

FOA: Community Mental Health Centers Grant Program

OVERVIEW

On April 6th, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Community Mental Health Centers grant program. This program enables Community Mental Health Centers to support and restore the delivery of clinical services that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and effectively address the needs of individuals with serious emotional disturbance (SED), serious mental illness (SMI), and individuals with co-occurring substance use disorders (COD).

SAMHSA will award \$825 million in total funding to eligible Community Mental Health Centers that will address the unmet needs of individuals with behavioral health conditions, including, but not limited to:

- Timely access to and availability of early intervention and treatment for the mental health impact of the pandemic and worsening of pre-existing mental health conditions;
- Availability of in-person socially distanced or virtual intensive treatment programs;
- Availability and access to timely medications, such as long-acting injectables and clozapine;
- Access to private and safe spaces to conduct virtual treatment sessions; and
- Under-utilization of crisis services due to fear of the pandemic.

The full FOA is available [here](#). Applications are due on May 21st.

FUNDING

SAMHSA will award between 165 and 825 organizations with grants based on the number of unduplicated individuals with SED, SMI, and COD that will be served annually, as follows:

Minimum Individuals Served Per Year	Maximum Funding Request Per Year
100	\$500,000
200	\$1,000,000
300	\$1,500,000
400	\$2,000,000
500	\$2,500,000

Funding limitations are as follows:

- No more than 20 percent of the total grant award for each budget period may be used for data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment;
- No more than 20 percent of the total grant award for each budget period may be used for infrastructure development; and

- Grant funds cannot be used to fund technological devices for individual clients (e.g., iPads, laptop computers, mobile phones).

Awarded applicants are expected to use third party reimbursements and other revenue realized from the provision of services to the extent possible and use grant funds only for services to individuals who are not covered by public or commercial health insurance programs, individuals for whom coverage has been formally determined to be unaffordable, or for services that are not sufficiently covered by an individual's health insurance plan.

Contracts will last for up to two years starting on September 30th.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are Community Mental Health Centers, including state and local government-operated centers. Applicants must have at least two years of experience providing the relevant services. Key personnel for this project include a Project Director with a minimum of 0.5 full-time equivalency.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

Awarded applicants are expected to begin project implementation by the fourth month after the award. Required activities for the project include the following:

- Establish, strengthen, and/or sustain the infrastructure necessary to provide audio and audio-visual HIPAA-compliant telehealth capabilities;
- Provide outpatient services for individuals with SED, SMI, and COD in the project's service area;
- Provide trauma informed screening, assessment, diagnosis, and patient-centered treatment planning and treatment delivery;
- Provide clinical and recovery support services (e.g., psychosocial rehabilitation, case management services, peer support); and
- Develop and provide resources to address the mental health needs of center staff.

Awarded applicants may also choose to provide the following allowable activities:

- Train behavioral health professionals to work with schools to address behavioral health issues of school age youth at risk for SED;
- Provide staff specific training on behavioral health disparities including cultural and linguistic competence and strategies to engage and retain diverse client populations;
- Expand the capacity of center staff to address crisis and emergency response;
- Expand support for increased capacity for and availability of crisis beds;
- Expand mobile crisis mental health services for the population(s) of focus;
- Coordinate with crisis centers/hotlines to ensure that strong referral pathways are established and/or restored;
- Develop and implement outreach strategies and referral pathways for vulnerable populations, such as minority populations and individuals residing in economically disadvantaged communities;
- Train and support peer staff to serve as integral members of the team to address mental health needs which may have arisen as a result of the pandemic, including but not limited to trauma, grief, loneliness and isolation;

- Provide diversion services to promote alternatives to hospitalization and incarceration, e.g., multiple intercept model; and
- Provide support for prison/jail initiatives including reentry services, service provision while incarcerated, and partnerships between behavioral health teams and the criminal justice system.

Awarded applicants will be expected to develop a behavioral health disparities impact statement no later than 60 days after receiving the award.

APPLICATION

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Population of Focus and Statement of Need (25 points)
- Proposed Implementation Approach (30 points)
- Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice (15 points)
- Staff and Organizational Experience (20 points)
- Data Collection and Performance Measurement (10 points)

Awards will be distributed based on the above criteria, the availability of funds, and an equitable distribution of funding by geographic area, population need, and program size.

Timeline

Proposals must be submitted by May 21st. Program and eligibility questions should be submitted to Asha Stanly at Asha.stanly@hhs.gov. Fiscal and budget questions should be submitted to Odessa Crocker at Odessa.crocker@samhsa.hhs.gov. Grant review process and application status questions should be submitted to Cynthia Riddick at Cynthia.riddick@samhsa.hhs.gov.