

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Application due 07/10/2026

HRSA

Health Resources & Services Administration

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy






Hospital State Division

State Offices of Rural Health Program

Opportunity number: HRSA-26-065



Contents

Before you begin	<u>3</u>
 Step 1: Review the Opportunity	<u>4</u>
Basic information	<u>5</u>
Eligibility	<u>6</u>
Program description	<u>8</u>
Award information	<u>11</u>
 Step 2: Get Ready to Apply	<u>14</u>
Get registered	<u>15</u>
Find the application package	<u>15</u>
Application writing help	<u>16</u>
 Step 3: Build Your Application	<u>17</u>
Application checklist	<u>18</u>
Application contents and format	<u>20</u>
 Step 4: Understand Review, Selection, and Award	<u>30</u>
Application review	<u>31</u>
Selection process	<u>36</u>
Award notices	<u>36</u>
 Step 5: Submit Your Application	<u>37</u>
Application submission and deadlines	<u>38</u>
Other submissions	<u>38</u>
 Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award	<u>39</u>
Post-award requirements and administration	<u>40</u>
Reporting	<u>44</u>
 Contacts and Support	<u>45</u>



Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registrations are active and up-to-date.

SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Apply by the application due date

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on 07/10/2026.



To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.



Step 1:

Review the Opportunity

In this step

Basic information	5
Eligibility	6
Program description	8
Award information	11

Basic information

Health Resources Services Administration

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

Hospital State Division

Help states strengthen rural health care delivery systems by maintaining a focal point for rural health within each state.

Summary

The State Office of Rural Health (SORH) program funds organizations to provide a framework to link small rural communities with state and federal resources to develop long-term solutions to rural health programs. Only one applicant from each state is eligible for this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), based on the designation of the governor.

Each SORH must:

- Maintain within the state a clearinghouse for collecting and sharing information on:
 - Rural health care issues.
 - Research findings relating to rural health care.
 - Innovative approaches to delivering health care in rural areas.
- Coordinate rural health-related activities in the state and avoid redundancy.
- Identify federal and state rural health programs and help public and nonprofit private entities participate in these programs.

Funding details

Application types: Competing continuation, New

Expected total available funding in FY 2026: \$11,200,000

Expected number and type of awards: 50 grants **Funding**

range per award: Approximately \$223,410

We plan to fund awards in five 12-month budget periods for a total five-year period of performance from 07/01/2026 to 06/30/2031.



Have questions?

Go to [Contacts and Support](#).

Key facts

Opportunity name:

State Offices of Rural Health Program

Opportunity number:

HRSA-26-065

Announcement version:

Initial

Federal assistance listing:

93.913

Key dates

NOFO issue date:

06/08/2026

Informational webinar:

[See Webinar Section](#)

Application deadline:

07/10/2026

Expected award date is by:

07/01/2026

Expected start date:

07/01/2026

See [other submissions](#) for other time frames that may apply to this NOFO.

Eligibility

Who can apply

Types of eligible organizations

These types of domestic organizations may apply:

- State governments.
- Others (see additional information on eligibility).

Additional information on eligibility

States with State Offices of Rural Health are eligible to apply. Only one applicant from each state is eligible, based on the designation of the governor.

Individuals are not eligible applicants under this NOFO.

Completeness and responsiveness criteria

We will review your application to make sure it meets these basic requirements to move forward in the competition.

We will not consider an application that:

- Is from an organization that does not meet all [eligibility criteria](#).
- Is submitted after the [deadline](#).

Application limits

You may not submit more than one application. If you submit more than one application, we will only accept the last on-time submission.

Cost sharing

Federal share

This program requires you to contribute 75% of the federal share.

You can meet your match requirement through any combination of:

- Cash contributed by your organization, partners, or other third parties.
- In-kind (non-cash) contributions from your organization, partners, or other third parties.

You can calculate this cost-sharing requirement in two ways:

Method 1: Start with the federal share.

Calculation: Multiply the federal share by 75 and divide that product by 25.

For example: $(\$30,000 \times 75) / 25 = \$90,000$.

Method 2: Start with the total project cost.

Calculation: Multiply the total project cost by 75%.

For example: $\$120,000 \times 75\% = \$90,000$.

We may waive or reduce the non-federal contribution if we determine that requiring matching funds would limit the State Office of Rural Health's ability to carry out the purpose described in 42 U.S.C. § 254(r)(a).

We waive cost sharing requirements up to \$200,000 for any award to the U.S. Virgin Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. (48 U.S.C. 1469a(d)).

Post-award requirements

Before you apply, make sure you understand the requirements that come with an award.

See [Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award](#) for information on regulations that apply, reporting, and more.

Program description

Purpose

The purpose of the SORH Program is to help states strengthen rural health care delivery systems by maintaining a focal point for rural health. This program funds an institutional framework in each state that links small rural communities with state and federal resources to help develop long-term solutions to improve access to, and the quality of, care for the nearly 60 million people living in rural communities.

Funding opportunity goals

- Maintain within the state a clearinghouse for collecting and sharing information on rural health care issues, research findings related to rural health care, and innovative approaches to rural healthcare delivery.
- Coordinate rural health related activities in the state and avoid redundancy.
- Identify federal and state rural health programs and help public and nonprofit private entities participate in these programs.

Background

The SORH Program is a federal-state partnership that has been federally funded since 1991. SORH provides funding to a single organization in each of the 50 states and serves as the central convening entity for rural coordination within the state. The SORH in each state link small rural communities with state and federal resources to help develop long-term solutions to improve access to, and the quality of care for the nearly 60 million people living in rural communities.

Authorizing legislation provides that each SORH must conduct all of the following activities:

1. Establish and maintain within the state a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on all of the following:
 - (A) Rural health care issues.
 - (B) Research findings relating to rural health care.
 - (C) Innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural areas.
2. Coordinate the activities carried out in the state that relate to rural health care, including providing coordination for the purpose of avoiding redundancy in such activities.

3. Identify federal and state programs regarding rural health, and provide technical assistance to public and nonprofit private entities regarding participation in such programs.

The legislation also allows each SORH to:

- Conduct activities pertaining to the recruitment and retention of health care professionals to serve in the rural areas of their states.
- Provide sub-awards and contracts to public and non-profit organizations to carry out SORH activities.

To help SORHs build the capacity to support rural communities, the State Rural Health Coordination and Development Program (SORHCDP) was created in 2005 to support SORH in collecting and disseminating information, coordinating activities, building collaborative partnerships, convening stakeholders, and providing leadership development to improve rural health.

SORH helps advance the [Making America Healthy Again \(MAHA\)](#) priorities, which include:

- Preventive health.
- Reducing chronic disease.
- Mental health.
- Nutrition.
- Primary and value-based care.
- Culturally appropriate services for tribes.
- Early childhood health and autism support.

Program requirements and expectations

You, as the recipient, will be required to help:

- Strengthen the rural health-care delivery system.
- Develop short- and long-term solutions to rural health challenges.
- Prioritize the rural health program's limited resources and activities.

To do these items, you will need a clear understanding of the rural health landscape.

Each SORH must:

- Maintain within the state a clearinghouse for collecting and sharing information on:
 - Rural health care issues.

- Research findings relating to rural health care.
- Innovative approaches to delivering health care in rural areas.
- Coordinate rural health–related activities in the state and avoid redundancy.
- Identify federal and state rural health programs and provide technical assistance to public and nonprofit private entities so they can participate in these programs.

Each SORH may also work to recruit and retain health professionals to serve in rural areas of the state and provide contracts to public and nonprofit private entities to carry out SORH activities.

Proposed activities should also advance one or more of the MAHA priorities. Strategies to consider include:

- Addressing root causes of poor health.
- Improving access to primary care, behavioral health, preventive care, or developmental services.
- Expanding nutrition programs or chronic disease prevention.
- Supporting early childhood development or autism services.
- Preparing systems for value-based care.
- Partnering with tribal health systems.

Statutory authority

42 U.S.C. § 254(r) (§ 338J of the Public Health Service Act)

Award information

Funding policies and limitations

Changes in HHS regulations

As of October 1, 2025, HHS has adopted [2 CFR Part 200](#), with some modifications included in 2 CFR Part 300. These regulations replace those in 45 CFR Part 75.

Policies

- To make an award, funding must be available and allocated for this program and purpose, at which point we will move forward with the review and award process.
- Have clear policies and good financial practices to avoid spending HRSA funds on unallowable activities. Like other award rules, we may audit your policies, procedures, and controls.
- Support beyond the first budget year will depend on:
 - Appropriation of funds.
 - Your satisfactory progress in meeting the project's objectives.
 - A decision that continued funding is in the government's best interest.
- If we receive more funding for this program, we may:
 - Fund more applicants from the rank order list.
 - Extend the period of performance.
 - Award supplemental funding.

General limitations

- For guidance on some types of costs we do not allow or restrict, see:
 - Project Budget Information in Section 3.1. of the [Two-Tier Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).
 - [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E](#) - General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost.
 - Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities, in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#).
- All costs must be [reasonable](#), necessary, [allocable](#) to the award, and adequately documented ([2 CFR 200.403](#)).
- You cannot earn profit from the federal award. See [2 CFR § 200.400\(g\)](#).
- Current appropriations law includes a salary limit of \$228,000 as of January 2026 that applies to this program. You may pay salaries at a higher rate if the rate

beyond the salary rate limit (Executive Level II) is paid with non-HHS funds. For help calculating salaries under this limit, read more at “salary rate limitation” in the [Two-Tier Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).

Program-specific statutory or regulatory limitations

You cannot use funds for the following:

- Paying for health care services, including cash payments.
- Conducting TA activities that another federal program already funds (non-duplication of funds).
- Purchasing medical equipment, ambulances/vehicles, aircraft, or major communications systems.
- Purchasing or improving real property.
- Supporting certificate of need activities.

See [Manage Your Grant](#) for other information on costs and financial management.

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are costs you charge across more than one project that cannot be easily separated by project. For example, this could include utilities for a building that supports multiple projects.

To incur indirect costs, you can select one of two methods:

Method 1 – Approved rate. You currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency at the time of award.

Method 2 – *De minimis* rate. Per [2 CFR § 200.414\(f\)](#), if you do not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate. If you choose this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs.

This rate is up to 15% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). See [2 CFR § 200.1](#) for the definition of MTDC. You can use this rate indefinitely for all your federal awards or until you choose to receive a negotiated rate.

Consider your indirect costs when developing your [budget](#).

Program income

Program income is money earned as a result of your award-supported project activities. You must use any program income you generate from awarded funds for approved project-related activities. Find more about program income at [2 CFR 200.307](#).



Step 2:

Get Ready to Apply

In this step

Get registered	15
Find the application package	15
Application writing help	16

Get registered

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov to apply. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register:

- Go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and select Get Started. From the same page, you can also select the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.
- You must agree to the [financial assistance general certifications and representations](#) specifically. Those for contracts are different.

When you register, you will also receive your required Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Once you register:

- You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.
- If your organization has multiple UEIs, use the one associated with your physical location.

If you need additional information about user roles in SAM.gov, see “Get registered: SAM.gov user roles” in the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#) and [How to Apply for Grants](#).

Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can find it online. Go to [Grants Search at Grants.gov](#) and search for opportunity number HRSA-26-065.

After you select the opportunity, we recommend that you select the Subscribe button to get updates.

Application writing help

Visit [HHS Tips for Preparing Grant Proposals](#).

Visit [HRSA's How to Prepare Your Application](#) page for more guidance.

See [Apply for a Grant](#) for other help and resources.

Join the webinar

Webinar information will be posted to the Related Documents tab on Grants.gov. We recommend you “Subscribe” to the NOFO on Grants.gov to receive updates when documents are posted.



Have questions? Go to [Contacts and Support](#).



Step 3:

Build Your Application

In this step

Application checklist	<u>18</u>
Application contents and format	<u>20</u>

Application checklist

There are two types of forms in Grants.gov.

- Some forms allow you to upload components of your application to the form. These include components like your project narrative, budget and budget narrative, and attachments, as applicable.
- Other forms are more typical, fill-in-the-blank forms.

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply.

Narratives

Component	Grants.gov form	Included in page limit*?
<input type="checkbox"/> Project narrative	Project Narrative Attachment form.	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget narrative	Budget Narrative Attachment form.	Yes

Attachments

Insert each in the Attachments Form in this order.

Component	Included in page limit*?
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Work plan	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Staffing plan and job descriptions	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Biographical sketches	No
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Agreements with other entities	No
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Multi-year budgets, fifth-year budget	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Project organizational chart	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. SORH letter on RHT Program	No
<input type="checkbox"/> 8-15. Other relevant documents	Yes

Other required forms

Upload using each required form in Grants.gov.

Forms	Submission requirement
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	With application.
Project Abstract Summary form	With application.
Grants.gov Lobbying form	With application.

*Only what you attach in these forms counts toward the page limit. The forms themselves do not count.

Application contents and format

This section includes guidance on each component found in the application checklist.

Application page limit: 40

Submit your information in English and express whole number budget figures using U.S. dollars.

Required format

Required format for project summary, project narrative, budget narrative, and attachments.

Font: A readable font like Arial, Courier, CG Times, or Times New Roman

File format: We only accept the following document formats:

- .PDF — Adobe Portable Document Format
- .DOC/.DOCX — Microsoft Word
- .RTF — Rich Text Format
- .TXT — Text
- .WPD — Word Perfect Document
- .XLS/.XLSX — Microsoft Excel
- .VSD — Microsoft Visio

Size: 12-point font

Footnotes, charts, graphics, and budget tables may be 10-point or higher.

Ink color: Black

Spacing: Single-spaced, including all text and tables.

Alignment: Left

Headings: Bold all headings and align left.

Size: 8.5 x 11 (Make sure the print area is set and allows printing to 8.5 x 11.)

Margins: 1-inch on all sides

Footer: On each page as the footer, include your organization's name and page numbers. If a competing continuation or competing supplement, also include your 10-digit award number.

Page numbering:

- Do not number the standard OMB-approved forms.
- Number each attachment page sequentially (that is, 1, 2, 3).
- Reset the numbering for each attachment.
- Treat each attachment as a separate section.

File names: You can find guidance for naming your files in the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).

Project narrative

Introduction

See merit review criterion 1: [Need](#)

Briefly describe the purpose of your project. Make sure it aligns with the [purpose described in the program description](#).

Need

See merit review criterion 1: [Need](#)

Describe the rural health system and infrastructure and the needs you will address through your activities to meet the purpose of the SORH program, such as information dissemination, coordinating activities, collaborating and partnering with other entities, providing technical assistance, and recruiting and retaining rural providers.

Describe the assessment techniques you will use to determine the rural needs you will address with the funds.

Use the following subheadings for this section.

Rural population

Describe your state's rural population, based on state and [HRSA's](#) definition of "rural." Use and cite demographic data whenever possible to support the information you provide. Include a map of the rural landscape.

Health status

Describe the general health status of your state and rural population. Note how it compares to national data. Include any relevant factors, such as age, poverty, health outcomes, substance use disorders (including opioid use), and other social problems.

Health-care delivery system

- Describe the state rural health system and infrastructure. Include components such as critical access hospitals (CAH), small rural and referral hospitals, rural health clinics (RHC), community health centers, and rural emergency medical services (EMS).
- Describe key partners and stakeholders, such as hospital and rural health associations, quality networks, public health partners, and coalitions. Describe how they coordinate and interact with each other.
- Discuss challenging issues and how you will address them. These could include broadband and telehealth access, maternity and obstetrics services, behavioral health, oral health, aging, substance use disorder (including opioid use), and transportation.
- Describe the efforts of providers and partners to participate in alternative payment models and value-based payment programs.

Workforce recruitment and retention

- Describe the availability of, distribution of, and shortages within the rural health workforce.
- Describe any other state health workforce issues.
- Include information on specific shortages, such as obstetrics/gynecology, behavioral health, or oral health.
- Include not only medical doctors but other health care professionals, such as allied health professionals.

Approach

See merit review criterion 2: [Response](#)

Describe how you will meet each of the [SORH program requirements and expectations](#). Your program objectives should be linked to the needs you identify in the need section of your project narrative. Explain the activities, programs, and initiatives you plan to conduct. These descriptions should be specific, realistic, measurable, and achievable within the project's time frame.

As appropriate, identify meaningful support and collaborations with key partners and stakeholders in planning, designing, and implementing all activities (for example, hospital and rural health associations, quality network, coalitions).

Your approach must align with your work plan. For example, Objective 1.a. in the approach section should be labeled as 1.a. in the work plan.

You should only describe award activities funded by the SORH federal and non-federal matching funds under this award. Do not include activities performed by SORH staff that are funded by other HRSA awards or nonfederal funds. However, you must disclose whether you participate in or benefit from your state's CMS Rural Transformation Program. If yes, you must provide a brief summary of SORH level of involvement in the CMS Rural Transformation Program activities and include a letter in Attachment 7 explaining how you plan to ensure HRSA-funded work is non-duplicative, coordinated, and complementary.

High-level work plan

See merit review criteria 2: [Response](#) and 4: [Impact](#)

The work plan narrative is a snapshot of what you describe in more detail in the approach section. Here, you will describe the activities or steps that you will use to achieve the objectives. Use a timeline that includes each activity and identifies responsible staff.

The work plan must be clear, concise, and numbered to correspond with the objectives, goals, and activities described in the approach section.

Include a more [detailed work plan as Attachment 1](#) in a chart form and include:

- Objectives.
- Activity (multiple for each objective).
- Anticipated date of completion.
- Staff or other responsible entity, contractor, or partner.
- Anticipated progress or process measures.
- Anticipated outcomes or impacts. These may be specific or broad.

Resolving challenges

See merit review criterion 2: [Response](#)

Discuss any potential barriers or challenges you anticipate in designing and implementing the activities you described in the approach and work plan. Describe the strategies and approaches you will use to resolve these barriers or challenges. If applicable, include information on how you will address any unobligated balance.

Performance management

See merit review criteria 3: [Performance reporting and evaluation](#) and 5: [Resources and capabilities](#)

- Describe the strategies and measures you will use to evaluate your performance during the period of performance. Describe how progress toward meeting grant-funded objectives will be tracked, measured, and evaluated.
- Describe how data collection strategy will be implemented to collect, analyze, and track data to measure performance and determine impact or outcomes. Describe how you will use the data to improve your performance.
- Discuss how you will use any automated or web-based performance reporting system (such as TruServ) and the HRSA Salesforce Data Collection Platform (DCP) data.
- Describe the capacity of your organization and staff to evaluate the program. Include their experience, skills, and knowledge.
- Describe how you will share results, how you will assess whether you are sharing results effectively, and whether other states or organizations can replicate your program.

See the reporting section for more information.

Organizational information

See merit review criterion 5: [Resources and capabilities](#)

- Briefly describe your mission, structure, and the scope of your current activities. Explain how they will help you carry out the program requirements. You'll include a [project organizational chart as Attachment 6](#).
- Describe relationships that contribute to your SORH's ability to meet program requirements and expectations.
- Describe how your organization will routinely assess and monitor the unique needs of rural communities.
- Explain how you will use nonfederal matching funds and how they will affect the rural population within the state. Discuss how you will use matching funds to fund activities related to one or more of the three program objectives, or for other rural health-related objectives.

Budget and budget narrative

See merit review criterion 6: [Support requested](#)

Your **budget** should follow the instructions in budget narrative: detailed instructions section of the Application Guide and the instructions listed in this section. Your budget should show a well-organized plan.

HHS now uses the definitions for [equipment](#) and [supply](#) in 2 CFR 200.1. The new definitions change the threshold for equipment to the lesser of the recipient's capitalization level or \$10,000 and the threshold for supplies to below that amount.

The total project or program costs are all allowable (direct and indirect) costs used for the HRSA award activity or project. This includes costs charged to the award and non-federal funds used to satisfy a matching or cost-sharing requirement (which may include maintenance of effort, if applicable).

The **budget narrative** supports the information you provide in Standard Form 424-A. It includes an itemized breakdown and a clear justification of the costs you request. The merit review committee reviews both.

As you develop your budget, consider:

- If the costs are reasonable, allowable and allocable, and consistent with your project's purpose and activities.
- The restrictions on spending funds. See [funding policies and limitations](#).
- How much funding you will need for staff to attend the required partnership meetings:
 - FORHP Regional SORH Meeting.
 - National Rural Health Association meeting.
 - National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health meeting.
 - The FORHP SORH orientation. New SORH directors must attend within one year of beginning their role.
- Costs that do not fit into any other category. Put these costs in the Other category and explain them. Include partner organization dues (such as for the National Rural Health Association, National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health, or 3RNet) in this category.
- The total project or program costs. These are the total allowable costs (including direct and indirect costs) you incur for this program. In your total project or program costs, include costs charged to the award and your cost-sharing funds.

To create your budget narrative, see budget narrative detailed instructions in the Application Guide.

Attachments

Place your attachments in this order in the **Attachments Form**. See [application checklist](#) to determine if they count toward the page limit.

Unless the instructions below require it, do not submit organizational brochures or other promotional materials (for example, slides, films, clips).

Attachment 1: Work plan

The work plan for the project must include all information detailed in the project narrative and cover all five years of the period of performance. The work plan must describe both required and additional activities that you will use to achieve the program objectives.

As appropriate, identify meaningful support and collaborations with key partners and stakeholders in planning, designing, and implementing all activities.

The work plan should be clear, coherent, and aligned with the goals and objectives described in the approach section. Include a timeline with each activity and its responsible staff.

Reminder: The work plan should use a numbering system to identify each objective/activity that clearly aligns with the approach section.

Attachment 2: Staffing plan and job descriptions

Include a staffing plan that shows the staff positions that will support the project, and key information about each. Justify your staffing choices, including their education and experience. Explain your reasons for the amount of time you request for each staff position.

Each SORH must fund a SORH director (position title may vary) to be the dedicated face of the SORH and the primary rural health contact within the state and with FORHP. There is no minimal full-time equivalent (FTE) requirement, but the amount should be sufficient to perform and/or oversee award objectives and activities listed in the work plan.

You may fund additional staff, such as a deputy or clerical support, with federal or matching funds. However, you may not use SORH program funds for organizational positions whose primary purpose is not directly related to the completion of SORH objectives and activities. For each key staff member, attach a one-page job description. It must include their role, responsibilities, and qualifications.

Attachment 3: Biographical sketches

Include biographical sketches for people who will hold the key positions you describe in Attachment 2.

Each biographical sketch should be no more than two pages. Do not include nonpublic personally identifiable information. If you include someone you have not hired yet, provide a letter of commitment from that person along with the biographical sketch.

Attachment 4: Agreements with other entities

Provide any documents that describe working relationships between your organization and others you mention in your project narrative. If you include documents that confirm actual or pending contracts or agreements, the documents should clearly describe the roles of subrecipients and contractors and any deliverables. It is not necessary to include the entire contents of lengthy agreements, so long as the portions you include describe the working relationship between you and the other organization. Make sure letters of agreement are signed and dated.

Attachment 5: Multi-year budgets, fifth-year budget

For the fifth budget year, submit a copy of Section B of the SF-424A as an attachment. We do not count this in the page limit. However, any related budget narrative does count. See Section 3.1.4 of the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).

Attachment 6: Project organizational chart

Provide a one-page diagram that shows the full project's organizational structure.

Attachment 7: SORH letter on RHT Program

Letter must be dated and specifically describe how you plan to ensure HRSA-funded work is non-duplicative, coordinated, and complementary to your state's CMS Rural Health Transformation Program (if applicable).

Attachment 8-15: Other relevant documents

Include here any other documents that are relevant to the application, including letters of support. Letters of support must be dated and specifically indicate a commitment to the project/program (in-kind services, dollars, staff, space, equipment, federally negotiated indirect cost rate, etc.).

Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms. Upload the following forms at Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and any available instructions at [Grants.gov Forms](#).

Forms	Submission requirement
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	With application.
Project Abstract Summary form	With application.
Grants.gov Lobbying form	With application.

Form instructions

The application guide has detailed instructions for:

- The [Application for Federal Assistance \(SF-424\) \[PDF\]](#).
- The [Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs \(SF-424A\) \[PDF\]](#).

Project abstract summary form instructions

Complete the information in the Project Abstract Summary form. Include a short description of your proposed project. Include the needs you plan to address, the proposed services, and the population groups you plan to serve. When writing your summary:

- Use 4,000 characters or fewer.
- Make sure it's clear, accurate, and short.
- Do not refer to other parts of the application.
- Do not include [personally identifiable information \(PII\)](#) in abstract form.

If you receive an award, we'll put your project abstract on public websites and databases, including [USAspending.gov](#).

Important: Public information

When filling out your SF-424 form, pay attention to Box 15: Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project.

We share what you put there with [USAspending](#). This is where the public goes to learn how the federal government spends their money.

Instead of just a title, insert a short description of your project and what it will do.

[See instructions and examples \[PDF\]](#).



Step 4: Understand Review, Selection, and Award

In this step

Application review	<u>31</u>
Selection process	<u>36</u>
Award notices	<u>36</u>

Application review

Initial review

We will review your application to make sure that it meets [eligibility](#) criteria, and the requirements in this NOFO. If your application does not meet eligibility criteria, it will not be funded. If your application does not meet other criteria, we will not fund it.

Merit review

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. You can find more about the merit review process in the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#). The members use these criteria.

Criterion	Total number of points = 100
1. Need	20 points
2. Response	35 points
3. Performance reporting and evaluation	10 points
4. Impact	10 points
5. Resources and capabilities	15 points
6. Support requested	10 points

Criterion 1: Need (20 points)

See the project narrative [Introduction](#) and [Need](#) sections.

The panel will review your application for how well it does the following.

Introduction (5 points)

The reviewer will assess the extent to which your introduction section responds to the [purpose included in the program description](#).

Needs assessment (15 points)

The reviewer will assess the quality and extent to which the needs assessment section:

- Describes assessment techniques to determine the rural needs you will address with the funds.
- Describes specific needs related to the purpose of the SORH, such as collecting and sharing rural health information, coordinating activities to avoid duplication, identifying federal and state programs and providing technical assistance.
- Describes the rural health landscape, including any relevant data for the following:
 - Demographics of the rural population.
 - Their health status.
 - The rural healthcare delivery system.
 - Workforce issues, including recruitment and retention.

Criterion 2: Response (35 points)

See the project narrative [Approach](#), [High-level work plan](#), and [Resolution of challenges](#).

The panel will review your application for the following.

Approach (20 points)

The reviewer will assess your approach section for the extent to which:

- It aligns with the SORH program requirements and expectations.
- The listed activities clearly link to the needs identified in the needs assessment section.
- It addresses the objectives, activities, programs, and initiatives, which are specific, measurable, realistic, and achievable in the project's time frame.
- The objectives and activities are clearly numbered and align with the work plan.
- It describes coordination of rural health-related activities in the state to avoid redundancy with other HRSA funded and non-federal funded activities.

High-level work plan (10 points)

The reviewer will assess the extent to which your work plan:

- Is clear and concise, with numbered objectives and activities that align with the approach section.
- Includes objectives, activities, estimated completion dates, responsible entity (e.g., staff, contractor, or partner), progress or process measures, and outcome or impact of activities, including quantitative information.

Resolution of challenges (5 points)

The reviewer will assess the extent to which you sufficiently discuss:

- The barriers and challenges you expect to encounter when designing and implementing the activities described in the approach and work plan.
- How you will resolve identified challenges.
- How you will address any unobligated balance (if applicable).

Criterion 3: Performance reporting and evaluation (10 points)

See the project narrative [Performance reporting and evaluation](#) section.

The panel will review your overall approach and methods to evaluate project results against goals and objectives and to gain insights into program outcomes and impact.

The panel will review the evidence you provide that the evaluative measures will be able to assess whether:

- The data collection strategy includes how data will be collected, analyzed, and tracked to measure performance and determine impact or outcomes, including a discussion of SORH performance measures.
 - The program objectives have been met.
 - Results are shareable and can be replicated.
 - These results can be attributed to the project.

Criterion 4: Impact (10 points)

See the project narrative [High-level work plan](#).

The panel will review your application for:

- The activities you propose in the work plan are clear and specific, contribute to accomplishing each objective, and are reasonably achievable, given the level and experience of staff, resources available, and length of the project.
- You explain any assumptions you made when developing the project work plan and discuss anticipated performance measures and desired outcomes of award-funded activities.

Criterion 5: Resources and capabilities (15 points)

See the project narrative [Organizational information](#) and [Performance reporting and evaluation](#) sections.

The panel will review your application to determine the extent to which:

- Project personnel are qualified by training and/or experience to carry out the project.
- Your organization is capable of fulfilling the requirements of the proposed project, including through the quality and availability of facilities and personnel.
- You provide a detailed project organizational chart (Attachment 6) that includes a SORH director (or similar title) and any subcomponents of SORH.
- The staffing plan and job descriptions for key personnel (Attachment 2) describe how each position will support the program objectives or activities. This includes roles, responsibilities, qualifications, and rationale for the amount of time (as a percent of FTE) requested for each staff position.
- The biographical sketches of key personnel (Attachment 3) provide sufficient detail to confirm that personnel are qualified for their positions.

Criterion 6: Support requested (10 points)

See the [Budget and budget narrative](#) section.

The panel will review your application to determine:

- The extent to which SF-424A (budget grid) is complete, is accurate, and includes both federal and non-federal 3:1 matching funds, and clearly indicates that indirect costs are 15% of the budget or less.
- How reasonable the proposed budget is for each year of the period of performance.
- How reasonable costs are and how well they align with the project's scope.
- How sufficient the time is for key staff to spend on the project to achieve project objectives.

We do not consider **voluntary** cost sharing during merit review.

Risk review

Before making an award, we review your award history to assess risk. We need to ensure all prior awards were managed well and demonstrated sound business practices. We:

- Review any applicable past performance.
- Review audit reports and findings.
- Analyze the budget.
- Assess your management systems.
- Ensure you continue to be eligible.
- Make sure you comply with any public policies.

We may ask you to submit additional information.

As part of this review, we use SAM.gov Entity Information [Responsibility/Qualification](#) to check your history for all awards likely to be more than \$250,000 over the period of performance. You can comment on your organization's information in SAM.gov. We'll consider your comments before making a decision about your level of risk.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific conditions on the award.

For more details, see [2 CFR 200.206](#).

Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- The amount of available funds.
- Assessed risk.
- [Alignment with HRSA Mission and Strategic Priorities.](#)
- The results of reviewing the progress report submitted with a competing continuation application that seeks to a new period of performance.
- Merit review results. These are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.

We may:

- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.
- Choose to fund no applications under this NOFO.

You cannot appeal a denial, or the amount of funds awarded. Additionally, we may not make an award if you are delinquent on two or more Single Audit Report.

Award notices

We issue Notices of Award (NOA) on or around the [start date](#) listed in the NOFO. See “how we make awards” in the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#) for more information.

By drawing down funds, you accept the terms and conditions of the award.



Step 5: Submit Your Application

In this step

Application submission and deadlines	<u>38</u>
Other submissions	<u>38</u>

Application submission and deadlines

Your organization's authorized official must certify your application. See the section on [finding the application package](#) to make sure you have everything you need.

Application deadline

You must submit your application by 07/10/2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives applications.

If you need a deadline extension, see “requesting a waiver” in the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).

Submission method

Grants.gov

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. You may do so using Grants.gov Workspace. This is the preferred method. For alternative online methods, see [Applicant System-to-System](#).

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Make sure that your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks, or we may not get it. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

If Grants.gov rejects your application due to errors, you must correct and resubmit before the deadline.

If you want to know more about correcting errors or tracking your application, you can refer to the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#).



Have questions? Go to [Contacts and Support](#).

Other submissions

Intergovernmental review

This NOFO is not subject to [Executive Order 12372](#), Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. No action is needed.



Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award

In this step

Post-award requirements and administration	40
Reporting	44

Post-award requirements and administration

Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you need to know if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the Notice of Award (NOA). We incorporate this NOFO by reference.
- The regulations at [2 CFR Part 200](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, modifications at [2 CFR Part 300](#), and any superseding regulations.
- The [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#). Your NOA will reference this document. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your NOA.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#), Appendix D: HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- The requirements for performance management in [2 CFR 200.301](#).
- All anti-discrimination laws: By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, you certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements. Complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. You are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.

Required alignment with HRSA mission and strategic priorities

Recipients must use funds awarded under this NOFO to implement program goals or agency priorities in accordance with the HRSA [vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities](#), where authorized by law.

In administering programs under this and all funding announcements, HRSA prioritizes:

- **Evidence-based healthcare:** Funding activities supported by rigorous scientific evidence, particularly for programs serving children and adolescents, where HRSA is committed to approaches that reflect the highest standards of clinical care and child safety.
- **Biological and physiological integrity:** Recognizing the relevance of biological sex to health outcomes, HRSA encourages applicants to account for sex-based

health factors in program design, data collection, and service delivery where scientifically appropriate.

HRSA will implement these priorities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, court orders, and all required administrative procedures. Applicants are encouraged to describe how their proposed programs align with these priorities in their project narratives.

Funded activities must advance HRSA's vision of protecting and improving the health and well-being of Americans. The particular focus is on those who are, medically vulnerable or live in areas with limited access to care. HRSA's duty is to serve wisely, effectively, and with measurable results that justify every taxpayer dollar invested.

Consistent with HRSA's priorities, in carrying out any project funded under this NOFO, the recipient must adhere to the following principles, where they are consistent with the authority and scope of the award and its activities:

- **Gold standard science:** Design and deliver services using gold standard evidence-based and evidence-informed approaches, establish measurable performance goals, and use data to monitor outcomes and drive continuous improvement.
- **Program integrity and fiscal stewardship:** Recipients must:
 - Administer funds in accordance with all applicable federal statutes, regulations, and award conditions.
 - Maintain strong internal controls.
 - Prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.
- **Partnership and local leadership:** Coordinate with state, tribal, territorial, local, and community partners, as appropriate, and tailor services to meet community-identified needs while respecting local decision-making authority.

Recipients must manage any project awarded under this NOFO in accordance with the following objectives in programs authorized to advance them:

Make America Healthy Again (MAHA): HRSA prioritizes the health and well-being of all Americans by supporting common-sense, evidence-based health policies that promote:

- Personal responsibility.
- Strong families and communities.
- Proper nutrition.
- The prevention and management of chronic disease, while ensuring access to high-quality, affordable physical and mental health care.

Child protections, biological integrity, parental rights, and lawful use of funds: HRSA prioritizes safeguarding children's health and safety by:

- Not supporting medical interventions for gender dysphoria in minors that lack a strong evidence base.
- Applying sex-based definitions grounded in biological reality.
- Supporting parental authority, transparency, and choice in education, including school-based health centers that respect parental rights and religious upbringing.
- Ensuring taxpayer funds are not used to promote or support elective abortions, consistent with federal law and the Hyde Amendment.

Advancing evidence-based, merit-driven, and ethically grounded health care: HRSA will prioritize unbiased, transparent science; merit-based workforce opportunities; and programs that demonstrate measurable outcomes, while deprioritizing organizations with:

- Conflicts of interest.
- Harm reduction models.
- Housing-first approaches.
- Activities that facilitate illegal drug use or unsafe medical practices.

Promoting public safety, lawful use of federal funds, and national health priorities:

To the extent permitted by law, HRSA will align funding with administration priorities by:

- Supporting ending the HIV epidemic through authorized, evidence-based care.
- Reserving benefits for eligible individuals.
- Discouraging illegal immigration and unsafe community practices.
- Prioritizing recipients that enforce public safety, address serious mental illness and substance use through treatment and recovery, and reduce homelessness responsibly.

To the extent allowable by law, under awards, HRSA will give priority to states and municipalities for programs to:

- Enforce prohibitions on open illicit drug use.
- Enforce prohibitions on urban camping and loitering.
- Enforce prohibitions on urban squatting.
- Enforce, and where necessary, adopt, standards that address individuals who are a danger to themselves or others and suffer from serious mental illness or substance use disorder, or who are living on the streets and cannot care for themselves. The approach must be through assisted outpatient treatment or by moving them into treatment centers or other appropriate facilities through civil commitment or other available means, to the maximum extent permitted by law.

HRSA will implement these priorities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, court orders, and any required procedures.

The recipient must demonstrate ongoing compliance with these priorities, in all programs that are authorized to advance them, through program design, implementation, reporting, and evaluation.

Failure to meaningfully align funded activities with the applicable requirements may result in corrective action, additional reporting requirements, or other actions consistent with federal grant regulations at [2 CFR. part 200](#) and the terms and conditions of this award. This includes termination under [CFR. 200.340\(a\)\(4\)](#) if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

Cybersecurity

If awarded, you must develop plans and procedures, modeled after the [NIST Cybersecurity framework](#), to protect HHS systems and data.

Health IT

Successful applicants under this NOFO agree that:

Where award funding involves:	Recipients and subrecipients are required to:
<p>Implementing, acquiring, or upgrading health IT for activities funded by any entity.</p> <p>Implementing, acquiring, or upgrading health IT for activities by eligible clinicians in ambulatory settings, or hospitals, eligible under Sections 4101, 4102, and 4201 of the HITECH Act.</p>	<p>Use health IT that meets standards and implementation specifications adopted in 45 CFR 170, Subpart B, if such standards and implementation specifications can support the activity.</p> <p>Visit to 45 CFR 170, Subpart B learn more.</p> <p>Use health IT certified under the ONC Health IT Certification Program if certified technology can support the activity.</p> <p>Visit the Certification of Health IT site to learn more.</p>

If standards and implementation specifications adopted in [45 CFR part 170, Subpart B](#) cannot support the activity, recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to use health IT that meets non-proprietary standards and implementation specifications developed by consensus-based standards development organizations. This may include standards identified in the [ONC Interoperability Standards Advisory](#).

Reporting

If you are funded, you will have to follow the reporting requirements in the “reporting” section of the [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#). The NOA will provide specific details.

You must also follow these program-specific reporting requirements:

- Progress report(s) each year
- Annual performance reports

SORH performance reporting data collection reporting platform

The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy has created specific performance measures that you will be required to report within the Salesforce Data Collection Reporting Platform annually within 60 days of the budget period. For information on the updated measures, please contact your project officer or view [the archived webinar](#). Further instructions will be provided by your project officer.



Contacts and Support

In this step

Agency contacts	46
Help with systems	47

Agency contacts

Program and eligibility

Sarah Ndiang'ui, MPH

Public Health Analyst

Attn: State Offices of Rural Health Program

Health Resources and Services Administration

SNdiangui@hrsa.gov

301-443-0876

Financial and budget

Kimberly Dews

Grants Management Specialist

Division of Grants Management Operations

Office of Financial Assistance and Acquisition Management (OFAAM)

Health Resources and Services Administration

KDews@hrsa.gov

301-443-0655

HRSA contact center

Open Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, except for federal holidays.

Call: 877-464-4772 / 877-Go4-HRSA

TTY: 877-897-9910

[Electronic Handbooks Contact Center](#)

Help with systems

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. You can call 800-518-4726, search the [Grants.gov Knowledge Base](#), or [email Grants.gov for support](#). Hold on to your ticket number.

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Helpful websites

- [Application Guide \[PDF\]](#)
- [HRSA Grants page](#)
- [HHS Tips for Preparing Grant Proposals](#)
- [Grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Applicant Training](#)
- [National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health](#)