

PUBLIC NOTICE

LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Notice of Availability of Funds

Civic Justice Corps Model Pilot Program

Take notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4, the Department of Law and Public Safety, hereby announces the availability of funds for the below grant pilot program.

- A. Name of program:** Civic Justice Corps Model Pilot Program
- B. Background and purpose:** In accordance with Governor Corzine's Prevention Strategy for Safe Streets and Neighborhoods (Prevention Strategy), the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety through its Division of Criminal Justice announces the availability of \$300,000 in grant funds for a one-year pilot initiative designed to support the implementation of the nationally-recognized Civic Justice Corps model program.

The Governor's Prevention Strategy aims to reduce crime, gang activity, and youth violence through comprehensive, evidence-based programs designed to address root causes. Recognizing the strong correlation between court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people and juvenile delinquency, gang activity, and youth violence, the Prevention Strategy places priority on comprehensive strategies designed to keep young people safely in school and positively engaged. It also places priority on the utilization of evidence- and research-based programs and practices in achieving desired outcomes.

The Civic Justice Corps (CJC) is a youth-serving program model developed by the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (The Corps Network) in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, the United States Department of Labor, the Open Society Institute, the JEHT Foundation, and the Cascade Center for Community

Governance. The objective of CJC is to help court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people to reconnect with their communities and find pathways to success through service and education. As a program model, CJC is designed to integrate/incorporate into existing Corps programs and/or other similar-serving youth programs which emphasize service as a vehicle for positive transformation. In CJC, “service” is the center of a model that includes formal working partnerships with justice agencies, employers, and other community agencies; individual case management and intensive services; life-skills development, education, and employment preparation - in large part through meaningful service projects.

The Corps Network, as it is known today, began in 1985 when a small group of social entrepreneurs organized into one network the range of existing Corps programs already operating across the country. Member Corps programs operate in 42 states and the District of Columbia, annually engaging 21,000 youth and young adults, ages 16 to 25, in full-time service, training and education. The majority of Corpsmembers come to Corps programs looking for a second chance to succeed in life. In return for their efforts, Corpsmembers receive guidance by adult leaders who serve as mentors and role models, a modest stipend and a wide range of member development services including significant educational opportunities, career preparation, and the opportunity to invest in their communities.

As a founding member of The Corps Network, New Jersey YouthCorps was established by legislation in 1984 and today is one of the largest youth service and Conservation Corps programs in the United States. Funded through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, New Jersey Youth Corps programs currently operate in approximately 12 locations throughout the State.

As a groundbreaking model developed by The Corps Network and its partners, CJC recently launched and has been evaluated in 14 Corps program sites nationwide including one in Camden, New Jersey. Early results confirm and reinforce the important role of “service” as an effective method for positively re-engaging court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people into the workforce, communities, families, peer networks, and society as a whole.

Utilizing “service” as its primary vehicle for change, the CJC model is designed to integrate/incorporate into existing Corps programs and/or other similar-serving youth programs in order to improve outcomes for court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people. The CJC model consists of specific requisite elements designed to lead to improved outcomes. The following is a brief overview and description of each of the CJC elements:

- 1) **Staff Development:** Prior to the enrollment of youth, CJC offers specific training in the implementation of each required program element to all site staff members responsible for assuring the success of the program.
- 2) **Enhanced Relationship with High Growth Industry Partners:** CJC requires each program to engage their high growth industry employers and employer group partners in planning for the provision of services that respond to employer concerns and counsel regarding enrolling court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people. The model also requires programs to research local labor markets trends and consult with employers in high-growth industries in order to delineate the career pathways for these jobs and to design training programs that allow participants to meet the needs of these industries.

- 3) **Enhanced Relationship with Justice Partners – Recruitment and Enrollment:** CJC requires that the process for justice agency referral, cooperative selection of enrollees and the provision of justice agency support services be identified and committed to writing in order to serve as a guide for partnership activities. CJC model programs will also have strong partnerships with local probation, parole and corrections institutions, One Stop Centers, community colleges, cooperative probation systems, juvenile justice organizations, and nearby Youth Offender Demonstration Project and Going Home sites.
- 4) **Expansion of Orientation Process to Accommodate Transition of Court-Involved, Formerly Incarcerated Youth:** CJC requires programs to engage participants in an intensive orientation and to provide ongoing support via assigned staff and peer mentors. The model requires programs to mainstream court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people into regular programs; however, it is understood that this will occur gradually with a special emphasis on the safety of participants and staff.
- 5) **Mainstreaming:** When appropriate, CJC encourages participants into service teams (or crews) and engages them in a wide range of regular daily youth programming in the organization.
- 6) **Supportive Services:** CJC recognizes that court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people face unique challenges and barriers to success ranging from dysfunctional family situations to their inability to secure regular employment because they often have criminal records. Thus, CJC requires programs to provide effective re-entry and aftercare services. It requires programs to have case managers

- and support staff who will work closely with individual participants to build upon their assets and address their needs.
- 7) Education: CJC recognizes the promotion of educational achievement as a cornerstone of its model. Thus, the model requires that programs have strong education programs leading to credentials (preferably a high school diploma) which are tailored to meet the needs of each individual participant.
 - 8) Service: As noted, service to community is the centerpiece of the CJC model (and The Corps Network of programs). Meaningful service opportunities are required to bring youth and young adults into a supportive team atmosphere, connect them to the larger community in which they live, teach creative problem solving, and serve as a developmental tool as well as restorative instrument.
 - 9) AmeriCorps Education Awards: CJC emphasizes the importance of education awards in making post-secondary education accessible and affordable. Thus, the model encourages existing programs to link CJC youth with AmeriCorps where possible.
 - 10) Data Based Management Decision Making Process Based on Results: CJC requires programs to continually monitor progress toward achieving desired results for each participant, as outlined in the individual participant's plan. Based on data collected, if progress is not being achieved as planned, programs are required to alter their achievement strategies in order to increase the likelihood of success.
 - 11) Post Program and Placement Support: CJC requires programs to provide plans for 12 months of post-program support and data collection for CJC participants. The model requires that each program will assign a staff member to each graduating CJC participant. The staff member will be required to contact the graduated participant

on a regular schedule and as needed in order to identify and address work related and non-work related issues as they arise.

Through this framework, the CJC model is recognized as an effective gang- and crime-prevention program. Its comprehensive, personalized approach to re-engaging court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people affords the types of positive opportunities necessary to prevent these same youth and young adults from re-engaging in delinquent or criminal behavior. To this end, CJC has been deemed an effective program in preventing court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people from recidivating and helping them to be successful by a variety of important opportunity measures. For example, during the first 18 months of CJC's nationwide pilot, the following outcomes were documented:

- 126.2 percent enrolled (442 enrolled exceeding the goal of 350 at the 18-month mark);
- 339 formerly/currently incarcerated participants enrolled (exceeding the goal of 200);
- 41.4 percent received GED/high school diploma;
- 72.9 percent earned job/college placement (exceeding the goal of 60 percent);
- 81.7 percent retention in job/college placements (exceeding the goal of 75 percent); and
- 8.8 percent recidivism (exceeding the goal of 20 percent below the prevailing rate of 50 to 70 percent).

This Notice of Availability of Funding to support the Civic Justice Corps model pilot stems from the work of the Prevention Coordinating Council, an essential component of the Prevention Strategy, which was established to support the Prevention Strategy in maximizing

and improving coordination of statewide prevention efforts. Prevention Coordinating Council members, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers (CNJG), were particularly instrumental in working with the Department of Law and Public Safety to research and identify the CJC model and its supporting evidence-base. As noted, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development enjoys considerable experience administering similar types of initiatives through its New Jersey YouthCorps program. Likewise, the CNJG's "New Jersey Together" initiative endeavors to bring the private philanthropic sector together to leverage its collective resources, knowledge, and expertise to address critical issues in New Jersey. Through "New Jersey Together", CNJG has identified New Jersey's Prevention Strategy as a priority and, more specifically, the challenge of meaningfully re-engaging disconnected young people as critical to the success of the Prevention Strategy.

C. Available funding: A total of \$300,000 will be made available to support eligible organizations in integrating/incorporating the CJC model into its existing youth program(s). Funds will be awarded based upon review of timely and fully completed applications. It is anticipated that up to three grant awards will be made, each in the amount of up to \$100,000 for one year. Additional funding for subsequent years may be granted subject to availability of funds and success of the first-year pilot. Approved funding may only be used to support the proposed activities as set forth in Section E-5 herein. It may not be used to cover expenses incurred prior to the program start-date nor may it be used to supplant existing program funding. The anticipated start-date for this one-year grant program is October 15, 2009.

D. Organizations which may apply for funding under this program: Eligibility to apply for these funds is limited to public or private nonprofit organizations which currently operate

programs that: (a) serve youth ages 16 to 25; and (b) utilize “service” as part of their approach and/or curriculum to serving youth. The intention of this Notice of Availability of Funding is to integrate/incorporate the CJC model into existing programs that serve youth and young people ages 16 to 25 and that also utilize service as a primary vehicle of opportunity for their participants. While it is not required that existing programs currently serve court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people, it is required that they propose to do so in accordance with the CJC model, including integration and mainstreaming into existing programs. Award recipients will be required to participate in technical assistance, reporting, and evaluation activities which will be described in detail during the contracting process.

Nonprofit organizations are those organized under Title 15A of the New Jersey Revised Statutes or otherwise qualified for nonprofit tax exemption under the Internal Revenue Code 26 U.S.C. §501 (c)(3). Nonprofit organizations must be current with their charitable and business registrations under the Charitable Registration and Investigation Act, N.J.S.A. 45:17A-18 et seq., and maintain current State of New Jersey Business Registration with the Division of Revenue, Department of Treasury, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:32-44 et seq. Applicants must be in good standing with all State and Federal agencies with which they have had an existing grant or contractual relationship. Where appropriate, all applicants must hold State licenses, permits, and certificates and must conduct background checks on employees as required by the law.

Additional copies of the Notice are available by contacting the Division of Criminal Justice, Program Development/Grants Section, at (609) 292-5939.

E. Proposal content and scored program components: A detailed description of the specific CJC requisite elements is outlined in Section B. All applications will be evaluated and

scored in accordance with the following priorities and criteria consistent with these CJC requisite elements:

1. Problem Statement/Needs Assessment – 10 percent

Each applicant must describe its community and/or service area - including relevant needs and risk factors - where its existing youth program(s) operates, including the demographics of current participants. Information related to the poverty rate, school dropout rate, unemployment rate, incidents of juvenile crime, and the number of 16 to 25 year olds without a high school diploma are all examples of information that will be deemed helpful. Please provide information relating to the number of court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people in the applicant's service area.

2. Program Management and Organizational Capacity - 15 percent

Each applicant should provide a description of its organization and a statement of its qualifications for integrating/incorporating a Civic Justice Corps model into its existing program(s). Provide information including number of years operating youth programs, current annual operating budget for the organization, experience of organization leadership and youth program staff, continuity of youth program leadership, and a listing of other programs and responsibilities managed by the organization. Please also detail the organization's capacity to track and report outcomes, manage fiscal and budgetary matters, and submit administrative and program reports in timely fashion. This description should provide a clear link between the capacity of the organization and its ability to successfully carry out the proposed integration/incorporation of Civic Justice Corps.

3. Program Design, Action Strategy, and Outcomes - 45 percent

Program Design: Applicants should set forth a thorough description of how it proposes to integrate/incorporate the Civic Justice Corps model and its requisite elements, as set forth in Section B, into its existing program(s). Please include a description of the current youth program(s) for which applicant intends to integrate/incorporate the CJC model, including the manner in which “service” is currently utilized in this programming.

Action Strategy: It is also important, where relevant, to ensure that the description specifically addresses the action strategy for how each of CJC’s requisite elements, as set forth in Section B, will be integrated/incorporated into its program(s). The following includes some key questions and considerations which applicant should address, where relevant, in describing its program design and action strategy:

- Describe the target youth population. How will these youth be recruited and selected?
- Describe the applicant’s approach to staff development. How will staff be trained with regard to implementation of CJC? When will it occur? Which staff will it involve? How will staff development be linked to specific outcomes and program requirements?
- Describe the applicant’s approach to engaging industry partners. Which partners does applicant already engage? Which new ones will be engaged? Specifically describe how these partnerships will impact the CJC program. Please describe how they will help shape career and job training components of CJC. How will these partnerships respond to employer potential concerns/challenges regarding enrolling court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected youth?
- How will applicant identify and engage Justice Partners? What partners does applicant already engage? What new ones will be engaged? Describe how these partnerships will impact the CJC program.

- Please describe the proposed orientation process for CJC participants. Please provide details on the manner and process by which CJC participants will be integrated and mainstreamed into regular youth programming.
- Please describe supportive and aftercare services that will be provided to CJC participants, including the role of staff in assuring that appropriate services are identified and made available.
- Please describe applicant's current educational program(s) and/or schools. How will CJC participants benefit from current educational program(s) and/or schools?
- Please describe applicant's current community service programs and/or efforts. Describe the proposed approach to service opportunities for CJC participants. Is there - or will there be - a partnership with AmeriCorps?
- Please describe how applicant will monitor CJC participant progress. How will individual and group data be collected? How will this information be utilized?
- Please describe applicant's plans to ensure post-program placement and support. This is a one-year pilot and, thus, there is no guarantee of funding for year two. Nevertheless, successful applicants will be expected to address plans for ensuring effective post program placement and support, regardless of whether funding is provided.

Outcomes: The CJC model emphasizes the importance of achieving outcomes related to enrollment of court-involved, formerly incarcerated, and disconnected young people (ages 16 to 25), GED/high school diploma attainment, job/college placement and retention, and recidivism. Please describe how the proposed integration/incorporation of CJC will ensure high program quality and how it will achieve these and any other relevant outcomes including, where relevant, anticipated targets and benchmarks in these categories.

4. Linkages to Key Partners and Leveraged Resources - 15 percent

Please describe the key partners who are involved in the applicant's current youth program(s). Please describe any new or additional partners who will be involved in implementation of CJC. If the applicant's proposal is dependent upon the active participation of a key partner(s), please attach letters of commitment that demonstrate the nature and strength of the proposed partnership(s).

In general, applicants are encouraged to identify and elaborate upon any current or proposed innovative partnerships with law enforcement, the juvenile justice system, public schools, relevant industry, national service programs, and community colleges.

In describing how the proposed program will coordinate with local, State, and Federal agencies, please identify and list other relevant state-administered programs operated by the applicant and/or key partners. Examples of other relevant state programs might include, for instance, AmeriCorps National Service Programs from the New Jersey Department of State, Outreach to At-Risk Youth gang prevention programs from the New Jersey Department of Children & Families, NJAfter3 & 21st Century Community Learning Center after school programs from the New Jersey Department of Education, and Neighborhood Crime Prevention/Intervention Initiative programs from the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety.

5. Program Budget and Budget Narrative– 15 percent

Please provide a budget and budget narrative which demonstrate that the proposed costs are reasonable in relationship to the number of participants to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. Consistent with the Civic Justice Corps model, the annual per participant cost is expected to be approximately \$4,000. There is no formal match requirement; however, as

noted elsewhere this Notice of Availability of Funding, success is contingent upon applicants integrating/incorporating the CJC model into an existing program(s). Applicants must clearly indicate how the proposed funding will be used to successfully integrate/incorporate CJC into their current programming. Please provide a line item budget and narrative for use of CJC funds, up to \$100,000.

F. Procedures for eligible organizations to apply: Eligible organizations that wish to apply for funding should submit a completed proposal containing a program narrative, budget, budget narrative, and relevant letters of support before the proposal submission deadline. The program narrative shall consist of the following sections: (1) Problem Statement/Needs Assessment; (2) Program Management and Organizational Capacity; (3) Program Design, Action Strategy, and Outcomes; and (4) Linkages to Key Partners and Leveraged Resources. The program narrative shall be limited to 20 double-spaced single sided pages, using 12-point text font and one-inch margins.

All award recipients will be required to participate in technical assistance, reporting, and evaluation activities related to their CJC programs.

G. Mandatory applicant's conference: There will be a **mandatory applicant's conference** at 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, August 26, 2009 at the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Hughes Justice Complex, 8th Floor, 25 West Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08625. All eligible applicants are required to have representatives attend this mandatory technical assistance meeting during which important application information will be provided.

H. Deadline by which proposals must be submitted: All proposals must be received by 4:00 P.M. on or before September 18, 2009. Proposals received after 4:00 P.M. on September

18, 2009 will not be considered for an award. Applicants should submit one signed original and 10 copies of the proposal. Faxed or emailed proposals will not be accepted.

I. Address of the State agency receiving the proposal:

Heddy Levine-Sabol, Chief
Division of Criminal Justice
Program Development/Grants Section
Hughes Justice Complex
25 Market Street
P.O. Box 085
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

J. Date by which notices shall be mailed of approval or disapproval of proposals:

Approximately 30 days after the proposal submission date.