

2021 COVID-19 Recovery Grant **Request Summary**

COVID-19 Recovery Grant Application

In response to the strain the COVID-19 virus pandemic is placing on the local healthcare system and community-based organizations, the Desert Healthcare District and the Regional Access Project have made available grant funds to provide additional support and resources to our local healthcare and service providers.

Cathedral Center, Grant #1264

About the Organization

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Organization Type:

501(c)(3)

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Proposal

Project Title: CCSC Operating Funding to Continue and Improve Beyond Current Essential Services

Total Project Budget: \$102,767.00

Requested Amount: \$10,000.00

Start Date: 4/1/2022

End Date: 6/30/2022

Project/Program Description

Community Need: *Define a specific need(s) for the project and describe the alignment to ongoing COVID-19 relief, recovery, and assistance efforts.*

Funding from DHD/RAP in 2020 helped pivot Cathedral City Senior Center from its focus on in-person social and educational connections to a pandemic essential services provider focused on seniors, families, and caregivers. The agency faces funding needs due to the high and growing demand for food, social services, and the harmful effects of isolation and loneliness.

Cathedral City and surrounding communities' vulnerable seniors face disproportionate hardship economically, medically, and nutritionally. Technology and transportation remain major challenges. The pandemic threatens to push people living on the edge further into the margins of poverty, homelessness, and isolation.

Area residents are low-income, including senior citizens, large family-, single-parent-, and non-English-speaking households. With no parks department, community center, or human services division in Cathedral City, CCSC is the de facto community center. Predictably, this epidemic leads to an unprecedented spike in seniors' needs, and Cathedral City seniors are financially and otherwise unprepared without a robust intervention from CCSC. The community needs food, medical supplies, social services, reliable access to information, surrounding community resources, and virtual online programming to encourage connectivity and stem loneliness.

Project Description: *What program/service are you performing or providing that is vital to your target population during the current COVID-19 public health crisis and describe its importance.*

CCSC addresses epidemic-related hunger, financial need, and isolation. A weekly food bank serving hundreds, a daily warm lunch, weekend meals, emergency food bags, frozen weekend meals, grocery store gift cards, and other nutritional offerings compose a set of grab and go and delivery services to meet a growing need for food.

Volunteer and staff Friendly Callers provide regular reassurance calls to any senior who requests the free service. The calls can be weekly, more or less often as established between the caller and senior, and calls have surged into the hundreds at times during the epidemic. All calls offer a regular friendly voice, many have provided essential resources and vital information, and a few have saved lives and made important medical connections.

CCSC provides electric mobility carts and scooters, wheelchairs, walkers, canes, adult diapers, and many health-related products and household goods to those in the most need.

The agency manages a reception desk open daily taking incoming calls and visits from the community, making vital social service referrals to our on-site MSW partners, JFS and SAOTD, and many community partners.

A robust new CCSC@Home and CCSC@Home Espanol virtual senior center will offer online connectivity, entertainment, and stimulation, as will drive-in Bingo and other creative programming.

Is this a new project or an expansion of a preexisting project? *Please describe if the proposed project has been developed recently or if a preexisting program has been modified to address the impact of the COVID-19 virus*

This is the expansion of a new project. The new project was to convert our traditional, in-person expertise into a modified set of services that meets the moment of greatest need for vulnerable seniors in our area. CCSC has successfully pivoted to pandemic-related food and emergency/crisis-related services. The agency provides an astonishing number of grab and go and delivered food, supplies, outbound automated informational calls, and referrals to social, health, and community services--including assistance with testing and vaccination--with a volunteer-led, 2.5 FTE organization on a spare budget. The most recent improvements include comprehensive services to people who are sheltering in place, homebound, and the establishment of a robust virtual senior center with online offerings.

How will the grant funds be used? *Please describe specifically how the grant funds will be used towards operational and/or programmatic support?*

DHD/RAP funding will allow the center to continue its current operations for three months without borrowing from our small, diminishing reserves. A full \$10,000 grant will cover the cost differential between unanticipated, unpaid-for spending, such as Ecolab fogger and floor products that are used before and after all volunteer staging events (food packing, disinfecting donated medical goods, etc.), added insurance coverage, and gas for the exceptionally high use of our agency van, products that better allow for online programming (HD computer cameras, lights), and increased utility costs from additional freezers for the nutritional programs.

Geographical Area Served

Cathedral City; Desert Hot Springs; Palm Desert; Palm Springs; Rancho Mirage

Population Served

Disabled and/or special needs; Homeless; Seniors (65+ years old); Individuals with pre-existing medical conditions; Homebound individuals

How many residents will be served? *Please provide the number of unduplicated number of individuals and/or number of services provided*

7,500

Evaluation *Please describe how the success and/or impact of on-going operations or the proposed project will be evaluated*

Evaluation

Because Cathedral City Senior Center operates on a razor-thin margin, ending the 2020-21 fiscal year without having closed our doors, turned away anyone in need, exhausted the agency's limited reserves, and maintained the agency's small 2.5 FTE workforce will be a strong measure of considerable success. Also, more specifically, CCSC tracks all incoming information request calls, outgoing Friendly Connections calls, food distribution, equipment loans, and online programming participation.

