FILED FOR RECORD
12/19/2017 9:00 AM
Dana Debeauvoir - County Clerk, Travis County,TX

Item 9

Travis County Commissioners Court Voting Session Agenda Request

Meeting Date: December 19, 2017

Agenda Language: Consider and take appropriate action on request to authorize a new 4-Hour Marijuana class and related fees by Counseling & Education Services (CES).

Prepared By/Phone Number: Caryl Colburn, CES Director, (512) 854-4618; Teresa Goff, CES Administrative Services Director, (512) 854-4133

Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head: Roger Jefferies, Justice & Public Safety County Executive, (512) 854-4759

Commissioners Court Sponsor(s): Commissioner Margaret Gomez, Pct. 4

Background/Summary of Request and Attachments: The Travis County Attorney's Office (TCAO) requested that Counseling and Education Services (CES) partner with them to create and provide a 4-Hour Marijuana class for their pretrial diversion program for low-level possession of marijuana offenders. Clients who are expected to attend the class are low-level offenders who have received a citation from a law enforcement officer for Possession of Marijuana (POM) and then released to appear before Justice of the Peace Nicholas Chu at a later date. These offenders typically have no higher charges pending and would be considered low-risk. Individuals who are approved by the County Attorney's Office for participation in this program will be referred by Judge Chu directly to the 4-Hour Marijuana class with no assessment necessary by CES. Judge Chu will reset the appearance date for 60 days to allow the individual time to complete the class. Offenders who return to JP5 with proof of completion of the class will have their POM charge dismissed at the JP level and no formal charging instrument will be filed by the County Attorney. Diverting these low-level, low-risk individuals at this earliest stage of their interaction with the criminal justice system will allow them the opportunity to avoid a criminal charge while also freeing up the resources of the courts, the County Attorney's office, and Pre-Trial Services to focus their time and resources on higher-risk, higher level offenses and offenders.

CES has been providing an 8 hour Marijuana Class since FY2012. The curriculum used is evidenced based from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). The new 4-Hour Marijuana class for the Pretrial Drug Diversion program will consist of the basics from the 8 hour curriculum (See Attachment A for more details). The 8 hour curriculum will continue to be provided to offenders who are higher-risk, who have higher charges pending, or who possess larger amounts of marijuana.

AGENDA REQUEST & BACKUP MATERIALS DEADLINE: Agenda requests and backup materials must be submitted in PDF format via email to agenda@traviscountytx.gov by **12 noon on Tuesday** in order to be considered for inclusion in the following week's voting session.

Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends that a fee of $45.00 be approved for the 4-Hour Marijuana class and a $10 rescheduling fee for clients that do not attend their scheduled appointment. CES will begin scheduling classes January 2018 averaging three (3) classes per month (27 classes total for FY2018), which will hold up to a maximum of 20 participants totaling 540 participants for FY2018.

Issues and Opportunities: This is an opportunity to provide a more appropriate educational class for the Pretrial Drug Diversion program with a 4-Hour Marijuana class. The original 8-Hour Marijuana class was not specifically created for the cite and release population, but to be able to separate the POM clients from the PI clients. The 4-Hour Marijuana class will fill a gap and be more appropriate for the population being referred to CES by the diversion program.

Fiscal Impact and Source of Funding: For FY2018, CES will utilize existing resources to implement the new class. There will be additional revenue estimating $24,300 brought in from the classes in FY'18. Additional funding may be requested in FY2019 if classes increase.

Required Authorizations:
David Escamilla, Travis County Attorney - 49415
Vicki Ashley, Assistant County Attorney - 44805
Roger Jefferies, Justice and Public Safety County Executive - 44759
Caryl Colburn, CES Director - 44618
Teresa Goff, CES Administrative Director - 44133
Vanessa Robles, Auditors Office - 48833
Katie Peterson Gipson, PBO Analyst - 49346

Attachment A

Travis County Counseling & Education Services

4- Hour Marijuana Class

Target Population

Low-level, low-risk offenders given a citation for possession of marijuana or Paraphernalia or having been identified during their assessment as needing this class based on potential problems with marijuana use.

Course Objectives:

To understand the Human Brain & Body as it relates to marijuana use
To learn about the Pharmacology of Marijuana & It's Effects on Humans
To understand the Myths or Facts on Marijuana Health Dangers & Accepted Medical Use
To gain more knowledge on Marijuana: Legal & Health Issues
To more fully understand about Addiction & Marijuana

Skills Taught:

- Describe the Impact of Marijuana on the Brain and Body
- Understand and Explain How All Mind/Mood Altering Drugs Including Create Their Effect in the Human Body
- Understand and Explain Specifically how Marijuana Creates its Effect in the Human Body
- Distinguish Myths from Facts about Marijuana and Marijuana Use/Abuse
- Awareness of the Law and Legal Consequences of Marijuana Possession and Use
- Describe the Impact of Marijuana Use/Abuse and the Impact on Social Relationships, Family, School, Work and other Aspects of Life
- Understand the Symptoms of Substance Use Disorders
- Understand Addiction

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