

Background

In 1999 the Oregon legislature made a law that said when Fairview had no more residents, the property was to be sold and the money used to create a Trust Fund for housing for persons with developmental disabilities. According to the law, 5% of the Fairview sale price and all the interest the account earns can be spent. 95% of the money stays in the Trust to earn more interest for future housing needs.

The last resident of Fairview Training Center left for a home in the community in June 2000. After that, the property was put up for sale. A group of developers, Sustainable Fairview Associates, agreed with the state to buy Fairview in April, 2002, for \$15,120,000 to be paid over six years. They made the first large payment of \$2,361,666 in August 2003, and a similar payment in April 2004. Now it is time to begin spending the available Trust money that the law says can be used for housing for persons with developmental disabilities.

A group of persons with developmental disabilities, their family members, advocates and professionals wrote rules determining how the Trust will work. They decided that the money should be used for housing grants. They also decided that the money would be spent on housing modifications and equipment for persons with developmental disabilities living in residences that are not licensed. That means people living in their own home, a family home, or an apartment qualify, but modifications cannot be made to group homes or foster homes with these funds. The rules also say that the housing modifications or equipment must contribute to the health, welfare or safety of the person, or increase his or her independence. The numbers of the Administrative Rules for the Trust are 411-315-0010 through 411-315-0090.

The amount that will be offered for grants beginning in September, 2004 is \$150,000. That money will be distributed throughout Oregon by region based on the population in each region. Here is a list of the regions and the initial amount of money available for grants in each region. Additional money will be available as the fund grows.

Region	Counties in the Region	Grant Money Available
Metro/ North Coast	Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Washington	\$37,404
Multnomah	Multnomah	\$28,822
Mid-Valley	Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, Yamhill	\$29,740
Cascade	Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Lane, Lake	\$21,340
Southern	Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath	\$22,239
Eastern	Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Wheeler	\$10,455

The following questions and answers will help you understand how the Trust works, and learn if you can benefit from this program.

What kinds of things qualify for a grant award? All kinds of housing modifications and equipment qualify that will help you be more independent, or contribute to your health, safety and welfare. Here are a few examples: a ramp, modifications to a bathroom so it works better for you, assistive technology to help you use the telephone or schedule appointments, installing an alarm or intercom system, making doorways wider, making a kitchen more accessible, and installing specialized play equipment. There are many, many possibilities.

What kinds of things do not qualify for a grant award? Help with rent, normal maintenance and repair, and things that do not contribute to health, welfare, safety or independence of the person applying are not eligible.

Who can apply? If you are a person with a developmental disability who is NOT living in a licensed home or facility you are eligible to apply for a grant from the Housing Trust Fund.

Can grants be awarded on behalf of children as well as adults? Yes, both are eligible.

How and when do I apply? An initial application form is attached and is available on-line at the following website: <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/disabilities/>. You should fill out the form as completely as you are able and return it between September 15th and October 15th, 2004. You will be notified by November 15th

about your application. If your initial application is approved, you will be asked to provide additional information about the details of the plan and cost.

What is the maximum dollar limit of a grant? The Trust Advisory Committee decided that the current maximum amount of a single grant would be \$5,000. That may change later if the Trust has more income to spend.

What is the Trust Advisory Committee? The Administrative Rules established the Trust Advisory Committee to advise The Department of Human Services about how to allocate and distribute funds, the amount of grants, and the procedures. The Committee also will evaluate how the program is working, and may hear grievances. The Committee includes persons with developmental disabilities and their families, and is appointed by the Assistant Director of Seniors and People with Disabilities.

The rules say that the modification must be part of a support plan. What does this mean? It means that the modification or equipment must “make sense” as part of the overall supports you receive. It does not mean that it has to be part of a formal Individual Support Plan, but there should be a written statement from a case manager, personal agent or other persons involved in your care that says why this modification is important for your safety, health and welfare or contributes to your independence.

Can I get help designing the work I’m requesting or getting required information? Yes. If they have time available, the Housing Section at Seniors and People with Disabilities can help you make decisions about exactly what to do, writing a detailed plan for the work, drawing plans, writing specifications and obtaining a cost estimate from a contractor. There is no cost for this help. You may also get help from a contractor or an architect, and the Housing Section can help arrange that. The cost for getting this help can be part of the project.

Can a Trust grant be combined with other funds to do a larger project? By all means! Applicants are encouraged to seek other sources of funding. The maximum amount of a Trust grant award is \$5,000, but there is no limit on the other funds. All requests will be reviewed the same way.

Must a licensed contractor do the work? Yes. If you are requesting a grant for modifications to a residence, a licensed contractor must do the work.

Can modifications be made to a place I am renting? Yes. If your application for a modification is accepted and you live in a rented house, duplex or apartment you must get written permission from the owner to do the work.

How will grant award decisions be made? The Housing Section at Seniors and People with Disabilities will review the applications and making funding decisions. The decision will be based on how the request addresses the health,

safety or welfare of the applicant; whether it is part of a support plan; whether it is a cost-effective way of accomplishing the goal; and what funds are available.

What are the possible decisions that can be made about an application?

The Department may make the following decision about an application: Award the grant; returned to applicant for additional information; deferred for consideration in another round of funding; or denied for reasons stated in the letter. If your application is selected for funding, you will be asked to supply more detailed information, for example, a description of the work, a contractor's bid, or the brand and model of equipment.

What if I don't receive a grant and disagree with the decision? A grievance procedure is found in the administrative rule (OAR 411-315-0090). You will be notified in writing about your grievance rights when the notification about funding is made.