



City of Baltimore Opioid Restitution Fund Transparency & Accountability Plan

Background

The City recently brought litigation against drug companies for their role in creating the opioid epidemic in Baltimore. To date, the City has won settlements and jury awards against major pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors, now totaling more than \$668.5 million, with abatement proceedings underway.

On August 29, 2024, Mayor Scott signed an Executive Order establishing a comprehensive framework for the administration of opioid restitution funds in the City of Baltimore. Included in this Executive Order, the City is required to publish a plan for transparency and accountability of the restitution funds.

What is Transparency and Accountability?

Transparency in governance relates to providing the public with access to information about policies, activities, and decision-making in formats that are useful and understandable. For opioid restitution funds, it serves as a means for governments to showcase responsible stewardship of restitution dollars and own responsibility for their actions and decision-making.

The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation are nationally recognized guidance for jurisdictions receiving money from the opioid settlements that encourages governments to create a fair and transparent process for the use of opioid settlement funds. Principle 5 in The Principles for the Use of Funds outlines how governments should adopt strategies and practices to publicly disclose information related to their planning process, funding decisions, and monitoring activities.

Proposed Plan for Transparency

The key building blocks for transparency can be conveyed to the public in a variety of ways including website landing page visuals and links, or as periodic reports. To ensure transparency, the City will commit to sharing information related to opioid restitution funds financials, the process for the decision-making, and the impacts of investments. To share this information publicly, the City will adhere to the following commitments:

1. A webpage — The City will maintain a page on the City's website for easy access to all things related to the opioid restitution funds. Staff will check the site at least monthly for accuracy and update it as needed. Elements on the website will include:
 - a. Financial documents including up-to-date financial input and output for the Trust, or a link to the dashboard where this information can be found.
 - b. Links to documents outlined in the executive order and the due dates of when updated versions can be expected.
 - c. Links to public engagement opportunities including public feedback forms and links to relevant open meetings.
 - d. Clearly outline of the decision making process, including who is making the decisions and where the City is in this process. This will also include making public the Restitution Advisory Board members and other key decision makers, and how they will be making recommendations for funding to the Mayor and the Overdose Cabinet.

- e. Links to funding availability including available RFPs with scoring criteria and a detailed outline of how the applications will be scored and resources for technical assistance.
2. The City will release an annual report that summarizes the yearly activities related to the ORF. This report will include:
- a. Of the Trust, a financial summary that includes:
 - i. Total funds received
 - ii. Total interest accrued
 - iii. Total funds earmarked
 - iv. Total funds spent
 - b. An overview of expenditures from the Trust that includes details of each recipient that include:
 - i. Amount received
 - ii. Duration of the grant
 - iii. A description of funded activities
 - iv. Connection to strategic plan
 - v. Plans for sustainability
 - vi. Output metrics: All funded organizations will report regularly on a set of performance metrics as outlined in their grant agreements.
 - vii. Outcomes: They City may explore opportunities for formal evaluations of specific programs that are novel. Any evaluation will be posted publicly. These evaluation may report:
 - What happened as a result of the intervention
 - What were the broader implications
 - c. Impacts: The City will explore opportunities for a broader evaluation of the impacts of investment across the City. These evaluations will be posted publicly and will answer questions like:
 - i. What happened as a result of the interventions
 - ii. What were the broader implications