

Massachusetts
Promoting Engagement Acceptance and Community Empowerment Project
(MA PEACE Project)
FFY17 Q1 Report
10/1/16 to 12/31/16

On 9/30/15, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) signed a Cooperative Agreement in order to explore ways to address violent extremism in Massachusetts. The Cooperative Agreement requires quarterly reports. This report summarizes activities conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FFY16) and the efforts undertaken by EOHHS in the first quarter of FFY17, from 10/1/16 to 12/31/16.

FFY16 Activities (9/30/15 - 9/30/16):

In the first two quarters of FFY16, EOHHS initiated and participated in several meetings and forums related to the Greater Boston Collaborative (the Collaborative). These meetings served as a way to increase dialogue and transparency among EOHHS, members of the Collaborative, and other stakeholders. The meetings allowed EOHHS the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Collaborative's activities occurring prior to EOHHS' involvement, and develop ideas for collaboratively moving forward.

During the third quarter of Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FFY16) EOHHS issued a Request for Information (RFI) on 03/11/16 in order to collect written information from the public regarding the development of a program to help prevent violent extremism by using a public health approach. The RFI responses were due on 4/5/16. EOHHS received twelve RFI responses from a range of organizations. The responses provided feedback related to: program design, eligible applicants, recommended violence prevention and intervention strategies, and resource requirements.

EOHHS reviewed the RFI responses and used the information collected through the RFI to develop an open competitive procurement, also known as a "Grant Application." On August 8, 2016, EOHHS issued the Grant Application to solicit responses from registered non-profit or for-profit organizations, school districts, academic institutions, or municipalities to operate the Massachusetts Promoting Engagement, Acceptance and Community Empowerment Project ("PEACE Project" or "Project") within the Community.

EOHHS sought to support Projects that help to prevent violence, (as defined by the Grant Application) and help to prevent people from joining organizations that promote, plan or engage in violence. Through the Grant Application, EOHHS sought to promote Community resilience by strengthening Community protective factors including:

- Social Support
- Social Cohesion
- Social Capital and trust in institutions
- Integrated cultural identity
- Employment success, and

- Access to democratic means for negotiating needs and opinions

Responses to the Grant Application were due on September 12, 2016. EOHHS received a total of \$431,580 in funding requests from four respondents. The responses were then evaluated by an Evaluation Committee (Committee) appointed by EOHHS, consisting of staff from EOHHS, the MA Department of Public Health and the MA Department of Mental Health.

No cost extension request:

On August 26, 2016, EOHHS submitted a no-cost extension to extend funding for this initiative through the end of FFY17. The no-cost extension was approved by the USAO in September 2016.

FFY 17 Activities: (10/1/16-12/31/16)

Following a comprehensive review of the respondents' proposals, including proposed budgets, the Committee recommended grant allocations to three out of the four vendors, ranging from \$42,000 to \$105,000 as follows:

- Empower Peace: \$42,000
- Somali Development Center: \$63,000
- United Somali Youth Project: \$105,000

Pursuant to Section 9.1 of the PEACE Project Grant Application, EOHHS announced agreement to enter into contract negotiations with the selected vendors. Awards are contingent upon successful Grant Agreement negotiations between the selected Respondents and EOHHS which are taking place in December 2017. We anticipate that contracts will be signed by January 2017.