

Notice of Funding Opportunity
Pension Regional Counseling Projects FY2024
HHS-2024-ACL-AOA-PCRP-0015
Information Call Overview & Frequently Asked Questions

March 29, 2024

On March 25, 2024, the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services held an informational call about the Pension Regional Counseling Projects (PRCP) funding opportunity (HHS-2024-ACL-AOA-PCRP-0015). Below is a summary of the information shared and a set of “frequently asked questions” related to this funding opportunity.

The topics addressed below highlight information from this Notice of Funding Opportunity, drawing attention to changes ACL has made from past PRCP funding opportunities. **This document is not a complete overview of the funding announcement and prospective applicants should review the announcement closely for complete details.** All referenced pages numbers correspond to those found in the lower right-hand corner of the Notice of Funding Opportunity announcement’s PDF.

I. General Information

- This opportunity is a full and open competition. Additional eligibility information can be found on Page 9. Applicants are also required to meet the responsiveness and screening criteria, which are listed on Pages 10-11 of the announcement.
 - Applications that meet the responsiveness and screening criteria will move on to the objective peer review process.
 - Final decisions will be made by ACL using the criteria outlined on Pages 7 and 26.
- ACL plans to award **6 grants in the form of cooperative agreements**. More information on cooperative agreements is found on Pages 7-9.
- Award information (Pages 6-7): We anticipate total funding to be \$1.2 million, ranging from **a minimum of \$175,000 to a maximum of \$200,000 per award per year, for 5 years (60 months)**.
 - For this funding opportunity, **cost sharing/match will be 20%**. This is a change from previous PRCP funding opportunities. See Pages 9-10 for more information about applicant match requirements.

II. **Key dates**

- Letters of Intent (Page 13): requested by **April 19, 2024**.
 - Letters of Intent are not required and need only be provided in the form of an email stating an intent to apply. Letters of Intent should be sent via email to Sara Planthaber, Aging Services Program Specialist (sara.planthaber@acl.hhs.gov).
- **Applications are due by 11:59 PM ET on May 20, 2024.**

III. **Regional Alignment (Pages 5-6)**

- In responding to this funding announcement, applicants must identify which ACL pre-defined region(s) they propose to serve:
 - Region I: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Illinois
 - Region II: New York and New Jersey
 - Region III: Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee, and Kentucky
 - Region IV: Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas
 - Region V: Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota
 - Region VI: Arizona, Nevada, California, and Hawaii
- ACL will make one (1) award per region. Applications must specifically identify the proposed service region from the above list.
- Applicants may apply for more than one region. To do so, the entity must submit a separate application for each region they propose to serve and must:
 - Demonstrate they meet all program performance requirements as articulated in this Notice of Funding Opportunity for each region they propose to serve; and
 - Serve all states in every region, and comply with all conditions set forth in this Notice of Funding Opportunity for each grant awarded.

IV. **Project Activities (Pages 15-16)**

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity requires four (4) project activities. Please note these are minimum requirements, and ACL anticipates that strong applications will detail how the project proposes to carry out these activities.
- The activities are as follows:
 - **Regional Pension Counseling and Referral Services:**
 - Includes counseling and assistance to all individuals who reside in the region and to those who seek pension benefits that are sponsored,

administrated, or provided to workers within the service region (either at the time of service or when the benefit was earned).

- The application must demonstrate how the proposed project will provide equivalent services and access to each state in the defined region, and how it will accept referrals and send referrals to other organizations.

- **Regional Outreach Activities:**

- The application must describe how the project will provide outreach in each state in the region and how pension access information and materials will be distributed throughout the region.
- This section should address how project outreach activities will target traditionally marginalized populations in need of pension access information, counseling, and assistance.

- **Training:**

- The application must address new staff and on-going staff training, including proposed training topics and how the training curriculum will integrate existing content from the National Pension Assistance Resource Center (NPARC).
- The application should also identify reference materials, and the budget should include costs to maintain those materials.

- **Programmatic Consistency:** Applicants must describe how they will collect and report client data, as well as outreach activities and outcomes, in conjunction with NPARC.

V. **Proposal Requirements:** All required elements for the Project Narrative and additional materials are set forth at Pages 13-16 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

VI. **Organizational Capacity and Collaboration (Pages 6, 17)**

- For each state in the region, applications must identify an attorney with expertise in pension law who is licensed to practice in that state and who is available for consultation with project staff.
- Applicants must attach a Letter of Commitment or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for any organization or individual who is identified as a key partner, key personnel, or otherwise named to carry out specific activities in the application, including consulting attorneys who are not part of the applicant organization. More information about Letters of Commitment is found on Page 19. The Letter or MOU from consulting attorneys must include:
 - Relationship between the applicant and attorney;
 - Attorney's experience with pensions and retirement plans;
 - State(s) licensed to practice;

- How the attorney will support the applicant; and
- Mechanisms for ensuring the attorney has no conflicts of interest with.

VII. Application Review Criteria (Pages 23-26)

- Points are assigned across the five (5) review criteria: (1) Project Relevance and Current Need; (2) Approach; (3) Budget Narrative and Justification; (4) Project Impact; and (5) Organizational Capacity and Collaboration.
- We strongly encourage all applicants to thoroughly review each of the five review criteria to understand how objective reviewers will score applications and any questions that should be answered in the narrative and application.

VIII. Application Due Date (Page 21): By 11:59 p.m. ET on May 20, 2024

- As is stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, ACL advises applicants not to wait until the last minute to submit their application. We cannot anticipate or predict issues with computer systems and functionality. Please give yourself enough time to completely upload the application.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q: “Does [my proposed activity] fit in the with the NOFO?”

A: Please look at the Project Description to understand the purpose of this funding and review the scoring criteria to consider whether a reviewer reading your application will think your idea is responsive.

2. Q: “My agency can serve 2 of the regions as defined in the opportunity. Can I send in 1 application to cover both of those regions?”

A: You are permitted to apply to serve more than one region. There are two ways applicants could demonstrate they would like to serve more than one region:

- (a) You can send **one** application **per** region that you would like to serve. Each application is reviewed and scored on its own and individual merit. In this scenario, an applicant agency could receive more than 1 grant award, one for each application (i.e., region), within the floor and the ceiling amounts for each award; or
- (b) You can send **one** application that proposes to serve multiple regions. Reviewers will apply the scoring criteria to everything in that single application and your score will be cumulative of everything included in the single application. You would only be eligible to receive one award within the floor and the ceiling amounts, *regardless of the number of regions you propose to serve in a single application.*

3. Q: “Do I have to have a separate attorney for each state?”

A: No; one attorney for each state is not required. It is permissible to identify one attorney who is licensed to practice in multiple states to fulfil this requirement.

4. **Q:** “The opportunity lists four activities. Do I have to do all of those? What if we want to do just 2, or add our own?”

A: Yes, the opportunity clearly states in the program description, the project narrative description, and the review criteria that applicants must describe how they will carry out the four (4) required activities, and that applicants are free to propose **additional** activities.