



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:** 17-5379

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**Agenda Item Number:** 2.

**Agenda Date:** 10/3/2017

**In Control:** Economic and Workforce Development Committee

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**DEPARTMENTS:** Economic Development

**DEPARTMENT HEADS:** Rene Dominguez

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

### **SUBJECT:**

The Economic and Workforce Development Committee (EWDC) will hear a briefing on the Veterans Employment Pay for Success Project, a partnership that will provide workforce development support to veterans with service-connected PTSD in order for them to gain sustained, competitive employment and increased earnings.

### **SUMMARY:**

The Veteran Employment Pay for Success Project (VEPSP) will be implemented in partnership with Social Finance, the federal Department of Veteran Affairs, the City of San Antonio, the South Texas Veteran's Health System (STVHS), and the Foundation for Advancing Veterans' Health Research (FAVHR), with Social Finance serving as the project manager. Social Finance is a non-profit organization dedicated to mobilizing capital to drive social progress.

Social Finance has been awarded a \$3 million grant from the federal Department of Veteran Affairs to provide employment outcomes for veterans with service-connected PTSD with the assistance of matching funds to four local jurisdictions across the country. San Antonio was selected as a candidate to be one of the four jurisdictions.

Under this program, over a three-year period veterans will receive services in accordance with the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model. IPS is an evidenced-based approach to supportive employment emphasizing rapid job search for employment that matches an individual's needs and preferences with integrated mental health care.

The outcomes for the veterans being served by the IPS model are: sustained competitive employment, increased

earnings, and job satisfaction. The City of San Antonio and the federal Department of Veteran Affairs will only pay if the local outcomes are achieved.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

According to the VA, of these Veterans with service-connected PTSD form a special population that has been underserved in the community. The STVHS (the local VA Medical Center) serves approximately 16,000 veterans with services-connected PTSD annually. Of these veterans, only about 30-40 receive workforce development services at the STVHS through the Compensated Work Therapy program a year.

While there are a number of community-based organizations and agencies that offer workforce development services to veterans, the specific needs for the population of veterans with service-connected PTSD are not being met because the supports are not connected or integrated into the mental health services the veterans are receiving. By implementing the IPS model, workforce development services are directly integrated with mental health services since the IPS specialists become part of the mental health team and work within the community to place and support veterans into jobs.

For three years, the Tuscaloosa Research and Education Advancement Corporation (TREAC) will manage the IPS implementation at the South Texas Veteran's Health System (STVHS), and the Foundation for Advancing Veterans' Health Research will be the direct service provider working with the STVHS teams and individually with the veterans with service-connected PTSD. In year four, an independent evaluator will measure and validate outcomes. If the outcomes are not achieved, the City will not be required to provide financial support.

The Veteran Employment Pay for Success Project (VEPSP) is an opportunity for San Antonio to improve alignment of funding and services related to workforce development. The City will be leveraging federal dollars to provide workforce development services to our local veterans. City-funded workforce development delegate agencies will be connected to the VEPSP by referring clients to the VEPSP and vice versa. Local veteran service providers and partners will also be connected for referral purposes, both ways.

Additionally, the Veteran Employment Pay for Success Project will align with the City's efforts in ending veteran homelessness by serving those veterans already connected to the effort and that are in need of sustainable employment. Lastly, as Military City USA, the VEPSP aligns with the City's commitment to care for veterans and their needs.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends endorsing the program for full City Council consideration of the Veterans Employment Pay for Success Project.