



Photos by Lydia Ely /The Astorian

The van housing the mobile clinic includes a private room for meeting with patients.

County launches a mobile clinic with van

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

A new Clatsop County mobile clinic will help bring public health services, such as disease testing and vaccinations, to remote areas on the North Coast.

The county has purchased a van for \$160,000 using an Oregon Health Authority grant for services related to pandemic response.

The 2021 Ford E-450, previously used by a New York university, has been refurbished for the county Public Health Department, which rolled out the van this month.

Lisa McClean, the county's nurse manager and clinic supervisor, said the department is working out the van's schedule.

In a given week, the mobile clinic may spend time in Astoria, Warrenton or Seaside, as well as smaller, underserved communities such as Knappa and Jewell. The van will be staffed with at least two public health employees.

Emblazoned with the health department logo, the mobile clinic will reach schools, workplaces and central locations in communities, but is unlikely to make home visits or park on residential streets, as it should be kept near a power source.

In Cannon Beach, the van may be used to serve the Hispanic community, delivering vaccines as the Oregon Health Authority has done.

The front of the van is equipped for blood draws; the back has an exam table.

"We have new and emerging diseases, for as long as nature and humans have commingled," McClean said, "and so as Public Health continues to build stable infrastructure, we have this van."

The van arrives as coronavirus cases spike and the county dismantled its COVID-19 vaccination and drive-thru testing services at Camp Rilea Armed Forces Training Cen-



Lucas Marshall, left, the environmental health manager for the county Public Health Department, shared COVID-19 statistics during a meeting.

ter in Warrenton.

The county had been giving weekly boosters at Camp Rilea. Since July 1, the county's drive-thru testing takes place at the household hazardous waste facility on Williamsport Road in Astoria.

At first, the department will use the van primarily to offer COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters. "That's kind of our priority right now," McClean said.

COME FALL, THE MOBILE CLINIC MAY BE USED IN SCHOOLS' STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS EFFORTS.

In December, the county's overall COVID-19 vaccination rate reached 70% — among the highest in Oregon — but as of earlier this month had yet to breach 75%.

Come fall, the mobile clinic may be used in schools' student immunizations efforts. "Our hope is, we will be able to offer other vaccines with the van," McClean said.

As for workplaces, McClean imagined a sce-

nario where a large employer — a mill or cannery, say — has an employee who tests positive for tuberculosis. To investigate how many others contracted the disease, the Public Health Department would normally send out a team and convert that employer's lunchroom or other workspace into a clinic. With the van, the county could bring its own.

Recently, a company contacted the Public Health Department to vaccinate their employees against hepatitis B. The company was looking to schedule appointments for more than a dozen people at the county's clinic on Exchange Street in Astoria. Getting everyone vaccinated at the clinic could take about two days. "This time we can just take the van out there and probably be done within an hour or two," McClean said.

A mobile clinic has long been on the department's wish list, Margo Lalich, the county's interim public health director, said at a recent Board of Commissioners work session. Mobile clinics are used widely by public health departments, including in Tillamook County.

"This is quite historic for Public Health in Clatsop County, and I think it's just a huge relief for us," Lalich said. "And it will be, I think, a relief for the community once they get more familiar with seeing us out on the streets."

New pretrial release policy takes effect

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

A new Oregon law directs courts to take a more consistent approach when deciding which offenders should stay in jail before trial.

The law, which went into effect this month, replaces the state's bail schedule with pretrial release criteria tied to the seriousness of the charges and an offender's criminal history.

The goal is to have a standardized pretrial release program throughout the state and to move away from a system where an offender's release depends on how much money they have available, according to Julie Vredevel, the trial court administrator at Clatsop County Circuit Court.

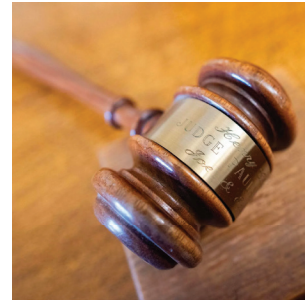
The changes were approved by the state Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Kate Brown last year. Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Martha Walters issued guidelines in June to help courts comply with the law.

Under these guidelines, offenders are sorted into one of three categories based on the nature of the charges and potential risk factors. Judge Dawn McIntosh, the presiding judge of the Clatsop County Circuit Court, signed an order establishing these categories for her judicial district.

In category No. 1, offenders who commit low-level misdemeanors and felonies can be released on their own recognizance.

Category No. 2 includes offenders with higher-level misdemeanors or class B or C felonies whose crimes don't include domestic violence. They can be released with court-imposed conditions.

Offenders in category No. 3 are alleged to have committed the most serious crimes, such as domestic



A new pretrial release program began in July.

violence, violent felonies and sex abuse. They will be held until they appear before a judge.

For the past several years, Clatsop County has used a pretrial release program with some of the same tools as the new order. These include a risk assessment tool that helps the sheriff's office determine which offenders can be released safely and under what conditions.

The county adopted the pretrial release policy amid concerns about overcrowding at the county jail in Astoria and the fact that too many offenders were locked up before trial.

"We are really fortunate in Clatsop County that we had a very effective and well-designed pretrial release program, so much of our pretrial release in Clatsop will stay the same," Vredevel said. "The big difference is that, instead of people using money to get out of jail, the jail will follow the information as laid out in that presiding judge order. So I think it will feel very similar from the outside."

Although the county's pretrial release program has been replaced with a new one, the two are similar enough that the impact to the county won't be as drastic as elsewhere, according to Judge McIntosh.

"I don't think it's going to have a dramatic impact on who gets out of jail in Clatsop County and who doesn't," she said, "except

that folks that are safe to release into the community, but don't have enough money and are charged with a crime that previously would have necessitated bail, can be released."

In addition, people who commit serious crimes, and would previously have been released after posting a substantial bail, can now be held.

The new order allows certain conditions to override the category criteria. If an offender isn't capable of understanding the pretrial release program, or poses a credible threat of violence to people associated with the case, they may be slotted into a different category.

Sheriff Matt Phillips will still be able to manage the jail population and accommodate additional holds based on available beds.

Phillips said it is good that the law creates more uniformity in how courts use pretrial processes throughout the state.

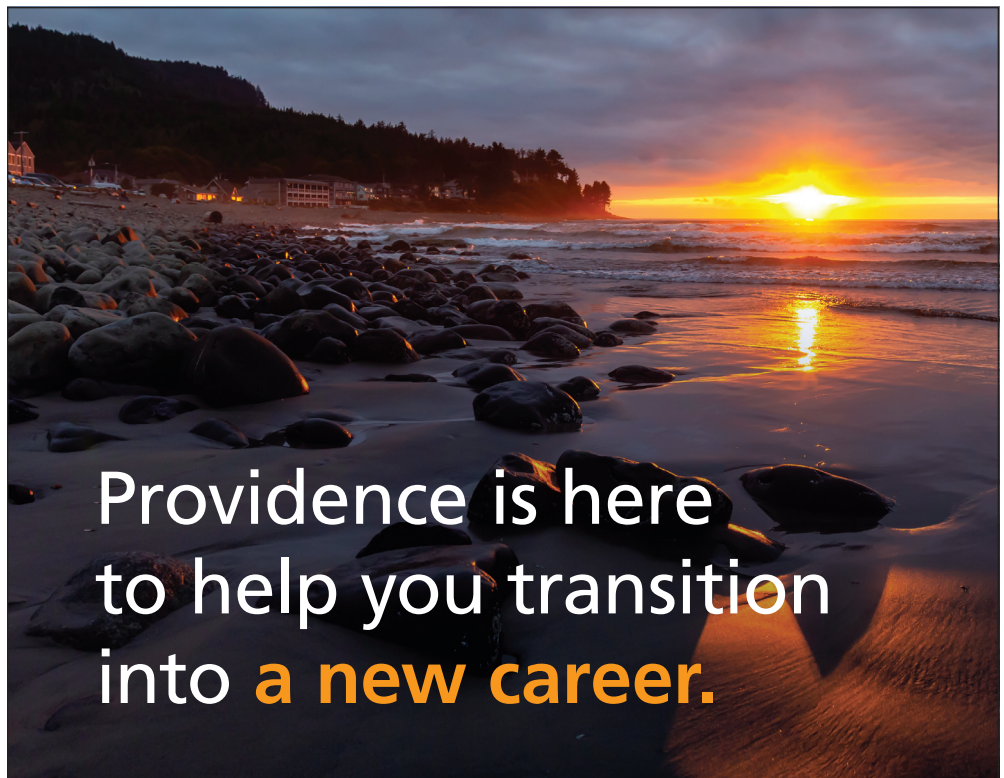
"There are some things that I think a lot of us in law enforcement see as concerning," he added.

For example, a person could be released if the victim isn't a human being. Category 2 could allow crimes against animals to result in a conditional release — the suspect wouldn't be allowed to have pets — unless other factors in the offender's history qualifies them for an override and allows the jail to hold them until arraignment.

In the old system, anyone arrested for a crime could be held. "So there's a few things that raise eyebrows," Phillips said.

The sheriff, Judge McIntosh and Vredevel believe it is too early to predict the effects.

McIntosh imagines there could be legal challenges to the law. "It'll be interesting to see how everything plays out," she said.



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DEATH NOTICE

Arthur F. Trout
July 12, 2022

TROUT, Arthur F., 67, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Salon: 'It was good to push myself'

Continued from Page A1

in her customers' lives and hearing their stories. She thinks of it as "giving them a moment to unwind in the chair and be themselves." As a result, she's been able to develop long-term relationships with her clients over the years.

"As much as they look forward to coming here, I look forward to seeing them and getting up to date with them and seeing what's going on with their kids and their families," she said.

The location of the beauty shop itself boasts accessibility, being conveniently located off the highway

between Seaside and Gearhart. It's a one-story building and there is ample parking out front.

The shop is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays and half-days on Thursdays. For more information, visit northcoast-beautyshop.squarespace.com.

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