



TEXAS

Health and Human Services

Cecile Erwin Young, Executive Commissioner

**Request for Applications (RFA)
For**

**Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program
RFA No. HHS0007424**

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**NIGP Class/Item Codes:
952-15 - Case Management
952-21 - Counseling Services
952-74 - Referral Services
952-82 - Suicide Prevention Services
952-85 - Support Services**

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ARTICLE I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, DEFINITIONS, AND AUTHORITY

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This procurement is intended to solicit Grant Applications to be considered for funding through the Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program (TV+FA Grant Program).

The State of Texas, by and through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), seeks to implement the TV+FA Grant Program as directed by Texas Government Code, Title 4, Subtitle I, Chapter 531, Section 531.0992, Grant Program For Mental Health Services For Veterans and Their Families. Through the TV+FA Grant Program, HHSC awards grant funds, to be matched by Grantees as required in statute, to local Texas Applicants representing community collaborations to provide behavioral health treatments and services to veterans and their families in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Grant Applications (RFA).

To be considered for a Grant Agreement, Applicants must execute **Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance**, of this Grant Application and provide all other required information and documentation as set forth in this Grant Application.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Refer to **Exhibit B, HHSC Grantee Uniform Terms and Conditions** for additional definitions. Additionally, as used in this Grant Application, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below:

“Addendum” means a written clarification or revision to this Solicitation issued by the System Agency.

“Apparent Awardee” means an organization that has been selected to receive a Grant Agreement through response to this RFA but has not yet executed a contract. May also be referred to as "Apparent Grant Recipient" or "Apparent Grantee."

“Applicant” means the legal entity responding to this RFA

“Behavioral Health Services” means programs or services concerned with research, prevention, and detection of mental disorders and disabilities, and all services necessary to treat, care for, control, supervise, and rehabilitate persons who have a mental disorder or disability, including persons whose mental disorders or disabilities result from alcoholism or drug addiction.

“Budget” means the financial plan for carrying out the Grant Project, as formalized in the Grant Agreement, including both request State award and statutorily required “Match”, as part of a Grant Application to this RFA. May also be referred to as “Grant Project Budget.”

“Client” means the veteran(s) and their families to be served through the Grant Project as described by the Applicant in the Grant Application in response to this RFA.

“Community Collaborative” means the Applicant and any Partner Organizations which enter into Community Formal Agreement(s) or conditional formal agreement(s) to meet the needs of the Grant Project clients, led by the Applicant. The Community Collaborative may include, but is not

limited to, federal, state, and local government entities, nonprofit entities, and local businesses. Community Collaboratives shall not include entities which do not directly provide the services, treatments, and coordination for transition support services required as part of the Grant Project. A Community Collaborative must consist of at least one Partner Organization.

“Community Formal Agreements” means a contract, including a Memorandum of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding, between the Applicant and a Partner Organization which creates the Community Collaborative and may be conditioned upon the formal award of a Grant Agreement between HHSC and the Applicant. A letter of commitment is acceptable documentation of the intent to enter into a Community Formal Agreement for this RFA, and it will be required that the Grantee will enter into one of the formal types of contracts listed above.

“Cost Reimbursement Contract” means a contract under which a Grantee is reimbursed for costs, which are reasonable, allowable, and allocable in accordance with the contract terms and consistent with the Grant Project Budget approved by HHSC.

“Cost Substantiation Documents” means the documents required to substantiate the reasonable and necessary reimbursement of funds expended, including Match, to achieve the deliverables of the Grant Agreement.

“Direct Cost” means a cost that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective, specifically the proposed Grant Project for the purposes of the RFA. A Direct Cost generally falls under a Grant Project Budget category such as salaries/wages, fringe benefits, or contracted services.

“Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD)” means the electronic marketplace where State of Texas contract opportunities over \$25,000 are posted. The ESBD may currently be accessed at <http://www.txsmartbuy.com/sp>.

“Evidence-based practice (EBP)” means the practice that results from the integration of the best available research evidence with professional expertise and client values.

“Expenditure and Match Report” means a required monthly report which includes: expenses the Grantee incurred and paid for during a reporting period; the amount and type of Match contributed by the Grantee or its Partner Organizations during the reporting period; and the amount of reimbursement requested from the System Agency by the Grantee for expenses incurred and Match contributed for the reporting period reimbursed from state funds and matching funds expended during that reporting period.

“Fully Executed” means the point at which both the Grantee and System Agency authorized signature authorities have signed and dated the Grant Agreement, creating a legal agreement between both parties.

“Grant Agreement” means financial award offered to an Apparent Awardee resulting from an evaluation and selection process of Grant Application received in response to an RFA.

“Grant Application” means documents the Applicant submits on behalf of the Community Collaborative in response to this RFA including all required forms and exhibits.

“Grantee” means an Applicant with whom HHSC has entered into and fully executed Grant Agreement as a result of an Grant Application submitted in response to an RFA.

“Grant Project” means the work and activities for which Grant funding is awarded and information is provided as part of the Grant Application under this RFA.

“Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant Website” means the electronic marketplace where HHSC Grant opportunities are located. The HHS website may be accessed at <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/pcs/rfa.cfm>.

“Indirect Cost” means a business expense that is not readily identified with a Grant Project or organizational activity but incurred for the joint benefit of both Grant Project and other activities. Indirect costs are usually grouped into common pools and charged to benefiting objectives through an allocation process/indirect cost rate.

“Internal Controls” means the mechanisms, rules, and procedures implemented by an entity to ensure the integrity of financial and accounting information, promote accountability, and prevent fraud.

“Key Personnel” means any key staff who will perform Grant Project activities central to Grant Project success.

“Match” means the funds to be matched by Grantees, as required in statute, to the HHSC awards grant funds.

“Military-related Trauma(s)” means traumatic experiences, which are directly related to military service during periods of peacetime and/or combat operations, resulting in symptoms and behaviors which disrupt the lives and relationships of veterans and their families. Military-related Trauma(s) may include but are not limited to: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and Moral Injury (MI).

“Partner Organization” means a member of a Community Collaborative, as identified by formal agreement with the Applicant, which provides reportable behavioral health treatments and services in direct support of the Grant Project.

“RFA” means a Request for Grant Applications to achieve the aims, goals, and objectives of TV+FA Grant Program, including Exhibits and Addenda, if any.

“Selection Authority” means an individual or body of the System Agency with the authority to approve funding for Grant Applications submitted to this RFA on behalf of the System Agency.

“Selection Committee” are subject matter experts in a wide variety areas and programs that review Grant Applications submitted under the RFA and contribute to funding decisions.

“Selection Process” means the process of selecting Awardees from Grant Applications submitted to this RFA.

“Solicitation Process” means the review of submitted Grant Applications to ensure eligibility and appropriateness of Grant Applications submitted to achieve Grant Project goals. Grant Applications received which meet the minimum eligibility requirements will entered the Selection Process. The result of the Selection Process will be funding recommendations to the Selection Authority.

“State” means the State of Texas and its instrumentalities, including HHSC, the System Agency and any other state agency, its officers, employees, or authorized agents.

“[Texas eGrants](#)” means the electronic marketplace where State of Texas Grant Agreement opportunities may be located. The Texas eGrants may be accessed at <https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/eGrants/search.htm>.

“[The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program](#)” means the program associated with this RFA for the System Agency. May also be referred to as TV+FA Grant Program.

“[Transition Support Services](#)” means activities or services that assist with persons transitioning between or remaining engaged in behavioral health services offered outside the Community Collaborative, which meet the unique needs of veterans and their families and which are not behavioral health services or treatments of the Grant Project.

1.3 AUTHORITY

The System Agency is requesting Grant Applications pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 4, Subtitle I, Chapter 531, Section 531.0992, Grant Program for Mental Health Services for Veterans and Their Families.

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ARTICLE II. SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD

2.1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The TV+FA Grant Program empowers Community Collaboratives to meet the behavioral health needs of veterans and their families across Texas and remove barriers to treatment. Program funds serve as a catalyst for Community Collaboratives to develop and sustain coordinated service delivery systems that continue to operate beyond the Grant Agreement.

The purpose of the TV+FA Grant Program is to provide community-based, sustainable, evidence based, and accessible behavioral health services to Texas veterans and their families to augment the work of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The goals of the TV+FA Grant Program are to:

- A. Expand availability of behavioral health services and treatments for veterans and their families;
- B. Increase access to behavioral health services and treatments for veterans and their families; and
- C. Enhance delivery of behavioral health services and treatments for veterans and their families.

2.1.2 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN

The TV+FA Grant Program aligns with the mission, vision, and goals of the [Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan \(Plan\)](#), published by the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (SBHCC). A progress report is required by the 2020-2021 General Appropriations Act, House Bill (H.B.) 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article IX, Section 10.04(c)), details of this reporting requirement are found in **Section 2.5.1.1**.

The vision and mission of the Plan are:

Vision: To ensure that Texas has a unified approach to the delivery of behavioral health services that allows all Texans to have access to care at the right time and place.

Mission: To develop a coordinated statewide approach to providing appropriate and cost-effective behavioral health services to Texans.

The Plan notes untreated behavioral health needs can affect all aspects of life including economic productivity, student success, criminal justice, and public health and safety. Gap Four of the Plan specifically addresses the need to establish a wider approach to providing behavioral health services for veterans and their families statewide.

The TV+FA Grant Program, through Grant-supported projects, seeks to fulfill the following goals of the SBHCC Strategic Plan:

- A. Goal 1 - Program and Service Coordination
 1. Address need for behavioral health treatment and services among Texas veterans and their family members by promoting community collaboration;
 2. Identify and address duplication of efforts across state agencies and community-level organizations; and

3. Implement improved program, service coordination, and integrated program and service strategies to reduce duplication of efforts and maximize resources.

B. Goal 2 - Program and Service Delivery

1. Identify and coordinate (provision of) best, promising, and evidence-based behavioral health practices;
2. Identify strategies to improve and strengthen access to behavioral health programs and services to engage and serve clients in remote areas;
3. Implement strategies to improve service access and continuity of care; and
4. Develop and implement programs and services to address identified gaps for diverse and special populations, as defined by the SBHCC Strategic Plan.

C. Goal 3 - Statewide Data Collaboration

Identify existing common measures or similar metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services across targeted agencies and community-level organizations.

2.2 GRANT AWARD AND TERM

2.2.1 AVAILABLE FUNDING

The anticipated amount of State funding available for the TV + FA Grant Program is \$10 million per year for State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2022 and 2023. HHSC anticipates issuing multiple awards.

Grant awards are funded a) on a cost-reimbursement basis, and b) only to the extent the Grantee provides Match as specified in **Section 2.2.2** for the duration of the Grant Agreement.

The Grantee will be notified of the availability of funding through a Notice of Funds Available (NFA) for each SFY of the Grant Agreement. Award of a contract does not solely guarantee the availability of funding to the Grantee. The funding is not available to the Grantee until the NFA is issued and returned to HHSC with Grantee's signature. An NFA will only be issued after HHSC approval of a detailed Grant Project Budget. The Grantee may not begin work or incur any expenses prior to the start date on the NFA document.

Grantee may request an initial advance payment, not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the grant award, within thirty (30) calendar days of System Agency's receipt of Grantee's signed NFA, provided the Grantee maintains or demonstrates the willingness and ability to maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of the funds and their disbursement. Initial advance payment must only be used for actual, allowable, and allocable Grant Project costs within the Grant term in **Section 2.2.3** unless pre-award costs are specifically authorized by HHSC.

Regarding indirect costs, only costs associated with an existing approved indirect cost rate (as supported by letter/statement issued by a state or federal entity), Central Service Cost Allocation Plan, or the De Minimis Rate of ten percent (10%) will be allowable. A copy of the cost rate certificate and cost allocation plan will be required during the completion of the detailed Grant Project Budget.

Applicant must complete the Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire contained in **Form M TV+FA Internal Control Structure Questionnaire** and submit it with its Grant Application.

2.2.2 MATCH

Grantees will match State funds awarded from non-state and non-federal sources in the following manner:

- A. If the Grant Project is to serve one or more counties, and the population of each county is less than 250,000, the Match must be no less than fifty percent (50%) of the value of the State funds requested or;
- B. If the Grant Project is to serve one or more counties, and if any county has a population of 250,000 or larger, the matching funds must equal one-hundred percent (100%) of the State funds requested.

Population figures must be consistent with the 2018 Texas Demographic Center, Texas Population Estimates: <https://demographics.texas.gov/Data/TPEPP/Estimates/>.

For purposes of this Grant Agreement “Match” means the proportion of Grant Project costs not paid by federal or State funds. All matching funds and contributions must meet all the following criteria:

- (1) Are verifiable from the funding Grantee’s records;
- (2) Are not included as contributions for any other state or federal award;
- (3) Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of Grant Project or TV+FA Grant Program objectives;
- (4) Are allowable under the Grant Agreement;
- (5) Are not paid by the State or federal government; and
- (6) Are provided for in the approved Grant Project Budget and/or required Match form.

The value of donated services may be used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements. If a third party donates supplies, the contribution will be valued at the market value of the supplies at the time of donation. If a third party donates the use of equipment or space in a building, but retains title, the contribution will be valued at the fair rental rate of the equipment or space. If a third party donates equipment, building, or land, and title passes to Grantee, the treatment of the donated property will be determined based on Uniform Grant Management Standards, Matching or Cost Sharing, Section (e).

Unrecovered indirect costs, including indirect costs on cost sharing or matching may be included as part of cost sharing or matching. Unrecovered indirect cost means the difference between the amount charged to the award and the amount which could have been charged to the award under the Applicant’s indirect cost rate. Refer to Title 2 CFR Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards and the Uniform Grant Management Standards issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts for additional Match information and requirements.

The successful Grantee will be awarded, through contract and NFA, half of the twenty-four (24)-month approved, detailed Grant Project Budget amount for SFY 1 and half of the Grant Project Budget for SFY 2.

If the Grantee wishes to carryover funding from SFY 1 to SFY 2 the Grantee must notify HHSC in writing no later than one-hundred twenty (120) calendar days prior to August 31. HHSC may

require additional information prior to approving the carryover request and will provide any such approval at its sole discretion. If HHSC concludes SFY 1 with a balance of unspent funding by Grantees awarded funds through this RFA, HHSC may re-distribute the funding using performance, spending, or service area need-related data to other Grantees awarded funds under this RFA, thereby increasing their award amount.

2.2.3 GRANT TERM

The anticipated Grant term (i.e., funding period) will be 24-months. The anticipated term is September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2023. HHSC may, at its sole discretion, extend grants beyond the Grant term to allow for the full expenditure of awarded funding and completion of Grant activities.

2.3 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be eligible for a Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA, an Applicant must be a nonprofit organization or a governmental entity that will lead a Community Collaborative. Governmental entities include local government bodies, their agencies, departments, school districts, schools, colleges, universities, and other political subdivisions. Nonprofit organizations are entities that have obtained a federal income tax exemption under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Title 26 USC Subtitle A, Chapter 1, Subchapter F, Part 1, Sections 501(c)(3), (4), (8), (10) or (19). Each Applicant may only submit one Grant Application. The Applicant is not considered an eligible Applicant, if they are listed as a Partner Organization of or within any other Grant Application submitted in response to this RFA.

In addition to the eligibility criteria described above, Applicants must meet and comply with the criteria listed below at the time the Grant Application is submitted and continue to meet the eligibility conditions throughout the Grant term. HHSC expressly reserves the right to review and analyze the documentation submitted and to request additional documentation to determine Applicant's eligibility for Grant award. Applicants must:

- A. have a Texas business address. A post office box may be used when the Grant Application is submitted, but the Applicant must conduct business at a physical location in Texas prior to the date that the Grant Agreement is executed;
- B. must not be ineligible to apply for funds under this RFA due to being currently debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded or ineligible for participation in Federal or State assistance programs. As part of the pre-compliance check for responsiveness to this RFA, HHSC will perform a check for debarment/suspension through the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) and the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA). In compliance with CPA's rules, during HHSC's verification of eligibility a name search of all Grantees during the contract award phase using the websites listed in this section will be conducted.
- C. An Applicant will be considered ineligible to contract with HHSC, regardless of the funding source, if a name match is found on any of the following lists.
 1. The General Services Administration's (GSA) [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) for parties excluded from receiving federal Contracts, certain subcontracts and from certain types of federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits;
 2. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities Search can be located at <https://oig.hhsc.state.tx.us/oigportal2/Exclusions>;

3. [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts \(CPA\) Debarment List](#);
4. [Iran, Sudan, & Foreign Terrorist Organizational Check and Boycott Israel](#), prior to [award](#) found in the divestment lists in accordance with the [Texas Government Code](#); and
5. [Texas Comptroller Public Accounts \(CPA\) Franchise Tax Check](#).

2.4 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The TV+FA Grant Program operates through Community Collaboratives (See Section 1.2 Definitions, Community Collaborative) that:

- A. Implement or enhance community-based systems to deliver behavioral health services and treatments to veterans and their families; and,
- B. Coordinate behavioral health care services for veterans and their families with other transition support services.
- C. Include the following Grant Project activities:
 1. Evidence-based treatments specific to Military-related Trauma(s) and its impact on veterans and their families, including veteran suicides;
 2. Evidence-based behavioral health service practices specific to Military-related Trauma(s) and its impact on veterans and their families, including veteran suicides; and
 3. Coordinating with, making referrals to, and ensuring follow-up for Transition Support Services for veterans and their families.

The term Evidence-based above refers to Evidence-based practices (EBPs), which are practices that result from the integration of the best available research evidence with professional expertise and client values. Below are examples of several EBP resources:

1. [American Psychiatric Association](#) – Clinical Practice Guidelines
2. [Healthy People](#) – Evidence Based Resources
3. [National Council on Disability](#) - Evidence Based Approaches for Prevention, Outreach, Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment
4. [Substance Abuse and Behavioral health Services Administration](#) – Evidence Based Practices Resource Center
5. [Texas Health and Humans Services](#) - Evidence Based Practices and Resources
6. [US Department of Veteran Affairs](#) - VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guidelines

2.4.1 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

To ensure effective and appropriate behavioral health services and treatments for veterans and their families, along with coordinating transition support services, it is critically important that Community Collaboratives include organizations which can accomplish the goals of the TV+FA Grant Program, previously listed in **Section 2.1**.

While for-profit organizations may contribute to the Grant Project, they cannot be an Applicant. Applicant must:

1. Coordinate with the Community Collaborative to reduce duplication of effort and maximize available resources for behavioral health services for veterans and their families;
2. Meet the needs of veterans and their families they intend to serve and design an implementation plan, which, through coordination and continuity of effort within the

Community Collaborative, expressly demonstrates the mechanisms, methods, timelines, and parties responsible for each activity listed in the implementation plan;

3. Expand availability of, increase access to, and delivery of behavioral health services and treatments for veterans and their families;
4. Ensure continuity of effort within the Community Collaborative to refer veterans and their families to Transition Support Services;
5. Refer veterans and their families to Transition Support Services; and
6. Provide a sustainability plan for the Community Collaborative beyond the Grant term.

2.4.2 SERVICES AND TREATMENTS

The primary focus of the RFA is providing behavioral health services and treatments to veterans and their families. Applicants must include service(s), which are EBP(s), as a part of its Grant Project. The service(s) included must aid veterans and their families in achieving the benefits of the treatment(s), which are EBP, such as treatment(s) and/or intervention(s).

The Community Collaborative must deliver all services and treatments described by the Applicant in its RFA Grant Application and in the following forms submitted with the RFA Grant Application:

Form D:	Project Purpose and Goals
Form E:	Project Plan
Form F:	Project Deliverables
Form G:	Project Structure and Contributions
Form H:	Project Assessments and Tools

Primary services are evidence-based therapies and treatments and may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Peer support services;
- B. Counseling;
- C. Medication services; and,
- D. Suicide prevention.

The secondary services are directly related to a veteran or his or her family member accessing the primary services listed above and may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Child care;
- B. Transportation;
- C. Navigation services;
- D. Military informed care training;
- E. Coordinated referrals;
- F. Shared data systems; and,
- G. Coordinated case management.

Applicant will include the process, method(s), and mechanism(s) by which appropriate referrals to Transition Support Services are made. Additionally, Applicant will include the process, method(s), and mechanism(s) the Community Collaborative will use to ensure Grant Project clients' Transition Support Services have met client needs.

2.4.3 SUBCONTRACTING

For all contractual relationships established to perform work associated with an award, as a result of this RFA , by the Grantee and another party (i.e., subcontractor), the Grantee must:

- A. Contract/procure services in a method following the Grantee's own written policies and consistent with all State and Federal laws including the Uniform Grant Management Standards;
- B. Identify and document Grantee and Community Collaborative's relationship to the subcontractor as that of a subrecipient or a vendor/contractor consistent with Title 2 CFR Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirement for Federal Awards and/or the Uniform Grant Management Standards;
- C. Ensure the requirements associated with this RFA and any resulting Contract are passed through to the subcontractors, as appropriate;
- D. Maintain policies and procedures for the administration and financial oversight of subcontracts; and,
- E. Ensure the proper documentation, tracking, and disposition of any purchased equipment or controlled assets by the subcontractor including those items purchased to meet the matching requirements.

2.4.4 BACKGROUND CHECK AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

The Grantee must render services in a manner that meets all required licensing and legal standards associated with the provision of the particular type of service described in the Contract.

The Grantee must ensure and document a process for conducting background/licensing checks for, at a minimum, individuals with direct client contact. The process must be consistent with State and Federal laws and completed at predetermined, regular intervals.

HHSC reserves the right to request the professional documentation for staff providing any services which require a license, certification, or other accreditation and/or the Grantee's background check policy. Failure to provide such documentation by the date identified by HHSC at the time of the request may result in the disallowance of cost claims or other contractual remedy, including termination.

2.4.5 DATA SYSTEMS

The Grantee shall provide the necessary data systems, including computer hardware and software, to carry out the provisions of this Contract. Refer to Data Use Agreement in **Section 2.8** of RFA and **Exhibit E HHS Special Conditions, Version 1.1**. The data system must:

- A. Adequately track, maintain, and protect client referral and services information to ensure operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- B. Include a record of all client names, contact information, and services received, as well as, the data necessary to comply with reporting requirements including the ability to identify unique, unduplicated clients.
- C. Have the capacity to provide program and financial information to assist the Grantee in conducting regular data assessment and analysis for performance reporting and to determine if the Grantee is meeting the performance benchmarks required under the Grant Agreement.

- D. Have adequate electronic back-up systems, back-up schedules, back-up procedures, and continually updated virus protection software to prevent the loss or corruption of system data.

2.4.6 QUALITY MONITORING

The Grantee must submit to HHSC a plan for monitoring the quality of services sixty (60) calendar days after contract execution. The plan must explain the processes used to assess the overall quality of services provided by the Grantee's staff and subrecipients.

At any time during the Grant term HHSC may prescribe additional methods for ensuring quality services, which must be implemented by the Grantee, as requested.

2.4.7 CLIENT FEEDBACK

The Grantee must submit to HHSC a plan explaining the process by which clients can provide feedback about the services they receive sixty (60) calendar days after contract execution. The plan must address:

1. The method the Grantee uses to document and track client feedback.
2. The Grantee's process for identifying and communicating to HHSC any unmet client need(s) so the Grantee can work in collaboration with HHSC to address those need(s).
3. The Grantee's procedure must include notifying HHSC within ten (10) business days of any complaint against the Grantee or any subrecipient. The notification must include the following:
 - a. Contact name of individual or organization making the complaint and other identifying information;
 - b. Date contact received;
 - c. Method of receipt (fax, phone, email, etc.);
 - d. Nature of Complaint (in line with standard definitions developed by [Health and Human Services Office of the Ombudsmen](#));
 - e. Details to isolate potential trends such as location of services rendered or a particular service;

HHSC reserves the right to change the client feedback process and may require any feedback to be directed to HHSC staff in addition to the Grantee.

2.4.8 CULTURAL AND VETERANS' CULTURAL COMPETENCE

The Grantee will develop and maintain a cultural competence plan to equitably serve all clients and submit the plan sixty (60) calendar days after contract execution. The plan must address how the Grantee will:

- A. Meet the needs of clients of various cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions.
- B. Tailor services based on the intellectual functioning, literacy, level of education, and comprehension ability of each client to ensure all information is presented in a way that meets the needs of each client.
- C. Provide services in the client's primary language, whether provided directly by the Grantee or through a translator.
- D. Ensure services are provided to all clients in a manner that recognizes and affirms their worth and protects and preserves their dignity.

- E. Provide services respectful of veterans' culture and understanding of the unique experiences and contributions of those who have served their country.

2.4.9 INTERNAL CONTROLS

The Grantee must have financial systems in place to maintain internal controls, ensure proper management of state funds, maximize non-federal resources, and maintain solvency. The Grantee's accounting and internal control systems must meet the following requirements:

- A. The systems must be appropriate to the size of the organization.
- B. The accounting system must consist of source documents, a chart of accounts, journals, ledgers, and routine financial reports.
- C. The accounting system must produce expenditure reports, cost center analyses, Grant Project Budget formats, and automated reports as required by, and without additional support from, HHSC.
- D. The internal controls system shall safeguard the Grantee's assets, produce accurate accounting data, promote efficient operations, and encourage adherence to prescribed accounting policies and procedures.
- E. Effective internal control shall involve a division of responsibility among different employees for a sequence of related functions, clear establishment of each employee's responsibilities and duties, and use of standards such as procurement policies, proofs, checks, and other security measures.

2.5 PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DELIVERABLES

2.5.1 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Grantee must submit:

- A. Monthly Grant Project expenditure and Match Reports (i.e., invoice template) on or before the 20th day following the close of each month throughout the Grant term using a system/format approved by HHSC, such as Clinical Management for Behavioral Health Services (CMBHS);
- B. Quarterly financial status reports on or before the 20th day following the close of the State fiscal quarter (i.e., December 20th, March 20th, June 20th, and September 20th), and fiscal closeout report no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the close of the Grant term. These reports must be submitted using a system/format chosen by HHSC, such as CMBHS;
- C. Quarterly Grant Project performance reports (see **Section 2.5.2** Quarterly Performance Reports) on or before the 30th day following the close of the State fiscal quarter (i.e., December 30th, March 30th, June 30th, and September 30th);
- D. Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (SBHCC) summary reports describing the Community Collaborative Grant Project implementation, Grant Project impact, and behavioral health outcomes on population(s) served by the Grant funding (See **Section 2.5.3** SBHCC Reporting Requirements). SBHCC summary reports must be submitted semi-annually on or before March 31st and September 30th of each SFY; and
- E. TV+FA Grant Program survey data must be submitted on an ongoing basis through a website link provided at the time of survey administration.

HHSC will identify, in collaboration with the Grantee, performance measures using a standardized menu of outputs and outcomes, depending on the type of work funded. HHSC anticipates providing an approved list of measurement instruments to use for data collection.

2.5.2 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORTS (SEE 2.5.1.C)

A. Performance Measures

Grants awarded under this RFA are subject to System Agency's performance monitoring activities throughout the duration of the Grant term.

Applicants will submit the necessary information and documentation to:

- A. Inform the Grant Project's ability to provide deliverables such as services, treatment, and coordination for transition support.
- B. Identify Grant Project deliverables completed by Partner Organizations within the Community Collaborative and reported to the System Agency by the Applicant;
- C. Assess the method and type of Internal Controls used by the Applicant to ensure fiscal soundness of the Grant Project.

Quarterly Performance reports must show progress toward:

- A. Outputs: Number of clients and number of services/activities delivered; and
- B. Outcomes: Measures showing benefits to TV+FA Grant Program clients, as a result of services/activities received, such as positive changes to knowledge, skills, and/or behaviors.

HHSC may, at its discretion, require additional output measures. Additional performance measures may include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Unduplicated number of veterans who received behavioral health service by type of service;
- B. Unduplicated number of veterans who received behavioral health treatment by type of treatment;
- C. Unduplicated number of family members who received behavioral health service by type of service;
- D. Unduplicated number of family members who received behavioral health treatment by type of treatment;
- E. Unduplicated number of veterans who received referral to Transition Support Services by type of referral;
- F. Unduplicated number of family members who received referral to Transition Support Services by type of referral;
- G. Unduplicated number of veterans who received a TV+FA Grant Program survey;
- H. Unduplicated number of family members who received a TV+FA Grant Program survey.

HHSC may, at its discretion, require reporting additional outcome measures such as:

- A. Clients will show improvements in functioning, as a result of TV+FA Grant Program participation (e.g. an ability to complete activities of daily living and basic functions with symptoms and/or substance use not interfering with activities or social interactions);

- B. Clients will show improvements in autonomy, as a result of program participation (e.g. requiring less intervention and/or less-restrictive care, an ability to complete instrumental activities of daily living, and/or an ability to earn wages, maintain housing in the community, or access resources when needed);
- C. Clients will show improved quality of life, as a result of program participation (e.g. self-reported satisfaction with life, fulfillment, and positive emotions and mood. The client has positive social connections, is engaged with the community, and is able to achieve self-directed goals);
- D. Behavioral health programs will show a decrease in occurrence of adverse events, (including but not limited to hospitalization, justice involvement, suicide); and,
- E. Clients will report satisfaction with services and self-perceived improvement, as a result of program participation.

HHSC reserves the right to change outcome or output reporting requirements with a sixty (60) calendar day written notice to Grantees.

B. Tracking Client Services

Grantees will track and report the number of client services provided within Grant Project. HHSC may require Grantees to provide additional information about clients, such as demographic information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, income, education, age; and data, including data collected using HHSC-approved measurement instruments, at a minimum of pre and post service.

Grantees must develop a process to document and aggregate information for clients served by funded Grant Projects.

The Grant Project Budget may be subject to negotiation to ensure allowability and necessity of costs to achieve the aims, goals, and objective of the TV+FA Grant Program.

During the Grant term, HHSC anticipates making adjustments that will require Grantees to enter individual-level data for clients served into database or data system HHSC identifies and provides. HHSC may allow Grant Project Budget changes, if additional resources are needed in order to meet the revised data entry requirements but will not increase the total awarded amount.

2.5.3 SBHCC REPORTING REQUIREMENTS (SEE 2.5.1, D)

Per the 2018-19 General Appropriations Action, S.B. 1, 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017 (Article IX, Section 10.04), Grantees must report, twice annually, to the SBHCC on the impact each Community Collaborative has had on Grant Project implementation and behavioral health outcomes on population(s) served by the Grant funding.

Reports will be submitted to TV+FA Grant Program and serve:

- A. As opportunities to increase collaboration for effective expenditure of behavioral health funds among State and local entities, and
- B. To emphasize a systemic approach to delivering behavioral health services by demonstrating relationships between State and local/community efforts.

2.5.4 PROGRAM SURVEY (SEE 2.5.1, E)

The TV+FA Grant Program survey will be designed by the System Agency program staff and will be distributed via a website link to all Grantees which enter into a Grant Agreement. For each client served by Grant funding awarded, the Grantee must administer an in-person or telephonic survey to all clients receiving services as part of the TV+FA Grant Program. The Grantee is responsible for providing language and ability accommodations to ensure the survey is understood and completed by all clients. Grantees will be the sole party responsible for reporting information about program survey distribution to the System Agency.

The Grantee will report, on a fiscal quarterly basis and in a manner and format designed by System Agency, the number of Grant Project clients to whom program surveys are distributed, defined as:

- A. Each unduplicated veteran; and,
- B. Each unduplicated family member

2.5.5 ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DELIVERABLES

As described in **Sections 2.4.6 – 2.4.8**, the following deliverables are due no later than sixty (60) days after contract execution:

- A. Quality Monitoring Plan;
- B. Client Feedback Plan; and,
- C. Cultural and Veterans' Cultural Competence Plan.

2.6 PROHIBITIONS

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- a. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
- b. Lobbying;
- c. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- d. Vehicles or equipment for government agencies that are for general agency use and/or do not have a clear nexus to terrorism prevention, interdiction, and disruption (i.e. mobile data terminals, body cameras, in-car video systems, or radar units, etc. for officers assigned to routine patrol);
- e. Weapons, ammunition, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized vehicles, or explosives;
- f. Admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity, or sporting event (exceptions may be issued at HHSC's sole discretion for related costs that are incurred for components of a program approved by HHSC that are directly related to the program's purpose);
- g. Promotional gifts;
- h. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel or where pre-approved for working events;
- i. Any use of Grant funds to replace (supplant) funds that have been budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources;
- j. Fundraising;
- k. Services to non-Texas residents;
- n. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state, or local laws; and

- o. Capital acquisition projects.

2.7 STANDARDS

Grantees must comply with the requirements applicable to this funding source cited in the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements* for Federal Awards (Title 2 CFR Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards); the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Grantees are required to conduct Grant Project activities in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination. Guidance for adhering to non-discrimination requirements can be found on the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Civil Rights Office website at: <http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/aboutHHS/CivilRights.shtml>.

Upon request, a Grantee must provide the HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all the Grantee's civil rights policies and procedures. Grantees must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to performance under the contract no more than ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the complaint. Notice must be directed to:

HHSC Civil Rights Office
701 W. 51st Street, Mail Code W206
Austin, TX 78751
Phone Toll Free (888) 388-6332
Phone: (512) 438-4313
TTY Toll Free (877) 432-7232
Fax: (512) 438-5885

A Grantee must ensure that its policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of persons in the Grantee's programs, benefits or activities on the basis of national origin, and must take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate languages other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.

2.8 DATA USE AGREEMENT

By entering into a Grant Agreement with HHSC as a result of this Solicitation, Applicant agrees to be bound by the terms of the Data Use Agreement attached as **Exhibit C, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement**.

Applicant must submit **Exhibit C, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement**, and **Exhibit C-1, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement Attachment 2, Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)**, with its Grant Application.

The Grantee will develop and implement security systems and procedures to safeguard all confidential information in accordance with the Data Use Agreement (DUA) contained in

Exhibit C, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement. Additionally, the Grantee will require each of its subrecipients (if applicable) to sign the subcontractor agreement referenced in the DUA.

2.9 NO GUARANTEE OF VOLUME, USAGE OR COMPENSATION

The System Agency makes no guarantee of volume, usage, or total compensation to be paid to any Applicant under an awarded Grant, if any, resulting from this Solicitation. Any awarded Grant is subject to appropriations and the continuing availability of funds.

The System Agency reserves the right to cancel, make partial award, or decline to award a Grant under this Solicitation at any time at its sole discretion.

There should be no expectation of additional or continued funding on the part of the Grant Recipient. Any additional funding or future funding may require submission of a Grant Application through a subsequent RFA.

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ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

3.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE/TIME
Solicitation Release Date	September 2, 2020
Applicant Conference	September 9, 2020
Deadline for Submitting Questions	September 14, 2020, by 2:00PM CST
Answers to Questions Posted	September 21, 2020
Deadline for submission of Grant Application [NOTE: Grant Application must be <u>RECEIVED</u> by HHSC by the deadline.]	October 2, 2020 by 2:00PM CST
Anticipated Notice of Award	September 1, 2021

Note: These dates are a tentative schedule of events. The System Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at any time upon notice posted to the [ESBD](#), [HHS Grants Site](#) and [Texas eGrants](#). Any dates listed after the Grant Application for RFA deadline will occur at the discretion of the System Agency and may occur earlier or later than scheduled without notification on the [ESBD](#), [HHS Grants Site](#) and [Texas eGrants](#)

3.2 CHANGES, AMENDMENT, OR MODIFICATION TO SOLICITATION

The System Agency reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this Solicitation, or to withdraw this Solicitation, at any time prior to award, if it is in the best interest of the System Agency and will post on the [HHS Grants website](#). It is the responsibility of Applicant to periodically check the [HHS Grants website](#) to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this Solicitation.

3.3 IRREGULARITIES

Any irregularities or lack of clarity in this Solicitation should be brought to the attention of the Sole Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** as soon as possible so corrective Addenda may be furnished to prospective Applicants.

3.4 INQUIRIES

3.4.1 POINT OF CONTACT

All requests, questions or other communication about this Solicitation shall be made in writing to the System Agency's Point of Contact addressed to the person listed below. All communications between Applicants and other System Agency staff members concerning the Solicitation are strictly prohibited, unless noted elsewhere in this RFA. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Applicant's Grant Application.**

Name: Amy Pearson
Title: PCS Grants Specialist
Address: Procurement & Contracting Services, HHSC, 1100 West 49th St, MC2020
Building S, Austin, TX 78756
Phone: 512.406.2638
Email: amy.pearson@hhsc.texas.gov

However, if expressly directed in writing by the Point of Contact, Applicant may communicate with another designated System Agency representative, e.g., during contract negotiations, if any.

3.4.2 PROHIBITED COMMUNICATIONS

All communications between Applicants and other System Agency staff members concerning the Solicitation may not be relied upon and Applicant should send all questions or other communications to the Sole Point of Contact. This restriction does not preclude discussions between affected parties for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this Solicitation. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Applicant's Grant Application.**

3.4.3 QUESTIONS

The System Agency will allow written questions and requests for clarification of this Solicitation. Questions must be submitted in writing and sent by U.S. First class mail or email to the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** above. Applicants' names will be removed from questions in any responses released. Questions shall be submitted in the following format. Submissions that deviate from this format may not be accepted:

- a. Identifying Solicitation number;
- b. Section number;
- c. Paragraph number;
- d. Page number;
- e. Text of passage being questioned; and
- f. Question.

Note: Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 3.1, Schedule of Events above. However, the System Agency, at its sole discretion, may respond to questions or other written requests received after the deadline. Please provide entity name, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and name of contact person when submitting questions.

3.4.4 CLARIFICATION REQUEST MADE BY APPLICANT

Applicants must notify the Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specifications, omission or other error in the Solicitation in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions.

3.4.5 RESPONSES

Responses to questions or other written requests for clarification may be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). The System Agency reserves the right to amend answers prior to the Grant Application deadline. Amended answers may be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). It is Applicant's responsibility to check the [HHS Grants website](#) or contact the Point of Contact for updated responses. The System Agency also reserves the right to decline to answer any question or questions or to provide a single consolidated response of all questions they choose to answer in any manner at the System Agencies sole discretion.

3.4.6 APPLICANT WEBINAR

HHSC will conduct an optional Pre-Submittal Webinar in the month of September. Applicants will need to register for the webinar using the following link <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2777337093089488910>.

After registering, Applicant should receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

3.5 SOLICITATION RESPONSE COMPOSITION

3.5.1 GENERALLY

All Grant Applications must be:

- a. Clearly legible;
- b. Sequentially page-numbered and include the Applicant's name at the top of each page;
- c. Organized in the sequence outlined in **Article IX - Submission Checklist**;
- d. In Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced, one-inch margins, , no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- e. Blank forms provided in the Attachments must be used (electronic reproduction of the forms is acceptable; however, all forms must be identical to the original form(s) provided); do not change the font used on forms provided;
- f. Correctly identified with the RFA number and submittal deadline;
- g. Responsive to all RFA requirements; and
- h. Signed by an authorized official in each place a signature is needed (copies must be signed but need not bear an original signature). Electronic signatures will be accepted.

3.5.2 SUBMISSION IN SEPARATE PARTS

The Grant Application must be separated into the following parts:

- a. Administrative Information, including all forms;
- b. Narrative Proposal, including all forms;
- c. Grant Project Budget Proposal; and
- d. Applicable Exhibits and Required Forms

Electronic submissions must be separated by parts using file names that relate to each part and submitted on USB drive (i.e. flash drive)

The entire Grant Application must be submitted in one package to HHSC at the address listed in **Section 3.6.3, Delivery**. The number of copies and directions for submitting an “Original” and “Copies” are outlined in **Article IX, Submission Checklist**. All forms should be saved as individual documents; do not merge any documents/forms.

3.6 SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

3.6.1 DEADLINE

Grant Applications must be received at the address in **Section 3.6.3** time-stamped by the System Agency no later than the date and time specified in **Section 3.1**.

3.6.2 LABELING

Grant Applications shall be placed in a sealed box and clearly labeled as follows:

SOLICITATION NO.: HHS0007424
SOLICITATION NAME: Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program
RESPONSE DEADLINE: October 2, 2020 by 2PM
PURCHASER NAME: Amy Pearson
APPLICANT’S NAME: _____

The System Agency will not be held responsible for any Grant Application that is mishandled prior to receipt by the System Agency. It is Applicant’s responsibility to mark appropriately and deliver the Grant Application to the System Agency by the specified date and time. The System Agency will not be responsible for any technical issues that result in late delivery, inappropriately identified documents, or other submission error that may lead to disqualification (including substantive or administrative) or nonreceipt of the Applicant’s Grant Application.

3.6.3 DELIVERY

Applicant must deliver Grant Applications by one of the methods below to the address noted. Grant Applications submitted by any other method (e.g. facsimile, telephone, email) will NOT be considered.

Applicant shall submit the following on two USB drives – One (1) labeled “Original” and One (1) labeled “Copy”- to the mailing address identified in this section:

- a. Each USB must contain one file named “Original Proposal” that contains the Applicant’s entire Grant Application in searchable portable document format (PDF).
- b. In accordance with **Section 8.1.3**, one file named “Public Information Copy” that contains the Applicant’s entire Grant Application in searchable PDF, if applicable.

To be delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or hand delivery to:
HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)
Attn: Bid Coordinator
1100 W. 49th Street, MC 2020
Service Building (Building S)
Austin, Texas 78756

Note: All Grant Applications become the property of HHSC after submission and will not be returned to Applicant.

3.6.4 ALTERATIONS, MODIFICATIONS, AND WITHDRAWALS

Prior to the Solicitation submission deadline, an Applicant may: (1) withdraw its Grant Application by submitting a written request to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**; or (2) modify its Grant Application by submitting a written amendment to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**. The System Agency may request Grant Application Modifications at any time.

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ARTICLE IV. SOLICITATION RESPONSE EVALUAION AND AWARD PROCESS

4.1 GENERALLY

Grantee will demonstrate an ability to use the data system chosen by HHSC by adhering to the following requirements:

1. Grantee shall have appropriate internet access and an adequate number of computers with sufficient capability to use the HHSC-provided database and data system to report data to HHSC.
2. Grantee's network monitoring shall include troubleshooting or assistance with Grantee-owned Wide Area Networks (WANs), Local Area Networks (LANs), router switches, network hubs or other equipment, and Internet Service Provider (ISP).
3. Grantee shall maintain responsibility for local end-user procedures and is responsible for data back-up, restore, and contingency planning functions for all local data.
4. Grantee shall designate a Security Administrator and a back-up Security Administrator. The Security Administrator is required to implement and maintain a system for management of user accounts/user roles to ensure that all user accounts are current.
5. Grantee shall ensure that adequate internal controls, security, and oversight are established for the approval and electronic transfer of information regarding payments and reporting requirements.
6. Grantee shall develop and maintain a written security policy that ensures adequate system security and protection of confidential information.
7. Grantee shall notify System Agency immediately if a security violation is detected, or if Grantee has any reason to suspect that the security or integrity of the database or data system has been or may be compromised in any way.
8. Grantee shall develop and maintain internal controls, security, and oversight for the approval and electronic transfer of data into a database or data system. Grantee must submit data that is true, accurate, and complete at the time of submission.
9. Grantee shall complete a Security Administrator Attestation & Authorized Users List, confirming Grantee has reviewed the names of agency employees who have access to database systems that may be used in conducting business with System Agency, and Grantee has removed access to users who are no longer authorized to access secure data.

HHSC will provide support for the database or data system, including at a minimum the following assistance:

1. Problem tracking and problem resolution.
2. Provision of telephone numbers for Grantees to access expert assistance with resolving problems related to the HHSC-provided database or data system.
3. Initial training in the HHSC-provided database or data system, as well as subsequent ongoing end-user training.

Applicants making it through the initial review process will be invited to submit additional information and to participate in a negotiation process which will determine final selection. The specific dollar amount awarded to each Grantee will depend upon the merit and scope of the Grant Application and negotiations. Funded amounts may differ from those requested. Not all Applicants who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving an award. The final funding amount and the provisions of the contract will be determined at the sole discretion of HHSC.

A three-step selection process will be used:

- A. Eligibility screening;
- B. Evaluation based upon specific selection criteria; and
- C. Final selection based upon State priorities.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

Grant Applications will be reviewed for minimum eligibility and completeness. All complete Grant Applications, received by the deadline, that meet the minimum qualifications listed in **Section 3.1**, will move to the Evaluation stage. Awards are given at HHSC's sole discretion.

4.3 EVALUATION

Grant Applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the factors required by authorizing legislation, Grant Project criteria, and in this Solicitation using **Exhibit G, Evaluation Tool**. Grant Applications shall be evaluated based upon the following Grant Application components:

- A. Form D: Project Purpose and Goals (20%)
- B. Form E: Project Plan (20%)
- C. Form F: Project Deliverables (25%)
- D. Form G: Project Structure and Contributions (15%)
- E. Form I: Organization's Experience (20%)

4.4 FINAL SELECTION

4.4.1 SELECTION COMMITTEE

HHSC intends to make multiple awards. After initial eligibility screening, risk evaluation, and scoring of specific criteria listed in **Section 4.3**, Evaluation, a Selection Committee reviews the information to determine which proposed Grant Project should be awarded funds to most effectively accomplish TV+FA Grant Program goals, listed in **Section 2.1**.

Grant Project selection will be based on the degree to which Applicants meet eligibility criteria in **Section 2.3**, Eligible Applicants and additional criteria described in **Article IV**, of this RFA as recommended by the Selection Committee and approved by the HHSC Executive Commissioner, or his/her authorized delegate.

[Section 531.0992 of Texas Government Code](#) requires the HHSC Executive Commissioner or designee to consider other relevant factors to be included in selection criteria. The Selection Committee considers the following in recommending awards to the HHS Executive Commissioner:

- A. Evaluation Scores of Grant Applications;
- B. Risk Evaluations of Grant Applications and Applicants,
- C. Geographic distribution of funding and services represented by Grant Applications, with an emphasis on funding Grant Project serving communities with a population of 250,000 or less;
- D. Prior Grantee performance, with a preference given to existing Grant Project demonstrating success;

- E. To minimize duplication of effort and maximize existing resources in service areas with an emphasis on addressing service gaps; and,
- F. Specific programmatic components such as demonstrating a focus on treating impacts of Military-related Trauma(s), holistically serving the veteran and family unit, and providing clients with more than one service, treatment, and/or referral option.

The Selection Committee will recommend Grant awards to the HHSC Executive Commissioner or designee, who will make the final award approval. Final funding decisions will be based on eligibility, evaluation ranking, geographic distribution across the state, state priorities, reasonableness, available funding, and cost-effectiveness.

4.5 NEGOTIATION AND AWARD

HHSC may announce tentative or apparent grant recipients once the Executive Commissioner or designee has given approval to initiate negotiation and execute Contracts.

Initial negotiation will involve direct contact between the Applicants and HHSC representatives via phone and/or email. During negotiations, Applicants may expect:

- A. An in-depth discussion of the submitted Grant Application and Grant Project Budget; and
- B. Requests from HHSC for clarification or additional detail regarding submitted Grant Application.

The specific dollar amount awarded to each Successful Applicant will depend upon the merit and scope of the Grant Application, the recommendation of the Selection Committee, and the decision of the Executive Commissioner or designee. Not all Applicants who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving a Grant Agreement.

Any exceptions to the requirements, terms, conditions, or certifications in the RFA or attachments, addenda, or revisions to the RFA sought by the Applicant must be specifically detailed in writing by the Applicant on Exhibit D, Exceptions Form in this Grant Application and submitted to HHSC for consideration. HHSC will accept or reject each proposed exception. HHSC may not consider exceptions submitted separately from the Grant Application or at a later date.

HHSC will post to the [HHS Grants website](#) and may publicly announce a list of Applicants whose Grant Applications are selected for final award. This posting does not constitute HHSC's agreement with all the terms of any Grant Application and does not bind HHSC to enter into a Grant Agreement with any Applicant whose award is posted.

4.6 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION BY THE SYSTEM AGENCY

The System Agency reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification from any Applicant at any time during the Grant Application process.

ARTICLE V. NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

The grant narrative proposal consists of Forms D through I. Each form must be completed in its entirety and in accordance with the instructions on each form.

Applicants should identify resources needed for data collection, analysis, and reporting in their Grant Application Package, including but not limited to the Narrative Proposal and the Expenditure and Match Proposal. Costs for these efforts may be negotiated during the contract award process.

ARTICLE VI. REQUIRED APPLICANT INFORMATION

6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY INFORMATION

Applicant must provide satisfactory evidence of its ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation. As a part of the Grant Application requested in **Article III**, Applicant must complete and submit all required exhibits, attachments, and forms in **Article IX, Submission Checklist**.

6.2 LITIGATION AND CONTRACT HISTORY

Applicant must include in its Grant Application a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual failures.

In addition, Applicant must disclose any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending over the last five (5) years that involves Applicant or in which Applicant has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify Applicant.

Grant Application may be rejected based upon Applicant's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual obligations.

6.3 CONFLICTS

Applicant must certify that it does not have any personal or business interests that present a conflict of interest with respect to the RFA and any resulting contract. Additionally, if applicable, the Applicant must disclose all potential conflicts of interest. The Applicant must describe the measures it will take to ensure that there will be no actual conflict of interest and that its fairness, independence and objectivity will be maintained. The System Agency will determine to what extent, if any, a potential conflict of interest can be mitigated and managed during the term of the contract. Failure to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest may result in disqualification of a Solicitation Response or termination of a contract.

Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations and individuals who may be assigned to this Contract, if any.

Additionally, pursuant to Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code, a successful Applicant awarded a Contract with a value of \$1 million dollars or more or awarded a Contract that would require the successful Applicant to register as a lobbyist under Texas Government Code Chapter 305 must submit a disclosure of interested parties to the state agency at the time the business entity submits the signed contract. Rules and filing instructions may be found on the Texas Ethics Commissions public website and additional instructions will be given by HHSC to successful Applicants.

6.4 GRANT APPLICATION DISCLOSURE

In an effort to maximize state resources and reduce duplication of effort, HHSC, at its discretion, may require the Applicant to disclose information regarding the Grant Application for or award of state, federal, and/or local grant funding by the Applicant or Community Collaborative member organization within the past two (2) years to provide behavioral health services and supports to Texas veterans and family members.

6.5 AFFIRMATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS, EXHIBITS, AND FORMS

Applicant must complete and return all the following listed forms and exhibits. Exhibits are listed following **Article X, List of Exhibits and Forms**.

- A. Exhibit A: Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance
- B. Exhibit C: Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement
- C. Exhibit C-1: Security and Privacy Inquiry Form
- D. Exhibit D: Exceptions and Assumptions Form
- E. Exhibit F: Budget Template Instructions and Examples

6.6 HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES (HUB)

If a successful Applicant chooses to contract for goods and services using the funding awarded in this grant, HHSC encourages the Applicant to use HUBs to provide those goods and services where possible.

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ARTICLE VII. EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

7.1 EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

Form J - Match and **Form K Expenditure - Match Proposal**, include templates for submitting Grant Project Budget expenditure and Match information. These forms must be completed and submitted with response. All proposed budget and Match information must support and align with the scope described in Article II, Applicant's narrative proposal, and must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable State grant requirements. A description of each of the cost categories is available in **Exhibit F Budget Template Instructions and Examples**. Budget and Match information will be reviewed by HHSC, for compliance with UGMS and federal grant guidance found in Title 2 CFR Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, as modified by UGMS, with effect given to whichever provision imposes the more stringent requirement in the event of a conflict between the two requirements.

Form L - Indirect Cost Rate Questionnaire (ICRQ) includes an assessment designed to approve an Indirect Cost Rate, or Federally Approved Cost Allocation Plan for HHS System Contracts and is required for current and potential HHS Grantees. This form must be completed and submitted with response.

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ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

8.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

8.1.1 COSTS INCURRED

Applicants understand that issuance of this Solicitation in no way constitutes a commitment by any System Agency to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to this Solicitation. The System Agency is not liable for any costs incurred by an Applicant prior to issuance of or entering into a formal agreement, contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing Grant Applications, preparing for or participating in oral presentations and site visits, or any other similar expenses incurred by an Applicant are entirely the responsibility of the Applicant, and will not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Texas.

8.1.2 CONTRACT RESPONSIBILITY

The System agency will look solely to Applicant for the performance of all contractual obligations that may result from an award based on this Solicitation. Applicant shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its contractors.

8.1.3 PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT

Respondent Requirements Regarding Disclosure Proposals and contracts are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Other legal authority also requires HHSC to post certain contracts and Proposals on HHSC's website and to provide such information to the Legislative Budget Board for posting on its website.

Under the PIA, certain information is protected from public release. If Respondent asserts that information provided in its Proposal is exempt from disclosure under the PIA, Respondent must:

1. Mark Original Proposal:
 - a. Mark the original Proposal, on the top of the front page, the words "CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION" in large, bold, capitalized letters (the size of, or equivalent to, 12-point Times New Roman font or larger); and
 - b. Identify, adjacent to each portion of the Proposal that Respondent claims is exempt from public disclosure, the claimed exemption from disclosure (NOTE: no redactions are to be made in the original Proposal);
2. Certify in Original Proposal - Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance (attached as Exhibit A to this Solicitation): certify, in the designated section of the Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, Respondent's confidential information assertion and the filing of its Public Information Act Copy; and
3. Submit Public Information Act Copy of Proposal: submit a separate "Public Information Act Copy" of the original Proposal (in addition to the original and all copies otherwise required under the provisions of this Solicitation). The Public Information Act Copy must meet the following requirements:

- a. the copy must be clearly marked as "Public Information Act Copy" on the front page in large, bold, capitalized letters (the size of, or equivalent to, 12-point Times New Roman font or larger);
- b. each portion Respondent claims is exempt from public disclosure must be redacted; and
- c. Respondent must identify, adjacent to each redaction, the claimed exemption from disclosure. Each identification provided as required in subsection (c) of this section must be identical to those set forth in the original Proposal as required in section 1(b), above. The only difference in required markings and information between the original Proposal and the "Public Information Act Copy" of the Proposal will be redactions - which can only be included in the "Public Information Act Copy." There must be no redactions in the original Proposal.

By submitting a Proposal to this Solicitation, Respondent agrees that, if Respondent does not mark the original Proposal, provide the required certification in the Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, and submit the Public Information Act Copy, Respondent's Proposal will be considered to be public information that may be released to the public in any manner including, but not limited to, in accordance with the Public Information Act, posted on HHSC's public website, and posted on the Legislative Budget Board's website.

If any or all Respondents submit partial, but not complete, information suggesting inclusion of confidential information and failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this section, HHSC, in its sole discretion and in any solicitation, reserves the right to (1) disqualify all Respondents that fail to fully comply with the requirements set forth in this section, or (2) to offer all Respondents that fail to fully comply with the requirements set forth in this section additional time to comply.

Respondent should not submit a Public Information Act Copy indicating that the entire Proposal is exempt from disclosure. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire Proposal is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or privileged information is not acceptable, and may make the entire Proposal subject to release under the PIA.

Proposals should not be marked or asserted as copyrighted material. If Respondent asserts a copyright to any portion of its Proposal, by submitting a Proposal, Respondent agrees to reproduction and posting on public websites by the State of Texas, including HHSC and all other state agencies, without cost or liability.

HHSC will strictly adhere to the requirements of the PIA regarding the disclosure of public information. As a result, by participating in this solicitation process, Respondent acknowledges that all information, documentation, and other materials submitted in the Proposal in response to this solicitation may be subject to public disclosure under the PIA. HHSC does not have authority to agree that any information submitted will not be subject to disclosure. Disclosure is governed by the PIA and by rulings of the Office of the Texas Attorney General. Respondents are advised to consult with their legal counsel concerning disclosure issues resulting from this process and to take precautions to safeguard trade secrets and proprietary or otherwise confidential information. HHSC assumes no obligation or responsibility relating to the disclosure or nondisclosure of information submitted by Respondents.

For more information concerning the types of information that may be withheld under the PIA or questions about the PIA, please refer to the Public Information Act Handbook published by the Office of the Texas Attorney General or contact the attorney general's Open Government Hotline at (512) 478-OPEN (6736) or toll-free at (877) 673-6839 (877-OPEN TEX). To access the Public Information Act Handbook, please visit the attorney general's website at <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov>.

8.1.4 RESPONDENT WAIVER - INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

SUBMISSION OF ANY DOCUMENT TO ANY HHS AGENCY IN RESPONSE TO THIS SOLICITATION CONSTITUTES AN IRREVOCABLE WAIVER, AND AGREEMENT BY THE SUBMITTING PARTY TO FULLY INDEMNIFY THE STATE OF TEXAS, HHSC FROM, ANY CLAIM OF INFRINGEMENT BY HHSC REGARDING THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE SUBMITTING PARTY OR ANY THIRD PARTY FOR ANY MATERIALS SUBMITTED TO HHS BY THE SUBMITTING PARTY.

8.1.5 NEWS RELEASES

Prior to final award an Applicant may not issue a press release or provide any information for public consumption regarding its participation in the procurement. Requests should be directed to the HHSC Point of Contact Identified in **Article III**.

8.1.6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

By submitting a Grant Application, the Applicant grants HHSC the right to obtain information from any lawful source regarding the Applicant's and its directors', officers', and employees': (1) past business history, practices, and conduct; (2) ability to supply the goods and services; and (3) ability to comply with contract requirements. By submitting a Grant Application, an Applicant generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing HHSC information about the Applicant. HHSC may take such information into consideration in evaluating Grant Applications.

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ARTICLE IX. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

This checklist identifies documents that must be submitted in this Grant Application. If a DUNS number is required on any form, the Applicant may use its DUNS number or its Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) as issued by the U.S. General Services Administration. If the Applicant does not have a DUNS or UEI the Applicant may indicate “not applicable” or “N/A” in the form field.

Original Grant Application Package

The Grant Application package must include the following documents in one of the approved submission methods identified in **Section 3.6**.

a. Administrative Information (Forms A and C-1)

1. Form A: Face Page
2. Form B: Administrative Information
3. Form C: Governmental Entity- Authorized Officials (if applicable)
4. Form C-1: Non-Profit Entity or For-Profit Entity (if applicable)

b. Narrative Proposal Forms (Forms D - I)

1. Form D: Project Purpose and Goals
2. Form E: Project Plan
3. Form F: Project Deliverables
4. Form G: Project Structure and Contributions
5. Form H: Project Assessments and Tools
6. Form I: Organization’s Experience

c. Expenditure Proposal (Form J-M)

1. Form J: Match
2. Form K: Expenditure and Match Proposal Template
3. Form L: Indirect Cost Rate Questionnaire (ICRQ)
4. Form M: TV +FA Internal Control Structure Questionnaire

d. Applicable Exhibits (Section 6.5)

1. Exhibit A: HHSC Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance
2. Exhibit C: Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement
3. Exhibit C-1: Texas HHS Data Use Agreement Attachment 2 -Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)
4. Exhibit D: Exceptions Form
5. Exhibit E: HHSC Special Conditions
6. Exhibit F: Budget Template Instructions and Examples

Files to be provided

2 Two USBs – One Labeled “Copy” and One Labeled “Original” with all the files below.

1 One file named “Public Information Copy” that contains the Applicant’s entire Grant Application in searchable PDF, if applicable.

ARTICLE X. LIST OF EXHIBITS, ATTACHMENTS, AND FORMS

Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, v1.6
- Exhibit B: HHSC Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant v2.16.1
- Exhibit C: Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement
- Exhibit C-1: Texas HHS System Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)
- Exhibit D: Exceptions Form
- Exhibit E: HHSC Special Conditions
- Exhibit F: Budget Template Instructions and Examples
- Exhibit G: Evaluation Tool

Forms

- Form A: Face Page
- Form B: Administrative Information
- Form C: Governmental Entity – Authorized Officials (if applicable)
- Form C-1: Non-Profit Entity or For-Profit Entity (if applicable)
- Form D: Project Purpose and Goals
- Form E: Project Plan
- Form F: Project Deliverables
- Form G: Project Structure and Contributions
- Form H: Project Assessments and Tools
- Form I: Organization’s Experience
- Form J: Match
- Form K: Expenditure &- Match Proposal Template
- Form L: Indirect Cost Rate Questionnaire (ICRQ)
- Form M: TV+FA Internal Control Structure Questionnaire