

CCA Directors Meeting February 15, 2008

Kim Switzer, President of OCPOA, welcomed CCA Directors and invited them to join OCPOA. President Switzer also announced training to be offered by OCPOA on marketing strategies for community corrections. The training is scheduled for May 8, 2008 and is intended to help programs market themselves in the community. Flyers will be sent out with more information about this training.

Budget Cuts

An e-mail from DRC was distributed that went out earlier today concerning state budget cuts. The e-mail explained that Director Collins met with the governor and a determination was made that community corrections funding from DRC (CCA, Halfway House, CBCF) would not be cut in FY2008 and efforts would be made to refrain from cutting these programs in FY2009. The DRC is taking a large budget cut overall but Director Collins continues to stress the importance of diverting offenders from prison through community programs in order to reduce the prison population. The DRC will absorb the cuts originally intended for community corrections programs. As the budget has been cut so drastically, the Bureau of Community Sanctions (BCS) will closely monitor program statistics such as diversion rates, costs per diversion, successful completion rates, etc. to make sure that grant money is being spent appropriately and efficiently. Alicia Handwerk and Chris Galli encouraged program directors to understand how grant funds are spent and to be fully aware of their county or city fiscal process. Program directors were encouraged to be vigilant in partnering with other community agencies and marketing their programs for grants and other funding.

Chris Galli added that BCS would review the top 20 programs that have returned funds since FY03 and try to determine why the funds were returned. CCA programs are encouraged to spend all of the funds they are allocated responsibly, ensuring that unspent funds are minimized. It was recognized that this is difficult in some programs due to the manner in which the county administers the grants, but attempts should be made to work with county administration to minimize unspent funds.

Program directors who volunteered to return funds in the current fiscal year, will be contacted to determine if they still want to return the funds and why they cannot spend the funds.

Emergency Funding FY08

Chris Galli announced that programs that received emergency funding in FY08 will be contacted to check their progress in spending the funds. If this funding is not being completely spent, the program may be considered for a funding cut in that area. Chris Galli noted that it is anticipated that successful completion rates should go up as a result of this extra money for service. Programs that do not show these results will be contacted for more details.

Several directors mentioned that they would like to see conformity in defining terms such as 'successful termination' as well as establish acceptable criteria for measurements such as 'successful termination rates' for programs. This is important if programs are to be compared to each other. Chris Galli indicated there are many factors that go into making

these determinations and suggested that goal ranges be established for; successful completion rate, cost per diversion, number of days in the program, etc. He added that it is important to be sure the appropriate offenders are selecting for programs and that programs work with those offenders rather than aiming for a statistic. DRC will be looking at programs that have statistics far different than the norm for similar programs. Several program directors mentioned that variables such as different program requirements, judge's philosophies and procedures for selecting offenders for the program affect the success rate, cost per diversion, etc. Chris Galli indicated efforts would be made to account for these issues when comparing programs.

FY09 Budget

Chris Galli announced that, at this point, FY09 CCA program funding will not be cut. Grant funding for FY09 should be the same as FY08 with the emergency funding rolled in. Programs may not be expected to submit the monthly reports that are currently required for emergency funding. More information will be provided once it is available.

FY09 Grant Applications

FY09 grant applications should be out to programs next week. The deadline to turn in the applications is March 31, 2008. Programs are encouraged to submit the grant application earlier if possible. New state-required ethics language will be included in FY09 grants. Additionally, an addendum to the FY08 grants will be sent to programs in order to ensure the ethics language is updated/included as required.

Ohio Risk Assessment

Alicia Handwerk report that the Ohio Risk Assessment Tool is to be rolled out to pretrial programs this month for testing. She estimated that general training on this tool should begin at the end of calendar year 2008. The DRC will provide an update on the progress of the development and roll out of the tool in June.

408 Focus Group

Juli Tice announced that the focus group reviewed all of the 407/408 surveys and had many discussions on whether to combine the 407 & 408 grants. The group decided to recommend combining the grants. This decision was made for fiscal reasons and to give programs more flexibility. The change will have to go through legislative approval first and will not affect FY09 grants. Programs will stay the same however, if approved, the grant applications and funding for FY10 will be combined. Chris Galli indicated BCS staff would be available to talk to anyone who needs assistance with understanding these new procedures including commissioners, auditors, treasurers, etc. Programs would not be required to combine with others in their county if it is not in the best interest of creating diversions for that county. If requested, the grants would stay separate.

Grant Application Committee

Kris Nuhfer is chairing a committee to develop recommend updates and changes to the FY10 grant applications. Please contact Chris if you have any ideas or would like to be a part of the committee.

Community Corrections Collaborative

Gayle Dittmer reported that the collaborative has been asked to assist in identify cost-cutting initiatives for community corrections programs funded by DRC and develop new ideas to create more diversions to reduce the prison population. The CCA representatives of the community corrections collaborative (Vince Polito, Gary Yates, Dan Peterca, Gayle Dittmer) requested input on these issues and other issues to be addressed. President Switzer suggested that an email be sent to CCA directors to request input.

The next CCA Directors meeting will be May 9, 2008 at 1:00 PM at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Columbus.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Gayle Dittmer, OCPOA Secretary
Phone: (614) 462-4055
Email: Gayle_Dittmer@fccourts.org