

## National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment (HHS-2025-ACL-CIP-MINC-0022)

### Award Structure and Budget

- Can ACL confirm whether the \$15,000,000 "Estimated Total Funding" and "Award Ceiling" (Page 8) is for the entire 36-month project period or per 12-month budget period, potentially totaling \$45,000,000 over three years?
  - The estimated \$15 million is the annual funding amount for this grant. The total for the full 36-month project period could be up to \$45 million.
- Are there specific guidelines for allocating funds across the three 12-month budget periods, particularly for equipment and contractual costs (e.g., sub-grants to Benefits Enrollment Centers [BECs])?
  - No, it is up to the applicant to determine how to distribute the funding to meet the required goals and objectives of the grant. Funding will be allocated in three separate 12-month budget periods over the life of the project period. Applicants should plan to use the funding within the budget period it is received.
- For BEC sub-grants of \$30,000 each, totaling \$1,500,000 annually (Page 24), are these fully included in the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) for the 15% de minimis indirect cost rate, or are there additional exclusions?
  - The first \$50,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance for the subaward) may be included in the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) to determine the 15% de minimis rate. Therefore, if the applicant proposes to award BECs, \$30,000 each, those subawards could be included in the MTDC since they are below the \$50,000/per subaward threshold.
  - Please see [2 CFR Part 200](#) for full definitions.

### Benefits Enrollment Centers (BECs)

- Is there a minimum or target number of BECs (e.g., 50) required for nationwide coverage (Page 6), and are there specific geographic or demographic priorities for their distribution?
  - There is no minimum or target number for the BECs required, however, the applicant should provide a clear explanation and justification for the nationwide model they choose to propose for the BECs.

- What is the expected funding range per BEC sub-grant (e.g., \$30,000–\$100,000 annually) to support outreach and enrollment activities?
  - The applicant should provide a clear proposal for the BECs including planned funding per BEC along with the justification for that decision.

### **Web-Based Tools and Clearinghouse**

- Beyond 508 compliance, are there specific technical standards or platforms (e.g., interoperability with ACL/CMS systems) that web-based decision support tools must meet (Page 5)?
  - Beyond 508 compliance applicants should describe how they will ensure the information collected and housed by their proposed web-based decision support tool/s will be safely managed and secured. The tool will be grantee-owned and therefore will not be subject to the HHS IT security standards and processes. However, if applicants are interested in better understanding those standards details can be found on the [HHS OCIO website](#).
- Does ACL expect the grantee to independently host and maintain the information clearinghouse, or can existing ACL/CMS platforms be leveraged for best practices dissemination?
  - The information clearinghouse and any proposed web-based tools will be owned by the grantee and must be fully managed and maintained by the applicant/grantee.

### **Training and Technical Assistance**

- For training 500 grantees, including MIPPA grantees and BECs (Page 7), is there a minimum number of sessions or participants per session, and can virtual training fully satisfy this requirement to manage travel costs?
  - The applicant should outline in their proposal a plan for the anticipated number of training/events and target audience engagement for each event. These events may be in-person or virtual.
  - For planning purposes, applicants can assume most virtual events will have at most 500 attendees. There may be isolated events that draw more than that, but those events would be the exception to the usual attendee size.
- Are there specific performance measures or data validation requirements for training outcomes that must be included in the evaluation plan?

- The applicant should include proposed outcomes and evaluation plans for their activities in their application.

### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

- Are there priority organizations or ACL-funded resource centers that the grantee must engage with (Page 7), and should letters of commitment be secured by the application deadline (July 30, 2025)?
  - The NOFO lists suggested partners/organizations for this grant on page 7. These partners are strongly suggested but not required. In addition, this list is not all-encompassing. Applicants are encouraged to propose partners not identified in the NOFO.
  - Letters of commitment must be included in the application package prior to the application deadline of July 30, 2025, to be considered in the application review.
- Is there a preferred process for competing and awarding BEC sub-grants to ensure transparency and alignment with state No Wrong Door systems?
  - There is no preferred process, however, applicants should outline in their proposal how they will identify and manage any subrecipients involved in this grant.
  - Additional information and requirements on subrecipient monitoring and management can be found in [45 CFR Part 74](#).
- We understand letters of commitment are required for key collaborating organizations and agencies specifically named to have a significant role in the project and should be considered essential collaborators. Suppose the applicant organization also wanted to include letters of support from non-key collaborating organizations or agencies that are not named to have a significant role in the project, but would like to express their support. Would letters of support be allowed to be submitted? The letters of support would be in addition to the required letters of commitment, not in lieu of.
  - Letters of support are allowable and would not count toward the Project Narrative page limit. Please be sure to distinguish in the application the difference between the letters of support and the letters of commitment so that the reviews are clear on what the partner organizations are agreeing to.

### **Application and Submission**

- Does the Budget Narrative/Justification count toward the 20-page Project Narrative limit (Page 11), or can it be submitted as a separate attachment?

- The Budget Narrative/Justification is separate from the Project Narrative and does not count toward the 20-page limit.
- Clarification on the Criteria points for Budget, Project Impact, and Organizational Capacity: Can you please confirm the Criteria points for the sections below?
  - On page 21, Budget points indicate 15 points, while on page 22, it indicates 10 points.
  - On page 21, Project Impact points indicate 20 points, while on page 22, it indicates 15 points.
  - On page 21, Organizational Capacity points indicate 10 points, while on page 22, it indicates 20 points.
- Answer: The Review Criteria Points per category are as follows:
  - Project Relevance & Current Need = 5 points
  - Approach = 50 points
  - Project Impact = 15 points
  - Organizational Capacity = 20 points
  - Budget = 10 points

### **Post-Award Requirements**

- Are there specific templates or data reporting formats required for semiannual performance reports and collaboration with ACL on performance evaluation (Page 9)?
  - ACL has information, resources, tools, and forms available to current grantees on our website here: <https://acl.gov/grants/managing-grant>. Within that site is a link to a suggested format for the [performance report](#).
- For FFATA and FSRS reporting of subawards over \$30,000 (Page 26), should each BEC sub-grant be reported individually, or can uniform sub-grants (e.g., \$30,000/BEC) be aggregated?
  - Additional information on the FFATA and FSRS system can be found on ACL's website for current grantees under the "Federal Funding Requirements" section: <https://acl.gov/grants/managing-grant>.