

AG Kobach announces grant opportunities to fight addiction across Kansas

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TOPEKA - (February 27, 2023) - Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach has announced that the first round of funding opportunities under the Kansas Fights Addiction (KFA) grant program, which will use money recovered by the state through opioid legal settlements to support substance abuse and addiction services in Kansas, will be available starting in March.

The Kansas Fights Addiction Grant Review Board has agreed to make an initial \$3 million available to eligible agencies, entities and nonprofit organizations through a Request for Proposal (RFP) grant application process that will prioritize strategies related to treatment, recovery, reducing harm associated with substance use, and linking people to support services and care. The RFP is scheduled to open March 6.

A second RFP announcement, anticipated in early May, will make an additional \$2 million available, with funding prioritizing prevention, providers and health systems, and public safety and first responders. The priorities are based on the Kansas Prescription Drug and Opioid Advisory Committee's 2023-2027 state strategic plan, which was developed using input from key stakeholders, public comment, subject matter experts and survey data collection.

The opioid epidemic has taken an enormous toll nationwide and in Kansas. Over a million people in the U.S. have died from drug overdoses since 1999. It is estimated that in 2021, more than 107,000 people died of a drug overdose in the U.S., with opioids involved in 75% of those deaths. In Kansas, the number of overdose deaths has risen steadily in recent years. In 2019, the state reported 393 overdose deaths; that number rose to 477 in 2020 and 678 in 2021, the most recent year for which statistics are available.

Kansas has reached multiple settlements with major pharmaceutical companies, distributors and related firms as part of the state's ongoing efforts to bring accountability to those that fueled the opioid-addiction crisis and to provide funds to support addiction services. In, Kansas has secured more than \$340 million in settlements to be paid to the state over the next 18 years.

The Kansas Legislature enacted the Kansas Fights Addiction Act in 2021, authorizing the creation of the KFA board. Sunflower Foundation, a statewide health philanthropy based in Topeka, serves as the administrator for the KFA grant program.

Eligibility is limited to state agencies, local and county governments, and nonprofit organizations that provide services in Kansas for the purpose of preventing, reducing, treating, or otherwise abating or remediating substance abuse or addiction. To be eligible, applicants also must release all legal claims arising from covered conduct against each defendant named in the opioid settlement agreements.

The initial RFPs constitute a short-term approach to funding immediate needs in Kansas. During the first year of funding, the KFA board will conduct a comprehensive substance use disorder (SUD) needs assessment that will be used to guide long-term KFA funding strategies. To expedite the distribution of funds to communities, entities and organizations providing substance use support and addiction services, the KFA board agreed to approve these initial rounds of funding prior to completion of the needs assessment, which could take up to a year.

Additional information on the grant application and review process will be announced March 6. Learn more about the KFA board and the opioid settlements at ag.ks.gov/about-the-office/affiliated-orgs/kansas-fights-addiction-act-grant-review-board.