



Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

12.5.22

This resource has been prepared by the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) to answer questions about the Behavioral Health Initiative grant opportunity submitted to the email below and during Information Sessions and Workshops. Questions have been consolidated and adapted for clarity, and questions pertaining to specific proposed programs ideas are not included. Questions could be submitted through Wednesday, November 30th, and the final FAQ document was posted on Monday, December 5th. If you have a question that is not covered by the “[Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details](#)” PDF or this FAQ document, you may email BuildingHealthyCommunitiesOpenCall@cookcountyhhs.org. Please note that you may not receive a response as we are unable to answer program-specific questions.

Category	Question	Response
Application Portal	Are we using the same grant portal as the last CCDPH application?	No, please apply at BHCopencall.com .
	Are there character/word limits for the narrative sections?	There is a 4,000-character limit (including spaces) per question in the Application Form narrative sections. There is no word limit for the Work Plan and Budget templates, but please be concise.
	Is there more content on the strategies and opportunity as whole?	BHCopencall.com contains all information on the grant opportunity but specifically the “ Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details ” PDF under Relevant Downloads contains all information on the grant.
	Can we submit additional documents to provide more information about our organization? For example, at the end of the Grant Application Workshop presentation, there are cover letter and rec letter samples. Are those allowed to be submitted along with the required application materials?	No, the only documents that reviewers for this grant will consider are the Work Plan and Budget templates provided. Please do not attach or submit additional documents. This grant application does not require a cover letter or letters of recommendation. The cover letter and recommendation letter templates in the first Workshop are examples to help with other funding opportunities.
	If our organization employs more than 500 employees, how should we answer the question about how many people we employ?	Organizations with more than 500 employees should select the 251-500 employee option and provide more information in their Organization Description.



Category	Question	Response
Information Sessions and Capacity Building Workshops	Will the information session slide deck and recording be shared?	Yes, recordings and slide decks from the information sessions and workshops are posted on BHCopencall.com .
Eligibility – Org Type/ Service Line	Are Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) that are part of a larger health system eligible to submit for the Mental Health and/or Youth Dev strategy?	Yes, if the center is a registered 501(c)(3) at the time of submission.
	As a skilled home health agency serving mental health patients, are we eligible for this?	Yes, if the agency is a registered 501(c)(3) at the time of submission.
	Are institutions of higher education eligible to apply?	Yes, high education institutions are eligible if they maintain 501(c)(3) status.
	Are centers based at universities eligible to apply if they are 501(c)(3)s?	Yes, if the center is a registered 501(c)(3) at the time of submission.
	Do applicants have to be 501(c)(3) non-profit entities and GATA certified? Could a higher education-affiliated entity that is GATA certified but not a 501(c)(3) apply? If the entity is in the process of attaining not-for-profit status at the time of application, is this sufficient?	This grant uses Federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. GATA certification is not required by 2 CFR 200 , also known as Uniform Guidance. For this grant, 501(c)(3) status is required. Higher education entities and affiliates must have 501(c)(3) status to be eligible. Lead applicants must already have 501(c)(3) status at the time of application.
	What are the minimum requirements an education agency must meet to apply for the grant?	Education agencies must have 501(c)(3) status at the time of application submission and proposals can only serve residents of suburban Cook County excluding Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.
	Are hospitals that are 501(c)(3)s eligible to apply for this grant?	Yes, if the hospital is a registered 501(c)(3) at the time of submission.
How should 501(c)(3) hospitals that don't fit into the community-based organization or FQHC categories categorize themselves in the application?	Organizations that are 501(c)(3) entities and do not clearly match one of the other eligible organization types can indicate that they are 501(c)(3) organizations and provide any additional details in the first section of the application.	



Category	Question	Response
Eligibility – Org Type/ Service Line <i>(continued)</i>	Can for-profit CBOs apply?	No, though for-profit organizations can be partners to lead applicants that are 501(c)(3) organizations. We value the work that all community-based organizations are doing, but for-profit organizations cannot be lead applicants for this grant opportunity.
	Are General Psychiatry Training Programs eligible to apply?	Please review the “ Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details ” PDF under Relevant Downloads for a list of eligible and ineligible expenses.
	Can organization that applied to the previous ARPA funded Building Healthy Communities grant apply to this opportunity?	Yes, previous Building Healthy Communities grant applicants and recipients may apply for this funding opportunity. Applicants are responsible for coordinating funding from multiple sources and must be able to delineate which grants are being used to cover which expenses. As part of their application, these organizations should clearly define how the scope of work for this Open Call differs from the scope of work covered by previous funding.
	Does having received American Rescue Plan funds through other local agencies precludes us from applying?	Organizations that have previously received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, as well as other government funding, are eligible to apply.
	Are there any limiting factors (disqualifiers such as - no training barred asks will be funded)?	Applicants should consult the “ Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details ” PDF under Relevant Downloads for full eligibility details.
Eligibility – Partnerships	Can a 501(c)(3) entity have a for-profit entity as a partner as part of the program design?	Yes, organizations that are not 501(c)(3)s may partner with an eligible organization that serves as the lead applicant.
	Can two non-profits 501(c)3 partner as one entity with a wider range of expertise apply as one with one leading and primary organization?	Yes, we encourage collaborations. Please note that the lead applicant must be a 501(c)(3) or other eligible organization at the time of submission.



Category	Question	Response
Eligibility – Partnerships <i>(continued)</i>	If an organization is part of a collaborative application under one strategy, can they also submit a separate application for a different project within the same strategy?	Yes, if each organization only serves as the lead applicant for one application per strategy. An organization can serve as a partner on one application and the lead applicant on a separate application under the same strategy.
	Can one organization apply to be the lead for two different strategies?	Yes, each organization can serve as the lead applicant once per strategy.
	Can organizations use contractors to do part of their project, including clinical work?	Yes, organizations can bring on contractors to complete part of their project. Applicants should explain the scope of work and procurement method for contractors.
	If we are applying as co-leads, do we still have to pick one agency as the main contact?	Yes, each application should have one designated lead applicant. Applications with multiple co-leads should describe the respective roles and responsibilities of each organization and identify only one organization as the lead applicant for the purpose of the application.
	Do we need to submit letters of support/commitment along with the grant application?	No, letters of support or commitment from partner organizations are not required. The only documents reviewers for this grant will consider are the Work Plan and Budget templates provided. Please do not attach or submit additional documents.
Eligibility – Geographic Scope/ Population	Want to be 100% sure that an Oak Park based 501(c)(3) can apply for funding used to served other suburban residents (outside of Oak Park)? Could we still apply for funding to support non-Oak Park residents at an Oak Park located program?	An Oak Park-based 501(c)(3) can apply for funding to serve suburban Cook County residents who do not reside in Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.
	If we're based in a Chicago office but we do a lot of work in suburban Cook County, are we eligible?	Yes, but only work impacting suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township, will be eligible for this funding.
	Would we be eligible if we are in the city but providing telehealth and in-person services for clients who live in suburban Cook County?	Yes, if this grant is only used to fund services for suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.



Category	Question	Response
Eligibility – Geographic Scope/ Population (continued)	Can a project occur outside suburban Cook County to the extent that it is not funded through this grant program? In other words, can an award partially fund a project that will only partially occur in suburban Cook County?	Yes, if the funding from this grant goes only to suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township, and the work plan clearly indicates what scope will be covered by this grant.
	Can organizations that do not operate in one of the 35 priority communities listed apply if they do serve suburban Cook County residents?	Yes, if the funding from this grant goes only to suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township, and the work plan clearly indicates how services will be limited to eligible residents.
	Could this grant be used to fund programming for police officers on mental health and suicide recognition/prevention? The officers work within the grant jurisdiction, but some live outside of it.	All grant applicants should describe how their program will serve eligible residents as part of their Proposal Description. Proposals for employee programming should explain how that programming will impact eligible residents. This grant funding can only be used to serve residents of suburban Cook County, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.
	If we do not intend to serve the listed Priority Communities, can we still apply? Are grants being prioritized to the communities listed?	If your work would serve suburban Cook County residents (excluding Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township), you may apply. The Priority Populations and Communities list notes groups that have been made more vulnerable, are at higher risk, or harder to reach, but may not include all eligible residents in need of Mental Health, Positive Youth Development, and Opioid-involved Overdose Prevention services. Please highlight the need(s) in the communities/populations you would serve in your application.
	Is this grant solely for suburban Cook County, not the entire Cook County population?	Yes, this grant can only serve residents of suburban Cook County, excluding Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.



Category	Question	Response
Eligibility – Geographic Scope/ Population (continued)	Are subset populations eligible?	Yes, organizations serving subset populations of suburban Cook County may apply. Please highlight the need(s) in the communities/populations you would serve in your application.
	Can non-south Cook agencies apply?	Eligible non-south Cook agencies may apply, but only work serving suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township, will be eligible for funding.
	Are Elk Grove, Wheeling, and Niles in suburban Cook County?	Yes, services for residents in these areas are eligible.
	Is Woodlawn, zip code 60637, eligible for this grant?	For this grant, Woodlawn and zip code 60637 are considered part of Chicago. Applicant organizations can be based in Woodlawn, but funding cannot be used to serve Woodlawn or 60637 residents. This grant funding can only be used to serve suburban Cook County residents, excluding residents of Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Skokie, and Stickney Township.
Grant Application – Timeline/ Project Period (Dates)	Can you more clearly define the 4-year project period?	We expect the awards to be announced the week of January 16, 2023. Awardees then will work with the Building Healthy Communities Behavioral Health Initiative team to solidify their scopes of work and budgets and complete the Cook County Risk Assessment. Awards of \$1,000,000 or more will be presented to the Cook County Board of Commissioners for approval in February 2023. We expect agreements to proceed and be executed, and for the project period to begin in March of 2023. The first year will be the shortest, spanning March – November 30, 2023. Subsequent years will be December 1 – November 30 to align with the County’s fiscal year. Programs will end by November 30, 2026.
	What is the program period over 4 years?	We expect the program period to be from March 1, 2023, to November 30, 2026.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Timeline/ Project Period (Dates) <i>(continued)</i>	How should we document the timeline for participant intake and treatment?	Applicants should identify and describe timeline phases, milestones, and deadlines that are most relevant for their program. Some phases may be ongoing for most of the program; applicants can use the Comments section of the Work Plan to provide any context needed for grant reviewers and funders to understand the process for participants.
Grant Application – Outcomes, Metrics, and Reporting	Are there outcome measurements including in the grant offering application, are there other key outcomes that are required to fulfill? Is there a list of required metrics applicants can look at?	Yes, please see pages 16 and 17 of the “Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details” PDF under Relevant Downloads for the deliverables and metrics. Please note that while required metrics are already determined, grant applicants should identify program-specific outcomes they will report on in their Work Plan.
	Is the reporting cadence the same for all BHC Open Call grant programs or can the provider propose their own reporting cycle?	The reporting cadence is the same for all BHC Open Call grant programs; the US Treasury and County require grant recipients to submit metrics monthly to the Cook County Department of Public Health. Recipients will have 30 days after the end of each month to report data from the month before. For example, recipients will submit metrics for March 2023 by April 30, 2023.
	Can the people served (outcomes) grow over time as the program gains momentum?	Yes, the number of people served can increase over the project lifetime. Applicants should identify outcomes that can capture any project growth.
Grant Application – Budget	So, how do we identify Year 1 and so on for budgeting purposes?	Provided the program launches as planned, year one will be from March 1, 2023 – November 30, 2023. Subsequent years will be from December 1 – November 30.
	Is the amount of the award the same for each of the four years (e.g., \$250,000 divided into 4 years)?	Each funding track indicates the total amount available over four years. Each year can have different total allocations and different allocations between budget categories.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Budget <i>(continued)</i>	Will grant awardees have opportunities to re-budget during the four-year period?	Organizations should provide budgets that are as accurate as possible. The Cook County Department of Public Health recognizes program needs may change over time., and there will be case-by-case opportunities to adjust the budgets. Organizations will be asked to justify any changes.
	Will funding be reimbursement based?	Funding will primarily be advancement-based. Grant awardees can request advance payments between 25% to 50% of their estimated budget per fiscal year. Grant recipients will complete a Risk Assessment that will dictate the exact terms for advancements. As needed, recipients can also receive funds through reimbursements.
	Do organizations need to plan reserves for a 45-day-payments?	Organizations should plan for 4-week payments.
	Can funds be used on capital expenses?	Funds from this grant cannot be used for the purchase or improvement of land or purchase, improvement, or construction of a building. Please see the “ Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details ” PDF under Relevant Downloads for a list of eligible and ineligible expenses.
	Are food and beverages eligible expenses?	Yes, food and beverages are eligible if tied to specific programming events or needs.
	Are hiring bonuses an eligible expense?	No, hiring bonuses are not eligible expenses for this specific grant opportunity.
	Is rent an eligible expense?	Yes, rent is an eligible expense under other direct costs if directly related to program services.
	Can a vehicle be in any of the grant strategies or only for the Opioid path? Can gas and car maintenance be a part of the grant costs?	Gas and car maintenance are eligible expenses for all grant strategies.
	Are consultant fees paid to a grants firm that will be tracking and reporting for this grant allowable as budget line items?	Yes, consultant fees are an eligible expense for this grant opportunity.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Budget <i>(continued)</i>	Can the funds be requested for three years only as we will be self-sustaining after that?	Yes, requests for funding that ends before November 30, 2026, can be made.
	Are matching funds required for this grant opportunity?	No, matching funds is not required.
	Is there a per-participant/recipient cost range or limit for services?	No, there is not limit on per-participant expenses if the proposal includes an explanation of the cost, likely in the Budget Narrative.
	Is there a section in the budget to describe in-kind contributions?	No, the budget template is specific to the funding you will be receiving for this grant opportunity.
	What category of the budget template do cost associated with other partner organizations fall?	Costs related to partners in this project will be included in the budget template under Consultants and Contractors
	What counts as indirect costs? How should we calculate that?	Indirect costs are costs that cannot be identified for a specific grant award, service, or activity of an organization, but are incurred as the result of multiple grant awards, services, or activities (see 2 CFR 200.56). Applicants that already have an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) with a federal agency for the upcoming fiscal year should use that rate. All other applicants can allocate up to 10% of their modified total direct costs (MTDC) over the project lifetime to indirect costs. MTDC are the sum of direct costs from salaries, wages, benefits, materials, supplies, training, marketing, travel, consultants, contractors, beneficiaries, up to \$25,000 of each subaward to partner organizations, and other direct costs. MTDC excludes rent, utilities, phone and internet, technology and equipment, program participant costs, and any unspecified administrative costs—these are eligible direct expenses but cannot be counted in the sum used to calculate indirect costs.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Budget <i>(continued)</i>	Can you apply for both levels, \$250,000 and \$1,000,000?	Organizations can be the lead applicant once per strategy and must select one funding track per application. Please see the questions in the Eligibility – Partnerships section and Strategy-specific sections for more information.
	Can organizations submit more than one application for the same category, one for the \$250,000 track and one for the \$1,000,000 track, if they are not the lead on both applications?	Organizations can be part of multiple applications to the same strategy where each application is for a different funding track. Applicants should note that a key goal of this funding opportunity is to “improve equitable distribution of resources,” as noted in the Use and Availability of Funding section of the “Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details” PDF under Relevant Downloads. Strong applications will clearly describe why each partner organization is uniquely positioned to fulfill the program goals and mission and advance the selected Strategy. Please see the questions in the Eligibility – Partnerships section and Strategy-specific sections for more information.
	If requesting funding for only a 3-year period, are we still allowed to ask for up to \$1,000,000? Or does this amount need to be prorated according to the number of years requested?	Funds requested do not need to be prorated. Applicants can request the full listed amount for that track for a program shorter than four years.
	Is there a cap on salaries?	No, but costs must be reasonable to the scope of the project and justified in the Budget Narrative.
	Is there fiscal agent that handles the flow of funding for this project?	Grant recipients will work directly with the Cook County Department of Public Health on project implementation and all fiscal processes.
Grant Application – Opioid-involved Overdose Prevention specific	In terms of mobile services, are you considering funding for mobile services that provide medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder as well as distribution of naloxone?	Funding for this opportunity can support operation and maintenance of the mobile unit but cannot pay for MOUD services themselves. However, this does not mean MOUD services cannot be provided on the mobile unit, just that this funding cannot be used to pay for them.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Opioid-involved Overdose Prevention specific <i>(continued)</i>	Would the funding for the opioid project count towards providing the mobile vehicle?	Yes, purchase and maintenance of a mobile vehicle are eligible expenses for this funding opportunity.
	Are syringes required for the opioid overdose strategy?	Syringes are an allowable expense but are not required.
	Can a program provide services that focus on both substance use and HIV?	Yes, but the primary focus of projects under this strategy must be overdose prevention. HIV testing can be a supplemental and complementary component, but it cannot be the only intervention or sole focus of the project.
	Can funds be used to buy spectrometers, or will they be supplied by CCDPH?	CCDPH will provide spectrometers and supply training for organization staff to use them. Recipients of the Opioid Overdose Prevention strategy can use grant funds to buy additional spectrometers if necessary for their programming.
	Are giveaways (such as gift cards, care packages, anything not directly related to the opioid issue - personal care items, clothing, food, etc.) allowable/eligible expenses?	Yes, but the primary focus of projects under this strategy must be overdose prevention. Expenses for additional items for program participants that are relevant to the goal of the program should be justified in the Budget Narrative.
	How many grants will be awarded?	We expect to award three grants for the Opioid-involved Overdose Prevention strategy.
	Is there someone we can talk to make sure our ideas are in the correct category?	Currently, the BHC committee is not able to offer technical assistance to the development of specific proposals. Applicants should review the “Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details” PDF under Relevant Downloads for descriptions of the strategies.
Grant Application – Mental Health and Positive Youth Development specific	What is the difference between Track One and Track Two programming? Is the only difference how much you are requesting or are there programmatic requirements attached to the separate tracks?	There are no programmatic differences between Track One and Track Two. The only differences are monetary, with Track One awarding up to a total of \$250,000 over four years and Track Two awarding up to a total of \$1,000,000 over four years.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Mental Health and Positive Youth Development specific <i>(continued)</i>	How do you identify Track One & Track Two?	Applicants will identify the Track they are applying to in the Project Overview and Key Application Priorities section of the application.
	Can an organization apply for both Track 1 (\$250,000) and Track 2 (\$1,000,000) in the same strategy?	No, applicants can only apply for a single track within a given strategy.
	Can you please clarify if mental health and positive youth development are two separate applications and that the grant total available for both is \$1 million for track 2?	Yes, Mental Health and Positive Youth Development are two different strategies. Organizations should choose between the two, or if applying to both, submit separate applications for each strategy. Both strategies offer two funding tracks: Track One (up to \$250,000 total over four years) and Track Two (up to \$1,000,000 total over four years). Each application should select one strategy and one funding track.
	How many grants will be awarded for the Mental Health and Positive Youth Development strategies?	We expect to award 15-20 grants total between the Mental Health and Positive Youth Development strategies. The exact number will depend on the number of applications received and the amounts requested.
	Could this funding be used to maintain programming for youth and families already enrolled in our services, or does every youth we project to impact have to be a new participant?	This grant funding can be used to maintain existing programming, including existing participants.
	We run three different youth development programs. When submitting the application for funding, should we choose one program, or can we put all three programs on the application?	Multiple activities can be submitted and funded under the same application. However, each application for the Mental Health and Positive Youth Development strategies can only receive up to either \$250,000 total over four years for Track One or \$1,000,000 total over four years for Track Two.
	What are the ages for the youth development strategy?	Youth for the Positive Youth Development strategy refers to residents aged 0 – 24.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Mental Health and Positive Youth Development specific (continued)	Are wrap around services eligible expenses for the Mental Health strategy?	Yes, wrap-around services including but not limited to housing and transportation are eligible expenses for the Mental Health strategy.
	What strategies are living rooms eligible for?	Living rooms can be eligible for the Mental Health or the Positive Youth Development strategies depending on participant ages. Programs designed specifically for youth may be best suited for the positive youth development strategy.
	Can you confirm that the maximum award amount per organization in the Mental Health strategy is \$250,000 or \$1,000,000, and that those award amounts would be spread out over four years?	The maximum award amount per application to the Mental Health strategy is \$250,000 total over four years for Track One and \$1,000,000 total over four years for Track Two. Organizations can only be the lead applicant/recipient once per strategy but may be partner organizations to additional applications to the same strategy.
	How do we know if our program will fit into the Mental Health strategy? Can organizations with a mental health program that has a positive youth development project apply to the Mental Health strategy? Which strategy would be the best fit for a program that provides mental health services, including counseling, outreach, and family involvement, to vulnerable youth populations? Is there someone we can talk to make sure our ideas are in the correct category?	Currently, the BHC committee is not able to offer technical assistance to the development of specific proposals. Applicants should review the " Behavioral Health Grants Opportunity Full Details " PDF under Relevant Downloads for descriptions of the strategies. Each strategy is broad enough to allow for a variety of program sizes and scopes, and it is up to applicants to identify which strategy best fits their program mission and activities and justify that selection. Strong applications will clearly describe how the lead organization meets the eligibility criteria and how their proposal advances the strategy they are applying to.
	Could we have an on-the-go vehicle in a category that is not the opioid path?	Vehicles are eligible expenses for the Mental Health and Positive Youth Development strategies. Strong applications will provide detailed justifications in their Budget Narrative for their expenses.



Category	Question	Response
Grant Application – Work Plan	Does the leader/person responsible for the objective need to be an existing employee/manager of the agency or can it be a position hired for the project?	People responsible/leaders for specific objectives can be new employees. Please name an existing employee for continuity and describe the timeline for hiring and scope of their work in the Work Plan Comments and Budget Narrative.
	Is it a requirement to have 3 goals (with 2-3 objectives each)?	Yes, the workplan requires 3 goals along with respective objectives. Applicants may include more goals as needed.
	Do the timelines for the objectives/outcomes need to be yearly or can some be completed/reported on at the end of the project in November 2026?	Metrics will be collected at program closeout but recommend that applicants collect metrics on a given cadence (yearly, quarterly, monthly).
	In the outcomes section of the work plan should we put in specific numeric targets?	Yes, please include specific numeric outcomes for each objective in the Work Plan. Full instructions are included at the top of the Work Plan template.