



STATE OF MARYLAND

Community Health Resources Commission

45 Calvert Street, Room 336 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Larry Hogan, Governor – Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair – Mark Luckner, Executive Director

March 11, 2022

Maryland Community Health Resources Commission FY 2022 Call for Proposals Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there a limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a single entity?

No, there is no limit to the number of applications submitted by a single entity; however, applicants should be very clear about the differences between each proposal submitted.

2. Does it matter if an applicant is a current and/or former grantee? Does that weigh in their favor?

Former/current grantees of the CHRC are welcome to submit proposals if they meet the eligibility requirements stated in the Call for Proposals.

3. Are current grantees eligible to submit new grant applications?

Yes, current grantees are welcome to apply for this grant funding if their current project is under implementation and meeting reporting requirements and they meet the eligibility requirements stated in the Call for Proposals. However, applicants are advised that the proposal must be wholly separate and distinct from the current CHRC grant under implementation.

4. How many project years can a grant submission cover?

Applicants may submit proposals that reflect a one-, two- or three-year project period and budget request.

5. Should the individual projects address each strategic priority detailed in the Call for Proposals?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to address each strategic priority stated in the FY 2022 Call for Proposals.

6. How many FY 2022 grants will be awarded? Do you have a preliminary estimate of the amount for each award?

The CHRC has a potential total of approximately \$7 million to award in new grant funding to support projects. Applications must include a budget proposal that covers the full term of the grant period (from 1 to 3 years), with expenditures calculated annually using the budget form provided by the CHRC.

7. Does the full Year One budget need to be expended before the end of FY 2022 (i.e., June 30, 2022)?

No. CHRC funds are special funds and do not need to be expended before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2022).

8. Once grants are awarded and start dates are determined, how much lead-time will be required?

Once the CHRC makes its grant awards at the May 2022 Commission meeting, grantees are notified that they need to: (1) sign the grant agreement; (2) review and approve performance metrics and grant reporting schedule; and (3) if requested by the Commission, provide an updated line-item budget for the grant award amount. Grantees are expected to launch project implementation within the first 60-90 days of the grant award.

9. Is the requirement to submit a financial audit mandatory?

Yes, submission of the most current financial audit for the lead or coordinating organization is mandatory. The CHRC uses the financial information of the applicants to evaluate the long-term financial solvency of potential grantees and to ensure that limited public grant funding is invested in financially sustainable organizations. If the audit is determined to be “aged,” CHRC staff will contact the applicant to request an updated financial audit. If the applicant does not have a current financial audit available, the CHRC will also accept other financial information such as tax returns or a profit and loss statement. However, submission of tax returns or a profit and loss statement in lieu of a formal, independent financial audit will result in the applicant being flagged as high risk.

10. Are local health departments required to submit the financial audit?

No, this requirement does not apply to local health departments.

11. Are grant funds able to support the costs of addressing social determinants of health (e.g., transportation)?

Yes, the CHRC aims to support projects that address the identified social determinants of health needs of the target population. The proposal should be **very clear** on what SDOH will be addressed, how grant funds will be used to address these SDOH, what health disparities and health outcomes will be improved by addressing these SDOH, and how the impact on the targeted health disparities and health outcomes will be measured. Proposals that utilize a holistic approach to address social determinants of health needs such as community health workers, patient navigators, multi sectoral partnerships, and community-based participatory approaches are reviewed favorably by the Commission. Interventions that propose collaborations with multiple entities and community-based partnerships that create social, political, or economic support systems to address the social determinants of health for the proposed geographic area/target population are strongly encouraged.

12. In light of prior legislation approved by the General Assembly, the CHRC is required by the State to honor certain rates for indirect costs on certain State-funded grants and contracts

with nonprofit organizations, will the Commission accept rates for indirect costs that exceed 10%?

Yes, in limited circumstances. In accordance with MD Code Ann., State Finance and Procurement § 2-208, the CHRC will allow for reimbursement of indirect costs to nonprofit organizations in an amount equal to the rate the nonprofit organization has negotiated and received for indirect costs under a direct federal award, or from a non-federal entity based on the cost principles in Subpart E of OMB Uniform Guidance.

13. What are permissible expenses incurred as part of indirect costs?

Indirect costs include items that are associated with running the organization as a whole and benefit more than one project/program. Allowable indirect costs include items such as administrative staff salaries, rent, utilities, office supplies, insurance, etc. No more than 10% of the total budget can be requested for indirect costs.

14. What is not allowable under indirect costs?

Noncash transactions such as depreciation are not allowable indirect costs.

15. Payroll fringe costs are limited to 25%. Will fringe costs exceeding 25% be considered?

The Commission advises that the fringe rate be calculated at no more than 25%. If the grantee requests more than 25%, the applicant will be required to provide a compelling rationale for exceeding this amount. The Commission is willing to consider fringe requests above 25% on a case-by-case basis.

16. What is the overall page limit for the proposals?

Applicants are advised to limit the project proposal section of their application (as defined in the Call for Proposals) to **15 pages** in length.

17. Are letters of support required or desired in addition to the letters of commitment or MOUs with partners and collaborators?

A letter of support from parties to an executed MOU or letter of commitment is not required per se. When a lead or coordinating organization submits an application on behalf of a coalition of community partners, the CHRC **strongly encourages** the lead applicant to define a clear governance or other organizational structure that ensures a clear line of accountability between the lead or coordinating organization and each community partner providing grant funded services. In addition, applications that demonstrate projects deeply rooted in community-based solutions will be favorably reviewed by the CHRC, so local support letters, while not required, are encouraged.

The CHRC does require that MOUs between the lead or coordinating organization and the coalition partners and/or partner organizations providing direct services or organizational support under the project be executed prior to and included with submission of the proposal. A letter of commitment would be viewed as a less acceptable alternative to MOUs as these are generally considered to be a less binding agreement between parties.

18. If the project proposal involves the provision of grant services through a partner organization, is a MOU with the partner organization required with submission of the application?

Yes. As noted above, the CHRC does require that MOUs between the lead or coordinating organization and the coalition partners and/or partner organizations providing direct services or organizational support under the project be executed prior to and included with submission of the full grant application.

The project proposal will need to clearly define the role(s) and responsibilities of partner organizations in providing grant funded services. The scope and type of services, and the formal nature of the relationship between the lead or coordinating applicant and partner organization(s) will determine whether a Letter of Collaboration or MOU (or other legal agreement) is appropriate. However, a letter of commitment would be viewed as a less acceptable alternative to MOUs as these are generally considered to be a less binding agreement between parties.

19. Can you clarify, what should be the content of an MOU with a primary care provider? This seems different from what is stated in the Call for Proposals (i.e., if grant funded services are provided through formal partnership with other organizations, an MOU must be in place ...).

To be "certified" as an Access Services Community Health Resource, the lead applicant must have a documented existing relationship with a healthcare provider to provide healthcare services to your clients. Both you and the healthcare provider must also provide services on a sliding fee scale basis (these documents must be provided with the application). You may already have an agreement in place with a clinical provider if you are already referring clients for care. As long as the relationship is memorialized on "paper" that will suffice and can be submitted.

20. If there are multiple partner organizations coordinating together to work on the proposed project, should we list all participating organizations?

Yes. CHRC recommends that the applicant identify **all** partners that intend to provide any grant funded services and/or provide substantive support to the project during planning and implementation. The proposal should present a clear accountability or management plan that delineates the role and responsibilities of each project partner/service provider and how the applicant will oversee these services and activities. Applicants should also describe how grant funds will be used in relation to services provided by each partner organization. This plan should describe which outcomes will be impacted by the activities of each partner.

21. How quickly will applicants be notified if they will be invited to present their grant proposal?

CHRC staff will notify applicants of their eligibility to present their grant proposal to the Commission in late April/early May 2022.

22. Permissible grant expenses may include:

- a) Salaries and employment benefits for project staff;
- b) Subcontracting and consultant fees;
- c) Data collection and analysis;
- d) Project-related travel, conference calls, and meetings;
- e) Office supplies, expenses, and other indirect costs as approved by the Commission; and
- f) A limited amount of essential equipment and minor infrastructure improvements required by the project.

Funds from operating grants awarded under this subtitle may not be used for:

- a) Major equipment or construction projects;
- b) Support of clinical trials;
- c) Medical devices or drugs that have not received approval from the appropriate federal agency; or
- d) Lobbying or political activity.

23. Are capital expenditures a permissible use of grant funds under this Call for Proposals?

The Commission will consider reasonable capital expenditures on a case-by case basis when requested to support interventions proposed by the applicant to address and demonstrate progress toward achieving the strategic goals of the Call for Proposals. However, large-scale construction projects (as determined by the type and budget amount proposed) will not be considered. As noted in the Call for Proposals, grant funds may also be expended for a limited amount of essential equipment and minor infrastructure improvements required by the project. In each case, the applicants will need to clearly demonstrate how the proposed use of grant funding relates to the strategic goals of the Act. Examples of reasonable expenditures include purchasing medical or dental equipment needed to improve or expand the provision of direct services.

24. What is the anticipated start date of the awards?

The grant period is expected to begin in late May or Early June 2022, once grant agreements are fully executed. It is expected that all projects will be fully implemented and operational within 60-90 days of the grant agreement date.

25. Are expenses incurred prior to the execution of the grant agreement eligible for reimbursement under the grant?

Expenses incurred by applicants prior to full execution of the grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement under the grant budget.

26. Please clarify the process and requirements for submitting the financial audit, MOU, and full grant application.

All applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent (LOI)** for the application to be considered. Letters of Intent **must be received by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on February 28, 2022, via email**

delivery to Jen Thayer at mdh.chrc@maryland.gov. In the subject line of the email, please state your organization's name and the Call for Proposals area of focus category for your application. A hard copy original of the Letter of Intent is not necessary.

The Letter of Intent submission must include the following two items:

1. **A completed Letter of Intent.** The LOI template and completion instructions can be found in Appendix I of this document and online at:

<https://health.maryland.gov/mchrc/Pages/notices.aspx>

The LOI template must be filled out completely and must adhere to the posted word limits.

2. **Financial audit.** Organizations must submit **an electronic version of the most recent financial audit of the organization.** The audit should be submitted at the same time as the LOI. Receipt of the LOI and financial audit are a condition for moving forward in the grant process.

If grant funded services are provided through **formal** partnerships with another organization or group, the CHRC will require that a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** or similar legally binding document be in place prior to submission of the LOI, and a copy of the fully executed document(s) be included with the LOI.

NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to confirm that all scanned documents are legible and complete prior to submitting to the CHRC, as poor image quality, incomplete submissions, or missing pages could result in disqualification of the proposal.

STEP 2: Submission of Grant Applications - due March 22, 2022

Applicants who are invited to submit a full grant application must follow the application guidelines detailed below.

Full grant applications (see components listed below) must be received electronically by the CHRC no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on March 22, 2022.

The full electronic grant application should be emailed to: mdh.chrc@maryland.gov

In the subject line of the email, please state your organization's name and the Call for Proposals area of focus category (Area 1, 2 or 3 is sufficient) of your proposal. **NOTE:** for the electronic submission, the **Executive Summary and Project Proposal** must be submitted in these two file formats: (1) Adobe Acrobat PDF, and (2) MS Word (version 2010 or later).

In addition to the electronic grant application submission, two hard copy originals of the full application with the items listed below must be sent via USPS mail or express delivery service. If sent by USPS, it must be postmarked no later than **March 22, 2022**; if sent by an express delivery service, the package must indicate that the package was picked up for delivery by the close of business on **March 22, 2022**, to be considered a complete grant application package. For a full list of required documents and attachments refer to the "HOW TO APPLY" Section of the Call for Proposals.

27. The Project Budget and Budget Justification are listed as components of the Project Proposal, are these included in the 15-page Proposal limit?

The Project Budget and Budget Justification are not included in the 15-page proposal limit. The **full project budget, budget narrative and budget justification** referenced under this heading are to be provided separately as appendices to the full proposal (see the Call for Proposals).

28. The two-page Executive Summary is listed as a heading/section of the Project Proposal, is this included in the 15-page Proposal limit?

The Executive Summary is not included in the 15-page proposal limit. However, a condensed version of the summary should be included in the introductory section of the full grant proposal.