



Multnomah County Veteran Services Taskforce

April 7th, 9:00am – 11:00am

Multnomah Building, 5th Floor Copper Room, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, Oregon 97214

MEETING MINUTES: Focus – Families

Welcome and Introductions

Task Force meeting attended by: Diane McKeel, Sean Files, Tina Edge, Tressa Kovachevich, Mike Caudle, Seth Lyon, Tommy Graven, Britni Childs, Alex Glover, Carrie Calaspa, Andy Smith, Joe Carbajal, Dwight Holton, Jill Behunin, Carrie Froelich, Calle Ann Pierson, Scott Wilkening, Belle Landau, Don Weber, Pete Pringle, Darrell Beck, Steven Easterday, Estanislado Quinones, Matt Burton, Lindsay Stover, Jean Detinger

TOPIC / PRESENTER	NOTES	Action
Family Services Presentation Carrie Froelich	<p>Carrie and Jill presented on the Oregon National Guard's Family Program and the role of Family Assistance Specialists across the state. Handout is attached on the task force website with contact information, map, and additional information on services.</p> <p>Family Assistance Coordinators support all branches and work with active service members, families, and veterans. They check in with the family whenever a service member is deployed over 30 days, and focus on getting the family in touch with the services that they need.</p> <p>Q: What are referral trends and how can local governments and other partners help?</p> <p>A: They can run reports to see what issues are experienced in certain areas, and do targeted training. In Multnomah County there is consistent need for financial assistance (e.g. budgeting, money management, savings and planning) for guard members, but not as much for veterans. Also trying to educate families to educate schools about self-identifying so they can connect kids with services and support.</p>	<p>Key Bank and Wells Fargo have provided financial assistance training for other partners, and may be resource for guard members.</p> <p>Family Assistance Coordinators can run a report for Mult Co of family needs.</p>
Update from Congressman Blumenauer's Office Mike Caudle	<p>Congressman Blumenauer recently held a forum at Portland State with Congresswoman Gabbard (HI-2nd Dist). It was a good discussion and opportunity for a lot of networking.</p> <p>Currently working on appropriations. Some of the Congressman's priorities related to veterans include funding PTSD research, extending the time to roll death benefits, securing as much funding as possible for guard members during the drawdown and changes to active duty roles, and livability at bases.</p> <p>Another issue discussed was veterans or family members getting denied for benefits. If someone calls you about their application getting denied and they've done all they can, encourage them to call their Senator or Congressional Representative for help.</p>	<p>Task force supports Congressman Blumenauer's Office with these efforts.</p>

<p>Resource Guide for Veterans</p> <p>All (follow-up discussion from March)</p>	<p>At the March Task Force meeting there was discussion about resource guides and how to get referral information to JTAP and other programs working with veterans in a manner that is accessible, efficient, and delivers accurate information. Sean presented some resource guides that are currently available, including the Street Roots Rose City Resource Guide, an excerpt from the Multnomah County Community Covenant, an 11x14 Clackamas County Community Resources flyer, a screenshot from 211's Veterans Services page, and the ODVA Veterans Benefits Magazine.</p> <p>During group discussion the task force agreed that this is not a new issue, and challenges include: how to keep it up to date when programs and contacts change so frequently; how to make it concise and easy to navigate while still having all of the info someone might need; how to make it relevant to all the different groups (families, veterans, law enforcement, health care providers, etc) that may use it.</p> <p>With the available examples presented, the group agreed not to create another resource guide. This will continue to be an issue that the task force will monitor, and at this point recommendation was to refer people to 211's veterans resources. (211info.org/military)</p>	
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**General
Updates**
All

- Jean and Lindsay presented on a grant application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) which would fund an expansion of efforts to support veterans in the criminal justice system who struggle with severe mental illness, substance addiction, and co-occurring disorders. It would develop a training module for different partners, which identifies gaps and training needs at the systemic intersect between criminal justice, mental health, and community service partner programs. Gabe from the County's CVSO will be part of the collaborative council. Following brief discussion, Commissioner McKeel will submit a letter of support on behalf of the Task Force. Handouts (linked from VTF webpage) include 1) the project summary, and 2) the letter of support submitted following the meeting.
- Belle reported that Returning Veterans Project has music therapists starting a drumming circle in June. In July they will also start an art therapy project at the art museum. Demand for RVP services are high, so if you know any LMTs and counselors who can open up one slot pro-bono per month, please refer them to Returning Veterans Project.
- Dwight announced that Lines for Life has been awarded a state contract for the crisis line. They received 7,000 calls in the past year. Home to 3 vet corps volunteers right now as well. LfL is setting up a prescription drug abuse task force, which will work on prescription drug take back as well as prescribing practices and abuse.
- Portland Veterans Acupuncture Project offers free services on a drop-in basis (no appointments needed). Clinic hours are every Thursday evening from 5-8pm at the Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church (2828 SE Stephens St in Portland).
- Cpl. Heidi Olson will be at Lines for Life on Saturday 4/12 from 1:30-3pm to discuss her experience being injured in Afghanistan. Email Joe Carbajal to attend (joec@linesforlife.org)
- Wasco County Veterans Services Tour on April 11th. The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Veterans Committee has organized a tour of Wasco County this Friday to discuss best practices and observe programs and strategies that other counties/communities can model. Tour will include the CBOC, Veterans Home, CVSO office, Veterans Memorial, NORCOR. Contact Sean for more info and to rsvp (sean.files@multco.us).
- The Portland Veterans Stand Down will be September 11th at the Kliever Armory (10000 NE 33rd Dr). Next planning meeting is May 7th at 3pm. Contact Alex for details.
- East County Stand Down will be October 18th in Troutdale.

Letter of Support submitted by Commissioner McKeel on behalf of the task force.