



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

October 9, 2020

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones  
Speaker of the House  
H-101, State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Ms. Victoria L. Gruber  
Executive Director  
Department of Legislative Services  
90 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Health-General Article § 10–208(d) and COMAR 10.21.23.06—Report on the Mental Hygiene Community-Based Services Fund for FY19 - (MSAR #290)**

Dear President Ferguson, Speaker Jones, and Ms. Gruber:

Pursuant to Health-General Article § 10–208(d) and COMAR 10.21.23.06, the Maryland Department of Health (Department) submits this report on the Mental Hygiene Community-Based Services Fund (Fund).

### **Background**

The money in the Fund is the Behavioral Health Administration’s (BHA) portion of the Community Services Trust Fund Account, which holds proceeds from the sale or lease of property and equipment of a Development Disabilities Administration or Behavioral Health Administration facility. Monies in the Fund are to be used to meet the needs of individuals leaving state facilities to enter community-based services. Any unspent portions of the Fund may not be transferred or reverted to the General Fund of the State but must remain in the Fund to be used for specified purposes. See also COMAR 10.21.23.05E.

### **Ward Closures**

In FY19, no state inpatient facility wards closed. No state inpatient facility wards are planned for closure in FY20.

### **Fund Balance and Expenditures**

At the beginning of FY19, the Fund had a balance of \$500,009.36. During the fiscal year, \$14,434.81 was added to the Fund balance: \$5,400 from rent from the U.S. Coast Guard and \$9,034.81 in interest. In FY19, BHA continued its allocation in funding for two programs to

serve individuals at risk for homelessness: the Housing First Initiative and the Hospital Discharge Program. Expenditures from the Fund during FY19 were \$513,627.55. The closing balance for the Fund on June 30, 2019, was \$816.62.

In FY20, revenue attainment is anticipated to be \$5,481: \$5,400 from rent from the U.S. Coast Guard and \$81 in interest. With the beginning Fund balance of \$816.62, total revenue for FY20 will be \$6,297.62. Currently, there is special fund appropriation of \$5,481 in FY20 for the Fund. In FY20, BHA will process a budget amendment to utilize these funds for housing initiatives.

### **Programming**

The Housing First Initiative started in FY15 to assist with breaking down some of the complex barriers that homeless individuals with severe behavioral health issues face when seeking access to housing. The Housing First Initiative provides rental assistance, housing support, advocacy, and linkages to resources for individuals with severe behavioral health conditions experiencing homelessness, individuals in state psychiatric hospitals who lack the housing resources to be discharged, and individuals who remain in residential rehabilitation beds because of a lack of affordable housing in the community. The project provides rental assistance and linkages to supportive services in Baltimore City (36 individuals), Montgomery County (24 individuals), and Prince George's County (12 individuals). A combined total of 72 individuals were served in FY19. Funding for this initiative will continue through FY20. The Department anticipates expending the estimated \$6,297 fund balance out of the Fund and \$1,360,318 from general funds.

Also started in FY15, the Hospital Discharge Program provides community services to individuals leaving state hospitals who (1) have a history of arson, inappropriate sexual behavior and/or conduct, or complex medical needs in addition to psychiatric symptomology and (2) require specialized services upon state hospital discharge. As a result of this program, individuals who have traditionally been difficult to place have been able to be transitioned to the community, allowing psychiatric hospitals to admit more patients from the judicial system and detention centers. The program supports individuals in Anne Arundel County (12 individuals), Howard County (4 individuals), Frederick County (13 individuals), Baltimore County (52 individuals), and Baltimore City (7 individuals). In FY19, 88 individuals were served. There are no funds available in this Fund for this initiative in FY20. The Department anticipates expending \$2,820,464 from general funds.

If you have any questions regarding the Fund, please contact Webster Ye, Director of Governmental Affairs, at 410-767-6480 or [webster.ye@maryland.gov](mailto:webster.ye@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Robert R. Neall  
Secretary

cc: Aliya Jones, M.D., MBA, Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health  
Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services, 5 copies