



**Administration for Children and Families**

Administration on Children, Youth and Families - Children's Bureau

Regional Partnership Grants to Increase the Well-Being of, and to Improve the Permanency  
Outcomes for, Children Affected by Substance Abuse

HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF-CU-1382

Application Due Date: 08/13/2018

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**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families**

<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	Regional Partnership Grants to Increase the Well-Being of, and to Improve the Permanency Outcomes for, Children Affected by Substance Abuse
<b>Announcement Type:</b>	Initial
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF-CU-1382
<b>Primary CFDA Number:</b>	93.087
<b>Due Date for Applications:</b>	<b>08/13/2018</b>

### Executive Summary

*Notice:*

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Children's Bureau (CB), announces the availability of competitive grant funds authorized by the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program. These targeted grants will be cooperative agreements to be awarded to Regional Partnerships that provide, through interagency collaboration and integration of programs, activities and services that are designed to increase well-being, improve permanency, and enhance the safety of children who are in an out-of-home placement or are at risk of being placed in out-of-home care as a result of a parent's or caregiver's substance abuse. The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act Public Law (Pub. L.) 112-34 includes a targeted grants program (section 437(f) of the Social Security Act), which directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to reserve a specified portion of the appropriation for Regional Partnership Grants (RPGs) to improve the well-being of children affected by substance abuse.

Grantees are expected to have a collaborative infrastructure in place that is capable of building the region's capacity to meet a broad range of needs for families involved with substance use disorder treatment, child welfare systems, court, and other service organizations. Grantees are expected to build evidence on targeted approaches designed to increase the well-being, improve permanency outcomes, and enhance the safety of children and families experiencing substance use disorders. Applicants should carefully review this full funding opportunity announcement (FOA) and consider the level of effort necessary to meet the purpose of the funding opportunity and the evaluation-related requirements. Applicants should note the FOA requires a minimum of 20 percent of grant funds be spent on required evaluation elements of this FOA, including the local evaluation, participation in the national cross-site evaluation, and

satisfactory collection and evaluation of the data necessary for monitoring the proposed performance indicators.

Per the legislative requirements, grantees are required to evaluate their local program and to select and report on performance indicators. The grantee's proposed program strategies and activities must align with their selection of performance indicators. In addition, grantees must participate in a national cross-site evaluation. The cross-site evaluation will describe outcomes for children, adults, and families enrolled in RPG projects and the outcomes of the partnerships.

## **I. Program Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

Title IV, part B, subpart 2 - Promoting Safe and Stable Families, section 437(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629g(f))

### **Description**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Families of children who come in contact with the child welfare system often present complex problems that include mental health, substance use disorders, and family violence. Parental substance use disorders are a key factor underlying the abuse or neglect experienced by many of the children who enter foster care or are at risk of entering foster care. According to *Child Maltreatment 2016*, which uses National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) data, 74.8 percent of the children determined by the child protective services agency to be victims of child maltreatment were neglected. When a parent is dependent on substances, chronic neglect of the child becomes more likely. Additionally, it is important to note that, according to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data, the number of children in foster care increased to 437,500 in fiscal year (FY) 2016. Though there is variation in how states report factors that contribute to foster care cases, it appears that parental substance use may have contributed to the recent growth in the child welfare population. Most recently, it has been noted that child welfare systems are reporting increases in caseloads, primarily among infants and young children coming into care. Hospitals are reporting increases of infants born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). Nationwide, the incidence of NAS increased from 1.20 per 1,000 hospital births in 2000 to 5.80 in 2012, coinciding with the observed escalation of opioid misuse and dependence in many communities.

While figures vary for methodological reasons, most studies find that parental substance abuse is a contributing factor for one-third of children whose parents are reported for child abuse and for two-thirds of children in out of home care.

In recent years, the field of child abuse and neglect has begun to better understand the far reaching detrimental impact of substance use disorders on children and families. An important challenge facing both the child welfare and the substance use disorder treatment fields is the need to take a comprehensive view of families' situations and to understand the contributions of various problematic behaviors that lead to child maltreatment. Furthermore, quality substance abuse treatment programs designed for parents involved with the child welfare system, especially treatment programs that target women with young children, are not widely available in many communities. When available, they do not strategically target the well-being and

functioning of children served. Historically, the provision of child welfare services and substance abuse treatment is uncoordinated and fragmented. Reasons for fragmentation among the multiple systems serving families with substance use disorders include the following:

- Difficulty of identifying, engaging, and retaining parents/caretakers in substance abuse treatment;
- Differing perspectives, policies, time tables for completing treatment, and expectations between child welfare workers and substance abuse treatment providers; and
- Lack of appropriate comprehensive family-centered treatment services for families involved in both the child welfare and substance abuse treatment systems.

## **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS ROUNDS 1-4**

The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 reauthorized the PSSF program and provided funding over a 5-year period to implement a targeted grant program to Regional Partnerships for the purpose of improving permanency outcomes for children affected by methamphetamine and/or substance abuse. This legislation was in direct response to the recognition that parental substance abuse is a key factor underlying the abuse or neglect experienced by many children in the child welfare system. In FY 2007, CB awarded 53 RPGs to projects focused on building regional capacity to improve services to children and their families through committed and coordinated collaborative practice across systems and organizations. RPG Round 1 showed that by investing time, resources, and effort into broad-based interagency partnerships integrated services could be developed that result in positive child, parent, and family outcomes. The active engagement of core partners from the child welfare, substance abuse treatment, court, and other service systems was essential to the partnerships' overall success. Key outcomes from grantees included:

- Parents achieving timely access to substance abuse treatment stayed in treatment and reported reduced substance use.
- The majority of children at risk of removal remained in their parent's custody.
- Most children in out-of-home placement achieved timely reunifications with their parent(s).

The report to Congress on the RPG Round 1 grants can be found at

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/targeted-grants-to-increase-the-well-being>

In 2011, the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Pub. L. 112-34) was passed, reauthorizing PSSF, and the RPG program. The legislation enhanced language around the evaluation requirements by requiring HHS to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the grants. Following this reauthorization, three more rounds of grants were funded for a period of 5 years:

- September 2012 (RPG Round 2): 17 grants awarded in 15 states
- September 2014 (RPG Round 3): 4 grants awarded in 4 states
- September 2017 (RPG Round 4): 17 grants awarded in 17 states

The RPG program continues to have a focus on building system level capacity and enhancing

safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and their families.

RPG Round 3 and 4 grantees are currently participating in a national cross-site evaluation. The RPG Round 3 and 4 projects seek to expand the evidence base of programs and practices in the broader fields of child welfare and substance abuse treatment. The RPG program does so by (1) requiring grantees to identify and use appropriate evidence supported or emerging (evidence-informed) programs or practices, (2) encouraging grantees to consider adapting these practices for their target populations if needed, and (3) incorporating local and cross-site evaluation into the grant program in order to expand the evidence base on services for families involved in the child welfare and substance abuse treatment systems. By collecting and analyzing multiple sources of data, ACF will be able to provide information on the effectiveness of the RPG program.

In addition to the national cross-site evaluation, the 2011 reauthorization language requires technical assistance to be provided to grantees in order to support implementation and operation of their programs. The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW), an initiative of HHS jointly funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and ACYF/CB/Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, is providing integral programmatic technical assistance to the RPGs on a variety of topics. For more information, please visit NCSACW's Web site at <http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov>.

This FOA will support the awarding of RPG Round 5, to continue the efforts of the RPG program to build system level capacity for improving outcomes for children who are in an out-of-home placement or at risk of being placed in out-of-home care as a result of a parent's or caregiver's substance abuse. In addition, RPG Round 5 will contribute to the efforts of this work to expand the evidence base of programs and practices in these fields.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

This FOA continues the requirements for grantees to:

- Use services and interventions that are emerging (evidence-informed), supported, or well-supported by evidence that are appropriate and culturally responsive to the target populations they select;
- Address child well-being along with the more traditional goals of safety and permanency as part of their selected strategy or program;
- Conduct an evaluation sufficiently rigorous to contribute to building the evidence base on service delivery and outcomes associated with their chosen interventions; and
- Participate in the national cross-site evaluation and collect and report performance and evaluation measures to increase the knowledge that can be gained from the RPG program.

### *Target Population*

The target population of the project should include communities in which there are a number of children in out-of-home placements or who are at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement due to the substantial impact of substance abuse.

### *Collaboration*

Grantees will collaborate with a wide range of family-serving agencies, including, but not limited to, child welfare agencies, substance abuse treatment providers, mental health agencies, courts, and other service organizations. Collaborations are required to include memoranda of agreement/understanding. In addition, collaborations may include the following components:

1. Routine consultation and interaction with other agencies;
2. Joint accountability and shared outcomes among agencies in memoranda of agreement/understanding;
3. Cross training and staff development;
4. Processes for communication and information sharing;
5. Willingness and agreement to share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research;
6. Addressing how partners' values and principles help or hinder the collaboration; and
7. Having agreements about shared costs and budgets.

The grantee acknowledges its obligation to comply with 45 CFR Part 87 “Equal Treatment For Faith-Based Organizations,” including the requirement that all faith-based or religious organizations are eligible, on the same basis as any other organization, to participate in this and any program for which they are otherwise eligible. Thus, the grantee agrees that when selecting service providers or subgrantees it will not discriminate for or against any organization on the basis of the organization's religious character or affiliation as indicated in 45 CFR 87.3(a).

#### *Program Strategies and Activities*

Grantees will implement, in coordination with CB and CB-supported contractors, specific services and activities that increase the well-being, improve permanency outcomes, and enhance safety of children who are in or at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement as a result of a parent's or caretaker's substance abuse. All grantees must select and report on performance indicators to measure improvement of child, adult, and/or family outcomes that align with their proposed program strategies and activities. CB-supported contractors will work with grantees after the award to assess the fit of program strategies and activities for the identified target population and review how the quality of the program services and activities influence the intended outcomes of the grant. Therefore, grantees will work with the CB-supported contractors to make adjustments as needed after award to ensure that the RPG proposed project strategies and activities are well-defined. By identifying the core components of the proposed project and looking at the implementation of the strategies and activities, ACF expects to better understand the factors associated with the successful implementation and sustaining of program strategies and activities.

Examples of services and activities that grantees will engage in or integrate into existing service delivery systems include the following:

- Services and activities for children and youth that address child well-being and trauma including: screening and assessment of child well-being, enhancing identification and services to substance-exposed newborns, access to appropriate mental and behavioral health services, and early intervention and preventive services;
- Quality substance use disorder treatment for parents and families that include access to comprehensive substance abuse treatment programs where children can live on-site with

mothers. The programs are designed to meet the needs of the entire family by providing access to medication-assisted treatment, trauma-specific services, and continuing care and recovery support;

- Services designed to specifically address violence and trauma-related symptoms and reactions; and
- Services for parents and children that improve parenting capacity and family functioning including parenting skills training programs to address relational problems and concerns, training for substitute caretakers, services and interventions to improve family functioning and assist with reunification and ancillary services for families to support securing needed services including housing, transportation and child care.

Please see Appendix A for a further list of examples of services and activities for applicants to consider including as a part of their proposed project to engage in or integrate into existing service delivery.

#### *Using Evidence-Supported and/or Emerging (Evidence-Informed) Practices*

Grantees will build upon and strengthen existing collaborative practices and fund services or practices that are: well-supported and supported by evidence, as well as those innovative practices that are emerging, but are evidence-informed; appropriate for the population of focus; and shown to be effective in achieving the outcomes of the grant. Grantees are required to (1) identify the evidence-supported and emerging (evidence-informed) practices they plan to use; (2) provide evidence that shows the practices to be effective; (3) commit to fidelity in implementing the practices; and (4) provide a rationale for using the practices in the identified community with the identified target population. Evidence-supported refers to approaches that are validated by some form of documented research evidence.

The following resources may assist RPGs in selecting practices that are evidence-supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices:

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network Empirically Supported Treatments and Promising Practices (<http://nctsn.org/training-guidelines>)
- Evidence-Based Mental Health Therapies (Child Welfare Information Gateway) (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/bhw/ebp/>)
- Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (<http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov>)
- California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (<http://www.cebc4cw.org>)
- National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare In-Depth Technical Assistance Report 2007-2012 ([http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/files/IDTA\\_Final\\_Report\\_2007\\_2012\\_508.pdf](http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/files/IDTA_Final_Report_2007_2012_508.pdf))

The preceding sources do not list all of the available evidence-supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices. Grantees may use information from other sources, such as unpublished studies or documents describing formal consensus among recognized experts.

#### *Planning Period*

This FOA allows for a 90 day planning period, after which grantees are required to have the project up and the implementation of services fully functioning as described in their application timeline. In addition, this FOA allows for a 150 day evaluation planning period, after which



grantees are required to have their local evaluation fully functioning as described in their application timeline. During the planning period and the evaluation planning period, grantees will build on their proposed project plan that was clearly described in their applications to further refine and finalize their implementation and local evaluation plans, as well as finalize their performance data indicator selections. Adjustments to their implementation and evaluation plans may be necessary upon further refinement of the target population and in consultation with CB and technical assistance providers. The purpose of the planning period and evaluation planning period is to:

- Finalize all outstanding partnership agreements necessary to support successful implementation of the Regional Partnership project;
- Ensure the appropriateness and fit of the selected program(s), models, interventions and/or services for the targeted children and their families;
- Further refine the evaluation plan to be as rigorous as possible; and
- Ensure the final evaluation plan is reviewed by the relevant Institutional Review Board(s) (IRB), and their approval is obtained, when appropriate, or ensure a sound plan is in place to obtain IRB approval.

### *Evaluation*

Grantees should be aware that the evaluation and reporting on performance measures for this cooperative agreement requires a great deal more effort than is typical for discretionary grants. Grantees will adopt and fully implement specific, well-defined, and quality program services and activities that are evidence-supported and/or evidence-informed. Grantees are to complete a local evaluation plan that analyzes the implementation, performance, and outcomes of the grant project. ACF is specifically interested in determining the impact of these programs on improving outcomes for children and families in the key areas of increased well-being, improved permanency, enhanced safety, recovery, and family stability. Grantees must implement a local evaluation plan of sufficient rigor to assess impacts on service delivery and outcomes for the specified target population and to contribute to the evidence base for approaches that improve well-being and functioning for families affected by substance use disorders.

In addition to conducting a local evaluation, grantees must participate fully in a national cross-site evaluation in which an ACF-supported contractor analyzes the performance and/or outcomes of multiple projects that are funded under the grant program. Grantees must devote a minimum of 20 percent of grant funds to data collection and evaluation activities. The cross-site evaluation will describe outcomes for children, adults, and families enrolled in RPG projects and the outcomes of the partnerships. Grantees must collect and submit the required information and performance indicator data for the national cross-site evaluation.

Per the legislative requirements, grantees are required to evaluate their local program, finalize their performance indicator selections with the assistance of the CB-supported contractor, and report on those selections. The grantees' proposed program strategies and activities must align with their selection of proposed performance indicators. Please see Appendix A for a list of potential outcomes, performance indicators, and measures. Legislation requires that ACF report on grantees' success in meeting performance indicators and addressing the needs of families with substance abuse problems. In order to meet this requirement, ACF will review and analyze

a number of data sources collected and reported by grantees.

ACYF/CB recognizes that when our discretionary grantees are able to access relevant child welfare data from child welfare agencies for the child and family participants in their grant projects, they are better able to assess performance and outcomes or complete their required evaluations. Grantees are encouraged to review Information Memorandum (IM) ACYF-CB-IM-13-02, which encourages child welfare agencies to share relevant child welfare data on the families and children served with CB discretionary grantees and related federally funded grant projects for program evaluation, performance measurement, or research purposes. See <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/im1302.pdf>.

### *Well-being as a Special Consideration*

A key intent of this FOA is to ensure that the well-being of all target populations will improve as a result of the programs and services offered by the grantees. CB anticipates that grantees will rely on existing theory and evidence-based knowledge to guide their activities and that the results of the evaluations will contribute to the body of evidence that demonstrates the impact of services that address substance use disorders and its effects on child and family well-being. CB recognizes that there are a variety of projects that can be responsive to this FOA and that grantees will represent a diverse set of activities and strategies that are intended to impact a number of outcomes. Nonetheless, this FOA requires that at a minimum, each grantee work to achieve at least one well-being measure indicator for children and one well-being indicator for adults (either proximal or distal).

The well-being of both children and parents or caretakers should be better as a result of the programs and services offered by the grantees. CB recognizes that well-being can be defined in a variety of ways (physical, social/emotional, cognitive, etc.), but grantees are required to give particular focus on the social/emotional well-being of their target population. This may include, but is not limited to, projects that target activities that will result in improvement in the following proximal outcomes: child and family functioning, parenting skills, developmental functioning, or protective factors such as resiliency or attachment.

CB expects that grantees will be able to logically link and empirically support the connection between project activities that are designed to mitigate the effects of parental/caretaker substance abuse and the improved well-being of children in the child welfare system. Measuring the improvement of well-being could mean that a treatment group fared better on a proximal outcome than a control group or comparison group with similar characteristics that did not receive the benefits of the program provided by the grantee. It also could mean that graduation rates increase in the geographic area identified (a distal indicator). For the data collection and reporting of well-being measures, grantees are required to use valid and reliable instruments and to report case-specific baseline and subsequent data measurement points (e.g., pre- and post-scores) to demonstrate the results of their services and activities. Potential measurement tools that are included in the existing cross-site evaluation are listed in Appendix B.

### *Dissemination*

Grantees will be expected to work throughout the course of their grants with federal project officers, the relevant CB training and technical assistance providers, and other grants in this cluster to:

- Finalize individual grant dissemination goals, objectives, and strategic plans;
- Identify and engage with target audiences for dissemination;
- Produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products based on the program evaluation and the needs of identified target audiences;
- Develop and disseminate summarized/synthesized information about the grant; and
- Evaluate their dissemination processes and outcomes.

*Project Sustainability Plan*

ACYF is interested in ensuring that the most effective program strategies, services, and interventions can be sustained. Therefore, grant progress reports should explain ongoing efforts to assess and gather evidence on the particular strategies and activities initiated under this grant that should and can be sustained after the end of the project period.

**II. Federal Award Information**

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$19,000,000
Expected Number of Awards:	10
Award Ceiling:	\$1,900,000 Per Project Period
Award Floor:	\$1,500,000 Per Project Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$1,800,000 Per Project Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	09/30/2018

**Length of Project Periods:**

Length of Project Period: Other  
 36-month project period with one 36-month budget period. Grantees should anticipate spending approximately one-third of the project award per each 12-month segment. Each grantee must spend no more than \$1,000,000 and no less than \$500,000 per 12-month segment, beginning 9/30/2018.

**Additional Information on Awards:**

**Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's**

**failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

Applicants are required to commit a minimum of 20% of their budget to program evaluation.

### **Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement**

A cooperative agreement is a specific method of awarding federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement is anticipated. A cooperative agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of CB and the awardee prior to the award. CB anticipates that agency involvement will produce programmatic benefits to the recipient otherwise unavailable to them for carrying out the project. The involvement and collaboration includes:

- CB review and approval of planning period programmatic and evaluation related activities before the implementation of the proposed project may begin;
- CB and recipient joint collaboration on the finalization of performance data indicator selections; and
- Close monitoring by CB during performance that may, in order to ensure compliance with the intent of this funding, exceed those federal stewardship responsibilities customary for grant activities.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **III.1. Eligible Applicants**

The Secretary has the authority to make grants to regional partnerships. As required by the legislation, Regional Partnership means a collaborative agreement (which may be established on an interstate or intrastate basis) entered into by at least two of the following parties:

- The state child welfare agency responsible for the administration of the state plan under title IV-B and title IV-E of the Social Security Act (must be included in the partnership, unless it is a Regional Partnership entered into by Indian tribes or tribal consortia (section 437(f)(2)(B)(ii));
- The state agency responsible for administering the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant provided under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. § 300x-21 et seq.];
- An Indian tribe or tribal consortium (federally recognized);
- Non-profit or for-profit child welfare service providers;
- Community health service providers;
- Community mental health providers;
- Local law enforcement agencies;
- Judges and court personnel;
- Juvenile justice officials;
- School personnel;

- Tribal child welfare agencies or a consortia of such agencies; or
- Any other providers, agencies, personnel, officials, or entities that are related to the provision of child and family services under PSSF.

Applicants must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

The state child welfare agency responsible for the state plan under title IV-B and title IV-E of the Social Security Act must be included in the Regional Partnership. A Regional Partnership cannot consist solely of the state child welfare agency that is responsible for the administration of the state plan under title IV-B and title IV-E of the Social Security Act and the state agency responsible for administering the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant provided under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act.

If the Regional Partnership is located in a state-supervised, county-administered state, the county child welfare agency satisfies the administration of the state plan requirement. In such a Regional Partnership, the state agency that is ultimately responsible for state plan compliance under title IV-B and title IV-E is not required to be a partner in the Regional Partnership but also is not precluded from participating as a member of the Regional Partnership. In a state-administered system, a local office of the state child welfare agency can participate in the Regional Partnership and satisfy this statutory requirement.

As required by the legislation, if an Indian tribe or tribal consortium enters into a Regional Partnership, the Indian tribe may (but is not required to) include the state child welfare agency as a partner in the collaborative agreement. If the Regional Partnership is an Indian tribe or tribal consortia, they may not enter into a collaborative agreement only with tribal child welfare agencies (or a consortium of such agencies). The Indian tribe or tribal consortium applicant should enter into a collaborative agreement by at least two of the parties listed above.

Any member of the Regional Partnership is eligible to be a lead applicant provided that: (1) the partner is one of the eligible entities described above and (2) the member agency or organization has the capacity to sufficiently monitor program activities or services, funding, and reporting requirements described in this FOA. While either the state child welfare agency that is responsible for the state plan under title IV-B and title IV-E of the Social Security Act or an Indian tribe or tribal consortium must be a member of a Regional Partnership, it is NOT necessary that either of these entities serve as the lead agency.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review the basic rules on grants to Faith-Based Organizations (see 45 CFR Part 87).

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with Section 437(f)(6) of the Social Security Act.

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient’s cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient’s failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, where “cost sharing” refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient’s failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

#### FEDERAL/GRANTEE SHARE

12-Month Period	Federal Share	Grantee Share
9/30/2018 – 9/29/2019	85%	15%
9/30/2019 – 9/29/2020	85%	15%
9/30/2020 – 9/29/2021	80%	20%

Applicants are to detail the match amount, as well as detail the proposed match source.

Match can be calculated by using the Federal Share (award) divided by the percentage of Total Project Cost minus Federal Share. A sample is as follows:

With a match of 15%, and Federal Share of 85%, a \$100,000 federal grant:

$\$100,000 \text{ divided by } 85\% = \$117,647$

\$117,647 minus \$100,000 = \$17,647

Applicants must fully identify and document the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet the matching requirement, the source of the funding or contribution, and how the valuation was determined. Additionally, applicants are advised that funded projects will be required to meet the matching requirement on an annual basis. In keeping with good business practices, a recipient may wish to consider providing its required matching in proportion to its expenditure of the federal share of the total annual budget.

Applicants are further advised that if an applicant proposes cost sharing at a level in excess of a cost-sharing requirement and the proposed cost sharing is accepted as part of the approved budget and project, it becomes an award requirement enforceable through the Notice of Award (NOA). Therefore the excess is included in the amount of the total approved budget, and the percentage for the non-federal share in block 17a of the NOA will adjust accordingly.

### **Matching Waiver Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. § 1469a(d)**

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

Non-federal resources will be evaluated under criteria found in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

## **III.3. Other**

### **Application Disqualification Factors**

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

### **Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" at [www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6).

#### **Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)**

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

#### **Award Floor Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that is below the *Award Floor* per budget period, as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies to the *Award Floor* listed for the 36-month budget period.

#### **Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**



## IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

CB Operations Center  
C/O LCG, Inc.  
ATTN: HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF-CU-1382  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Forms Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

### **FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

**Each applicant applying electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.**

### ***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

#### **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

#### **Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to

answer any questions pertaining to the application.

### **Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

### **Accepted Font Style**

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read comfortably, will be removed.

### **English Language**

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

### **Page Limitations**

**Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

### **Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

### **Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

### **Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications**

When applicants make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

### **Signatures**

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

### **Accepted Application Format**

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page. All pages of the application must be readable. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

### **PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

With the exception of Standard Forms (SFs) and forms approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the application submission is limited to 110 pages in its entirety. The two files applicants must submit are:

The Project Description file must include these items:

- Table of Contents
- Abstract
- Objectives and Need for Assistance
- Approach
- Evaluation
- Organizational Capacity
- Logic Model
- Line Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices file must include these items:

- Certifications and Assurances
- Proof of Legal Status (if applicable)
- Third-party agreements
- Staff and Position Data (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
- Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)
- Documentation related to collaboration (see *Section IV.2, Project Description, Approach, Collaboration*)

## **ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2, Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One:** Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

### **Adherence to the Two-File Requirement**

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

## **Application Upload Requirements**

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under the topic “Online Answers.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grant.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

## **Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms**

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

## **Naming Application Submission Files**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).** Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov’s naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF’s systems, are listed in the instructions available in the Download Application Package at Grants.gov. Please also see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

## **Use only file formats supported by ACF**

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the

competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

**ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

**Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

**FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "*ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*" at [www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6)

**Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the FOA's Synopsis on [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) under the Package tab.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

**Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application

submissions.

### Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

**Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.  By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a> .  Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.  SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a> .	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.

Lobbying Form)	application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http:// www.hhs.gov/ohrp/ assurances/ forms/index.html</a> .  General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/</a> . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email ( <a href="mailto:ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov">ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov</a> ) or by phone (240-453-6900).
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

**Mandatory Grant Disclosure**

Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and



to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

**And to:**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

**Fax:** (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or

**Email:** [MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov)

## The Project Description

### The Project Description Overview

#### Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

#### General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

## **General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

### **Introduction**

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

### **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

### **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall goals of the project as described in *Section I. Program Description*. If research is part of the proposed work, outcomes must include hypothesized results and implications of the proposed

research.

Applicants should propose and select performance indicators and measures that are consistent with the focus and goals of the project they plan to implement and evaluate. Applicants must demonstrate how each of the proposed performance indicators selected is an appropriate outcome of their proposed program strategies and activities and relate them to the goals identified in their logic model. For RPG grantees that received awards in FY 2012 and FY 2014, the cross-site evaluation outcome measures were also used as the RPG performance indicators. It is anticipated that this will be the same for grantees who received awards in FY2017.

Applicants should also consider the existing cross-site evaluation outcome measures in their planning (see Appendix B). Please see *Section I. Program Description, Project Requirements, Program Strategies and Activities*, and Appendix A for suggested program strategies and activities.

Applicants should propose how they will examine the implementation of the proposed strategies and activities of their project in order to enable a better understanding of the factors associated with the successful implementation of the project and any barriers or challenges that impede implementation. The description should include implementation and fidelity measures that will be used.

Applicants should include a description of the goals and outcomes to be achieved in the partnership region during the funding period for the grant that will (1) enhance the well-being of children receiving services or taking part in activities conducted with funds provided under the grant, (2) lead to improved permanency and enhanced safety for such children, (3) decrease the number of out-of-home placements for such children, and (4) decrease the number of children who are at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement.

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

#### *Target Population and Need for Services*

Applicants must describe, define, and justify their proposed target population and provide evidence, including child welfare data, of the following:

- The impact substance use disorders experienced by parents or caregivers has had on the number of out-of-home placements for children, or on the number of children who are at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement, in the partnership region;
- The limited availability of resources for addressing the needs of children, adults, and families affected by substance use disorders;
- The target area's lack of capacity for, or access to comprehensive family treatment

services for adults, children, youth, and other family members to be served in the target population, and the need to improve/ expand those services;

- Data from the child welfare agencies and other sources, as appropriate, that identify and describe the size, characteristics, and needs of the populations of the children/youth and their families to be served;
- Data from applicable sources used to determine inclusion/exclusion criteria of adults, children/youth, and families to be served, including how they will be identified and recruited, and an initial projection of the numbers to be served; and
- How the applicant will be culturally responsive to the target population including ensuring that services and practices provided are culturally relevant and appropriate.

Identifying and fully understanding the target population is critical to understanding what interventions are appropriate and needed, and how to best work to recruit, fully engage, and retain clients. Applicants must describe how, during the first 3 months of the grant they will work to expand their current understanding of their target population through data analysis in their community and specifically with partnering agencies and organizations, to determine who and how many there are of their target population, their demographic characteristics, and their needs. Applicants must be able to demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge of the data available, the limitations, and the factors that will speed or hinder analysis at the time of application. This work is critical to ensure alignment of target population with the most effective services and interventions.

Note: Applicants are permitted to serve a subset of the target population without serving all of the target population allowed under this FOA as long as the applicant clearly articulates the number served, who is receiving the enhanced services and how success will be assessed for the children and families served.

### *Collaboration*

Applicants must demonstrate the existence of an established partnership that has the capacity, resources, and commitment to fully implement the proposed project. Applicants must describe how the partnership is supported by a collaborative infrastructure that is in place between the child welfare agency, the substance use disorder treatment agency, the courts, and other eligible service organizations in the following areas:

- Routine consultation and interaction with other agencies;
- Joint accountability and shared outcomes among agencies in memorandums of agreement/understanding;
- Cross training and staff development;
- Processes for communication and information sharing;
- Willingness and agreement to share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research;
- Addressing how partners' values and principles help or hinder the collaboration; and
- Having agreements about shared costs and budgets.

In order to demonstrate the collaborative infrastructure, applicants must:

- Describe the strategies for integrating programs and services determined to be

- appropriate for the child and, where appropriate, the child's family;
- Describe the strategies for collaborating with the state or local child welfare agency and substance abuse treatment agency and consulting with state law enforcement and judicial agencies, as appropriate, when any of the agencies listed here are not the lead applicant;
  - Describe the planned referral process and enrollment criteria, including naming the referral partners, identifying how referrals will be provided/received, and a description of anticipated outreach strategies; and
  - Describe the joint services and activities to be funded in whole or in part with the funds provided under the grant, including the sequencing of activities proposed to be conducted under the funding period for the grant.

Applicants must provide formal contractual agreements including memoranda of understanding/memoranda of agreement (MOUs/MOAs) (outlining, for example, referral agreements, services to be provided, the level and intensity of resources committed, and data to be shared) from the primary collaborating organizations. Simply providing a letter of support from proposed primary partners is not sufficient to meet this requirement of documented agreements with organizations. These documents must be provided in the Grants.gov application appendices file to be considered for an award.

The primary applicant, when not any of the following agencies, must document a strong partnership with the state or local child welfare agency(ies) with responsibility for administering the child welfare program(s) in the partnership region, the state or local substance abuse treatment agency(ies) in the partnership regions(s) and the court(s) having jurisdiction over the targeted child welfare population. This documentation should include the following:

- Letter(s) of commitment or MOUs/MOAs from the relevant state or local child welfare, substance abuse treatment agency(ies), court(s), and other primary collaborating organizations, which describe, in detail, the roles and responsibilities of each collaborating organization;
- Evidence that the relevant state or local child welfare, substance abuse treatment agency(ies), court(s), and other primary collaborating organizations fully understand, are fully committed to the proposed project and demonstrate a willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application;
- Evidence that the relevant state or local child welfare, substance abuse treatment agency(ies), court(s), and other primary collaborating organizations are committed to following through on these commitments, regardless of changes in administration, economic status, or other foreseeable factors; and
- Any other evidence that would demonstrate the full commitment of the relevant state or local child welfare and substance abuse treatment agency(ies) and court(s), and other primary collaborating organizations, as appropriate, to making the proposed project a success. This includes coordination of services to:
  - Share information across systems, with appropriate releases of confidential information;
  - Ensure consistent data collection and data sharing across systems;
  - Share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research; and

- Monitor outcomes.

Applicants must demonstrate that they and any partnering organizations have the relevant experience and expertise in the administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects related to addressing the impact of parental substance abuse on the social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health of children; in improving parenting skills; in reducing substance abuse; and in supporting collaboration among the child welfare, substance use disorder treatment, courts, and other relevant agencies. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate that each participating organization (including partners and/or subcontractors) possesses the organizational capability to fulfill its assigned roles and functions effectively.

*Expectations of Applicant Lead Agencies that are not the Child Welfare Agency*

If the primary applicant responsible for administering the grant is not the child welfare agency, the applicant must document a strong partnership with the state or local child welfare agency(ies) with responsibility for administering the child welfare program(s) in the partnership region(s). This documentation must include the following:

- Letter(s) of commitment or MOUs/MOAs from the relevant state or local child welfare agency(ies), which describe, in detail, the roles and responsibilities of the child welfare partner(s);
- Evidence that the relevant state or local child welfare agency(ies) fully understand, are fully committed to the proposed project, and demonstrate a willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application;
- Evidence that the relevant state or local child welfare agency(ies) will follow through on these commitments, regardless of changes in administration, economic status, or other foreseeable factors; and
- Any other evidence that would demonstrate the full commitment of the relevant state or local child welfare agency(ies) to making the proposed project a success. This includes coordination of services and a commitment to:
  - Share information across systems, with appropriate releases of confidential information;
  - Ensure consistent data collection across systems;
  - Share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research; and
  - Monitor outcomes.

Regional Partnerships that cannot clearly demonstrate existing collaborative infrastructure in place between child welfare agencies, substance abuse treatment, and courts to meet the needs of children and families will not be considered for funding under this program.

See *Section III.1. Eligible Applicants* for more information regarding the composition of the partnership.

*Using Evidence Supported and/or Emerging (Evidence-Informed) Practices*

Applicants must identify practices that are: well supported and supported by evidence and/or innovative practices that are emerging but are evidence-informed; provide evidence that shows the practices are shown to be effective, commit to fidelity in implementing the interventions, and provide a rationale for using the practice in the identified community with the identified

target population that are culturally appropriate and responsive.

To address the proposed practices applicants must:

- Identify the practices to be implemented for the specific population. Identify and discuss the evidence that shows that the practice(s) is(are) effective in achieving the outcomes identified in the project logic model. (See note following this bulleted list.) If more than one practice is proposed, clearly identify which service modality and population of focus each practice will support. Applicants should consider implementing no more than three interventions; and
- Discuss the population(s) for which the practice(s) has (have) been shown to be effective and show that it (they) is (are) appropriate and culturally responsive for the target population(s) of focus.

Note: CB recognizes that evidence supported practices have not been developed for all populations and/or service settings. For example, certain interventions for American Indians/Alaska Natives, rural or isolated communities, or recent immigrant communities may not have been formally evaluated, and therefore have a limited or nonexistent evidence base. In addition, other interventions that have an established evidence base for certain populations or in certain settings may not have been formally evaluated with other subpopulations or within other settings. Applicants proposing to serve a population with an intervention that has not been formally evaluated with that population are required to provide other forms of evidence that the practice(s) they propose is (are) appropriate for the population of focus. Evidence for these practices may include unpublished studies, preliminary evaluation results, clinical (or other professional association) guidelines, findings from focus groups with community members, etc. Applicants may describe their experience either with the population of focus or in managing similar programs. In selecting emerging or promising programs, applicants must:

- Document the evidence that the practice(s) chosen is(are) appropriate for the outcomes to be achieved;
- Explain how the selected practice meets the purpose of this grant program (See *Section I. Program Description*);
- Describe any modifications/adaptations to the proposed practice(s) that are necessary to meet the goals of the proposed project and why the changes will improve the outcomes;
- If applicable, justify the use of multiple interventions. Applicants must discuss in the required logic model and related narrative how uses of multiple interventions are to be integrated into the program, while maintaining an appropriate level of fidelity for each practice. Applicants must describe how the effectiveness of each intervention is to be quantified in the performance assessment of the project; and
- Discuss training needs or plans for training to successfully implement the proposed intervention.

CB expects the evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) service(s)/practice(s) to be implemented in a way that maintains fidelity to the original service(s)/practice(s). However, ACYF understands that minor adaptations to the service(s)/practice(s) to meet the needs of the target population of focus or targeted program may be necessary to be more efficient. Applicants must describe any adaptations to the proposed service(s)/practice(s) that

is(are) necessary for these purposes and provide documentation that the applicant has worked closely with the original model developer regarding any proposed adaptation. Regional Partnerships may describe their experience with the population of focus or in managing similar programs. However, applicants must provide sufficient justification for the changes.

### *Program Strategies and Activities*

Applicants must propose specific services and activities to increase the well-being of children and their families as part of their joint responsibilities. The program strategies and activities that address well-being outcomes should be targeted to the specific population identified and reflect the most appropriate evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices. Please see the preceding section on evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices. See *Section I. Description Program Strategies and Activities, and Appendix A* for suggested program strategies and activities.

### *Project Sustainability Plan*

Applicants must address how they will maintain the involvement of partners on an ongoing basis in the planning and operation of their program and how they will approach sustainability planning in order to continue the proposed program at the conclusion of federal funding. Applicants also may include:

- How they will integrate the proposed project's activities into the grantee's ongoing practices with the goal of continuous data-informed partnerships;
- Approaches for institutionalizing necessary program strategies and activities into organizational policy and infrastructure; and
- Information on plans to secure additional financial resources.

Note: Applicants should review the additional text on the **Project Sustainability Plan** later in this section.

### **Project Timeline and Milestones**

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

### **Funded Activities Evaluation Plan**

Applicants must describe the plan for rigorous evaluation of funded activities. The evaluation may be supported by a logic model. The evaluation must assess processes and progress towards the goals and objectives of the project, and whether the project is having the expected effects



and impacts. The evaluation plan must specify expected outcomes and any research questions. The plan must discuss how the results of this evaluation will provide greater understanding and improvement of the funded activities. The plan must include a valid and reliable measurement plan and sound methodological design. Details regarding the proposed data collection activities, the participants, and data management, and analyses plans must be described. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles foreseen in implementation of the planned evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Applicants must provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and its results will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, the applicant must state what measures will be used to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. The applicant must discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the implementation of the project, the applicant must define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being implemented in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

Applicants must commit a minimum of 20 percent of grant funds be spent on required evaluation elements of this FOA, including the local evaluation, participation in the national cross-site evaluation, and to satisfactorily collect and evaluate the data necessary for monitoring the proposed performance indicators.

Applicants must provide a narrative about how they will address the following:

- Conduct a rigorous evaluation to assess their effectiveness in providing through interagency collaboration and integration of programs, activities and services that are designed to increase well-being, improve permanency outcomes, and enhance the safety of children who are in an out-of-home placement or are at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement as a result of a parent's or caretaker's substance abuse. The evaluation should address research questions related to the Regional Partnership, the target population, implementation of the proposed project, and outcomes;
- Ensure the recruitment and retention of participants needed to meet the target sample (as identified by the applicant) to enroll in the project. Identify what strategies will be employed to address challenges to securing the target sample;
- Evaluate the implementation of the project and the results of the project, including how the proposed performance indicators and outcome measures are tracked and how performance data are collected;
- Determine the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Applicants should include a discussion of the criteria to be used to evaluate results and explain the methodology used to determine if the needs identified are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved for the children and families served by the project. Applicants should describe a periodic assessment of program progress that can be used to modify the program, as necessary, and serve as a basis for program adjustments. Applicants should include process and outcome analyses for assessing the effectiveness of program strategies and the implementation process; and

- Determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the plan presented, and discuss the impact of the proposed project's various activities that address effectiveness. Toward that end, applicants should address the level of coordination between the proposed project and other programs with similar systems/services or that serve the same clients.

### *Cross-Site Evaluation Participation*

Through the RPG cross-site evaluation, ACF seeks to add to the knowledge base about effective models for improving the well-being, permanency, and safety of children; facilitating adult recovery from substance abuse; and supporting family functioning and stability for the target groups served by the RPG program. In particular, ACF is interested in the factors associated with successful implementation of evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence informed) programs, the potential for sustaining them, their suitability for replication, and the effects of the RPG projects on participant outcomes.

Taking the above mentioned goals into consideration, applicants must address how they will comply with participation in the cross-site evaluation. When possible, the applicants are encouraged to align elements of their local evaluation with the cross-site evaluation to decrease burden. The following are potential cross-site evaluation research questions:

- Who is involved in each RPG project, and how do the partners work together?
- Who are the target populations of the RPG project? Do RPG projects reach their intended target populations?
- Which evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices are selected as the primary focus of the RPG project? How well did they align with RPG project's target populations and goals?
- What procedures, infrastructure, and supports were in place to facilitate implementation of the evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices?
- How are the evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices going to be implemented? What services are provided?
- What are the well-being, permanency, and safety outcomes of children, and the recovery outcomes of adults, who received services from the RPG project?

For information about the current and past cross-site evaluations including cross-site evaluation design report, Reports to Congress, and other related publications, please visit: <https://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/projects/regional-partnership-grants-national-cross-site-evaluation>.

Applicants must describe their plan for working with the cross-site evaluator and complying with the requirements of the cross-site evaluation design.

### *Skilled Evaluator*

If the applicant does not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective and comprehensive evaluation of the project, the applicant must propose contracting with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. In either case, it is important that the evaluator demonstrate the necessary independence from the project to ensure objectivity. The proposed evaluator must have sufficient experience with

research and/or evaluation, understand the population of interest, and have experience in obtaining and analyzing child welfare data. The proposed evaluator must have experience successfully implementing human services evaluations utilizing research designs similar to the proposed effort. A skilled evaluator must be able to help develop a logic model and assist in designing an evaluation strategy that is rigorous and appropriate given the goals and objectives of the proposed project. The local evaluator is expected to work closely with the cross-site evaluation contractor and CB. Additional assistance may be found in a document titled "Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation." A copy of this document can be accessed at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/the-program-managers-guide-to-evaluation-second-edition>.

### *Comparison Group*

The applicant must include an appropriate, contemporaneous comparison group for determining the influence of the project activities on outcomes, when applicable. At a minimum, each applicant must demonstrate that its plans for identifying and obtaining data regarding the comparison group are realistic. The comparison group and the program/treatment group are assigned at random or matched on key characteristics. If not assigned at random or matched on key characteristics, the applicant provides a reasonable explanation of how it will identify and address pre-existing differences between the comparison group and treatment group. Applicants may use another type of evaluation research design, but they must include an adequate description and justification that the proposed design is the most rigorous design possible for addressing the questions of interest. Please see *Section V.1, Criteria, Evaluation, Part 1* for additional information on how applications will be evaluated based upon their proposed comparison group.

### *Institutional Review Board (IRB)*

Applicants must have a sound plan for securing informed consent and implementing an IRB review. Any evaluation collecting information from program participants or staff will require an IRB review; given this grant program's requirement for collecting and reporting data on performance measures, it is expected that this will include all applicants. The applicant should identify the IRB it expects to use and should demonstrate a familiarity with that IRB's procedures and review requirements.

Please note that when experimental designs involving random assignment to treatment and control groups are used for determining the intervention impacts, applicants need to describe how participant protections are adequately addressed. When random assignment is used, applicants also must provide adequate information on alternative services for families not selected for the services provided. General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/>. Applicants may also contact the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP) by email ([ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov](mailto:ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov)) or by phone (240) 453-6900.

### *Logic Model*

For the purposes of this FOA, applicants must include a logic model that clearly states what outcomes are to be achieved, what program strategies are to be used to specifically impact proximal and distal outcomes, and what data and instrumentation are to be used to measure those outcomes. Information on logic models is included later in this section.

### *Performance Indicators and Measures for Outcomes*

Applicants must explain how proposed performance indicators align with their proposed program model/design and identify the data sources from which they can obtain the needed data elements. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to collect and report on the proposed performance indicators and data sources. For example, applicants may describe their capacity to track the proposed performance indicators through standard sources or through special data collection procedures such as surveys or completion of certain questionnaires or other instruments. Applicants should justify any additional measures planned for use with this project.

Applicants must justify the use of the measures and demonstrate evidence of the technical soundness of the measures and its alignment with the existing cross-site evaluation measures. When appropriate, applicants are encouraged to consider using potential cross-site evaluation measures to reduce burden. Applicants must clearly demonstrate:

- The selection of appropriate indicators to match their goals (grantees must demonstrate the appropriateness of each selected indicator in assessing performance of proposed grant-funded activities or services);
- The proposed project's capacity to report on the selected indicators (applicants must comment on their capacity to track the indicators through standard sources or through special data collection procedures such as surveys or completion of certain questionnaires or other instruments); and
- The inclusion of at least one well-being measure indicator for children and one well-being indicator for adults (either proximal or distal) that is to be achieved as a result of its proposed project. Indicators must have a focus on the social/emotional or appropriate developmental well-being of participants.

Appendix B contains lists of suggested potential outcomes, indicators, and measurement tools that are being used in the cross-site evaluation and have been found useful by past grantees. Successful applicants will be required to use the cross-site measures. These lists are not intended to be comprehensive, and the applicants are expected to use discretion in their selections, depending on the goals of the program. However, it is unlikely that an applicant using none of the listed indicators and measures would be considered responsive to this FOA. CB also encourages grantees to consider using one or more of the measures in Appendix A that would be most applicable to the proposed project to help support any national cross-site evaluation effort initiated by CB. In addition, CB recognizes that additional appropriate indicators and technically sound measures could be added if they reflect the specific needs of the proposed project.

### **Geographic Location**

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

### **Additional Eligibility Documentation**

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this

announcement:

Applicants must also address the requirements regarding demonstrating established partnerships as outlined in *Section IV.2 Project Description, Approach, Collaboration*.

Any documentation should be provided in the Appendix of the application.

### **Project Sustainability Plan**

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Grantees are expected to sustain key elements of their grant projects, e.g., strategies or services and interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and those that have led to improved outcomes for children and families.

Describe the approach to project sustainment that will be most effective and feasible. Describe the key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain program activities. Describe the types of alternative support that will be required to sustain the planned program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

### **Organizational Capacity**

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

### **Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

### **Dissemination Plan**

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds**

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

**Special Note:** *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$189,600. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or the 424C, as applicable, for the proposed project that is being fully funded (the budget period and the project period are the same). Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Applicants must allocate sufficient funds in the budget to support required travel:

- Within 6 months after the award, the project director, child welfare and substance abuse treatment partner(s), evaluator, and/or other key staff must attend a 2- to 3-day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC.
- The project director, child welfare and substance abuse treatment partner, evaluator, and/or other key staff must attend the annual grantee meeting, usually held in the spring or summer in Washington, DC.

Applicants must:

- Commit a minimum of 20 percent of grant funds be spent on required evaluation elements of this FOA, including the local evaluation, participation in the national cross-site evaluation, and to satisfactorily collect and evaluate the data necessary for monitoring the proposed performance indicators.
- Anticipate spending approximately one-third of the project award per each 12-month segment. Each grantee must spend no more than \$1,000,000 and no less than \$500,000 per 12-month segment, beginning 9/30/2018.
- Be advised that funded projects will be required to meet the matching requirement on an annual basis. In keeping with good business practices, a recipient may wish to consider providing its required matching in proportion to its expenditure of the federal share of the total annual budget. See *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching* for additional information about matching requirements.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is

suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

## **Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages.

**Justification:** Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

## **Fringe Benefits**

**Description:** Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

**Justification:** Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

## **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

**Justification:** For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

## **Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

**Justification:** For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after



the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

### **Supplies**

**Description:** Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

**Justification:** Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

### **Contractual**

**Description:** Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

**Justification:** Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

**Note:** Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

### **Other**

**Description:** Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

**Justification:** Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

### **Indirect Charges**

**Description:** Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an

applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

- 1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

- 2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

**Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent de minimis rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

#### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

**Description:** Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

**For all federal awards,** any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient’s cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute,** recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient’s failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute,** where “cost sharing” refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected

commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards . These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**Justification:** If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards). **A recipient's failure to provide a statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I.* of this announcement.

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## **Application Submission Options**

### **Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

## **Electronic Delivery**

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

## **How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov**

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

***Obtain a DUNS Number:*** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

***Register with SAM:*** In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

***Create a Grants.gov Account:*** The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

**Authorize Grants.gov Roles:** After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:  
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

**Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to:  
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

### **How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each FOA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

**Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

**Complete a Workspace:** Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

**Adobe Reader:** If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

**NOTE:** Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:  
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

**Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be

completed to successfully submit your application.

***Complete SF-424 Fields First:*** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

***Submit a Workspace:*** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

***Track a Workspace:*** After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:  
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

### **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant

with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

### **Issues with Federal Systems**

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at [www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

### **Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

To request an exemption from required electronic submission please refer to ACF's "Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" document for complete guidance at:

[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf\\_policy\\_for\\_requesting\\_an\\_exemption\\_from\\_required\\_electronic.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from_required_electronic.pdf).

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

## **IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.**

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### **IV.4. Submission Dates and Times**

Due Date for Applications: **08/13/2018**

##### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.



Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at: [www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

### **Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

#### **Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

#### **Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

#### **Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:**

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

### **IV.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

### **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are

unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

**Applicants should note** this FOA requires a minimum of 20 percent of grant funds be spent on required evaluation elements of this FOA, including the local evaluation, participation in the national cross-site evaluation, and to satisfactorily collect and evaluate the data necessary for monitoring the proposed performance indicators. Applicants should also note that although this project consists of one 36-month budget period, there is a spending maximum of \$1,000,000 and a minimum of \$500,000 per 12-month segment.

#### **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at [www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6).

##### **Submission By Mail**

CB Operations Center  
C/O LCG, Inc.  
ATTN: HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF-CU-1382  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

##### **Hand Delivery**

CB Operations Center  
C/O LCG, Inc.  
ATTN: HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF-CU-1382  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209

##### **Electronic Submission**

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.

## V. Application Review Information

### V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** With the exception of the funding opportunity announcement and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

#### Objectives and Need for Assistance

Maximum Points:20

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the goals and objectives of the authorizing legislation and this FOA and clearly demonstrates how the proposed project will contribute to achieving those legislative goals and objectives and the goals stated in this FOA.
2. The applicant presents a clear description of the proposed project, including a clear statement of the goals (i.e., the intended end products of an effective project) and objectives (i.e., measurable steps for reaching these goals) of the proposed project. The applicant presents a clear vision for developing and implementing the proposed project to contribute to achieving these goals and objectives.
3. The applicant demonstrates the substantial impact of substance abuse by parents or caregivers in the target area, including child welfare data on the number of out-of-home placements for children or the number of children who are at risk of being placed in an out-of-home placement.
4. The applicant demonstrates that the target area has limited resources for addressing the needs of children affected by substance abuse and has a lack of capacity for, or access to, comprehensive family treatment services.
5. The proposed project clearly addresses the need for collaborative service delivery between child welfare agencies, substance abuse treatment, and other relevant child and

family serving agencies, such as mental health agencies and/or the courts, as a means of increasing the well-being, improving permanency outcomes, and enhancing the safety of children affected by substance abuse.

**Approach**

**Maximum Points:30**

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from the research and literature on known effective practices for collaborative practice related to the intersection of substance use disorders and child welfare, an understanding of the impact(s) of substance use disorders on children and their families, and builds on current theory, research, evaluation data, best practices, and effective evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices.
2. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed project will implement activities, strategies, and evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices that are appropriate and culturally responsive to the identified target population.
3. The applicant provides a detailed description of the target population, including the required child welfare data, as well as demonstrates working knowledge of the comprehensive data available to be used to complete the target population analysis in the first 90 days of the grant.
4. The applicant provides a detailed and sound proposed plan for the referral process and enrollment criteria, including naming referral partners, identifying how referrals will be provided/received, and a description of anticipated outreach strategies. The project would contribute to increased knowledge or understanding of the problems and issues addressed by this FOA.
5. The proposed project will involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of collaborative service delivery. The applicant provides clear detail on how the primary partner organizations will take an active role in the project throughout the entire length of the project, including: (1) routine consultation and interaction with other agencies, (2) joint accountability and shared outcomes amongst agencies, (3) cross training and staff development, (4) processes for communication and information sharing, (5) willingness and agreement to share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research; (6) addressing how partners' values and principles help or hinder the collaboration; and (7) having agreements about shared costs and budgets.
6. The applicant provides a reasonable and appropriate timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates.
7. The applicant describes the factors that could speed or hinder project implementation and explains how these factors would be managed.
8. There is a sound and reasonable plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project according to the proposed timeline and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities of proposed project staff.
9. A well-defined logic model guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short- and long-term outcomes.
10. The applicant presents a detailed and sound plan for strategically and effectively

disseminating project information and findings. The proposed dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget.

11. The project is likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies and contribute to and promote evaluation research and effective evidence supported and/or emerging (evidence-informed) practices that may be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.
12. There is a sound sustainability plan for continuing this project beyond the period of federal funding under this FOA. The proposed project would be integrated into the grantee's ongoing practices with the goal of continuous data-informed partnerships that will improve outcomes for the target population.

## Evaluation

Maximum Points:25

In reviewing the evaluation, reviewers will consider the extent to which the application meets the criteria in Part 1 and Part 2 as described below.

Part 1 (10 points) The extent to which:

1. The applicant's evaluation plan includes an appropriate comparison group for determining the influence of the project activities on outcomes, when applicable. The comparison group and the program/treatment group are assigned at random or matched on key characteristics. If not assigned at random or matched on key characteristics, the applicant provides a reasonable explanation of how it will identify and address pre-existing differences between the comparison group and treatment group.
2. The applicant provides a detailed and feasible plan for implementing their identified comparison group and how they will collect or access comparison group data.

Applications should be awarded points based upon the following:

- Applications proposing a contemporaneous comparison group are eligible to receive the full 10 points.
- Applications proposing a historical comparison group may receive no more than 5 of 10 points.
- Applications with evaluation designs without a comparison group are not eligible for any points in evaluation, Part 1.

Part 2 (15 points)

In reviewing the evaluation, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant proposes a clear and convincing plan for evaluating the project that satisfies the requirements for evaluation published in this FOA including a detailed description of data management and collection, as well as proposed analyses methods.
2. The methods of evaluation proposed are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project.
3. The applicant describes the methods to be used to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which accomplishments of objectives can be attributed to the project. This should include process and outcome

analyses for assessing the effectiveness of program strategies and the implementation process.

4. The applicant provides a detailed and reasonable plan to ensure the recruitment and retention of participants to meet the target sample (as identified by the applicant) and the proposed strategies that will be employed to address any challenges in meeting target sample size.
5. There is an appropriate plan for working with the designated evaluator in securing informed consent and implementing an IRB review, and tribal review, if applicable.
6. There is an appropriate plan for working with the RPG national cross-site evaluator and complying with the requirements of the cross-site evaluation design.
7. The applicant demonstrates that the proposed evaluator has sufficient experience with research and/or evaluation to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the project (including work related to the proposed performance indicators), has experience conducting evaluations with child welfare populations, and has experience obtaining and analyzing child welfare data.
8. The applicant provides an appropriate, feasible, and realistic plan for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of project activities and results. The evaluation plan includes periodic performance assessment of program progress that can be used to modify the program, as necessary, and serve as a basis for program adjustments.
9. The applicant thoroughly addresses the following points related to performance indicators and describes how the performance indicators selected will be incorporated into the evaluation:

- o Selects a set of performance indicators (which may be from those provided in Appendix A) that it proposes to use to track the outcomes of its project. Selects performance indicators relevant to their proposed grant-funded activities or performance indicators that would best assess their achievement in the three categories of outcomes (child/youth, adult/family, and Regional Partnership/service capacity).

- o Demonstrates how each of the indicators selected is an appropriate measure of their proposed activities and services and relates them to the outputs and outcomes identified in the logic model provided in this FOA.

- o Demonstrates the capacity to collect and report on the selected performance indicators, for instance by describing the Regional Partnership's capacity to track the indicators through standard sources or through special data collection procedures such as surveys or completion of certain questionnaires or other instruments. The applicant justifies any additional measures planned for use with this project.

- o Includes among its chosen performance indicators at least one well-being indicator for children and one well-being indicator for adults. While other approaches to well-being are permissible, a focus on the social/emotional well-being of all participants is expected. When such an approach will not work for infants and children, a standard developmental milestone measure is substituted as appropriate; and

- o Adequately discusses the criteria used to evaluate results and how the performance

indicators selected will be incorporated into the evaluation.

Organizational Capacity

Maximum Points:20

1. The applicant and any partnering organizations have relevant experience and expertise in the administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects related to addressing the impact of parental substance abuse on the social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health of children; in improving parenting skills; in reducing substance abuse; in preventing child maltreatment, child abuse, and neglect; and in supporting collaboration among the child welfare, substance use disorder treatment, courts, and other relevant agencies. Each participating organization (including partners and/or subcontractors) possesses the organizational capability to fulfill its assigned roles and functions effectively.
2. The proposed project director and key project staff demonstrate sufficient relevant subject matter knowledge (child maltreatment, child abuse and neglect prevention; the impact of parental substance abuse on the social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health of children; improving parenting skills; reducing substance abuse; and supporting collaboration among the child welfare, substance use disorder treatment, courts, and other relevant agencies); and experience, and capabilities (e.g., resume) to effectively institute and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity. The roles, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners, is clearly defined (e.g., job description) and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project.
3. The proposed project includes a sound management plan that clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by staff and any partners, subcontractors and consultants are achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
4. The applicant clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the applicant and any partnering organizations in the implementation of the proposed project. The application includes letter(s) of commitment or MOUs/MOA(s) from the relevant partners, which describe, in detail, the identified roles and responsibilities of the project partners, include evidence that the relevant partners fully understand and are fully committed to the proposed project, and demonstrate a willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application.
5. If the lead applicant is not a child welfare agency, the applicant clearly demonstrates a strong partnership with the relevant state or local child welfare agency(ies). The application includes letter(s) of commitment or MOU(s)/MOA(s) that describe in detail the identified roles, responsibilities, full commitment and willingness to be fully engaged in the activities that are described in the application, including the commitment to share administrative data for program evaluation and/or research.
6. The applicant demonstrates the ability to engage in successful partnerships that direct collaborative practices to support the target population of this FOA. The applicant demonstrates that efforts for collaborative service delivery have already been undertaken, in the partnership region, prior to reviewing and responding to this FOA, or it demonstrates that there is considerable community interest and commitment to



developing these practices.

## Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:5

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant provides a detailed line item budget and narrative budget justification for each year of the project, which reflects a budget of no more than \$1,000,000 and no less than \$500,000 per 12-month segment. The costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted, expected results, and benefits.
2. The applicant provides a budget that includes the costs associated with travel to attend the required grantee meetings (kickoff and annual) in Washington, DC, as outlined in this FOA.
3. The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this FOA.
4. The applicant allocates at least 20 percent of the project budget per year for the required evaluation elements of this FOA, including the local evaluation, participation in the national cross-site evaluation, and to satisfactorily collect and evaluate the data necessary for monitoring the proposed performance indicators. The applicant provides a detailed justification for the amount allocated.
5. The applicant allocates sufficient funds to support all required items for the project, including adequate funding to support all anticipated activities necessary for the successful implementation of the proposed project.

## V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

### Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

### Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement.

Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants and/or partnering organizations that have previously demonstrated an inability to adhere to ACF reporting requirements.

#### **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), [www.fapiis.gov/](http://www.fapiis.gov/), before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants ([http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200\\_1205&rgn=div8](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8)).

#### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval in the objective review process, but were not selected for award, may receive funding if additional funds become available or may compete for funding during the next review cycle (if one occurs in the next fiscal year). Applications designated as “approved but unfunded” typically cannot be kept in an active status for more than 12 months. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

### **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions

prior to the official applicant notification.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

### **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov). Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: [www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements).

#### **HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified

in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-1>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

### **VI.3. Reporting**

Performance Progress Reports:      Semi-Annually

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at [www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2).

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Financial Reports:              Semi-Annually

### **VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

#### **Program Office Contact**

Jean Blankenship  
Children's Bureau  
Administration on Children, Youth, and Families  
Administration for Children and Families  
C/O LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

#### **Office of Grants Management Contact**

Bridget Shea Westfall  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Administration  
Office of Grants Management  
C/O LCG, Inc.  
1400 Key Blvd, Suite 900

Arlington, VA 22209

Email: [CB@grantreview.org](mailto:CB@grantreview.org)

**Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

**VIII. Other Information**

**Reference Websites**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) [www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/).

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast [www.grants.gov/](http://www.grants.gov/).

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements [ami.grantsolutions.gov/](http://ami.grantsolutions.gov/).

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.

Grants.gov Accessibility Information [www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

**Additional References:**

Information Memorandum (IM) ACYF-CB-IM-11-06 provides information to state, tribal, and territorial title IV-B and IV-E agencies on the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, which reauthorizes programs funded under title IV-B and details basic information about the provisions of this law. The IM is available at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/policy/im/2011/im1106.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/im/2011/im1106.pdf).

Substance abuse and child welfare: Clear linkages and promising responses. *Child Welfare*, 80(2), 109-128; and Young, N. K., Boles, S. M., & Otero, C. (2007). Parental substance use disorders and child maltreatment: Overlap, gaps, and opportunities. *Child Maltreatment*, 12(2), 137-149.)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau (2016) *Child Maltreatment* <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2014.pdf><https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport23.pdf>

Tolia, V.N., Patrick, S.W., Bennett, M. M., Murthy, K., Sousa, J., Smith, P.B., Clark, R.H. &

Spitzer, A.R. (2015) Increasing incidence of neonatal abstinence syndrome in U.S. neonatal ICUs. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 372, 2118-2126. Retrieved from

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1500439>.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (1999) *Blending perspectives and building common ground: A report to Congress on substance abuse and child protection*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office; Semidei, J., Radel, L.F., & Nolan, C. (2001). Substance abuse and child welfare: Clear linkages and promising responses. *Child Welfare*, 80(2), 109-128; and Young, N.K., Boles, S.M., & Otero, C. (2007). Parental substance use disorders and child maltreatment: Overlap, gaps, and opportunities. *Child Maltreatment*, 12(2), 137-149.)

*Regional Partnership Grant Program Cross-Site Evaluation Design Report*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, November 2013). This report can be viewed online at: <https://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/regional-partnership-grant-program-cross-site-evaluation-design-report>

## Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

	The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	<i>Times.</i>
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
SF-424 Key Contact Form	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a>.</p>	Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a>.</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.</p> <p>If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> in the Mandatory section.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances,</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in

<p>Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs</p>	<p><i>and Certifications.</i></p> <p>These forms are available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> in the Mandatory section.</p> <p>They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities.</p>	<p><i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>The Project Budget and Budget Justification</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i></p>	<p>Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C.</p> <p>Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> See <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a> for additional information.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a></p>	<p>Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a>.</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>Mandatory Grant Disclosure</p>	<p>Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications.</i></p>	<p>If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.</p>



## Appendix

### Appendix A: Examples of Services and Activities To Engage In or Integrate Into Existing Service Delivery Systems

Below is a list of examples of services and activities for applicants to consider including as a part of their proposed project to engage in or integrate into existing service delivery systems.

- Services and activities for children and youth that address child well-being and trauma:
  - Screening and assessment of child well-being: In infancy and early childhood, this would reflect development in four general domains: (1) language development and communication, (2) intellectual ability and cognitive functions, (3) physical development and motor skills, and (4) socio-emotional functioning. In middle childhood, well-being involves the assessment of socio-emotional functioning and general social competence, academic achievement, peer relationships, social skills, a developing sense of identity, and the nature of social support. In adolescents, emotional health, social adaptation, academic achievement, and preparation for adult roles and responsibilities are evaluated. Please see *Section IV.2, Project Description, Funded Activities Evaluation Plan, Performance Indicators and Measures for Outcomes* for additional information;
  - Services to substance-exposed newborns to enhance identification and intervention with infants identified as substance exposed at birth and coordination/enhancement of services to be delivered. This could include programs such as home visiting services or referrals and linkages for medical and/or developmental follow-up with pediatric specialists knowledgeable about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and exposure to other commonly abused drugs. Additionally, the services could address the increase of babies born with NAS and preventive prenatal services to pregnant women, including the use of medication-assisted treatment;
  - Access to appropriate mental and behavioral health services for children involved in the child welfare system, including, but not limited to, services to address experiences of trauma. These might include evidence supported and emerging (evidence-informed) trauma-focused interventions (e.g., trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy), psychological first aid and de-escalation, development of coping strategies, relaxation and self-control and regulation strategies, encouragement of expression of feelings, services that address relationship concerns, and other approaches;
  - Early intervention and preventive services for children and adolescents to provide access to participation in evidence supported and emerging (evidence-informed) programs and services for children and adolescents to address the increased risk for intergenerational abuse and dependence on alcohol and other drugs. Examples of potential programs include programs such as those offered by the National Association of Children of Alcoholics or the Betty Ford Children's Program; and
  - Substance abuse treatment for adolescents that provide developmentally

appropriate services to adolescent family members who, like their parent(s), have a diagnosable substance use disorder.

- Quality substance abuse treatment for parents and families:
  - Timely access to comprehensive substance abuse treatment to ensure that families in the child welfare system have priority access to comprehensive substance abuse treatment services and concurrent mental health services as needed that meet the needs of the entire family, including:
    - Long-term residential treatment programs where children can live on-site with mothers and where the children's father and/or the mother's partner is served as well (in residence or not). Services and interventions to improve family functioning are provided for all family members, including access to family-based interventions (e.g., Functional Family Therapy, Parent Child Interaction Therapy) and individual care plans for the adult and child members of the family intensive out-patient treatment with or without a housing component (i.e., sober living homes). Services and interventions to improve family functioning and increase parenting capacity are provided for family members, including access to family counseling and individual care plans for the adult and child members of the family;
    - Access to medication assisted treatment, especially for pregnant and post-partum women;
    - Continuing care and recovery support services to support the ongoing recovery of parents after residential or intensive outpatient treatment through on-going connections to treatment and community support services, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, and on-going case management; and
    - Timely access to trauma-specific services for parents and family members when appropriate.
- Services designed to specifically address violence- and trauma-related symptoms and reactions.
- Services for parents and children that improve parenting capacity and family functioning:
  - Examples of evidence supported and emerging (evidence-informed) practices include Seeking Safety, Helping Women Recover, Helping Men Recover, Beyond Trauma, Addiction and Trauma Recovery Integration Model (ATRIUM), and Trauma Recovery and Empowerment (TREM);
  - Services are provided in a trauma-informed environment that acknowledges the pervasiveness of the trauma experience for persons with a substance use disorder and in which staff are trained to create a safe, non-retraumatizing environment where services are received;
  - Parenting skills training (as part of substance abuse treatment or stand-alone) to provide evidenced supported and emerging(evidence-informed) strategies to promote the parenting abilities of parents who are receiving in-home child welfare services, or whose children have been removed with goals of reunification. Examples include Celebrating Families and Strengthening

- Families, Nurturing Parent Program, Parents as Teachers, and Triple P;
- Access to programs to address relational problems and concerns, including such programs as Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Brief Strategic Family Therapy, Familias Unidas, Child Parent Psychotherapy, and Functional Family Therapy;
- Training for foster parents, relatives, and other substitute caretakers about the special needs of children and youth who have suffered from abuse or neglect and whose parents have a substance use disorder;
- Services and interventions to improve family functioning and assist with reunification of families when children have been in out-of-home placements, such as Multi-Systemic Family Therapy; and
- Ancillary services for families to provide assistance in securing needed services such as safe and drug-free housing, transportation, employment, and child care.

## **Appendix B: Potential Measures and Measurement Tools and Indicators**

CB expects that applicants will propose a diverse set of activities and strategies that are intended to impact a number of different well-being, permanency, and/or safety outcomes. Given this expected diversity, CB understands that applicants will have the discretion to choose from a variety of potential outcomes, indicators, and measurement tools. It is anticipated that the RPG cross-site evaluation study may examine child and family outcomes in following five areas of high interest: (1) child well-being, (2) child permanency, (3) child safety, (4) family functioning and stability, and (5) adult recovery from substance use disorders. The current RPG outcomes and specific cross-site evaluation measures are highlighted below.

Appendix B is not intended to be comprehensive or limiting to the applicant in any way, but is offered as an illustration of the importance of and the logic behind connecting outcomes to indicators to measures. It also highlights a number of measurement tools that have been used successfully by existing grantees and/or have been reviewed by the Mental Measurements Yearbook.

### Potential Outcomes, Indicators, and Measures

#### *Child Well-Being*

- Improve developmental functioning (e.g., gross or fine motor skills):
  - Potential measurement tool: Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ)
- Decrease internalizing/externalizing behaviors (e.g., aggressiveness, sleep problems):
  - Potential measurement tool: Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (current cross-site measure)
- Improve social and adaptive functioning (e.g., eating habits, stays away from danger)
- Assess sensory processing (i.e., profiling the effect of sensory processing on functional performance in a child's daily life):
  - Potential measurement tool: The Infant-Toddler Sensory Profile (current cross-site measure)
- Improve executive functioning:
  - Potential measurement tool: Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS);

- Increase school success (e.g., attendance, graduation); and
- Potential indicators: rates of attendance or graduation (administrative data, school district data)
- Increase post-secondary education (e.g., college, vocational school)
- Improve child health
- Decrease youth risk behaviors:
  - Potential measurement tool: Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE); The Socialization Subscale, Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition, Parent-Caregiver Rating Form (current cross-site measure); and
  - Potential measurement tool: Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function and the Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function-Preschool (BRIEF-P) (current cross-site measure)
- Improve protective factors (e.g., resiliency, attachment):
  - Potential measurement tool: Protective Factors Survey (PFS) Reduce trauma symptoms (e.g., avoidance behavior, numbing response);
  - Potential indicators: percent of youth who attain a degree/ certification (self-report surveys, administrative data);
  - Potential indicators: percentage of children classified as obese (National Center for Health Statistics); and
  - Potential indicators: percentage of youth who report illicit drug use (youth risk behavior surveys, administrative data).

### *Improve Permanency*

- Decrease length of stay in foster care
- Decrease in re-entry into foster care within predetermined time periods
- Increase timeliness of reunification of children removed from the home due to parental or caretaker substance abuse problems within predetermined time periods:
  - Potential indicators: Average length of stay in foster care from date of most recent entry to date of discharge (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), administrative data);
  - Potential indicators: Of all children removed from home due to parental or caretaker substance abuse and subsequently discharged from foster care to reunification, percent who re-enter foster care in less than 6, 12, or 18 months (AFCARS, administrative data); and
  - Potential indicators: Of all such children discharged from foster care to reunification, percent who are reunified in less than 6 or 12 months from the date of the most recent entry into foster care (AFCARS, administrative data)
- Increase timeliness of adoption or guardianship of children removed from the home due to parental or caretaker substance abuse problems within predetermined time periods:
  - Potential indicators: Of all such children discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption or legal guardianship, percent who are discharged in less than 12 or 24 months from the date of the most recent entry into foster care

### *Enhance Safety*

- Reduce out-of-home placements for children associated with a substantiated or indicated finding of maltreatment that are at risk of placement due to parental or caretaker substance abuse;
- Potential indicators: Of all such in-home children, percent who safely remained with a parent or caretaker through treatment completion (administrative data);
- Reduce incidence of child maltreatment for children of identified substance-abusing parent or caretaker;
- Potential indicators: Percent of such children who have an initial finding of a substantiated or indicated occurrence of maltreatment during the participation in the program (National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), administrative data);
- Reduce recurrence of child maltreatment of children who have an identified substance-abusing parent or caretaker within a predetermined period of time; and
- Potential indicators: Percent of all such children associated with a substantiated or indicated finding of maltreatment that have a subsequent substantiated or indicated finding of maltreatment within 6 or 12 months (NCANDS, administrative data).

#### *Adult/Family Recovery*

- Decrease substance use/abuse addiction severity (e.g., abstinence maintained for predetermined time periods post treatment):
  - Potential measurements: Addiction Severity Index (ASI) (current cross-site measure); administrative data; and
  - Potential indicators: percentage of parents completing substance abuse treatment who maintained abstinence for 3, 6, 12, or 18 months post treatment ((Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), administrative data, urine screenings)
- Assessing parent trauma:
  - Potential measurement tool: The Trauma Symptom Checklist-40 (current cross-site measure) Reduce incidence of subsequent births of substance-exposed newborns; and
  - Potential indicators: rate of substance-exposed newborns per 1,000 newborns in an identified time period (health care data, self-report surveys, administrative data)
- Decrease in criminal behavior (e.g., arrests, parole/probation violations in predetermined time periods post intervention):
  - Potential indicators: percentage of program participants who are arrested within 3, 6, or 12 months post intervention (administrative court or police data); and
  - Potential measurement sources/tools: percentage of program participants who are arrested (administrative court or police data)

#### *Family Functioning and Stability*

- Decrease parental stress (e.g., depression, feelings of isolation):
  - Potential measurement tools: Parental Stress Index (PSI), Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CESD) (current cross-site measures)
- Increase parenting skills (e.g., discipline, empathy, supervision):

- Potential measurement tools: North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS); Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI) (current cross-site measure)
- Improve systems-wide, data-driven decision making:
  - Potential indicators: percent of administrative staff who access and use data dashboards to guide daily practice (survey self-report, administrative data); percent of multi-disciplinary team meetings that result in increased timeliness of reunification (administrative data)
- Improve systems-wide service and organizational capacity:
  - Potential indicators: percent of strategic plan goals achieved (administrative data, staff survey data); visible and active stable relationships and interactions among external partners (organizational capacity assessment tools)

#### List of Potential Measurement Tools and Indicators

##### *Child/Youth Well-being Outcomes*

- Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function and the Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function Preschool (BRIEF and BRIEF-P) (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (versions for ages 1.5 to 5 and 6 to 18) (cross-site evaluation measure);
- The Infant-Toddler Sensory Profile (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- The Socialization Subscale, Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition, Parent-Caregiver Rating Form (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ);
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE) Greenspan Social Emotional Growth Chart;
- Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI);
- North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS);
- North Carolina Family Assessment Scale General Services (NCFAS- G) North Carolina Family Assessment Scale Reunification (NCFAS - R); and
- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS)

##### *Child Safety and Permanency (based on child welfare child maltreatment and foster care data)*

- Removals from the family of origin;
- Placements;
- Type of placement Discharge;
- Screened-in referrals;
- Type of allegation; and
- Disposition of allegation

##### *Adult Recovery Outcomes*

- Addiction Severity Index (ASI) (current cross-site evaluation measure); and

- The Trauma Symptom Checklist-40 (current cross-site evaluation measure) Beck Depression Inventory II (BDI-II)

*Family/Relationship Outcomes*

- Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2) (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- Parenting Stress Index (PSI) (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale short form (CES-D) (current cross-site evaluation measure);
- Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI);
- North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS); and
- North Carolina Family Assessment Scale General Services (NCFAS- G) North Carolina Family Assessment Scale Reunification (NCFAS - R) Protective Factors Survey (PFS)

*Regional Partnership/Service Capacity Outcome*

- Collaborative Values Inventory (CVI);
- Collaborative Capacity Instrument (CCI);
- Interagency Collaboration Activities Scale (ICAS);

In selecting measurement instruments for children and youth, the applicant may want to consider these factors:

- The age of the child. Babies, young children, older children, and youth will have different needs, and the indicators of what is healthy and normal will vary by age;
- Type of assessment will depend on the goals of the program and the desired impact on the children/youth. Is the goal to assess the needs of the clients? Is it to assess progress in meeting program goals? and
- The cost of the instruments, the type of personnel needed to adequately administer and score the measures, and how much time would be needed to do the assessments.

This list is not a complete list of possible measures, and applicants might choose some of these and add others. If others are proposed, the applicant must supply background information on the measures and provide a convincing argument for using them. In any case, applicants should explain their measurement choices and why they are the best measures to meet the needs of their programs.

Note that subscales of some instruments may be appropriate to a program's measurement needs, but not the whole instrument. If this is the case, the applicant will need to explain that fact.