

Texas Center for Child and Family Studies

Request for Applications

Providing Community-Based Child Welfare Agencies the Opportunity to Identify and Respond to Unmet Needs for Services and Supports that Families are Experiencing Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Texas Center for Child and Family Studies (Center), seeks applications to develop and establish or expand and operate coordinated programs focused on the following areas: 1) community-based family support services, 2) family preservation services, 3) family reunification services, and 4) adoption promotion and support services. The emergency supplemental funding aims to identify the unmet needs for services or support that families at risk or in crisis are experiencing during the pandemic to address the four key areas mentioned above and outlined below.

The Center invites applications from providers for projects to address to following objectives in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Applications (RFA):

- 1) Community-based family support services to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk through the provision of supportive family services. (Including adoptive, foster, and extended families as well as programs that offer direct incentives/payments to the aforementioned)
- 2) Family preservation services to assure children's safety within the home and preserve intact families in which children have been maltreated, when the family's problems can be addressed effectively.
- 3) Family reunification services to address the problems of families whose children have been placed in foster care so that reunification may occur in a safe and stable manner.
- 4) Adoption promotion and support services to support adoptive families by providing support services as necessary so that they can make a lifetime commitment to their children.

Potential areas of focus could include, but are not limited to:

- Family support programs directed at specific vulnerable populations have had positive effects on parents, children, or both. The vulnerable populations for which programs have been shown to be effective include teenage mothers with very young children and families that have children with special needs.
- Family preservation programs have been shown to provide extensive and intensive services to families in crisis.
- Increase in availability of services to address family problems, such as substance abuse treatment. Access to these types of services can be an important factor in successful family reunification.
- Increases in the annual number of adoptions have created a growing need for post-adoption services and for service providers with the particular knowledge and skills required to address the

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unique issues adoptive families and children may face. In addition, the high level of services and treatment needed by children when adoptions disrupt suggests that effective adoption support services may benefit some of the children who later need the most intensive treatment by offering services earlier.

Background: The Center is a 501(c)(3) and a supporting organization of Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services (TACFS). The Center strives to support and initiate the development of high-quality child welfare services to ensure appropriate care for all Texas children. The mission is to provide education, research, and training to strengthen the capacity of organizations and systems of care to deliver high quality support services to children and families in Texas. Please visit [our website](#) for more information.

TACFS is a network of mission-driven organizations that have embraced the call to serve at-risk children, youth, and families, and are working together to improve our care, services, and outcomes in their communities and statewide. TACFS works to achieve these goals through education and training, collaboration, and advocacy. The strength of TACFS is attributable to its diverse, high quality, and collaborative membership. Applicants for these grants are not required to be members of TACFS.

Project Objectives/Funding Opportunity: This RFA seeks proposals to address the needs of families at risk or in crisis, to develop or expand and operate coordinated programs of community-based family support services, family preservation services, family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services.

The Center will fund proposed projects, up to \$60,000. Organizations may submit one application per organization. Funds must be fully spent no later than November 1st, 2022. The intention is to distribute this funding widely across the state and to various program types in order to reach and serve more children and families, for this reason we intend to limit most award amounts to \$60,000 and under. Applications that exceed the capped award amount may be submitted and will be considered through an exception process and based on the availability of funds.

Grant awards will be announced via grant acceptance letters and project funding will be paid in one installment upon execution of the grant acceptance letter. All requirements within the grant acceptance letter must be met by the end date of the contract, including spending down funds and carrying out activities according to the approved application and established timelines, or organizations could risk having to pay back funds received.

Should an award organization need to make changes to the grant project described and budgeted in an application post approval by the Center, an amendment for approval must be submitted. Amendments must also comply with all applicable grant requirements and are subject to negotiation for approval.

Minimum Qualifications: Organizations applying must meet the qualifications noted below.

1. Eligible applicants for funding must be one of the following organization types:
 - a. Service provider operating in the State of Texas with applicable incurred costs;
 - b. Active DFPS Prevention and Early Intervention Contractor;
 - c. DFPS licensed 24-Hour Residential Child Care operation with an active contract with DFPS or an SSCC;
 - d. DFPS or SSCC Client Service Contractor;
 - e. Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC); or
 - f. An operation contracted to provide Supervised Independent Living services (SIL) to DFPS Youth.
2. Project application must align with the objectives stated above.
3. Amount requested must not be greater than \$60,000.
4. Must be in good standing (i.e. must not be placed on probation by CCR at the time of the award). The Center reserves the right to terminate the agreement if an organization is placed on probation during the agreement's term.
5. The funding from this RFA may be used to supplement existing funding but not supplant funding (take the place of funds already received for such purposes). Organizations must attest that the RFA amounts requested have not been funded by other public or private sources such as the CARES Act, private donations, or foundation grants.

Components of the Proposal: Proposals must be submitted using the **online application**. The online application can be found [here](#) and will require the following information:

1. Name of the organization and contact information
2. Confirm/document minimum qualifications: Confirm your organization meets the qualifications as outlined in the above section.
3. Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Regions your organization serves, number of children served in conservatorship in 2020 and if your organization serves rural or urban counties.
 - a. Each county in Texas is either part of a metropolitan (urban) or non-metropolitan (rural) area. According to this list of metropolitan/urban and non-metropolitan/rural counties: www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcdocs/95counties.pdf, you will be asked to if you serve urban, rural, or both types of counties.
4. Organizational components:
 - a. Describe your organization's history and mission
 - b. Describe the governance and leadership.
 - c. Describe commitment to best practices, with examples of best practices adopted, whether your organization has any accreditations, membership in professional associations, and other community involvement and support.
5. Services and programming: Describe the services your agency provides, including your core programming and the populations you serve.
6. COVID-19 impact: How has COVID-19 impacted your organization?

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- a. Consider areas such as programming, staffing, health and safety, capacity, funding, or any other domain that has been affected by the pandemic.
7. Proposed project for funding: How will this funding help support your work to provide community-based family support, family preservation, family reunification, and/or adoption promotion and support services needs brought on by COVID-19?
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to, creation of new programming or resources and support or expansion of existing programming or resources.
 - b. The project description should include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Project summary, if applicable
 - ii. A clear narrative that explains all components of the project as they relate to the four outlined objectives of the funding.
 - iii. Goals and activities
 - iv. Identifying measures of success (outputs and short-term outcomes)
8. Feasibility and financial position: Organizations must complete the expense requests and financial outlook sections of the application.
 - a. Justification for amounts requested should align with answers outlined in the proposed project section.
 - b. Provide specific details of the direct expenses to be incurred, including personnel and fringe benefits.
 - c. Total amounts for each of the categories must equal the sum of the amounts listed in boxes above.
 - d. Indirect costs are allowed but may not exceed 5% of total direct project expenses.
 - e. Total amount requested must equal the sum of the total amounts for each of the categories plus indirect costs.
 - f. Enter the gross revenues and total expenditures for your most recently ended fiscal year.
 - g. Upload a copy of audited, reviewed, or compiled financial statements for the most recently ended fiscal year. If not available, upload your internally prepared financial statements for the most recently ended fiscal year.
9. Certifications: confirm the statements by entering your initials into each of the 3 boxes to complete the application.

Application Evaluation: The Center will use a systematic scoring process by a panel of internal and external reviewers to select applicants for awards. Applications which do not include all required information, or which do not meet the minimum qualifications, will not be scored. The Center will score the applications using a rubric based on the project plan components noted above.

Timeline:

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RFA Release Date	10/29/2021
Applicant Questions Due (No later than 5 PM Central Time)	11/18/2021
Applications Due (no later than 5 PM Central Time)	12/03/2021
Tentative Award Announcements	12/17/2021
Anticipated Contract Start Date	1/04/2022
Anticipated Contract End Date	11/01/2022

RFA Submission and Contact: Please access the online application form [here](#). Applications are due by 5 pm Central Time on December 3, 2021.

Direct any questions to info@tacfs.org. The Center will not respond to questions received after 5 PM Central Time on November 18th, 2021.