

MEETING DATE: November 21, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: F

TO: BSCC Chair and Members

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SUBJECT: Adult Reentry Grant (ARG) Program – Cohort 4 – Release of the Requests for Proposals: **Requesting Approval**

Summary

This agenda item requests Board approval to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) (Attachment F-1) for Cohort 4 of the Adult Reentry Grant (ARG), as recommended by the Executive Steering Committee (ESC). This RFP will make \$108.3 million available to eligible community-based organizations to provide warm handoff, reentry, and rental assistance programs that support individuals released from state prison.

Background

The ARG Program provides funding for community-based organizations (CBO) to support individuals formerly incarcerated in state prison. ARG was established in the 2018 Budget Act (Senate Bill 840, Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018) and has received annual appropriations through the State Budget Act. A total of 217 projects have been awarded more than \$221 million in funding since ARG was implemented.

The Budget Acts of 2023 (Assembly Bill 102, Chapter 38, Statutes of 2023) and 2024 (Assembly Bill 107, Chapter 22, Statutes of 2024) appropriated \$57 million, respectively, for a total of \$114 million to award competitive grants, as follows:

- \$54.15 million shall be available for the **warm handoff and reentry** of offenders transitioning from state prison to communities. Priority shall be given to individuals released to state parole.
- \$54.15 million shall be available for **rental assistance**. Priority shall be given to individuals released to state parole.
- Up to 5 percent (\$5.7 million) shall be available to BSCC for costs to administer the grant programs.

Key Grant Components

Authorizing legislation required BSCC to establish an ESC comprised of members from relevant state agencies with expertise in public health, housing, and rehabilitation, including justice-impacted individuals and community-based organizations focused on reentry.

On July 12, 2024, the Board appointed Board Member Jason Johnson, Director of the Division of Adult Parole Operations at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, as Chair of the ARG Cohort 4 ESC. The ESC convened two days in September 2024 and one day in October 2024 to develop the RFP. An ESC membership

roster is included in Attachment F-2. The ESC and staff discussed several components of the new RFP and have recommended the following:

- **Eligibility:** Only community-based organizations with nonprofit (501(c)(3) status) in California that provide direct services to the community are eligible to apply.
- **Grant Period:** ARG projects will be awarded for a 42-month term, from July 1, 2025 to December 31, 2028. The first three years (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028) are for implementation and service delivery. The last six months (July 1, 2028, to December 31, 2028) are for completion of an audit and final evaluation report.
- **Funding Thresholds:** Eligible applicants may apply for a **maximum of \$4,500,000** for the entire grant period. Within that funding threshold, applicants may request up to:
 - \$2,250,000 in the Warm Hand-Off/Reentry Services category
 - \$2,250,000 in the Rental Assistance category
- **Housing First:** ARG projects must align with Housing First, which is an approach to serving people experiencing homelessness that recognizes that a person must first be able to address basic needs before stabilizing and engaging in programs. Welfare and Institutions Code sections 8255-8257.2 provide legislative guidance by defining the core components of “Housing First” and requiring a state agency that funds, implements, or administers a state program that provides housing or housing-related services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, to adopt guidelines that include the principles of “Housing First.”
- **New Grant Structure:** Historically, BSCC has administered separate RFP processes for the two grant components, Warm Handoff/Reentry and Rental Assistance, treating them as stand-alone grant projects. This ESC determined that the two components should not be treated as separate and distinct grants, but rather, they should be treated as categories or program purposes areas in a single grant. Therefore, the ESC recommended a new grant structure, where applicants may submit one proposal and request funding for a project with grant activities that include **both** Warm Handoff/Reentry Services **and** Rental Assistance or either component.
- **Eligible grant activities:** Authorizing legislation does not define or specify the types of services to be funded under “Warm Handoff” or “Rental Assistance.” To guide applicants, the ESC developed the following definitions:
 - *Warm Handoff:* A collaborative continuity of care that includes the participant and their support team when services transition from one provider to another. Multiple warm handoffs may occur during a client’s engagement, e.g., from an in-custody counselor to a transitional case manager to a housing provider. These activities can also include reentry services, which may include barrier removal, case management, housing support, and incentives to assist an

individual in transitioning from incarceration, parole supervision, or housing insecurity to self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

- **Rental Assistance:** Direct housing costs, including rent, vouchers, deposits, landlord incentives, utility payments, household furnishings, and costs required to place or maintain a participant in transitional or permanent housing.
- **Target population:** Grant projects funded by ARG must serve individuals, age 18 and over, who have been formerly incarcerated in state prison, with priority being given to those recently released and/or on state parole.
- **Reporting requirements:** ARG grantees must submit Quarterly Progress Reports, a Local Evaluation Plan (six months post-award), and a Final Local Evaluation Report.

RFP Activities and Tentative Timeline

Below is a tentative timeline of activities necessary to administer a competitive RFP for the ARG Cohort 4 grant.

Activity	Date
RFP Presented for Board Approval	November 21, 2024
Release RFP to the Field	November 22, 2024
Grant Information Session for Prospective Applicants	December 17, 2024
Proposals Due to the BSCC	March 3, 2025
Proposal Rating Process and Development of Funding Recommendations	March - June, 2025
Present Funding Recommendations to the Board	June 19, 2025
Grants Begin	July 1, 2025
Grants End	December 31, 2028

Recommendation/Action Needed

Staff recommends that the Board:

- Approve the release of the Adult Reentry Grant Cohort 4 Request for Proposals as recommended by the Executive Steering Committee.

Attachments

F-1: Adult Reentry Grant RFP

F-2: ARG Cohort 4 ESC Membership Roster