

CLALLAM COUNTY NON-PROFIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS – JULY 2020 (COVID-19 IMPACTS)

IMPACT SUMMARY NARRATIVE:

The Data:

The attached Clallam County nonprofit survey was designed and implemented by Clea Rome of WSU Extension, with wide distribution assistance from the Clallam EDC, North Olympic Peninsula Development Council, and the Olympic View Community Foundation. Responses were obtained from 57 organizations which provide a wide spectrum of programs and services:

Housing, food banks, medical and behavioral health, faith based, sports and recreation, performing arts, outdoor education and environmental, seniors, domestic violence, trails and land, early childhood screenings and parental support, veterans, Chambers of Commerce, animal welfare, farmers' markets, tourism, and many more.

The survey report shows aggregate data relating to geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic breakdown of the communities and populations served across the entire County by the nonprofit respondents, as well as the size (staffing) of the nonprofits. It also reveals that 78% of the respondents have not needed to lay off staff, and that the majority applied for / received financial aid for Covid-19 losses.

The Stories Behind the Data:

The survey also asked the nonprofits the following questions:

- 1) How has Covid-19 affected your ability to fulfill your mission?
- 2) What are your current and most pressing needs?
- 3) What are your anticipated funding needs in the next 6 months?
- 4) Please share any other pertinent thoughts!

Not surprisingly, a majority of the responses to the questions were financial-related; the following is a summary of some of the most common challenges:

Budgetary Impacts:

Revenue:

- Fundraising events cancelled
- Facilities closed
- Unable to connect with donors / supporters
- Unable to comply with grants that are only reimbursed upon completion of funded tasks
- Uncertain finances of loyal donors
- Decreased dues / membership fees collected
- Unable to provide critical cash matches needed for grants that fund their mission / programs
- Usual funding sources not available – have been diverted to other crisis needs
- Unable to employ usual independent contractors

Expenses:

- Cost of delivering home-based services, items
- Cost of putting Covid-19 safety precautions in place: PPE, barriers, sanitizers, signage
- Technology expenses for changing to virtual / digital work / meetings/ communications
- Fixed overhead expenses remain
- More clients in need; takes extra time, staff (volunteers unavailable due to Covid concerns)

Logistical Impacts on Providing Programs and Services:

In summary, **the nonprofit sector is doing more with less.** It has lost income, staff, and volunteers while trying to meet unprecedented needs in our communities. Some organizations are completely closed, while others are working hard to fulfill their missions. Several are pivoting to provide crisis response, which has completely changed the priorities of their programming. The following comments from the respondents tell of their struggles:

“It’s harder to outreach, and harder to accept people into our programs without a quarantine period. We’ve lost income and staff, had extraordinary expenses for food and PPE early on, and we face critical cost issues in our congregate setting”.

“Our mission is heavily weighted on community programs and events. When we can’t offer a venue for our community, we’re unable to promote the events and support as planned”.

“It’s difficult to get customers signed up for our programs that require a lot of paperwork. They can’t scan documents and get them back to us. They are not returning the forms”.

“We’re unable to provide transportation for our clients’ normal shopping, errands, or appointments. Transportation has to be approved, and shown to be emergent”.

“We’re unable to open our venue to receive audiences in order to entertain, educate, and inspire community involvement through experiences in the arts”.

“Most clients are unable to access virtual activities, so monthly care packages containing activities / projects / crafts, food and treats are delivered to 40 – 60 clients (this extra cost covered by the agency).

“With our local school closed, school children have been at home and unable to receive the academic and nutritional support that we offer”.

Current and Pressing Needs:

Far and away, the respondents’ greatest needs are additional funding, relaxing of social distancing requirements, and the return of staff and volunteers to previous levels, with some staff increases needed. For the interim, a way to safely visit and deliver services and items to folks at home is sorely lacking. The resumption of fundraising events and normal revenue streams was cited by almost all respondents. One worried Director replied:

“Future uncertainty with government budgets and spending priorities, coupled with uncertainty on the financial health of our supporters, makes us cautious on our ability to maintain fundraising support at the level needed”.

Anticipated Funding Needs in the next 6 months:

Again, the most common response was additional funding to support increased requests for client assistance and services, additional staffing, and more volunteers. Some anticipate a flood of requests for help once government assistance is reduced or ended. Many of the nonprofits quoted the actual dollar amounts needed to replace their revenue shortfalls and to replenish reserves that have been depleted. Many are adjusting their budgets, and rethinking their fundraising strategies to comply with Covid-10 related restrictions and delays in reopening. One Executive Director wrote:

“Our capital campaign has been put on hold as we continue to evaluate the likelihood of success given the state of the pandemic. We have struck out all nonessential spending outside of staff. As we get closer to the end of the year and continuing support is not available, we will have to look seriously at staff cuts”.

Note: The identities of the survey respondents are confidential.

Impact summary narrative provided by Sheila Everett, Program Director, Olympic View Community Foundation

Questions about the survey should be directed to Clea Rome, Director, WSU Extension Clallam County clea.rome@wsu.edu