



**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**  
**Justice Intervention Services**

## **BHJIS RFA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

1. What types of clients are eligible for direct services under this funding opportunity?

**ANSWER:** Programs that utilize Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG) funding for direct services may only be used to support individuals diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness, Serious Emotional Disturbance, First Episode Psychosis, or any of those diagnoses along with a co-occurring substance use disorder. Such direct services may include, but are not limited to, screening, assessment, treatment, recovery, and referral services.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SABG) direct service funding may be used for any individual with a diagnosed substance use disorder, with a history of substance misuse, or at risk of a substance use disorder. Such direct services may include, but are not limited to, screening, assessment, treatment, recovery, and referral services.

2. Is there a target number of participants for this project?

**ANSWER:** There is no specific target number of participants.

3. Are county offices (including behavioral health) eligible to apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes, county offices are eligible to apply.

4. Are schools eligible to apply or is it only for agencies in the law enforcement, first responder, and behavioral health communities?

**ANSWER:** School districts are eligible to apply, but they must partner their school resource officer program with a community behavioral health provider.

5. Can fiscal sponsors apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes, if you clearly establish the relationship between the fiscal sponsor and the agency, and how agencies will be working together as part of the application.

6. Is a community crisis responder program, consisting of a mental health professional and a medically trained professional EMT who respond to 911 calls with law enforcement, eligible to apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes, this is allowable.

7. Can a for-profit community-based behavioral health clinic/institute apply in partnership with a local law enforcement department?

**ANSWER:** See page 2 of the RFA. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply as the lead agency but may provide goods and services that are ancillary to the program.

8. Are non-profit hospitals considered eligible entities for applying?

**ANSWER:** Yes, non-profit hospitals are eligible to apply.

9. Would a state university/county hospital system be eligible to apply as the project director in collaboration with community partners?

**ANSWER:** Yes, a state university/county hospital system is eligible to apply.

10. Can faith-based organizations apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes, a faith-based organization can be a system partner on a project and may also be a project lead as long as they are a 501(c)(3) organization.

11. Is there a minimum number of collaborating agencies that must be engaged?

**ANSWER:** No, there is no minimum number of collaborating agencies for a project under BHJIS. However, collaboration is recommended, as applicants must demonstrate the ability to improve partnerships/collaboration, address structural inequities, and implement specific projects that will meet the BHJIS goal.

12. Is a dual diagnosis outpatient facility for substance use and mental health disorders eligible to apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes, outpatient facilities for substance use and mental health disorders are eligible to apply. Applicants must be able to perform the activities outlined in the RFA Scope of Work to be considered for funding.

13. Is an agency eligible for this grant opportunity if they have been awarded Project World Impact (PWI) funds on a separate project?

**ANSWER:** Entities that received PWI funding are not excluded from applying to this funding opportunity. This project is separate from PWI. The funding from this project cannot supplant funding from another project.

14. If a county has a separate children's unit and an adult unit, can each unit apply, or must the county only submit one application?

**ANSWER:** At this time, we can accept more than one application per county.

15. Can we include the members of our county coalition as partners for this proposal?

**ANSWER:** Only agencies that have full knowledge of the proposal and have expressly agreed to participate should be included as partners. On the application form, identify whether they will serve as subcontractors, a key partner agency, or individuals, and include contact information. MOUs are not required at time of application submission.

16. Are statewide project allowed that are doing projects in different regional/geographic regions?

**ANSWER:** Statewide projects that are establishing collaborations, developing resources, or conducting training that will benefit agencies throughout the state are allowable. Statewide programs working in non-continuous communities would likely be most effective if they apply at the local level.

17. Are regional projects allowed that include statewide partnerships or collaborations?

**ANSWER:** Regional projects that involve establishing one collaborative group and developing resources, infrastructure or training for their region are also

allowable and encouraged. They could include state-level agencies as sub-contractors and/or partners.

## FUNDING ALLOWABLES

18. Is there a limit to the funding (percentage or ratio) that can be used for training for capacity building?

**ANSWER:** There is not a set amount of funds that can be used for specific activities. The purpose of this grant is to support meeting local needs to improve and enhance collaborative response to individuals facing mental health or substance use crises. What capacity building occurs will depend on local needs. It is important to remember that these funds are limited and only allowed to be used from February 15, 2022 through February 14, 2023.

19. Can these funds be used for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities?

**ANSWER:** These funds are specific to mental health and substance use crises. There are individuals that have co-occurring intellectual and developmental disabilities, but the focus of the grant is mental health and substance use crises.

20. If an agency already has a co-responder team with one law enforcement agency, would costs for working with a new law enforcement agency count as “first year implementation”?

**ANSWER:** Yes, that would be allowable, as would new work with other first responder programs such as fire, emergency medical services, and school or housing authorities. Please note that this funding may not supplant existing funding for services or activities.

21. Can only a portion of the budget be used for direct services? And if so, is there a maximum percentage?

**ANSWER:** There is no set maximum that can be used for direct services. Capacity building is required, though, and applicants should consider how the services will be sustained after funding ends on February 14, 2023. See page 9 and 10 of the RFA for more information on funding restrictions.

22. Can direct services funding only be used for embedding co-responders?

**ANSWER:** Direct service funding may be used for a wide variety of services and activities, including embedding co-responders. It is allowable for an organization to utilize the direct service component of their funding only for embedding co-responders. However, the purpose of this grant is to support meeting local needs to improve and enhance collaborative response to individuals facing mental health or substance use crises, and applicant programs should be primarily focused on the Capacity Building activities outlined in the RFA.

23. Can funds be used for the first responder in the co-responder team (e.g. EMT, Fire, Police) or only for clinicians or peers?

**ANSWER:** These funds cannot be used to fund the direct services of law enforcement, fire, EMT, or other first responders or the dispatch of first responders. It is allowable for the funds to be used for the salaries and related costs for the staff of first responder agencies to participate in capacity building activities such as system mapping, meetings, and development of joint policy and procedures for the purpose of improving collaborative responses to individuals with mental or substance use crises.

24. Is technology an allowable capacity building expense?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Reasonable technology costs are allowed and must be explained in the budget justification.

25. Are there any cost-sharing or matching funds for this project?

**ANSWER:** No, there are no match requirements. However, any BHJIS-funded costs (e.g. equipment, personnel, etc.) that are utilized for other, non-BHJIS activities or services must be appropriately cost-shared.

26. Is training of dispatch staff to divert behavioral health calls from law enforcement to a behavioral health crisis response team allowable as part of capacity building?

**ANSWER:** Training of dispatch staff to divert behavioral health calls away from law enforcement and to a behavioral health crisis response team could be an allowable part of capacity building as long as no other funds are available to provide this service and it is tied to other project activities.

27. Can this funding support an existing program or does it have to be a new program?

**ANSWER:** We are looking for capacity building, which enhances, augments, or creates new programs or services. If there is an existing program to simply be continued, that would not be an appropriate use of these funds. Building the capacity to expand or augment an existing team would be allowable.

28. Can programs service specific populations, including teens and young adults?

**ANSWER:** Yes, as long as those populations include individuals with mental health or substance use crises.

29. Can county facilities apply for Medication Assisted Treatment induction and hand off between behavioral health emergency psychiatric units and jails?

**ANSWER:** No. The purpose of BHJIS is to support local and statewide efforts to improve first responder, law enforcement, and other community efforts to address behavioral health crises. BHJIS provides funding to help local communities address critical intervention points through which individuals with mental and substance use disorders can be diverted from criminal justice involvement.

30. Does the mental health professional in the co-responder team have to be a licensed clinician or can they be a peer?

**ANSWER:** The mental health professional in the co-responder team may be a mental health peer support provider.

31. Can a county apply to fund a Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) workshop?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

32. In addition to salaries, what are allowable/reimbursement costs for this grant?

**ANSWER:** See pages 3, 4, 9 and 10 of the RFA. Allowable costs may include salaries, supplies, equipment, or subcontracting costs.

33. Could an agency partner with the parole board to provide innovative solutions to help individuals transition from jail to housing?

**ANSWER:** This would be allowable for those individuals with a Serious Mental illness, Serious Emotional Disturbance, First Episode Psychosis, or substance use disorder.

34. Is collaboration with probation an example of a co-response team with law enforcement?

**ANSWER:** If referring to probation and behavioral health agencies co-responding to prevent or mitigate crises among individuals with substance use and eligible mental health disorders, yes, that could be allowable through the BHJIS funding.

35. Would parole agents working with community mental health to create linkages meet co-responder criteria?

**ANSWER:** Yes—as long as the focus is also to improve systems that allow for better linkages to behavioral health and prevent crises.

36. Does this funding cover the behavioral health clinician, including salary and benefits?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

37. Is there a list of allowable/unallowable expenses?

**ANSWER:** See pages 3-4 and 9-10 of the RFA.

38. Is there a minimum cost that necessitates identifying sub-contractors or vendors?

**ANSWER:** All subcontractors and vendors should be identified in the budget justification.

39. Can a county Office of Education facilitate collaboration with schools, community based organizations, probation and behavioral health agencies to serve individuals ages 3-22?

**ANSWER:** Yes, as long as the project supports meeting local needs to improve and enhance collaborative response to individuals facing mental health or substance use crises.

40. Should co-response teams be prepared to address both mental health and/or substance use crises?

**ANSWER:** It is expected that the team be able to address mental health, substance use, and co-occurring crises.

41. Can funding be used to develop fundraising projects for sustainability as part of capacity building?

**ANSWER:** Sustainability, including identification of ongoing funding for integrating behavioral health staff co-response, is an important part of capacity building. This may include developing necessary infrastructure to meet funding requirements. However, it would not be appropriate to use these funds as part of a development office's fundraising activities.

42. Is overtime an allowable expense?

**ANSWER:** Proposal budgets are evaluated for cost reasonableness and effectiveness in supporting the project activities. Planning for overtime is likely to result in a low score.

43. Can BHJIS funds be used instead of MHSA funds and then use the MHSA funds for another project?

**ANSWER:** No, these funds may not be used to supplant the funds. Applicants must describe how they will build capacity, and augment, enhance or add new crisis prevention and response services for individuals with mental health or substance use disorders.

44. Can these funds be used to purchase equipment?

**ANSWER:** Yes, funding can be used to purchase equipment necessary to carry out the proposed project?

45. Can these funds be used to provide direct behavioral health treatment services to someone who is currently in jail?

**ANSWER:** They may NOT be used for direct behavioral health treatment services for someone who is currently in jail. However, the funds may be used to establish relationships, plan and develop systems that will address behavioral health and crisis services for individuals involved with the criminal justice system. Some funds may be used to pilot direct services such as re-entry planning and services at the time of release for individuals who are at risk of mental or substance use crisis upon release from jail.

## **BUDGET**

46. Is there a limit on indirect administrative costs?

**ANSWER:** See page 9 and 10 of the RFA “Attachment A Funding Restrictions” for information on indirect rates.

47. Are there any travel or meeting expectations for technical assistance and training that should be included in the budget?

**ANSWER:** It is anticipated that each grantee will need to participate in 2 hours per month of coaching calls, 2–4 hours per month in training webinars, and two 1-day Learning Collaboratives that will be held in Sacramento (public health safety guidelines permitting).

48. Are system partners and/or stakeholder budgets required in the budget?

**ANSWER:** Budgets for system partners and stakeholders should be included in the deliverable-based budget and thoroughly explained in the corresponding budget justification required for this application.

49. What does a budget justification include?

**ANSWER:** A budget justification must include a detailed description of the total costs in each budget deliverable. The justification can include the cost for equipment, supplies, and/or salary, as well as any subcontracting and indirect costs. See page 9-10 of the RFA for more information.

50. Do deliverables need to be data driven or can it be the incremental requirements of building a collaborative team?

**ANSWER:** Deliverables must be either data driven or performance based.

51. Once a grant is awarded, what percentage of the funds will be provided to the upstart of the program?

**ANSWER:** Funds are reimbursed based on completion of deliverables, as outlined in the contract and budget.

## **COLLABORATION**

52. Can jails be considered a first responder in collaboration activities?

**ANSWER:** These funds support collaboration and crisis prevention. Jails generally are operated by law enforcement agencies (e.g., Sheriff Department),

thus funds may be used to improve collaborative responses to prevent or mitigate behavioral health crises for individuals transitioning from jail back to the community.

53. Can agency partners be identified after an application is submitted?

**ANSWER:** No. Applicants must identify system partners or stakeholders at time of application, and these partner agencies must be aware of the project and committed to participating.

54. Are memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or written agreements with system partners or stakeholder required for this grant?

**ANSWER:** MOUs or written agreements are not required; however, you must ensure that the system partners and stakeholders are aware of the project and committed to participating.

55. Are programs expected to work collaboratively with local police?

**ANSWER:** See RFA page 1 for additional information. It is not a requirement that projects work with police; they also may work with fire departments, EMTs, housing authority or school security, or other first responders.

## **CONTRACTING**

56. For some counties, it takes approximately 3-4 weeks to get contracts approved by the County Counsel and Board of Supervisors. Can the contract template be sent out sooner so those counties can have County Counsel review ahead of time?

**ANSWER:** We recognize that it takes additional time for some counties to approve contracts. However, we cannot guarantee that a contract template can be shared ahead of time. We anticipate that contracts will be executed in February 2022.

57. Can partners share the funding or does it only go to the agency applying for the grant?

**ANSWER:** System partners and stakeholders can share the funding as outlined in their contracts and budgets, but AHP will only provide payment to the lead agency.

## REPORTING

58. Are grantees expected to collect GPRA data?

**ANSWER:** Grantees will not be expected to collect GPRA data.

59. What type of data will be requested in quarterly reporting?

**ANSWER:** Metric and reporting requirements will be provided at a later date.

60. Will federal monitoring standards be required for subcontracts?

**ANSWER:** Yes, grantees must comply with federal monitoring standards, as this is federal SABG and MHBG funding awarded through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act..

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

61. Can a list of webinar participants be provided?

**ANSWER:** No. Some interested parties may prefer to remain anonymous, so a list of participants will not be provided.

62. Will there be a place to upload letters of support from partners?

**ANSWER:** No. A short description of support from partners can be included in the proposal narrative portion of the application, under section "C", in addition to answering the narrative question.

63. For school districts, this application period is not sufficient time to prepare a grant application. How are school districts expected to write a grant that can get approved by cabinet and the school board in time to submit the application?

**ANSWER:** We recognize the short timeline for this grant opportunity and that not all districts will be able to apply. If a district is interested, they may consider partnering with another agency who will be the lead for the project.

64. What is the total word count for this RFA?

**ANSWER:** There is no total word count for the application. However, sections of the application and the narrative questions do have word limits. See Attachment B of the RFA.

65. What is considered a program's target population?

**ANSWER:** Your target audience is dependent on what your community needs are.

66. What is capacity building as it relates to this grant opportunity?

**ANSWER:** See pages 3 and 4 of the RFA.

67. How many awards will be granted with the \$16.25 million in funding?

**ANSWER:** It is anticipated that between 32 and 40 awards will be granted.

68. What is the role of Advocates for Human Potential (AHP)?

**ANSWER:** AHP is contracted with DHCS to be the administrative entity for the BHJIS funds. AHP will subcontract with BHJIS awardees, provide technical assistance and training, and serve as the fiscal entity for the awardee contracts.

69. Do different collaborators on the same project each apply for funding of their piece of the project?

**ANSWER:** One lead agency should submit the application for the entire project and should list system partners and stakeholders on the application.

70. Is more than one proposal required per organization?

**ANSWER:** No.

71. What does DEI stand for?

**ANSWER:** Diversity, equity, and inclusion.

72. Is there a way to obtain and submit a hard copy of the application?

**ANSWER:** Applicants unable to submit the application online may email [BHJIS@ahpnet.com](mailto:BHJIS@ahpnet.com) and request a writable PDF version with instructions on how to submit the application.

73. Will a grant similar to this be announced in 2022 for the 2023 year?

**ANSWER:** Nothing is planned at this time.