

Mental Health & Recovery Board of Erie and Ottawa Counties

Replacement Levy November 3rd, 2009

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this a new levy?

NO, this 0.3 mil levy is a replacement of one previously passed levy which is expiring. This levy had been renewed five years ago. This replacement levy will provide revenues at current property values for the next five years.

2. Why is this levy necessary?

State funding which represents less than 30% of our Board funding *continues* to be reduced. For the past five years, the Board had to tap into its diminishing reserves just to continue meeting the basic mental health needs of our residents. By voting “yes” for this 0.3 mil levy replacement, you are supporting the continued funding of effective and necessary mental health and recovery services to the residents of Erie and Ottawa County.

3. What if it doesn't pass?

The Board cannot continue to draw from its diminishing reserve fund. If this replacement levy doesn't pass, needed and valuable services, will be cut or reduced. The Board's safety net of services will be reduced and/or eliminated. Access to counseling and assessment by individuals who qualify for a sliding-scale rate will decrease. People needing services today may have to put their name on a “waiting list” for help weeks or months away.

4. What is this levy used for?

The Board is a safety net of mental health and recovery services for every county citizen, much like an insurance policy. Hopefully, you or your children/grandchildren won't need our support. However, in the past 12 months, over 14,000 people (12% of our Erie/Ottawa population) received mental health treatment or prevention services. By using a sliding payment schedule, the Board was able to provide necessary services to every person needing them. Board dollars also allow us the flexibility to fund local priorities and community-designed mental health and recovery programs.

5. What will it cost the average homeowner?

The 0.3 mil levy will cost the owner of a \$100,000 house about \$9 annually or 75 cents a month. That's less than a cup of coffee!

6. How much of the Board's budget is comprised of levy dollars?

40% of the Board's 9 million dollar budget is from local levy dollars. That is over 3 ½ million dollars. Without local levy dollars, the Board would be required to limit its services to individuals eligible for Medicaid.

7. Where does the Board's Money Go?

The Board assesses needs in both Erie and Ottawa County. Based on this planning process, yearly contracts are completed with agencies and providers to deliver mental health and recovery services. The Board currently contracts with Bayshore Counseling Services, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Erie County, Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services, The Giving Tree, Erie Shore Network, Oak House, Center for Cultural Awareness, Volunteers of America and Sandusky Artisans.

8. How can you help?

Vote for the Levy-**Issue 4 in Erie County and Issue 5 in Ottawa County**. Call 419-627-1908 to schedule a group presentation!