

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES**

REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

**BSCA**  
**Critical Incident Stress Management**  
**(CISM) Grant**

September 20, 2023

Valerie L. Mielke, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

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## **I. Purpose and Intent**

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is issuing a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) for Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) teams. Through this RLI, CISM teams can apply for grant funding to support their pre-existing CISM programs. DMHAS anticipates making one award up to \$60,000; in two (2) disbursements of \$30,000.

### **The purpose of the grant is to:**

1. Address the shortage of CISM teams State-wide; ensuring that New Jersey has a robust number of individuals that can respond to first responder related crises.
2. Support CISM teams in the engagement, training and sustainability of their respective CISM volunteer workforces.

### **DMHAS will:**

- Award one CISM team up to \$60,000; in two (2) disbursements of \$30,000.
- Monitor the CISM team efforts to recruit and train volunteers through a quarterly reporting process.
- Collaborate with the CISM Team Leads and support their efforts to enhance their CISM program.

The selected CISM team will be expected to accomplish the following:

1. Create and execute a plan to increase the number of CISM volunteers that are available to respond to first responder crises.
2. Conduct recruitment and engagement activities that result in the expansion of your CISM volunteer workforce.
3. Provide opportunities for general and specialized training for new and existing CISM volunteers.
4. Maintain documentation that demonstrates the completion of activities such as training attendance sheets, receipts etc.
5. Comply with the monthly reporting schedule, updating DMHAS staff on activities and spending.

## II. The RLI timeline

The RLI timeline is **anticipated** as follows:

September 20, 2023:	Release of RLI
October 18, 2023:	Deadline for receipt of LOI no later than 4:00 pm ET
November 15, 2023:	Announcement of award

## III. Background

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) (P.L. 117-159) provides \$250 million in supplemental funding for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG), to enable States, the District of Columbia, and territories to expand access to mental health care. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has recommended that State behavioral health systems examine what is needed to address the need for mental health services in the aftermath of traumatic events in communities. As a part of these efforts, the State of New Jersey was awarded \$1,835,885.

Through the DMHAS's Disaster and Terrorism Branch (DTB), DMHAS works with Federal, State and local emergency management entities to coordinate and provide disaster crisis counseling. DTB is responsible for activating the State's behavioral health disaster response plan in coordination with the NJ Office of Emergency Management and the NJ Emergency Social Services Coordinators, during declared disasters. The services available through the Disaster and Terrorism Branch include but are not limited to:

- › Individual crisis counseling
- › Psychological First Aid
- › Disaster-specific psycho-educational information
- › Group crisis counseling
- › Consultation and training
- › Information and referral services
- › Toll-free warm line services

A vital part of crisis response involves the First Responder community. CISM teams are a volunteer workforce made up of First Responders that provide debriefing and support to other First Responders (police, fire, ambulance, emergency workers and disaster rescuers). CISM is a comprehensive, integrative, multicomponent crisis intervention system. CISM is considered comprehensive because it consists of multiple crisis intervention components, which functionally span the entire spectrum of a crisis. CISM interventions range from the pre-crisis phase through the acute crisis phase, and into the post-crisis phase. CISM is also considered comprehensive in that it consists of interventions which may be applied to individuals, small functional groups, large groups, families, organizations, and even communities. CISM teams have been an important part of the behavioral response for first responders in New Jersey for the past two decades, but attrition has led the teams to fold or be chronically understaffed. DTB proposes coordinating with a CISM teams in New Jersey to increase training for law enforcement, fire, dispatchers, and EMS to help rebuild the CISM infrastructure.

#### **IV. Funding Availability**

The funding period is October 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024. The awardee can expect the first disbursement of funds in Year 2023 and the final in Year 2024. The total allocated for these activities is \$60,000; there will be two (2) disbursements in the amount of \$30,000.

This funding is a time-limited opportunity to specifically address the need for a robust CISM volunteer workforce in New Jersey. CISM team leaders will submit a written narrative that proposes ways to meet the outlined objectives. A proposed budget should also be submitted; please clearly outline the requested award amount and the intended spending plan. Post-award, the awardee must clearly demonstrate through the monthly reports the expansion of CISM volunteers and activities to sustain and support this vital volunteer workforce.

#### **V. Eligibility Criteria and LOI Requirements**

To be considered for this opportunity, the following criteria must be met:

1. Applicant must be an existing New Jersey's CISM Team.
2. Applicant needs to have a pre-existing CISM program to expand and enhance.
3. Applicant must currently be a leader of a volunteer CISM team that serves the First Responder workforce.
4. CISM teams receiving funding from other sources are not eligible for this grant opportunity.

DMHAS will select an awardee based on the responses to the information outlined in Section V of this RLI. The LOI must be written in 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font and be no longer than three (3) pages, not including the budget. The letter must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and numbered to correspond with each item below. Your letter must:

1. State the size of your current CISM team. **(5 points)**.
2. Describe past or current successes and challenges with expanding or sustaining your CISM team and your response. **(10 points)**.
3. Explain your CISM needs and sustainability plan if applicable **(20 points)**.
4. Outline how potential CISM volunteers will be recruited, trained and sustained. **(10 points)**.

5. Attestation indicating you will comply with all reporting requirements, and that funding received from this initiative will not be used for other purposes (**5 points**).
6. Describe proposed plans to utilize the funds including a timeline of activities (**25 points**).
7. Clearly describe a proposed budget utilizing the budget narrative template provided (**25 points**).

## **VI. Submission Instructions**

In addition to the LOI, all submissions must include the following:

A completed Attachment A – LOI Cover Sheet, as provided in this RLI.

A completed Attached B – Budget Narrative Template, as provided in this RLI.

All LOIs must be submitted no later than 4:00 pm EST on October 18, 2023, by emailing the Disaster and Terrorism Branch at: [dmhas-dtb.programs@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:dmhas-dtb.programs@dhs.nj.gov).

DMHAS will notify selected applicant by November 15, 2023 after which time, DMHAS will reach out to the person named as the contact on the LOI Cover Sheet (Attachment A).

## **VII. Review of LOIs:**

DMHAS assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred in the preparation and submittal of the LOI. There will be a review process for all timely submitted LOIs. DMHAS will convene a review committee of public employees to conduct a review of each LOI accepted for review. The applicant must obtain a minimum score of 70 out of 100 points for the narrative and budget sections in order to be considered eligible for funding. Award recommendations will be based on such factors as the LOI scope, quality and appropriateness, as well as budget reasonableness. The review committee may invite applicants for interview and/or to review any programmatic or fiscal documents in the possession of DMHAS. DMHAS reserves the right to reject any and all LOIs when circumstances indicate that doing so is in its best interest. DMHAS' best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, loss of funding, inability of the applicant(s) to provide adequate services, an indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with State and federal laws and regulations, existing DHS contracts, and procedures set forth in DHS Policy Circular P1.04 <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/olra/contracting/policy/> .

**Attachment A: LOI Cover Sheet**  
Date Received

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services**

Name of RLI: **BSCA CISM Grant**

Total dollar amount being requested (up to \$60,000 per applicant): \$\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CISM Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment B: Proposed Budget Narrative Template

Please use this form to specifically describe the itemization of funds proposed for each category, not to exceed a total of \$60,000.

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Proposed Budget Narrative</b>
<b>Training</b>	Total Training: \$ (itemize cost)
<b>Recruitment</b>	Total Recruitment: \$ (itemize costs)
<b>Engagement</b>	Total Engagement: \$ (itemize costs)
<b>Supplies</b>	Total Supplies: \$ (itemize costs)
<b>Equipment</b>	Total Equipment: \$ (itemize costs)
<b>Other</b>	Total Other: \$ (itemize costs)
<b>Total</b>	