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Service Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF) Program Applicant Conference

**Request for Applications No. HHS0015183
January 10, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. CT**

Agenda



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1. Introductions
2. Procurement Activities
3. Project Period
4. Grant Funding Source and Available Funding
5. Project Overview and Scope
6. Program Requirements and Allowable Activities
7. Grant Funding Prohibitions
8. Closing Comments

Introductions

Speakers

Dedra Williams, Grants Specialist

Sole Point of Contact for RFA

Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) at Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)

Dawn Aniniba, Youth and Family Program Specialist,
Family Support Services (FSS) at Health and Human
Services Commission (HHSC)



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Procurement Roles

The RFA Team

Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) is responsible for all procurement and solicitation activities.

Family Support Services (FSS) is responsible for contract management activities throughout the life of the Grant Agreements, including Contract development, execution, and monitoring.

FSS is also responsible for Project scope, requirements, performance, results, and monitoring.



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Schedule of Events

Deadline for Submitting Questions or Requests for Clarification

January 16, 2025, by 5:00 p.m.

Any questions arising prior to the question deadline must be submitted in writing to Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov.

Tentative Date PCS Posts Answers to Questions or Requests for Clarification

January 23, 2025, by 5:00 p.m.

Application Submission Deadline

February 13, 2025, by 10:30 a.m.

Anticipated Project Start Date

September 1, 2025



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Solicitation Access

HHSC will post all official communication regarding this RFA, including the notice of award, on the HHS Grants website located at <https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/rfa>.

HHSC reserves the right to cancel this RFA or to make no award if it determines such action is in the best interest of the State.

HHSC may, in its discretion, reject any and all Applications or portions thereof.



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Sole Point of Contact

All communications relating to this RFA must be directed in writing to Dedra Williams, Sole Point of Contact, at Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov.

All communications between Applicants and HHSC staff members, or any other HHS staff members, concerning this RFA are **strictly prohibited**.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Application.



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Request for Applications (RFA) Overview

This webinar will provide a summary of the SMVF Program and the RFA requirements.

Applicants must read the RFA in its entirety before submitting questions or an Application.



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Project Period

The Project Period is anticipated to be September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2030.

Extension of Project Period: The System Agency may, at its sole discretion, extend the Project Period for up to one year to allow for the full expenditure of awarded funding and completion of Grant activities. The Grant Term may not exceed six years.



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Grant Funding Source and Available Funding

The total amount of federal and State funding available for the SMVF grant program is up to **\$13,921,875.00** for the entire Project Period.

HHSC estimates the total amount of funding for the SMVF Program is \$1,856,250.00 per State Fiscal Year.

It is the System Agency's intention to make multiple awards to Applicants that successfully demonstrate the ability to increase availability and accessibility of services and resources to Military-Connected Families in the State of Texas.

Annual awards per individual grant typically range between \$200,000.00 and \$350,000.00.

Review RFA Section 5.1, Grant Funding Source and Available Funding.



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Executive Summary of Program

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), the System Agency, is accepting Applications for the **Service Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF) Program**.

The purpose of this program is to increase availability and accessibility of services and resources to military-connected Families in the State of Texas.

Applicants can access information regarding current Family Support Services (FSS) programs and FSS at the following website: <https://fss.hhs.texas.gov/>.



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Eligible Applicants

Applicant must be a nonprofit corporation, as defined by Chapter 22 of the Texas Business Organization Code, or a governmental entity, and Applicant must submit a complete Application by the stated deadline. (Refer to RFA Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements.)



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Program Background

FSS partners with community-based programs and agencies to provide a variety of services that benefit Texas children by reducing incidence of abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy.

The SMVF Program is a community-based program that provides programming, coordinates resources, and promotes community efforts to support parents and Caregivers and their children impacted by military life.



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Program Background Cont.

It is an outgrowth of the Military Families and Veterans Pilot Prevention Program (MFVPP), which was initiated in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 because of H.B. 19 in the 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2015. Under MFVPP, community providers in Bell, Bexar, and El Paso counties received grants to provide an array of services and develop or participate in local or regional coalitions for the purpose of improving service coordination and promoting child welfare, early childhood education, and other youth and family services.

The SMVF Program goal and objectives address child abuse and neglect prevention, as well as family strengthening and well-being, by enhancing Protective Factors for Military-Connected families and increasing interorganizational collaboration in counties with military installations or high veteran populations.



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Eligible Population

The eligible Participant population consists of Military-Connected youth and families. The parent or Caregiver must be either expecting a child or have at least one child aged 0 to 17.

To be eligible to participate in Grantee's SMVF Program, families must also exhibit at least two of the Priority Characteristics outlined in RFA Section 2.3, Eligible Population.



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Eligible Population: Priority Characteristics Refer to RFA Section 2.3, Eligible Population

1. Behavioral concern;
2. Childcare or childcare access concerns;
3. Current or former military connection;
4. Current or past alcohol abuse – Caregiver;
5. Current or past alcohol abuse – Index Child/Index Youth;
6. Current or past child maltreatment or child welfare involvement;
7. Current or past conflict at school;
8. Current or past criminal justice involvement – Index Child/Index Youth*;
9. Current or past domestic or interpersonal violence*;
10. Current or past use or abuse of other substance – Index Child/Index Youth;



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Eligible Population: Priority Characteristics

11. Developmental delay or disability – Caregiver*;
12. Developmental delay or disability – Index Child/Index Youth*;
13. Family dynamics or structure concern*;
14. Family or household conflict*;
15. High stress level*;
16. Homeless, runaway, or housing instability*;
17. Household contains an enrollee who is pregnant and under 21 years old*;
18. Household has a child with developmental delays or disabilities;
19. Household has a history of alcohol abuse or a need for alcohol abuse treatment;
20. Household has a history of substance use or needs substance use treatment;



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Eligible Population: Priority Characteristics

- 21. Low school attainment – Caregiver;
- 22. Low-income household;
- 23. Mental health concern – Caregiver;
- 24. Mental health concern – Index Youth;
- 25. Parenting skills concern;
- 26. School engagement concern*; or
- 27. Social support concern.

*Note: Grantee should give priority to serving military families who present characteristics denoted with an asterisk.



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Eligible Service Areas

The Applicant may apply for one or more Texas counties in which services will be provided as the Service Delivery Area (SDA) in **Form G, Project Work Plan**. The SDA must consist of at least one Eligible County (see RFA Table 1: SMVF Eligible Counties).

- Under this RFA, the Applicant may propose to serve a single Eligible County or multiple counties contiguous to an Eligible County as Primary Counties.
- Identified services must be available to the entire Primary County or Counties. Services may not be denied to any Family that meets the eligibility requirements if capacity and funding allow for service provision.
- If an Applicant would like to serve multiple Eligible Counties that are not Contiguous Counties, the Applicant must submit a separate Application for each Eligible County that the Applicant proposes to serve.
- Under this RFA, FSS will award grants to provide SMVF programming and services in one or more of the following Eligible Counties: SMVF Eligible Counties: Counties with Military Installations and top 20 high veteran population ages 17-44.



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Eligible Service Areas Cont.

- Eligible County means a Texas county that has a military installation and a high veteran population as indicated in RFA Table 1: SMVF Eligible Counties.
- Primary County(ies) is a county proposed in this RFA to receive SMVF services, to include regular outreach services, grant activities, and other grant initiatives.
- Contiguous County(ies) means any county whose boundary touches at any point with that of a Primary County.



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Table 1: SMVF Eligible Counties

1. Bell	8. Dallas	15. Hidalgo	22. Tom Green
2. Bexar	9. Denton	16. Kleberg	23. Travis
3. Bowie	10. El Paso	17. Lubbock	24. Val Verde
4. Brazoria	11. Fort Bend	18. Montgomery	25. Wichita
5. Cameron	12. Galveston	19. Nueces	26. Williamson
6. Collin	13. Guadalupe	20. Tarrant	
7. Coryell	14. Harris	21. Taylor	

Eligible Activities

This Grant Project may fund activities and costs within the Scope of Grant Project as allowed by the laws, regulations, rules, and guidance governing fund use identified in the relevant sections of the RFA.

Only grant-funded activities authorized under the RFA are eligible for reimbursement and payment under any Grant Agreement awarded because of the RFA.



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Eligible Programming

- Grantees must implement quality programming and services to meet program goals and objectives, ensuring competent and effective delivery of programming and services and promoting family well-being, positive parenting strategies, and healthy child and youth development.
- The Applicant's proposed programming should be based on the needs and gaps in the proposed SDA as identified in the CSNA (see RFA Section 2.6.1, CSNA).
- Applicant should also address how programming will lead to the effects and impact identified in the logic model (see RFA Section 2.6.2, Logic Model).



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Eligible Programming Cont.

The Applicant must propose and describe programming to directly engage with Military-Connected Families in Form G, Project Work Plan. The following are potential areas and programming options under this RFA (for full descriptions review RFA Section 2.6.2, Programming Descriptions):

- A. Parent education;
- B. Mentoring;
- C. Post-High School Readiness (PHSR);
- D. Family Focused Activity;
- E. Support groups;
- F. Service planning and coordination;
- G. Counseling– Family and Individual;
- H. Basic Needs support;
- I. Financial Wellness;
- J. Childcare in conjunction with SMVF programming;
- K. Respite Care; and
- L. Other programming.



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Eligible Programming Delivery Methods

HHSC prefers face-to-face programming, which should encompass most program delivery methods; however, recognizing the unique need of flexibility for Military-Connected families, the Applicant may propose telephone and virtual programming alternatives to in-person service delivery.

The Applicant should address the following items, at a minimum, in Form G, Project Work Plan:

- A. Description of the programming that will be provided through a virtual platform, and the platform(s) to be used.
- B. Description of any modifications required for delivering applicable programming via telephone or virtual platform.
- C. Description of how family preference informs the programming delivery methods.
- D. Description of intake procedures, consent and authorization, and when programming or services are delivered via telephone or virtual platforms.



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Program Requirements

Grantees must provide programming and services as required by the Grant Agreement to the eligible population in the specified SDA:

- The number of unduplicated Families served must meet the minimum monthly and annual Outputs established in the Grant Agreement. An unduplicated enrollment requires a Primary Caregiver with a unique PEIRS Enrollment ID number, who is only counted one time per month for the monthly Output when they receive a service in that month and one time during the State Fiscal Year for the annual Output when they receive a service in the Fiscal Year.
- Grantees may only recruit and serve families that are not already receiving the same services.
- All Participants must enter the program voluntarily. "Voluntarily" means that the Participant must not be coerced, court ordered, or mandated to participate in SMVF programming.
- Grantee cannot charge Participants a fee for participating in the SMVF program or for any SMVF participation-related costs.
- Grantee must provide programming to parents and Caregivers and their children impacted by military life without regard to their economic status.
- Any community-level services, activities, and events the Grantee conducts under the Grant Agreement must be focused on and tailored for Military-Connected families.



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Program Requirements Cont.

To support effective programming and services, Grantees must:

- Incorporate intentional, ongoing efforts to support and make resources available to Caregivers and families.
- Meet requirements and qualifications of any selected Program Models.
- Provide Reflective Supervision for Program Staff, especially direct service staff.
- Provide supervision that includes case discussion and review, ongoing education, and professional development.
- Assess for and ensure program quality through supervision, service documentation review, quality assurance practices, Program Model fidelity review (as applicable), and monitoring.



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Program Requirements Cont.

- Grantees may use the National Family Support Network's Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support (<https://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality>), or another quality framework to assess the Applicant's organization and services for responsiveness to the needs of families and to enhance their approach and services during the Project Period.
- Grantees must comply with all policy updates and clarifications that HHSC issues during the Project Period.
- Grantees must participate in all HHSC required webinars, trainings, and conference calls.



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Program Requirements: Use of Subawards

- Grantee may choose to enter into a Subaward for the provision of any direct programming described within this RFA. Sub-awardees providing programming under this RFA shall meet the same requirements and levels of experience as required of the Applicant.
- No Subaward under this RFA shall relieve the Grantee of the responsibility for ensuring that the requested programming is provided in accordance with the requirements described in any Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA.
- Applicant will include in its Application work to be performed by Sub-awardees and will include proposed Sub-awardee Budget(s).
- Grantee will award Subawards based on its own internal policies and processes. Grantee will notify HHSC in writing before executing a new agreement if the Sub-awardee changes.
- After award, Grantee and Sub-awardee must negotiate any needed changes to the Sub-awardee SDA and report requested changes to HHSC. Any proposed change from the Grantee or Sub-awardee to the direct programming provided, or any proposed change that would require a new Sub-awardee, must have prior approval from HHSC.
- If Grantee terminates any Subaward and the Grantee has not fully expended the funds obligated to the Sub-awardee during the State Fiscal Year, the Grantee must find a replacement Sub-awardee within 60 Calendar Days or obligate those funds in a manner consistent with the purposes of SMVF. Any changes resulting from such termination must be reported to and approved by HHSC prior to implementation.



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Program Requirements: CSNA

- The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) is an assessment the Applicant develops and utilizes to identify community strengths, needs, assets, characteristics, challenges, and available resources in the proposed SDA.
- The Applicant must conduct a CSNA for their proposed SDA.
- The Applicant must use information and recommendations from the CSNA to identify and support the use of proposed services and activities that address needs and priorities of the eligible service population and the community.
- The Applicant must provide a summary of the CSNA as part of Form F, Program Narrative.



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Program Requirements: Logic Model

- A logic model is a graphic depiction (road map) that shows the relationship between the resources, activities, Outputs, Outcomes, and impact of a program. It demonstrates the relationship between the program's activities, intended effects, and impact. A logic model shows the impact the program's efforts will have in a measurable format.
- As part of the Application, the Applicant must submit a logic model for its proposed programming and activities. The logic model must be submitted as an attachment to Form F, Program Narrative, labeled as Attachment F-1, Logic Model.
- The Applicant may use any logic model format. There are a variety of logic model formats and generally they all have the same components, which include resources, activities, Outputs, Outcomes, and impact.
- The Applicant's logic model resources, activities, and Outputs should inform and be reflected in Form F, Program Narrative.



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Program Requirements: Organizational Qualifications and Requirements

The Applicant must describe their experience implementing and administering similar programs, including how they meet organizational qualifications in Form F, Program Narrative.

- Applicant should outline the organization's knowledge or experience implementing programs to the eligible population, such as experience in developing, managing, or overseeing family-focused, community-based, or short-term service programs relevant to programmatic requirements;
- Applicant should describe previous experience providing services in the proposed SDA and community partnerships;
- Applicant should describe the organization's experience and capacity in managing budgets, grants, or contracts and capacity to meet administrative and fiscal requirements. This could include Texas State agency or federal funding monitoring or audit reports for reviews conducted in the past three years;
- Applicant should have a financial manager responsible for fiscal oversight of the Grantee's organization. Applicant may decide to assign these duties to an existing role, or create a dedicated role, depending on the size and scope of the overall SMVF program; and
- Applicants should describe how any proposed Sub-awardees meet these organizational qualifications as well.



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Program Requirements: Organizational Enhancements

The Applicant must propose and describe, in Form G, Project Work Plan, strategies for organizational enhancements and service delivery to address the needs of Military-Connected Families in the SDA throughout the Project Period.

- The Applicant should consider multiple dimensions and strategies to effectively respond to the needs of Military-Connected Families such as service sites and hours, outreach materials, and relevance of service and activities, and the Applicant may propose activities that include the following:
 - Developing a parent advisory committee of Military-Connected Families to partner with the organization to develop and vet improvements or engage in intentional activities to recruit from the target population into an existing one;
 - Cultivating Military-Connected Families as mentors and leaders in the community;
 - Engaging Military-Connected Families in outreach strategies such as word-of-mouth and culturally relevant advertising campaigns;
 - Involving alumni who are Military-Connected in new program activities and across the organization; and
 - Strategic hiring of Program Staff to reflect lived experienced or knowledge related to the target population



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Program Requirements: Organizational Enhancements Cont.

- The Applicant may reference the following tools to inform the organizational enhancement strategy(ies):
 - Military One Source (see <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>) provides information, resources, and resource Referrals on every aspect of military life, including but not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationships, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting and childhood, and more.
 - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (see <https://www.nctsn.org/whatis-child-trauma/populations-at-risk/military-and-veteran-families/nctsn-resources>) addresses how children of military and veteran families experience unique challenges related to military life and culture. These include deployment-related stresses such as parental separation, family reunification, and reintegration; disruption of relationships with friends and neighbors due to frequent moves; and adaptation to new schools and new community resources.
 - The Texas Veterans Commission (see <https://veteransmentalhealth.texas.gov/provider-network/#training-options>) has several trainings and webinars to inform effective Service Member practices and program evaluation.
- In addition, the Applicant must identify a continuum of services, some within the Applicant's existing service array and others to meet the priorities of Military-Connected Families based on community needs, citing existing community needs assessments or other relevant community-specific resources. The Applicant should identify existing support services or propose other support services for the target population where appropriate.



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Program Requirements: Organizational Competence

- The Applicant must describe organizational competencies and demonstrate preparedness to implement SMVF programming in Form F, Program Narrative.
- The Applicant must address the following to show their ability to:
 - Strategically hire and retain direct service staff and supervisor(s) to ensure successful program implementation and quality service provision;
 - Ensure staff are competent in connecting with and serving Military-Connected Participants or other adverse experiences;
 - Promote programming and services, utilizing outreach methods and materials in a manner that is relevant and compelling to Military-Connected families and their communities; and
 - Reach and engage eligible families across proposed communities.
- Applicants should describe how any proposed Sub-awardees meet these organizational competencies as well.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Staffing Plan

As part of Form G, Project Work Plan, the Applicant must develop, provide, and manage a staffing plan that includes processes to recruit, hire, and train qualified Program Staff to include direct service staff, supervisors, program director, administrative staff, Sub-awardee staff, and volunteers as applicable.

- The staffing plan should ensure ability to provide quality programming and service delivery, continuity of programs in the event of a vacancy, and to meet required Performance Measures and achieve intended program impact.
- The Applicant must provide detailed position descriptions for all positions under the grant to include:
 - Minimum educational and experience requirements;
 - Required experience and skills;
 - Position responsibilities;
 - Comprehensive employee training plan; and
 - Succession plan for all program positions.
- If the Grantee elects to enter a Subaward for any programming, the same minimum staffing qualifications apply to Sub-awardee staff.
- Any changes to the staffing plan after award must have approval from FSS.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Program Staff Responsibilities and Requirements

The Applicant may decide to assign the responsibilities and activities to an existing role or position.

The Applicant must have a clear organizational structure, with program director responsibilities clearly accounted for and currently assigned to the qualified Program Staff.

The Applicant must outline staff roles, responsibilities, and qualifications detailed in Form G, Project Work Plan.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Program Director

- The program director role, or equivalent position such as program coordinator or program manager, is the primary program contact and is responsible for oversight of all program activities and offerings and supervision.
- Program director experience, education, and qualifications are ultimately at the discretion of the Grantee but should be sufficient to ensure quality programming and service oversight, as well as the ability to meet program Outputs and achieve intended program impact. HHSC recommends that any person holding the program director position or performing program director responsibilities should have at least a bachelor's degree in a relevant field, with relevant work experience, and a minimum of five years of relevant program management and supervisory experience or a master's degree in a relevant field, along with a minimum of three years program management and supervisory experience.
- The program director must have experience with performance evaluation, data analysis, reporting, budget oversight, and social service programming.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Program Director Cont.

The following responsibilities and activities are required of the program director role or must be integrated into other appropriate manager roles where qualifications are met. Clear organizational structure is required, with program director responsibilities clearly accounted for and assigned to the qualified FTE(s). The program director will:

- Serve as the primary SMVF Program contact and liaison;
- Provide program oversight, to include managing operations, supporting and monitoring performance related to the Project, and planning for improvements where needed;
- Ensure program operations and activities adhere to all applicable policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to the Grant Agreement, organization, the selected Program Model(s), and services;
- Ensure that SMVF Program goals are met, especially related to Deliverables, Performance Measures, and processes;
- Assist in Budget planning, ensuring the Budget aligns with program goals and operations;
- Hire, train, and supervise program employees; and
- Provide regular administrative, clinical, and Reflective Supervision of direct service staff.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Program Staff

- Program Staff who provide direct services conduct assessment, education, and support as they assist Caregivers and their Families in attaining identified goals. Program Staff may provide family and individual sessions, Program Model-based parenting or youth skills groups, or other approved programming.
- Staff experience, education, and qualifications are ultimately at the discretion of the Grantee but should be sufficient to ensure quality programming and service delivery as well as the ability to meet service Outputs and achieve intended program impact. FSS recommends that direct service Program Staff who are primarily responsible for delivering any services have an associate degree or higher in a health and human services field, along with two or more years of direct service experience in a health and human services field. A bachelor's degree is preferred, along with two or more years of direct service experience in a health and human services field. If any proposed Program Models have more stringent requirements or qualifications, Grantee must meet those requirements rather than the minimum requirements cited in this section.
- The Applicant may substitute experience for education on a year-for-year basis if the person holding the Program Staff position does not have an associate degree.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Program Staff

Program staff must:

- Complete all required training specified by FSS and any relevant to the selected Program Model(s);
- Adhere to standards of social work or other human services practice as well as any relevant agency or Program Model requirements, policies, procedures, and guidelines;
- Employ strengths-based methods;
- Complete required program documentation;
- Report to appropriate supervisor and engage in Reflective Supervision; and
- Conduct other approved duties as determined by the Grantee.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Background Checks

Grantee must ensure completed background checks, as directed by FSS, before Program Staff can complete any of the activities below:

- Having direct contact with a Participant;
- Accessing PEIRS; and
- Accessing Participant records.

Grantee must complete background checks every two years for all Program Staff members who complete any of the activities above.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Organizational Training Plan

The Applicant should submit a training plan that includes both initial and ongoing training for all Program Staff including volunteers, Sub-awardee employees, and anyone else working on the Grant Project. The Applicant should include a summary of all training elements, timeframes, number of hours, and frequency in Form G, Project Work Plan. Staff training must include the following competencies:

- New employee orientation;
- Military competency specific training;
- Program Model training (if applicable);
- Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support or other quality framework training (when appropriate); and
- Additional training topics that may be incorporated can be reviewed in RFA Section 2.6.6, Program Staffing Requirements.



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Program Requirements: Program Staffing Requirements

Organizational Training Plan Cont.

- Grantee must participate and involve appropriate staff in webinars, trainings, and conference calls, including the annual Partners in Prevention (PIP) conference, as required by HHSC.
- Grantee must develop and follow processes to track all required training in personnel files.
- Sub-awardees performing programming under this grant must meet the same training requirements as Grantee



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Program Requirements: Recruitment, Outreach, and Retention

- The Applicant should describe policies and procedures to align service and outreach efforts in accordance with the guidance provided in this section in Form G, Project Work Plan.
- In accordance with Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) federal program requirements, SMVF focuses on community-based and prevention-focused programs and activities designed to prevent child abuse and neglect. Activities, services, and outreach should focus on populations consistent with these primary and secondary prevention aims.
 - Primary prevention consists of activities that are targeted toward the community at large. These activities are meant to impact parents and Caregivers and their children impacted by military life before any allegations of abuse and neglect.
 - Secondary prevention consists of activities targeted to parents and Caregivers and their children impacted by military life that have one or more risk factors, including families with substance abuse, teen parents, parents of special needs children, single parents, and low-income families.
- Applicant should describe outreach and recruitment plans and strategies to connect to eligible families in Form G, Project Work Plan.
- Review RFA Section 2.6.7 for all details.



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Program Requirements: Service Authorization and Enrollment

- Grantees must have a documented process for conducting intake and completing enrollments, including how the Family's individual eligibility will be determined and forms completion.
- Grantee must have an enrollment process that includes completing the HHSC enrollment form or a Grantee enrollment form. The enrollment form must capture all required data, which includes a Primary Caregiver's signed consent to participate, a review of eligibility criteria, and any additional surveys and assessments required by HHSC.
- Grantees should complete the enrollment form in its entirety and ensure that all required data is entered in PEIRS. Primary Caregivers must sign consent to participate prior to the provision of programming.
- Annual Data Authorization: Grantee must complete a new data authorization form for each participating Primary Caregiver either at the beginning of each State Fiscal Year, at the beginning of the program year after services begin, or on each anniversary of Participant enrollment in the program, for as long as the Participant receives programming.



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Program Requirements: Service Completion

The Applicant must describe the process for service completion and discharge of SMVF Program participation in Form G, Project Work Plan.

- Grantee must document service completion through the Participant discharge form and in PEIRS when services are completed.
- Grantees must have a service completion process that includes collecting any required surveys from Participants and documenting any additional Referrals.
- If Participant(s) and Index Child or Index Youth have not received a service in 90 Calendar Days, Grantee must complete the discharge process.
- If Participant(s) and Index Child or Index Youth return within the next 30 Calendar Days 120 total Calendar Days since their last service), the "Undo Discharge" function should be used to reactivate the registration in PEIRS rather than reenrolling the Participant and Index Child or Index Youth.
- For all former Participants whose PEIRS enrollment has been closed for more than 120 Calendar Days, Program Staff should review their enrollment form to ensure that information is still current. If any information is outdated, Program Staff must open a new enrollment and complete any paperwork required by FSS or Grantee.
- Grantees must enter any Referrals made for additional services to other local social service providers in PEIRS. Grantees must have a documented process for service completion and corresponding forms completion.



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Program Requirements: Program Surveys

The Applicant must describe plans for the administration of the following surveys in Form G, Project Work Plan:

- **Protective Factors Survey**
 - Prior to service delivery, Grantee must provide a pre-service Protective Factors survey (PFS) to the Primary Caregiver. Grantee may provide this survey to any secondary Caregivers who are participating in program services. The survey should be administered during the intake and assessment session. Grantee must enter the survey data into PEIRS within the required data entry time frame.
 - Grantee must administer a post-service PFS to Primary Caregivers at the end of program participation. Grantee must make concerted effort to have the Caregiver complete this survey and document any efforts to administer the survey in the Participant Case Record. Grantee may also administer the post-service PFS to any secondary Caregivers who are participating in programming. Grantee must enter the survey data into PEIRS within the required data entry time frame.
 - The pre-service PFS and post-service PFS must be completed by the same Caregiver.
 - The Grantee must maintain the pre-service PFS and post-service PFS in the Participant Case Record.
- **Program Experience Survey:** Grantee must complete the Program Experience Survey (PES) with the Primary Caregiver when exiting the program, including those Participants who have completed the program and those who are exiting early.



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Program Requirements: Required Record Keeping

Participant Records and Grantee service documentation must be maintained by Grantees to maintain details of services requested by System Agency and to support programming efforts and improvements.

- Grantee must track all SMVF activities and initiatives provided in accordance with the Grantee's approved Form G, Project Work Plan.
- Grantee must ensure that all program documentation is complete, accurate, and maintained in an organized fashion.
- Grantee must maintain records in a manner that protects the Confidential Information of all members of the Participant's Family.
- Grantee must maintain individual Participant Records.
- Refer to RFA Section 2.6.11 for requirements.



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Program Requirements: Community and Systems Support Requirements

The Applicant must describe plans for community and systems-level engagement in Form G, Project Work Plan. The following should be considered:

- Military-Connected families benefit from an organized system of community resources to support family strengthening and well-being. An organized system can help families and their children connect to and access information, resources, and supports.
- Community coalitions can support community coordination of parent and Caregiver support, quality positive parenting strategies and programming, promoting family well-being, and healthy child and youth development. Through assessment, planning, and coordination, community coalitions can promote improved community conditions, services, and outcomes for Military-Connected families and their communities. Community coalitions could be a community-based collaborative, local or regional coalition, committee, or community group.
- Grantees must partner and collaborate with other FSS Grantees within Service Delivery Area, to ensure optimal coordination of services for families and to achieve greater impact of grant investments in the community.
- Grantees will document coalition efforts and impact and community partnerships through quarterly reporting and PEIRS data entry.
- Refer to RFA Section 2.6.12 for full requirements.



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Required Reports

Quarterly Reports

Grantee must submit reports to FSS for each State fiscal quarter regarding implementation efforts, achievements, challenges, and other issues relevant to performance.

FSS Program Staff will provide a quarterly report template to Grantees.

Review RFA Section 2.7.1 for due dates for all quarterly reports. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the quarterly report is due the first Business Day following the weekend or holiday.



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Required Reports

Invoices/Requests for Reimbursement – Monthly

FSS will provide required forms after grant award.

Grantee will submit an Invoice and purchase voucher through PEIRS monthly to request reimbursement from FSS.

Grantee will submit the Invoice and purchase voucher through PEIRS no later than the last day of the month following that in which the expenditures occurred. If the last day of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the Invoice and purchase voucher are due the next Business Day.

Refer to RFA Section 2.7.2 for requirements.



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Required Reports

PEIRS Data Entry

Grantees are required to enter data pertaining to Participant enrollments, service activities, and program events and activities in PEIRS.

Refer to RFA Section 2.7.3 for requirements.



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Required Reports

Compliance With Reporting Requirements

Grantee shall provide all applicable reports in the format specified by System Agency in an accurate, complete, and timely manner, and shall maintain appropriate supporting backup documentation.

Failure to comply with submission deadlines for required reports or other requested information may result in System Agency, in its sole discretion, placing the Grantee on financial hold without first requiring a corrective action plan in addition to pursuing any other corrective or remedial actions under the Grant Agreement.



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Performance Measures and Monitoring

- Refer to RFA **Section 2.8** for complete requirements.
- The System Agency will look solely to Grantee for the performance of all Grantee obligations and requirements in a Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA. Grantee shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its Subgrantees or Subcontractors, if any.
- Grant Agreement(s) awarded because of this RFA are subject to the System Agency's performance monitoring activities throughout the duration of the Grant Term. This evaluation may include a reassessment of Project activities and services to determine whether they continue to be effective throughout the Grant Term.



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Performance Measures and Monitoring Cont.

- The Applicant will propose the following target Outputs and Outcomes listed in RFA Table 2: Grantee Target Outputs and Outcomes, at the time of Application submission in Form G, Project Work Plan:
 - Total number of Families served monthly; and
 - Target number of Families served annually.
- FSS will negotiate these target Outputs and Outcomes with the Applicant prior to award of a Grant Agreement based on available funds and FSS requirements.
- Grantee will report to FSS on required Outputs and Outcomes through PEIRS, along with any additional reports that may be developed, implemented, and maintained by FSS because of State or federal requirements instituted subsequent to execution of any Grant Agreement awarded as a result of the RFA.



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Grant Funding Prohibitions

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs (see RFA Section 5.3, Grant Funding Prohibitions):

- A. Any use of grant funds to replace (supplant) funds that have been budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources;
- B. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
- C. Lobbying or advocacy activities with respect to legislation or to administrative changes to regulations or administrative policy (cf. 18 U.S.C. § 1913), whether conducted directly or indirectly;
- D. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- E. Vehicles for general agency use; to be allowable, vehicles must have a specific use related to Project objectives or activities;



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Grant Funding Prohibitions Cont.

- F. Entertainment, amusement, or social activities and any associated costs, including, but not limited to, admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity, or sporting event, unless such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- G. Costs of promotional items and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs;
- H. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel, where pre-approved for working events, or where such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- I. Membership dues for individuals in any civic or community organization, except when preapproved by HHSC, required for program implementation, and in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.454;



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Grant Funding Prohibitions Cont.

- J. Any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the Grant Project;
- K. Any activities related to fundraising;
- L. Any allocation of grant funds to individuals that do not meet the requirements outlined in **Section 2.3, Eligible Populations**;
- M. Equipment and other capital expenditures, such as capital improvements, property losses and expenses, real estate purchases, mortgage payments, remodeling, the acquisition or construction of facilities, or other items that are unallowable pursuant to 2 CFR 200.439;
- N. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, State, or local law; and
- O. Other unallowable costs as listed under TxGMS, Appendix 7, Selected Items of Cost Supplement Chart and/or 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles, General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost, where applicable.



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Cost Sharing

Cost Sharing is defined as the non-federal and/or non-State share of costs the Grantee contributes to accomplish the purpose of the Grant Project. Cost Sharing must be treated consistently with grant funds and used only for allowable and allocable purposes.

HHSC does not require Cost Sharing for this grant; however, awards may not cover the entire cost of the Grant Project. Requests for funding may not be fully met to ensure that funds are available for the broadest array of communities and programs. Awarded funding for the Project Period may be fixed and may not cover increasing or unexpected costs.



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Payment Method

Grant Agreement(s) awarded under this RFA will be funded on a cost reimbursement basis for reasonable, allowable, and allocable Grant Project Direct Costs.

Under the cost reimbursement payment method, Grantee is required to finance operations and will only be reimbursed for actual, allowable, and allocable costs incurred monthly and supported by adequate documentation.

No additional payments will be rendered unless an advanced payment is approved.



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Notice to Proceed

HHSC Contract Representative will issue a written Notice to Proceed (NTP) annually to Grantee on or around July 1 containing the award amount for the upcoming State Fiscal Year (September 1–August 31).

HHSC reserves the right to modify the annual award amount at any time during the Grant Term by issuing a written revised NTP to the Grantee.

No expenses may be incurred and no work may begin until HHSC issues an NTP to the Grantee. HHSC may send the NTP to the Grantee by regular mail, electronic mail, or facsimile transmission.

Grantee will be notified of a change to the availability of funds through the NTP.



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Evaluation Process

A three-step selection process will be used:

- A. Eligibility screening based upon Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements, and Section 3.3, Grant Award Eligibility.
- B. Evaluation based upon Section 9.4, Evaluation Criteria.
- C. Final Selection based upon Section 10.1, Final Selection.



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Specific Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the following scoring criteria using **Exhibit H, SMVF Evaluation Criteria**.

Scoring Criteria: Qualified Applications shall be evaluated based upon:

- A. Applicant's Experience (30%);
- B. Community Engagement (30%); and
- C. Project Design (40%).



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Final Selection

The System Agency will make final awards based on evaluation scores, geographic distribution across the State, Applicant past performance (if applicable), existing infrastructure, State priorities, and availability of funding.

HHSC may not fully fund requests to ensure that funds are available for the broadest array of communities and programs.

HHSC may not fully fund Budget requests to ensure that funds are available for the broadest array of communities and programs.

All funding recommendations will be considered for approval by the HHSC Program Deputy Executive Commissioner, or their designee.



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Exceptions

Applicants are highly encouraged, in lieu of including exceptions in their Applications, to address all issues that might be advanced by way of exception by submitting questions or requests for clarification pursuant to RFA Section 7.3, RFA Questions and Requests for Clarification.

No exception, nor any other term, condition, or provision in an Application that differs, varies from, or contradicts this RFA, will be considered to be part of any Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA unless expressly made a part of the Grant Agreement in writing by the System Agency.



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Required Submission Methods

Applicants must correctly deliver Solicitation Responses by one of the methods described in RFA **Section 8.3, Required Submission Method:**

- **Submission Option #1 HHS Online Bid Room:**

Applicants shall submit the Application through the HHS Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures identified in Exhibit G, Online Bid Room Instructions, and RFA Section 8.3, Required Submission Method; or

- **Submission Option #2 Sealed Package with USB**

Drives: Applicants shall submit the Application on USB drives utilizing the procedures identified in RFA Section 8.3, Required Submission Method.



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Submission of Forms and Exhibits

- Applicants must complete and submit the forms, exhibits, and Addenda in accordance with RFA Section XIII, Submission Checklist.
- Failure by an Applicant to submit the requested documentation by the deadline WILL result in disqualification.
- Applications that do not include Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations (completed and signed), and Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template (completed), will be disqualified.
- See RFA Section 9.2, Initial Compliance Screening of Applications, for further detail.



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Questions and Answers

All questions **must** be submitted in writing to the Sole Point of Contact using the formatting below from RFA Section 7.3, RFA Questions and Requests for Clarification:

- A. RFA Number;
- B. Section or Paragraph number from this Solicitation;
- C. Page Number of this Solicitation;
- D. Exhibit or other Attachment and Section or Paragraph number from the Exhibit or other Attachment;
- E. Page Number of the Exhibit;
- F. Language, Topic, and Section Heading being questioned; and
- G. Question.

Submit via email to Dedra.Williams@hhs.Texas.gov **by 5:00 p.m. on January 16, 2025.**



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Question Deadline

- Questions are due by **5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2025.**
- HHSC will not respond to questions received after this deadline.
- HHSC will post an Addendum on the HHS Grants Website with the answers to questions **on or after January 23, 2025.**



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Closing Comments

- Applicants are responsible for meeting the RFA requirements, including any Addenda.
- All Addenda must be signed and submitted with the original Application.
- Applicants must check the HHS Grants website frequently for any Addenda that may have been added to this Solicitation.

HHS Grants Website

The link is: <https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/rfa>



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Thank you!

Request for Applications No. HHS0015183

Service Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF) Program