



Family First Prevention Services – Private Provider Transitional Grants
Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)
FY 2021-22 Grant Year
REQUEST FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS (RFGA)

CFDA Number: 93.556

Posting Date: January 26, 2021

<p>Your application <u>must</u> be submitted in a <u>sealed</u> package if mailed or in-person delivery. RFGA Number and Deadline/Closing Date (see below) must appear on package exterior.</p>	
<p>Deadline/Closing Date for Applications: February 19, 2021 at 2:30 PM EST</p>	<p>Must Be Received At: SCDSS State Office-Procurement Division 1535 Confederate Avenue Ext. Columbia, SC 29201 or dssprocurement@dss.sc.gov</p> <p>No Later Than February 19, 2021 at 2:30PM EST</p>
<p>Submit your sealed package to either of the following addresses:</p>	
<p>MAILING ADDRESS:</p> <p>SCDSS State Office-Procurement Division Attn: Elizabeth M. Muenzenberger P.O. Box 1520 Columbia, SC 29202-1520</p>	<p>PHYSICAL ADDRESS:</p> <p>SCDSS State Office-Procurement Division Attn: Elizabeth M. Muenzenberger 1535 Confederate Avenue Ext. Columbia, SC 29201</p>

SCDSS offers this Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) for the funds administered by SCDSS for the State of South Carolina (SC) from the Federal **Family First Transition Services Act** grant. Acceptable applications that will be considered as part of this grant program are those that support the activities, goals, and objectives as outlined in the scope of services. Funds may not be used for any other purpose. SCDSS reserves the right to determine whether a proposal falls within the scope of activities and is eligible under the stated guidelines. Applications are only accepted during the Request for Grant Applications period, will be evaluated by a panel of subject matter experts, and will be scored based on the award criteria stated in the RFGA.

Forty awards statewide will be made under this RFGA to applicants. The total dollar amounts available to be awarded to each applicant under this RFGA is a maximum of **\$10,000**.

Eligibility: The applicant must be in “good standing as a provider with SCDSS, located in South Carolina, and provide residential services to children.

How to Apply: See the Request for Grant Applications (RFGA), starting on page four of this document, for additional details regarding information to be included with your submission. A cover letter should be included and signed by authorized agent or other official agency personnel. Eligible applicants must submit the required documents to either the mailing address or physical address listed above.

Deadline: The deadline for all applications is **February 19, 2021 by 2:30 P.M. EST**. Applications must be delivered in paper format or by electronic mail at dssprocurement@dss.sc.gov. Please see physical address instructions, below. Any documents received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Questions & Answers: Questions will be accepted until 5:00 P.M. EST, February 5, 2021. All questions must be submitted in writing to Elizabeth M. Muenzenberger at Elizabeth.M.Muenzenberger@dss.sc.gov. Responses will be posted on the SCDSS website by February 9, 2021 by 5:00 PM EST.

Final selection of the successful applicant is anticipated to be made and notifications released and posted on the SCDSS website on or before **March 2, 2021**. Notice of extension will be posted on this site if more time is required by SCDSS. The Grant Agreement will be effective when signed by both the Provider and SCDSS.

All vendors and Contractors must have a state vendor number to receive reimbursement from SCDSS. To obtain a state vendor number, visit www.procurement.sc.gov and select New Vendor Registration. (To determine if your business is already registered, go to “Vendor Search”). Upon registration, you will be assigned a state vendor number. Vendors and Contractors must keep their vendor information current. If you are already registered, you can update your information by selecting Change Vendor Registration. (Please note that vendor registration does not substitute for any obligation to register with the S.C. Secretary of State or S.C. Department of Revenue. You can register with the agencies at <http://www.scbos.com/default.htm>.)

Additional Physical Address Information:

Visitors arriving at 1535 Confederate Avenue, Columbia, SC will enter SCDSS through the front entrance and deliver their proposal to Security Personnel and have the proposal date and time stamped for receipt.

It will take several minutes to obtain building access and have your application date and time stamped. Please allow at least thirty (30) minutes for this process of obtaining building access and getting your application stamped in. The deadline for applications is identified on this Cover Page. Please plan accordingly as deadline times will not be adjusted and proposals will not be accepted after the deadline stated.

I. BACKGROUND

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (“Department”) is South Carolina’s lead child welfare agency. The Department’s charge is to protect the state’s most vulnerable populations; its mission, to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children while strengthening families. To fulfill its objective, the Department envisions a system that is trauma-informed, family-centered, strengths-based, culturally responsive, and recognizes that children belong in the least restrictive, most family-like, and trauma informed settings possible, where they can thrive and grow.

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was passed by Congress on February 9, 2018. FFPSA includes historic reforms to child welfare financial streams by allowing states to provide prevention services to families of children who are at imminent risk of entering foster care. The FFPSA highlights the importance of children growing up in families and seeks to avoid trauma related to children being separated from family members and entering foster care. Federal reimbursement will now be available for the following prevention service to allow children to remain safely in the home:

- Trauma-informed mental health services;
- Substance Use Disorder Treatment and;
- In-home parenting skills training.

In addition, FFPSA aims to improve the permanency, safety, and overall well-being of children in foster care by safely reducing the placement of children in non-family-based settings (i.e. congregate care). The goal is to place children in the least restrictive, most family-based setting appropriate to each child’s individual needs. Upon implementation of Family First in South Carolina, as of 10/1/2021, Title IV-E funds can only be used for the following congregate care settings beyond the initial fourteen (14) days upon entering foster care.

- Placement settings for pregnant or parenting youth;
- Supervised independent living for youth ages 18-21;
- Specialized placements for children who are at-risk of being or are identified victims of sex trafficking;
- Family-based residential treatment facilities for substance use disorders; or
- Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) for youth with treatment needs.

FFPSA created a new specific congregate placement setting called a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) along with a structured protocol centered on placement of children in these placement settings. QRTPs serve children with specific treatment needs who require out-of-home short-term placement.

SCOPE OF GRANT PROPOSAL

In an effort to support the South Carolina Department of Social Services' (SCDSS) implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), the Department is soliciting applications from licensed congregate care providers who are interested in becoming a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) in accordance with the provisions contained herein. The programs will be dedicated to providing behavioral health and clinically-appropriate services to children between the ages of twelve (12) and twenty-one (21) who cannot be safely served in their own homes or other licensed family-based settings.

Applications are limited to private providers with an active license issued by SCDSS. Successful applicants will be responsible for the development and implementation of the new QRTP model set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Children's Bureau (CB).

The QRTP model will be a part of a continuum of care for children who enter the foster care system and have serious behavioral and emotional disorders or disturbances.

The QRTP model's success will depend on the support and participation of the child serving systems in this state and will require support and understanding from all stakeholders to include families, children, judges, Court-personnel, child welfare workers, mental health agencies, schools, community-based service agencies, residential care providers, child placing agencies, and funders. The child-serving community must welcome this change in practice and embrace a new way of serving children and their families. Understanding the populations served and how to best meet their needs is the key to developing an effective and responsive system of care. The QRTP model will provide for trauma-informed treatment delivered in an environment that safely preserves family relationships and empowers families to ultimately meet their own needs with community support and resources.

All timely submitted applications from eligible applicants will be considered.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

A. REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

The applicant awarded under this grant application shall operate as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) and must apply the following:

1. Has a trauma-informed treatment model that is designed to address the needs, including clinical needs as appropriate, of children with serious emotional or behavioral disorders or disturbances and are able to implement the treatment identified for the child by the required 30-day assessment of the appropriateness of the QRTP placement.
2. To the extent appropriate, and in accordance with the child's best interest, facilitates participation of family members in the child's treatment program.
3. Facilitates outreach to the family members of the child, including siblings, documents information for any known biological family and fictive kin of the child.

4. Documents how family members are integrated into the treatment process for the child, including post-discharge planning and family-based aftercare support for at least six months post-discharge.
5. Is licensed by the respective state in accordance with title IV-E requirements and is accredited by any of the following independent, not-for-profit organizations: The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the Council on Accreditation (COA), the Teaching Family Association (TFA), the Educational Assessment Guidelines Leading Toward Excellence (EAGLE), or any other independent, not-for-profit accrediting organization approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
6. Has registered or licensed nursing staff and other licensed clinical staff who provide care within the scope of their practice as defined by state law, are on-site according to the treatment model, and are available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. This requirement shall not be construed as requiring a QRTP to acquire nursing and behavioral staff solely through means of a direct employer to employee relationship.

B. GRANT REQUIREMENTS

1. The applicant must allow SCDSS on-site for site visits and/or audits and make records available for financial, programmatic, quality management and other grant-related visits, as requested by SCDSS.
2. The applicant must be prepared to provide, upon request by SCDSS, specific documentation of expenditures included on submitted invoices. The following areas will be reviewed and/or audited:
 - a. Financial Management: Financial records will be reviewed to assure compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. The records should provide accurate, current and complete disclosure of financial results. Records must identify the source and application of funds and must be supported by invoices and another source documentation.
 - b. Program Progress: Review progress in meeting QRTP requirements. Programs must meet all requirements by October 1, 2021.
 - c. Program Outcome and Performance Measure: The following performance and outcome measures will be tracked by the provider to help DSS evaluate eligibility for Y2 and Y3 grants for ongoing assistance. Reporting requirements are listed below (see Section D. Grant Reporting Requirements).

C. FUNDING RELATED GRANT REQUIREMENTS

1. The full amount of the award must be expended no later than one year from the award date.
2. In-Kind Match Requirement: 5 percent (5 %) of awarded amount. The in-kind match must show that the applicant has invested equal amount of the award back into to the program to

- transition to a QRTP and meet the model requirements.
3. The waiver in-kind match shall no longer be valid if the pilot participant decides to no longer participate in the pilot or DSS decides to terminate the pilot.
 4. Annual submission of a budget, budget narrative, outreach and education plan are required at least four weeks prior to the start of the new funding cycle.
 5. Annual submission of report certifying compliance with QRTP model standards.
 6. Must go directly toward training for staff to implement a trauma-informed model of care, for initial accreditation fees by one of the approved accrediting bodies (not recertification fees), to obtain and train a licensed or registered nurse and other licensed clinical staff, to building, implementing, and enhancing: family engagement, treatment planning, discharge planning, and family-based aftercare services.
 7. Please note: Grant funds may not be used for the following:
 - Service Provision
 - Operating Costs
 - Lobbying
 - Publicity

D. GRANT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The successful applicant will provide programmatic and financial reports as required by the Division of Permanency Management. These requirements are:

1. Monthly Report due by the 15th of the following month: the monthly report will contain the following
 - a. Number of referrals received.
 - b. Number of referrals accepted for placement.
 - c. Number of youth discharged.
 - d. Percentage of children discharged within six months of admission.
 - e. Percentage of children discharged within six months to one year of admission to include children's ages.
 - f. Percentage of children discharged after one year of placement to include children's ages.
 - g. Percentage of youth discharged with a family-based after care plan for six months post-discharge from the QRTP. Minimally, contact shall be made with the child and family at least one time per month post discharge by phone, e-mail, or in-person. All aftercare contact shall be documented.
 - h. Number and percentage of youth discharged to a less-restrictive setting. Setting shall be identified and documented.
 - i. Number and percentage of youth who re-entered placement during the six-months of aftercare services.

The successful applicant may also be requested to provide other data metrics, as the program/grant progresses, and will be required to provide that information, upon request.

E. GRANT BUDGET

The grant project period is from the effective date of the Grant Agreement through March 1, 2022. The total dollar amount available will be dependent on approval by SCDSS which shall be based on performance over the aforementioned project period. The grant will be awarded by March 2, 2021. Determination of award will be based on the merits of the proposed projects as put forth in the grant applications.

If awarded, the applicant will submit to DSS a report and proof of satisfactory compliance with QRTP model standards and full site accreditation **no later than October 1, 2021**. Due to recent impacts of COVID in respect to accreditation and site visits, the Department is willing to consider “special circumstances” related to full implementation.

III. INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS TO SUBMIT/SCORING

To be considered for award all proposals must include, at minimum, responses to the information requested in this section. Scoring points associated with each section are noted in parentheses.

Proposals are limited to a maximum of 20 pages for the narrative. The cover page, budget, budget narrative, resumes, appendices and attachments are not counted against this 20-page limit. No additional attachments, other than those specified, will be accepted. Please submit only proposals with 1-inch margins, 12-point font and numbered pages. Single spacing is permissible. Proposals will be rated on a 100-point scale (Program Description points available = 30, narrative points available = 50; financial points available = 20).

Entities applying should restate each of the items listed below and provide their response immediately thereafter.

ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE PRESENTED IN THE LISTED ORDER:

TABLE OF CONTENTS – Provide a one-page table of contents document that includes all the items listed below.

1. Program Description
2. Work Plan Narrative
3. Reporting, Budget Narrative, and Evaluation.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (30 POINTS TOTAL)

1. Describe the history of the organization within the community and provide evidence that it has the capacity to serve and reach the target population.
2. Describe the organization’s experience working with children with serious emotional and mental disorders and disturbances.
3. Describe how staffing patterns will be developed to ensure the delivery of the core components of the QRTP model.

4. Describe who will oversee the administration and supervision of the services and their qualifications.
5. Include an organizational chart showing how the proposed program will fit into the organizations structure.

B. WORK PLAN NARRATIVE (50 POINTS TOTAL)

The applicant must demonstrate the proven ability to accomplish the tasks set forth in the Scope of Work.

1. Describe the agency's participation in and understanding of the Department's Guiding Principles and Standards Practice Model as Attachment 2.
2. Describe the target population the agency seeks to serve at the facility and the individualized services the facility will deliver to the target population.
3. Describe the agency's plan to successfully implement the QRTP model and to provide services to the target population.
4. Describe the agency's collaboration with existing service providers, community stakeholders, and the child welfare agency.
5. Describe the plan to build a "provider network" for services that cannot be provided internally.
6. Describe strategies to promote family engagement, including creative outreach methods to engage geographically isolated families as part of the on-site family engagement as well as the aftercare service components.
7. Describe the use of culturally appropriate and responsive services.
8. Describe the trauma-informed model and structure.
9. Describe the development needs for the proposed areas to be served to include education, access to services.
10. Describe how the agency will structure and develop the QRTP model to meet the needs of the target population.
11. Describe how the agency will decrease the length of stay for youth served when residential care is no longer necessary.
12. Applicants must provide a clear, concise, and well-supported statement identifying the service development needs and barriers in the community and how the provider will work collaboratively to build and enhance necessary structures, supports, and services.
13. If service development is required in order to transition to a QRTP Model, please describe what additional services/requirements are needed, how current services may need to be enhanced, and potential barriers such as isolated location, funding, staff/workforce, etc.

C. REPORTING, BUDGET NARRATIVE, AND EVALUATION (20 POINTS TOTAL)

1. Describe the system your agency will use to collect demographic and services- provided data and to evaluate its success in responding to the identified needs of the youth served and

- providing cost-effective services.
2. Describe how you will track outcomes of children and families who receive the model for which this grant is being awarded.
 3. Describe how your organization will approach continuous quality improvement.
 4. Describe your organization's budget template for use of grant funds in narrative format.

D. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicant shall submit a signed Cover Page and Application addressing all of the above noted points. Application must include one (1) original and three (3) copies of:

- a. Signed Cover Letter
- b. Table of Contents
- c. Program Description
- d. Work Plan Narrative
- e. Reporting, Budget Narrative, and Evaluation

ATTACHMENT 1

Procedures for Dispute Resolution

I DISPUTE PROCEDURES FOR GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATIONS DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The following dispute procedures are available to any community-based organization, local or county program or any other applicant that objects to any requirement(s) as outlined in a Request for Grant Applications (RFGA), amendment to RFGA or does not receive a distribution of funding as a grantee under a federal, state, or combined federal/state grant program. An applicant or grantee that disagrees with any element of the grant requirements or with the distribution of funding is also referred to herein as a “requestor.”

- A. **Request or Application for Funding.** Subject to conditions set forth in these procedures, any prospective applicant desiring to file a dispute concerning DSS’s proposed evaluation of applications or proposed manner of distribution of funds (as outlined in the RFGA) shall e-mail or fax a Notification of Appeal to the SCDDSS Procurement Manager within *three (3) business days* of the posting date of the RFGA or any amendment thereto. The notification of appeal must clearly specify the grounds of the dispute and the relief requested. Within *seventy-two (72) hours* of receipt of a notification of appeal, the Procurement Manager shall render a decision as to the disposition of the dispute and will e-mail or fax written notification of this decision to the prospective applicant. If the prospective applicant is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the Procurement Manager, the applicant shall e-mail, or fax written notification to the DSS Program Area Director* within *two (2) business day* of the date of the written notification of decision from the Procurement Manager. The Procurement Manager will conduct a review and e-mail or fax a written decision to the prospective applicant within *three (3) business days*. The written decision will be final and may not be further appealed by the requestor.
- B. **Award to a Provider.** A requestor with a dispute regarding the Notification of Award shall e-mail, fax or mail a Notification of Appeal to the Procurement Manager within *three (3) business days* of the date of posting of the Notification of Award. The notification of appeal must clearly specify the grounds of the dispute and the relief requested. Within *seventy-two (72) hours* of receipt of a notification of appeal, the Procurement Manager shall render a decision as to the C. of the dispute and will e-mail or fax written notification of this decision to the requestor. If the requestor is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the Procurement Manager, the requestor shall e-mail, or fax written notification to the Program Area Director within *three (3) business days* of the date of the written response from the Procurement Manager. The

Procurement Manager will conduct a review and e-mail or fax a written decision to the requestor within **three (3) business days**. The written decision will be final and may not be further appealed by the requestor.

- C. **Notice of Decision.** A copy of all correspondence or decisions under this dispute resolution procedure shall be mailed or otherwise furnished immediately to the requestor and any other party intervening.

II. PROCEDURES FOR GRANT DISPUTES OR CONTROVERSIES REGARDING DSS'S EVALUATION OF A GRANTEE'S EXPENDITURES IN THE POST-AWARD PHASE

- A. **Applicability.** These procedures shall apply to controversies between SCDSS and a grantee when the grantee disagrees with SCDSS's evaluation of an expenditure by the grantee as "not allowed" under the grant program requirements. These procedures constitute the exclusive means of resolving a controversy between SCDSS and a grantee of an awarded grant.
- B. **Grievance.** No later than **thirty (30) calendar days** after receiving notice that the agency's grant program area has denied an expenditure, a grantee must e-mail, or fax written notice identifying any dispute or controversy to the Procurement Manager. The Procurement Manager will, **within thirty (30) calendar days** thereafter, review and attempt to informally resolve the dispute or controversy. If the dispute cannot be mutually resolved within that timeframe, a grantee wishing to continue pursuit of the dispute must e-mail or fax written notice of the dispute to the Procurement Manager within **five (5) business days** following the 30-day review period. The Procurement Manager or his/her designee will, within **ten (10) business days** of receipt of a written notice of the dispute, meet or hold a conference call with the grantee. Within **ten (10) business days** after such consultation with the grantee, the Procurement Manager will e-mail or fax the grantee with a written determination as to his/her decision regarding the disposition of the expenditure. The decision of the Procurement Manager will be final and may not be further appealed by the requestor.

Grants Program Manager:

LaToya Faulkner-Clayton, MSW
Private Provider Program Manager
Division of Permanency Management
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