

TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING

January 6, 2021

Advisory Board Chair: Emma Ferriola-Bruckenstein, Restoration Legal Counsel

Staff Presenter: Megan Johnson, LCMHC, Police Crisis Unit Supervisor

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEBT PROGRAM

- Provides criminal justice-related relief to indigent members of our community.
- Initial request is for \$20,000 for a 1-year pilot program with a 6-month report to Council

PROGRAM GOALS

- Provides help to eligible low-income individuals who have not been able to receive other available debt relief opportunities
- Fills a gap that other efforts are not able to address

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Resident of Chapel Hill
- Meets court indigency standards
- Not currently incarcerated
- Has outstanding criminal justice or traffic fees or costs from Orange County or NCDMV

**Individuals convicted of violent felonies will not be eligible for the fund.*

***An individual will only be eligible to receive assistance from the fund once every three years.*

ELIGIBLE FEES

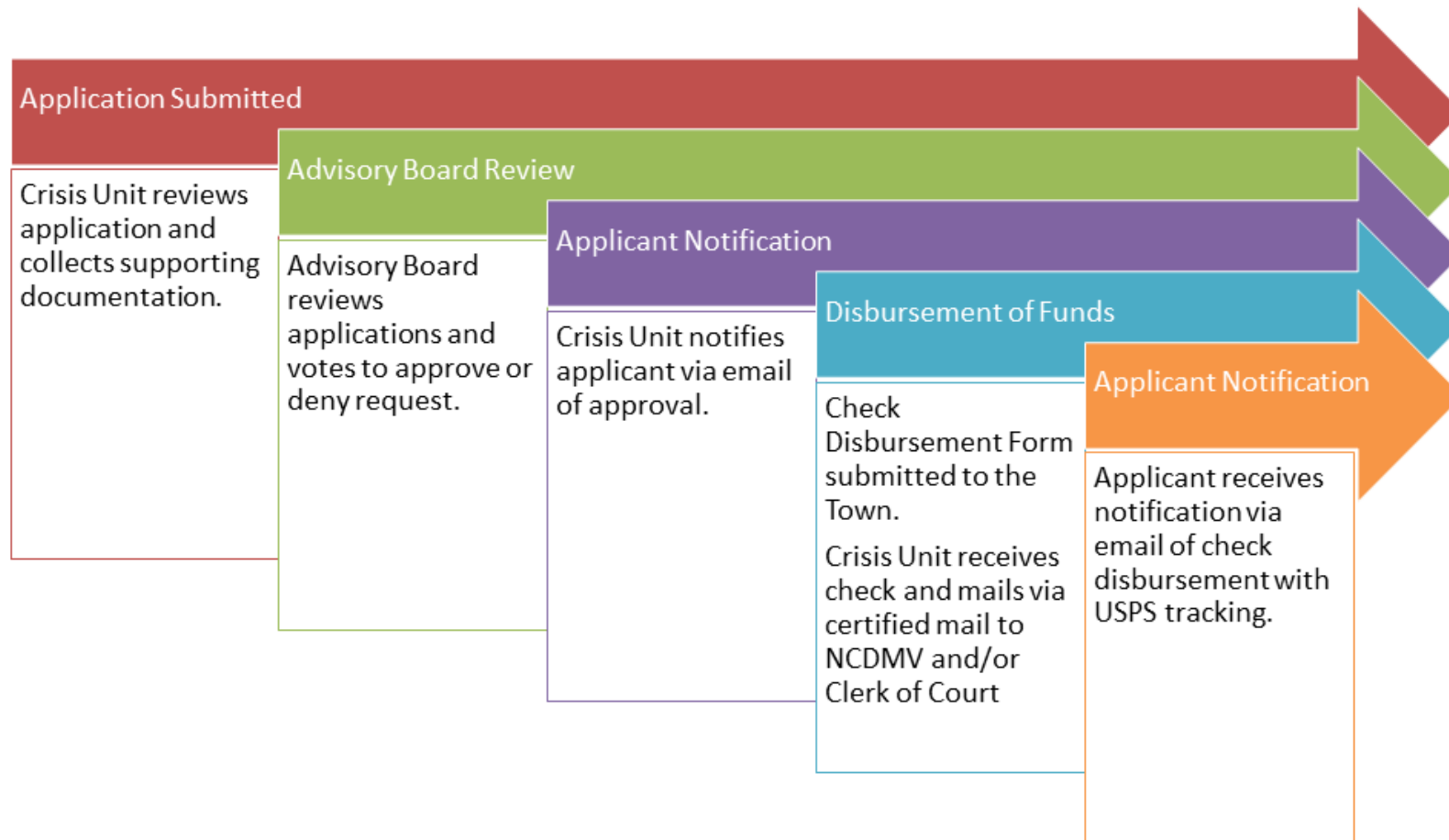
- Post-conviction court fees and costs
- Deferred prosecution court fees and costs
- NCDMV license restoration fees

**Fines and restitution payments imposed as part of sentencing will not be eligible for the fund.*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Emma Ferriola-Bruckenstein, JD Restoration Program Legal Counsel **CHAIR**
- Eliazar Posada, El Centro Hispano **VICE CHAIR**
- Donna Carrington, CEF
- Griselidy Marrero, IFC
- Mark Kleinschmidt, Orange County Clerk of Court Office
- Tiffany Bullard, Re-entry Council Case Manager
- Corey Root, Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness (OCPEH)
- Jesse Gibson, NAACP Legal Redress Committee or Criminal Justice Committee member
- Nancy Rosales, impacted community member
- Susan Friedman, Victims' advocate organization **

PROGRAM WORKFLOW



PROGRAM MEASURES

- 36 staff hours from January 2020 – June 2020 preparing for the program.
- Each application takes 1 – 1.5 hours of administrative time to be fully processed.
- Total of 12 applicants thus far.
 - 11 applicants approved and check disbursement request submitted
 - 1 applicant denied due to violent felony.
- Total Program Funds expended to date \$3,741.00.
- Total Program Funds Denied to date \$1,468.00.

PREFACE TO BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Governor's Task Force on Racial Equity in Criminal Justice (TREC):

- Created June 2020
- Report and Recommendations Released Dec. 14, 2020.
- Included four specific recommendations addressing Imposition of Fines and Fees

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Advisory Board makes the following recommendations after reviewing program's ability to meet community needs:

1. Expansion to Carrboro Residents (unanimous Board Approval)
2. To remove the restriction that an applicant can only apply once every three years (unanimous Board approval)
3. To remove the restriction on applicants with a violent felony conviction (unanimous Board approval)
4. Allow Program to pay debts for Chapel Hill residents due outside of Orange County (unanimous Board approval)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR COUNCIL

In addition to the previously stated recommendations, the Advisory Board brings the following to Council for future consideration:

1. Possibility of making this task force a Standing Committee (unanimous Board approval)

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!