Grant to help relaunch drug treatment center for homeless women

Money will help replace closed Long Island site

Victory Programs had to shutter a facility when the city closed the Long Island bridge.

By Beth Healy | Globe Staff March 09, 2015

An emergency $45,000 grant from the Boston Foundation will help Victory Programs search for a new drug treatment center for homeless women, to replace a facility it had to shutter when the city closed the Long Island Bridge last October.

"We’ve been very distressed at the travail and hardship that the bridge closure led to for
some of our most vulnerable citizens,” said Paul S. Grogan, chief executive of the Boston Foundation, a community nonprofit, in a statement. “We’re confident that the restoration of this program will bring help to those most in need in our community.”

The Globe reported last month that Victory Programs and another former Long Island drug treatment center had their “business interruption” claims denied by their insurer. The centers had hoped the insurance would help pay the expenses of relocating.

But Philadelphia Insurance rejected the claims, saying the city of Boston’s decision to close the bridge because it was unsafe was not covered under the policies it sold to Victory Programs and Bay Cove Human Services.

Attorney General Maura Healey’s office is looking into whether there are legal grounds to challenge the claim denials.

Jonathan Scott, chief executive of Victory Programs, said the Boston Foundation is the group’s most longstanding financial supporter, going back 40 years. He said the foundation’s donation is the first major financial aid it has received since the shelter shut down last fall, leaving hundreds of poor women without an alternative program for kicking addictions.

“It’s an emergency, one-time grant,” Scott said. “We have asked lots of our donors and supporters, and told them that we need heroes and we need leadership.”

The shutdown of the Long Island shelters has come amid one of the worst winters on record and a surge in the Commonwealth’s opiate addiction crisis.

Together, Victory Programs’s Joelyn’s Family Home and Bay Cove’s Andrew House treated more than 5,000 people a year on Long Island. Joelyn’s represented two-thirds of all the treatment beds for women in Boston.

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