



TEXAS

Health and Human Services

Stephanie Muth, Executive Commissioner

Request for Applications (RFA)

Grant for

Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP) Program

RFA No. HHS0016568

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

March 11, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time

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Section I. Introduction, Definitions, and Statutory Authority

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)the System Agency, is accepting Applications for the Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP) program. TNFP program is a community health program that provides home visiting services to expectant parents, partnering them with trained nurses from pregnancy through the child's second birthday.

The purpose of TNFP program is to improve maternal and child health, child development, and family economic self-sufficiency Outcomes for participating families.

Applicants should reference **Section II, Scope of Grant Project**, for further detailed information regarding the purpose, background, eligible population, eligible activities, and requirements.

Grant Name:	Texas Nurse-Family Partnership
RFA No.:	HHS0016568
Deadline for Submission of Applications:	March 11, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time
Deadline for Submitting Questions or Requests for Clarifications:	February 17, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time
Estimated Total Available Funding:	\$134,480,753.00
Estimated Total Number of Awards:	Multiple
Estimated Max Award Amount:	Refer to Section 5.1, Grant Funding Source and Available Funding.
Cost Sharing Required, if any:	N/A
Anticipated Project Start Date:	September 1, 2026
Anticipated Length of Project Period:	Five (5) State Fiscal Years

Eligible Applicants:	Refer to Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements .
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To be considered for screening, evaluation, and award, Applicants must provide and submit all required information and documentation as set forth in **Section VIII, Application Organization and Submission Requirements**, and **Section XIII, Submission Checklist**, by the Deadline for Submission of Applications established in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda. See **Section 9.2, Initial Compliance Screening of Applications**, for further details.

1.1 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Unless a different definition is specified, or the context clearly indicates otherwise, the definitions and acronyms given to a term below apply whenever the term appears in this RFA. All other terms have their ordinary and common meaning.

Refer to all exhibits to this RFA for additional definitions.

“Addendum” or “Addenda” means a written clarification or revision to this RFA, including exhibits, forms, and attachments, as issued and posted by HHSC to the HHS Grants RFA website. Each Addendum will be posted and must be signed by Applicant and returned with its Application.

“Applicant” means any person or legal entity that submits an Application in response to this RFA. The term includes the individual submitting the Application who is authorized to sign the Application on behalf of Applicant and to bind Applicant under any Grant Agreement that may result from the submission of the Application. May also be referred to in this RFA as “Respondent.”

“Application” means all documents Applicant submits in response to this RFA, including all required forms and exhibits. May also be referred to in this RFA as “Solicitation Response.”

“Budget” means the financial plan for carrying out the Grant Project, as formalized in the Grant Agreement, including awarded funds and any required Cost Sharing, submitted as part of the Application in response to this RFA. An Applicant’s Requested Budget may differ from the System Agency-approved Budget executed in the final Grant Agreement.

“Business Day(s)” means the official working days of the week to include Monday through Friday, except for legal holidays observed by the State of Texas.

“CFR” means the Code of Federal Regulations, which is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government.

[“Community Strengths and Needs Assessment”](#) or [“CSNA”](#) is an assessment Applicant develops and utilizes to identify community strengths, needs, assets, characteristics, challenges, and available resources in the proposed service area .

[“Cost Sharing”](#) is the non-federal and/or non-State share of costs the Grantee may optionally choose to contribute to accomplish the purpose of the Grant Project.

[“Direct Cost”](#) means those costs that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective under the Grant Project responsive to this RFA or other internally or externally funded activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy. Costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances must be treated consistently as either direct or Indirect Costs. Direct Costs include, but are not limited to, salaries, travel, Equipment, and supplies directly benefiting the grant-supported Project or activity.

[“Effective Date”](#) means the date on which the Grant Agreement takes effect.

[“Equipment”](#) means, pursuant to 2 CFR §200.1, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one (1) year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000. See §200.1 for definitions of capital assets, computing devices, general purpose Equipment, information technology systems, special purpose Equipment, and supplies.

[“Family Health Services”](#) or [“FHS”](#) means the program within the Texas Health and Human Services Commission that houses FSSs and other programs that focus on women, children, and families in the areas of health and medical services, crisis services and education, early childhood, and family support.

[“Family Support Services”](#) or [“FSS”](#) means the area within FHS that manages programs that are intended to provide intervention and promote safety and stability for children and at-risk families.

[“FSS Program Staff”](#) means employees who work for Family Support Services.

[“Grant Agreement”](#) means the agreement entered into by System Agency and Grantee as a result of this RFA, including the Signature Document and all attachments and amendments. May also be referred to in this RFA as [“Contract.”](#)

[“Grantee”](#) means the party receiving funds under any Grant Agreement awarded under this RFA. May also be referred to as [“Subrecipient”](#) or [“Contractor”](#) in this document.

[“Grant Term”](#) refers to the base Project Period plus any renewal or extension of the Grant Agreement.

[“HHS”](#) includes both the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

“HHSC” means the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

“Index Child” means the child for whom a family’s eligibility for TNFP programming is based. This RFA refers to Index Child to indicate children served. Index Child may be used interchangeably with “Participant” in this document.

“Indirect Cost” means those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one (1) cost objective and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. Indirect Costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the Grant Project responsive to this RFA but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.

“Indirect Cost Rate” is a formula for determining in a reasonable manner the proportion of Indirect Costs each program should bear. It is the ratio (expressed as a percentage) of the Grantee’s Indirect Costs to a Direct Cost base.

“Invoice” is Grantee’s bill or written request for payment under the Grant Agreement for services performed.

“Outcome” means a measure that demonstrates the effect a service has on Participants, typically related to improvements in the lives of Participants regarding safety, permanency, and well-being.

“Output” means an indicator referring to activities, methods, and approaches and the immediate results generated because of program efforts (e.g., number of families served).

“Performance Measure” means a service Output, Outcome, or deliverable used to assess the performance of Grantee.

“Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System” or “PEIRS” means the data reporting system used by FSS Grantees and FSS Program Staff to capture and report program and Grant-related information.

“Project” or “Grant Project” means the specific work and activities that are supported by the funds provided under the Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA.

“Project Period” is the initial period of time set forth in the Grant Agreement during which Grantees may perform approved grant-funded activities to be eligible for reimbursement or payment. Unless otherwise specified, the Project Period begins on the Grant Agreement Effective Date and ends on the Grant Agreement termination or expiration date, and represents the base Project Period, not including extensions or renewals.

“Project Work Plan” or “PWP” means the required documentation detailing how the Grantee will implement and operate the TNFP grant initiative to achieve the Performance Measures outlined in the Grant Agreement.

“RFA” means this Request for Applications, including all parts, exhibits, forms, attachments, and Addenda posted on the HHS Grants RFA website. May also be referred to herein as “Solicitation.”

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

“Statement of Work” means the description of activities Grantee must perform to complete the Project, as specified in the Grant Agreement and as may be amended. See **Exhibit D, Example Texas Nurse Family Partnership (TNFP) Statement of Work.**

“Subaward” means a written agreement that assigns portions of Grantee’s obligations to a third party that Grantee selects. The third party assumes some of Grantee’s obligations while Grantee remains completely responsible for all actions that the Sub-awardee performs. Subaward may be used interchangeably with the terms “Subcontract” or “Subgrant” for this RFA.

“Sub-awardee” means any entity that has entered into a Subaward with Grantee to assume some of Grantee’s obligations. Sub-awardee may be used interchangeably with the terms “Subcontractor” or “Subgrantee” for this RFA.

“System Agency” means HHSC, DSHS, or both, that will be a party to any Grant Agreement resulting from the RFA.

“TNFP” is the Texas Nurse-Family Partnership program as funded through HHSC.

“TxGMS” means the Texas Grant Management Standards published by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

1.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY

System Agency is requesting Applications under Chapter 137 of the Texas Human Resources Code. State funds for this Grant Project are authorized under the Texas General Appropriations Act, Article II. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated State funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Federal funding for this Grant Project is authorized under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), as amended and codified in 42 U.S.C. Section 601. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated federal funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law. Federal funding awarded to System Agency is through the program(s) listed below:

Federal Grant Program:	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Grant
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Federal Awarding Agency:	U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
Funding Opportunity No.:	2501TXTANF
Assistance Listing Number and Program Title:	93.558, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

1.4 STANDARDS

Awards made as a result of this RFA are subject to all policies, terms, and conditions set forth in or included with this RFA, as well as applicable statutes, requirements, and guidelines including, but not limited to, applicable provisions of the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS) and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200).

Section II. Scope of Grant Project

2.1 PURPOSE

This funding opportunity invites grant Applications requesting funding for TNFP program. The purpose of the TNFP program is to provide nurse home visiting services to expectant parents in communities across Texas to improve maternal and child health, child development, and family economic self-sufficiency Outcomes for participating families. Using the Nurse-Family Partnership model, the TNFP program works with expectant parents, beginning in early pregnancy and continuing through the child’s second birthday. Nurse home visitors provide parent education and support services to participating families through regular home visits addressing behavioral health, caregiver mental health, early care, safety, and overall well-being.

Families benefit from improved pregnancy Outcomes, improved infant and child health, and increased economic self-sufficiency, with Outcomes including reduced child maltreatment, fewer emergency room visits, healthy developmental indicators, and greater opportunity for parents to complete their education or find or maintain employment.

The TNFP program is entirely voluntary and free-of-charge to enrolled families.

2.2 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

As part of its array of services, FSS provides for TNFP programming in different communities throughout the State. The TNFP program is a voluntary, evidence-based nurse-home visitation program shown to improve the health and well-being of low-income, first-time mothers and their children. Under this model, registered nurses regularly visit the homes of mothers during pregnancy and throughout the first two years of the child's life to provide educational support services around maternal and child health, caring for infants and young children, child development, and family well-being.

Texas initially implemented its Nurse-Family Partnership programming in 2006. In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, passed Senate Bill 156, directing HHSC to use a competitive grant process to expand the Nurse-Family Partnership programming to additional sites in Texas. Through Article II, Rider 63, of the General Appropriations Act (GAA), House Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, the Texas Legislature appropriated \$7.9 million dollars to the TNFP program for fiscal year 2009 to serve an estimated 2,000 clients. In September 2008, HHSC awarded grants to nine (9) agencies to implement TNFP programming with the understanding that the grants could be extended for a maximum of six (6) years, contingent upon availability of funds.

In 2015, HHSC released a new RFA and awarded 15 grants effective September 1, 2015. The TNFP program and these grants moved to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) in 2016 as part of the HHS agency consolidation and transformation efforts, as directed by Senate Bill 200, 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2015. In 2019, the 86th Texas Legislature awarded additional State funding with the General Appropriations Act (GAA), House Bill 1, Article II, Rider 41, which permitted the expansion of Nurse-Family Partnership programming to additional counties and allowed existing agencies to increase staff and service numbers. In 2020, with this funding, DFPS awarded a total of 16 TNFP grants effective September 1, 2021, that served nearly 3,000 families across the State.

In 2024, TNFP grants were transferred to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, FSS, as directed by Senate Bill 24 of the 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023. Currently, TNFP grantees are serving more than 3,200 families across the State.

2.3 ELIGIBLE POPULATION

The eligible population to be served under this RFA consists of:

- A. First-time parents and their children, beginning in pregnancy and continuing until their child's second birthday.
- B. Individuals who are:

1. First-time expectant parents. A first-time expectant parent is considered an individual who has no previous live births. Individuals who have experienced neonatal death, loss of custody of a previous child during infancy, or relinquishment in the neonatal period may also qualify as first-time expectant parents.
 2. Enrolled by 28 weeks of pregnancy; and
 3. Impacted by socioeconomic or health risk factors. Socioeconomic or health risk factors supporting eligibility may include, but are not limited to, economic hardship, limited financial resources, housing instability, parenting under age 18, educational status, employment status, susceptibility to negative birth Outcomes, physical or mental health conditions, substance use, intimate partner violence or trauma exposure, developmental or intellectual limitations, child welfare or foster care involvement, or other risk factors for poor key health Outcome
- C. Primary caregivers that are not be able to continue parenting the child after enrollment in programming and birth of the child, another caregiver may continue with Nurse-Family Partnership programming should they wish to do so.

HHSC reserves the right to adjust program eligibility to align with any associated changes to statute or the Nurse-Family Partnership model.

2.4 ELIGIBLE SERVICE AREAS

The Service areas for project funding under this RFA are any of the Texas counties.

Applicants may propose to serve a single county or multiple contiguous counties under this RFA. Contiguous counties include any county whose boundary touches at any point with that of another county.

If an Applicant would like to serve multiple counties that are not contiguous counties, Applicant must submit a separate Application for each county that Applicant proposes to serve.

Approved counties will be identified in the Grant Agreement Statement of Work and must be served under the award. Refer to **Exhibit D, Example Texas Nurse Family Partnership (TNFP) Statement of Work**.

2.5 ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

This grant program may fund activities and costs as allowed by the laws, regulations, rules, and guidance governing fund use identified in the relevant sections of this RFA. Only grant-funded activities authorized under this RFA are eligible for reimbursement and payment under any Grant Agreement awarded pursuant to this RFA.

The primary focus of the TNFP program is to provide nurse home visiting services to expectant parents and their families until the child's second birthday. Each Applicant must include provision of the Nurse-Family Partnership program as its primary service.

The Nurse-Family Partnership program pairs first-time expectant individuals with a trained, registered nurse to provide education and support during pregnancy and the child's first two years. Using clinical skills and nursing expertise, Nurse-Family Partnership nurse home visitors provide support and preventative care; assess mothers and infants for signs of health or developmental concerns during pregnancy, the postpartum period, infancy, and early childhood; work with parents to enhance parenting skills; and connect parents to resources and supports needed for the family's and child's optimal health and well-being in infancy and during the child's first two years.

Primary services under a TNFP grant award are those required by and incorporated in the evidence-based Nurse-Family Partnership model and include:

- A. Nurse home visiting;
- B. Parent education and support;
- C. Screening and assessment; and
- D. Other services required by the Nurse-Family Partnership model.

Supplemental services and activities are related to eligible families engaging in and benefitting from the primary services listed above and may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Support groups;
- B. Lactation consultation;
- C. Mental health supports, including stress management;
- D. Infant and early childhood mental health consultation;
- E. Tobacco cessation support;
- F. Behavioral health support;
- G. Financial wellness and literacy support;
- H. Basic needs support;
- I. Coordinated referrals and service connections; and
- J. Coordinated case management.

Any supplemental activities provided must enhance primary home visiting activities and cannot interfere with a program's ability to meet Grant Agreement and model requirements.

2.6 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

All Grant Projects funded under this RFA must meet the following program requirements:

- A. Grantees must provide Nurse-Family Partnership programming and services as required by the Grant Agreement to the eligible population in the specified service area.
- B. Grantees must ensure competent and effective service provision and implement quality programming to meet program goals and objectives.
- C. Grantees must implement Nurse-Family Partnership programming with fidelity to the model, according to Nurse-Family Partnership requirements and standards as specified by the national model developer.
 1. Services must begin no later than 28 weeks gestation for first-time expectant mothers enrolling in the program. Late enrollments may only be considered with variance from Nurse-Family Partnership and approval by HHSC.
 2. Services must be completed when the child reaches 2 years of age. While some families conclude services earlier due to family circumstances, services must end at the time of the child's second birthday.
 3. Services may only be provided to multiparous clients or late registrant clients contingent on associated changes to statute or to the Nurse-Family Partnership model and only upon corresponding HHSC update to program eligibility.
- D. Grantees must provide Participants with information about the rights, responsibilities, and benefits of establishing paternity of a child, as appropriate.
 1. Grantees must provide assistance to parents regarding acknowledgement of paternity, as appropriate.
 2. Grantees must provide Participants with information about child support services available through the Office of the Texas Attorney General.
- E. Participation in TNFP programming and services must be voluntary and free of charge to Participants.
- F. Grantees may identify focus populations within the eligible service population for particular outreach or tailored support. Examples might include expecting adolescents or expecting mothers with substance use concerns. However, programs must make services known and accessible to all eligible families in the service area and no eligible families may be excluded or waitlisted for services if program capacity allows for service provision.

- G. Grantees must engage with a local or regional coalition that supports improvement in service coordination and Outcomes related to maternal health or early childhood development and well-being.
- H. Grantees are encouraged to partner with other relevant service providers in the service area to benefit Participant families through coordinated referrals, access to services, and program awareness and outreach. Grantees are encouraged to partner with local Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), and Thriving Texas Families (TTF) affiliates, along with other providers relevant to expectant parents and families with infants and young children.
- I. Use of Subawards
 - 1. 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 Applicant.
 - 2. No Subaward under this RFA shall relieve 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.
 - 3. Applicant must identify any work to be performed by Sub-awardees and will include proposed Sub-awardee Budget(s).
 - 4. Grantee will award Subawards based on its own internal policies and processes. Grantee will notify HHSC in writing if the Sub-awardee changes.
 - 5. 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.
 - 6. If Grantee terminates any Subaward, and Grantee has not fully expended the funds obligated to the Sub-awardee during the State Fiscal Year, Grantee must find a replacement Sub-awardee within 60 calendar days or obligate those funds in a manner consistent with the purposes of TNFP. Any changes resulting from such termination must be reported to and approved by HHSC prior to implementation.

2.6.1 CSNA

A comprehensive CSNA will aid in planning and decision making, helping to identify gaps in the community, identify priorities, set goals, and allocate resources accordingly. Applicants must conduct a CSNA for their proposed service area.

- A. The CSNA should include data on the number of eligible families, specifically first-time mothers experiencing economic hardship or other socioeconomic or health risk factors residing in the proposed service area.

- B. The CSNA should also describe existing services available to these mothers and families as well as needed services and any gaps or barriers.
- C. Applicants should include both quantitative and qualitative data and information in the CSNA.
- D. Applicants should make efforts to include parent and caregiver input, insights, and feedback in the CSNA. The CSNA is an early opportunity to engage expectant parents, parents of young children, and caregivers, those most affected by the program, in planning.
- E. Applicants should make efforts to include other service providers, partners, and stakeholders in the CSNA to provide information and context for data.
- F. Applicants must use information and insights from the CSNA to identify the needs and priorities of expectant families and families with young children in their proposed service area.
- G. The CSNA data, information, and insights should inform Applicant’s plan for Nurse-Family Partnership implementation in the community. Applicant’s plan should be clearly related to identified needs and priorities and supported by CSNA information and findings.
- H. Applicants must provide a summary of the CSNA. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.

2.6.2 Organizational Qualifications and Experience

Applicants must describe their experience implementing and administering similar programs, including how they meet organizational qualification. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.

- A. Applicants should describe previous experience providing services in the proposed service area and community partnerships.
- B. Applicants should describe their 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 (3) years.
- C. Applicants must describe organizational competencies and demonstrate preparedness to implement TNFP programming. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.
- D. Applicants should address the ability to:
 1. Strategically hire and retain nurse home visiting staff and supervisor(s) to ensure successful program implementation, family engagement, and quality service provision;
 2. Ensure staff are competent in connecting with and serving Participants who have trauma exposure or history or other adverse experiences;
 3. Promote programming and services, utilizing outreach methods and materials in a manner that is relevant and compelling to expectant families; and

4. Reach and engage eligible families across proposed communities.
- E. Applicants should describe how any proposed Sub-awardees also meet these organizational requirements.

2.6.3 Program Staffing Requirements

A. Program Staff

1. Applicants must develop and provide a staffing plan to ensure successful implementation of the Nurse-Family Partnership program and ability to meet program and grant requirements. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.
2. Applicants must indicate how they will hire, train, and retain nurse home visitors to effectively implement Nurse-Family Partnership programming and service.
3. Grantees must ensure program staff complete any HHSC-required and model-required training.
4. Grantees must provide for the Office of the Texas Attorney General training regarding acknowledgement of paternity and child support services.

B. Program Director Requirements

1. The program director role (or equivalent position, such as program coordinator, program manager, program supervisor) is the primary program contact and is responsible for program oversight, services, and supervision.
2. HHSC recommends that any person holding the program director position or performing program director responsibilities have at least a bachelor's degree in a relevant field, with relevant work experience, and a minimum of five (5) years of relevant program management and supervisory experience or a master's degree in a relevant field, along with a minimum of three (3) years of program management and supervisory experience.
3. The program director must have experience with performance evaluation, data analysis, reporting, budget oversight, and social service programming.
4. 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 full-time employee(s) (FTE(s)).
5. The program director will:
 - a. Serve as the primary program contact and liaison;
 - b. Provide program oversight, to include managing operations, supporting and monitoring performance related to the Project, and planning for improvements where needed;

- c. Ensure program operations and activities adhere to all applicable policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to the Grant Agreement, organization, program model, and services;
- d. Ensure program goals are met, especially related to deliverables, Performance Measures, and processes;
- e. Coordinate Budget planning, ensuring Budget is aligned with program goals and operations;
- f. Support hiring, training, and supervision for Project employees; and
- g. Provide for regular administrative, clinical, and Reflective Supervision of direct service staff.

C. Background Checks

- 1. Grantees must complete staff background checks, as directed by HHSC, before:
 - a. Having direct contact with a Participant;
 - b. Accessing Participant information and records; and
 - c. Accessing PEIRS.
- 2. Grantees must complete background checks every two (2) years for all program staff members who complete any of the activities above.

2.6.4 Recruitment, Outreach, and Retention

- A. Applicants must describe outreach and recruitment plans and strategies to connect to eligible families. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction. When developing plans and strategies, Applicants should be aware of the following:
- 1. In addition to standard means of program outreach, such as dissemination of brochures and attending community events, outreach to eligible families should involve innovative and targeted approaches that could include, but are not limited to, enlisting previous Participants to participate in outreach, partnering with other providers for shared early childhood information and referral, establishing relationships with obstetrics and family care providers, engaging community stakeholders and their respective organizations, etc.
 - 2. Outreach and retention plans should consider community context, geographic location, and other relevant factors.
 - 3. Applicants may also plan to serve and conduct outreach and recruitment efforts for expecting current and former foster youth who meet Nurse-Family Partnership eligibility criteria.
 - 4. Grantees must add programming, including all programming provided by Sub-awardees, to the Texas 2-1-1 site as well as its 2-1-1 Area Information Center and must update its information within 30 calendar days of any changes to program information.

- B. Applicants should describe plans to promote Participant retention. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.
1. Retention plans should include plans to promote and support family engagement and participation, including increased frequency of communication with families, use of parent support groups to enhance parent connections, involving families in program planning, developing relational health competency for direct service staff, etc.
 2. Applicants may propose the use of incentives to support program retention and engagement as well. Applicants should elaborate on proposed incentives, how they were chosen, how they will be provided, and the intended impact for Participants.
 - a. Incentives may be used in the cases of milestone achievement or after successful program completion.
 - b. For information on effective incentive types and strategies, please consult the field guide and webinar slides available at the following URL: <http://www.buildingbetterprograms.org/2016/12/14/using-incentives-in-human-services-field-guide-literature-review-and-webinar/>.
 - c. Incentives should not be used as payment for participation. Therefore, incentives cannot be excessive and cannot be provided at every interaction or encounter with a Participant family.
 - d. HHSC must approve program incentives plans, which must, at a minimum, be reasonable and allocable.
- C. Efforts must be made by Grantee to ensure that eligible families are not denied or delayed services due to a waitlist. Grantee must have referral policies and procedures in place that provide alternative service options either through Grantee or through other community resources when Grantee is at capacity.

2.6.5 Service Authorization and Enrollment

- A. Grantees must have a documented process for conducting intakes and completing enrollments, including how the family's individual eligibility is determined.
- B. Grantees must have an enrollment process that captures all required data, which includes a primary caregiver's signed consent to participate, eligibility criteria, identified priority characteristics, and any additional surveys or assessments as required by HHSC.
- C. Grantees must complete enrollments as required and ensure that all required data is entered in PEIRS.
- D. Grantees 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 services, for as long the Participant receives programming.
- E. Grantees may not serve families that are already enrolled in home visiting services.

- F. Grantees are not permitted to conduct outreach and recruitment, routine grant programming and activities, or other special initiatives for counties that are not listed in Grantee’s Statement of Work. In addition, they may not dedicate resources to serve counties outside Grantee’s approved county(ies). However, Grantees may enroll and serve families residing in contiguous counties that are not listed in Grantee’s Statement of Work on a limited, individual, and as-needed basis. This must not interfere with Grantee’s ability to serve eligible families in approved counties or to meet grant requirements.

2.6.6 Referrals

- A. Grantees must track all referrals made to other service providers for additional services for Participants or their families.
- B. Grantees must enter information regarding referrals made to other service providers in PEIRS as instructed by HHSC.

2.6.7 Program Surveys

- A. Grantees must administer Participant surveys as required by the Nurse-Family Partnership model.
- B. Grantees must complete the Program Experience Survey (PES) with the primary caregiver when programming ends. The PES must be completed for those Participants who have completed services as well as for those who may be exiting early.
- C. Grantees must complete the self-sufficiency survey with primary caregivers as required by HHSC.
- D. Grantees must administer any other surveys required by HHSC.

2.6.8 Service Completion

- A. Grantees must document service completion in PEIRS when services are completed as required by HHSC.
- B. Grantees must have a documented process for service completion and forms completion that includes collecting any required surveys from Participants and documenting any additional referrals when Participant exits the program.
- C. Applicants must describe the process for service completion and discharge. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.

2.6.9 Community and Systems Engagement Requirements

Applicants must describe plans for community and systems-level engagement. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction. The following should be considered:

- A. Young children and their families benefit from an organized system of community resources to support healthy development and well-being. An organized system can help expectant parents and families of infants and young children readily connect to and access information, resources, and supports. This connection and access can have

- a pronounced and positive impact on children’s early development, health, and well-being.
- B. Early childhood coalitions can enhance community coordination to support maternal and infant health, parenting awareness, improved early development and learning, and improved child health and safety practices. Early childhood coalitions can assess, plan, and coordinate for improved community services and Outcomes for expectant families and families with young children.
 - C. For these reasons, Grantees must lead or actively engage with a local coalition comprised of community partners and organizations, including parents and other stakeholders, sharing common goals of supporting healthy early childhood development, promoting maternal health, preventing child abuse and neglect, promoting early literacy, or other related areas in early childhood. Coalitions may be population- or issue-focused or have a subcommittee or task force to promote awareness and address goals.
 - D. Where possible, Grantees should engage with an existing coalition to leverage infrastructure and partnerships to promote and meet local coalition goals.
 - E. Examples of coalition activities include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Improving coordination of existing services and resources for expecting families and families with infants and young children.
 - 2. Planning for additional services or resources to improve systems and Outcomes for expecting families and families with young children.
 - 3. Engaging parents and caregivers in early childhood service planning or community development efforts.
 - 4. Developing a subcommittee to assess and improve service availability and coordination for expecting parents and families with young children in the community.
 - 5. Increasing connections between providers in the community that serve expectant parents and families with young children, e.g., health care providers, childcare, mental health, ECI, etc.
 - F. A community coalition that is an appropriate fit for a Grantee under this RFA should:
 - 1. Encourage collaboration among area agencies and stakeholders to address a range of needs for expectant parents and families with young children; and
 - 2. Identify and work to address barriers to service delivery and promote access to resources and supports.
 - G. Grantees will document coalition efforts in PEIRS and report on efforts and impact in quarterly reports.
 - H. Grantees must also partner and collaborate with other FHS grantees and providers in the service area, where applicable, to ensure optimal coordination of services for families and to strengthen impact of grant investments in the community.

1. Applicants should outline any plans for connecting to and collaborating with other FHS grantees and providers within the proposed service area. Refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction.
2. To learn more about many of the current FHS grantees in Applicant's community, visit the following URLs: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/health/women-children> and <https://fss.hhs.texas.gov/default.asp>.
3. To learn more about current FSS, Grantees specifically, visit the following URL: <https://fss.hhs.texas.gov/default.asp>.

2.6.10 Required Recordkeeping

Grantee must maintain service documentation and Participant records to reflect details of required programming and services and to support programmatic efforts and improvements. Grantee must also:

- A. Have Participant records and service activity documentation system(s), processes, and procedures.
- B. Have policies and procedures regarding how records and service activity documentation are maintained and utilized to support Participant services. These must identify the information required in Participant records and service activity notes.
- C. Have a quality assurance process pertaining to Participant records and service activity documentation.
- D. Track all program activities and initiatives in accordance with Grantee's approved PWP.
- E. Maintain electronic and/or physical records related to grant programming, activities, and operations.
- F. Ensure that all program documentation is complete, accurate, and maintained in an organized fashion.
- G. Maintain Participant records in a manner that protects the confidential information of all members of the Participant's family.
- H. Maintain individual Participant records that include the following:
 1. Enrollment form;
 2. Annual data authorization form;
 3. Required screenings, assessments, and surveys;
 4. Service activity documentation;
 5. Basic needs support documentation;
 6. Outgoing service referrals;
 7. Discharge form and information; and
 8. Other agency documentation or documentation required by the Nurse-Family Partnership model.

- I. Maintain service activity notes. Service activity notes are the narrative section of the Participant record in which Grantee documents programming and service details. Service activity notes support the program activities performed and billed to HHSC. They also aid in service planning, supervision, and quality assurance. Service activity notes must include, at a minimum:
 - 1. Programming type;
 - 2. Date and duration of programming;
 - 3. Participants;
 - 4. Brief description of topic or items discussed;
 - 5. Response or communication from the Participant(s); and
 - 6. Plans for next steps and follow-up.
- J. Develop and maintain a system tracking Participants referred to Grantee for services. Documentation must include:
 - 1. Date of referral;
 - 2. Origin of the referral;
 - 3. Participant eligibility; and
 - 4. Date Participant began program.
- K. Ensure compliance with all recordkeeping requirements in this RFA and must make all program records available and accessible to HHSC upon request.

2.7 REQUIRED REPORTS

System Agency will monitor Grantee’s performance, including, but not limited to, through review of financial and programmatic reports and Performance Measures, under any Grant Agreement awarded as a result of this RFA. Each Grantee awarded a Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA must submit the following reports by the noted due dates in **Section 2.7.1, Quarterly Reports**.

2.7.1 Quarterly Reports

Grantees must submit quarterly reports to HHSC regarding implementation efforts, achievements, challenges, and other issues relevant to performance. HHSC will provide quarterly report templates to Grantees. **Table 1. Quarterly Reports and Due Dates** provides due dates for all quarterly reports. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the quarterly report is due the next Business Day.

Table 1. Quarterly Reports and Due Dates	
Report	Due Date
Quarter 1 Report (September, October, November)	December 15

Quarter 2 Report (December, January, February)	March 15
Quarter 3 Report (March, April, May)	June 15
Quarter 4 Report (June, July, August)	September 15

2.7.2 PEIRS Data Entry

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

- A. Required PEIRS data entry includes the following:
 1. Participant enrollment information;
 2. Index Child enrollment information;
 3. Service data;
 4. Survey data;
 5. Participant discharge information; and
 6. Program events and activities data.
- B. Grantees must enter information regarding referrals made to other service providers in PEIRS as instructed by HHSC.
- C. Grantees must enter information regarding staff details in PEIRS as instructed by HHSC.
- D. Grantees must complete accurate and comprehensive data entry for a specific month into PEIRS no later than 30 calendar days following the close of the month in which an enrollment occurred, programming was provided, an event was held, or a Participant and/or family was discharged.
- E. Grantees must use a secure internet connection to complete PEIRS data entry and ensure that the computer Equipment used for data entry meets minimum requirements established by HHSC for connection to PEIRS. At the time of this RFA, the minimum requirements are Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome 99 or higher.
- F. Grantees must have documented procedures to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of data entry for all services provided, including training and quality assurance.
- G. To access PEIRS, program staff must:
 1. Have cleared a background check;
 2. Complete PEIRS training (see <https://learningportal.hhs.texas.gov/>); and
 3. Annually complete HHSC’s cybersecurity training, a version of which is located at the following URL:
<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/contracting/hhs-information-security-cybersecurity-training-for-contractors.pdf>.

2.7.3 Invoices/Requests for Reimbursement – Monthly

FSS will provide required forms to Grantee after grant award.

- A. Grantee must create and maintain reliable and accurate records to support all actions related to invoicing, payments, and adjustments for any activities under the Grant Agreement.
- B. Upon receipt of a proper and verified Invoice, and after deduction of any known previous overpayment made by HHSC, HHSC will pay Grantee from available funds for programming rendered in accordance with the terms of the Grant Agreement.
- C. Grantee must submit an Invoice and purchase voucher in PEIRS monthly, no later than 30 calendar days following the month in which expenses were incurred or services provided.
- D. Grantee must work with HHSC during the last month of each State Fiscal Year to submit accurate year-end expenditures as soon as possible.

2.7.4 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 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.

2.8 PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND MONITORING

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, Sub-awardees, or Subcontractors, if any.

Grant Agreement(s) awarded as a result of this RFA are subject to System Agency's performance monitoring activities throughout the duration of the grant Project Period. This evaluation may include a reassessment of Project activities and services to determine whether they continue to be effective throughout the Grant Term.

Grantees must regularly collect and maintain data that measures the performance and effectiveness of activities under a Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA in the manner, and within the timeframes specified in this RFA and resulting Grant Agreement, or as otherwise specified by System Agency. Grantees must submit the necessary information and documentation regarding all requirements, including reports and other deliverables and will be expected to report on the following measures in **Table 2, Grant Agreement Outputs and Outcomes**.

Table 2. Grant Agreement Outputs and Outcomes	
Output and Outcome Measures Defined	Required Outputs and Outcomes
Output 1: Expected number of families served monthly.	Applicant will propose the number of families served monthly.
Output 2: Expected number of families served annually.	Applicant will propose the number of families served annually.
Output 3: Percentage of families who remain engaged in the program for a minimum of one (1) year.	50%
Output 4: Percentage of primary caregivers who complete program experience surveys.	50%
Output 5: Grantee will participate in a local early childhood coalition.	Regular participation demonstrated in reporting.
Outcome 1: Percentage of mothers who breastfeed for at least six (6) months postpartum.	20%
Outcome 2: Percentage of children who attend recommended well child visits.	80%
Outcome 3: Percentage of primary caregivers and/or family members who read, tell stories, or sing songs daily with their child.	80%
Outcome 4: Percentage of primary caregivers who report satisfaction with services (agree/strongly agree responses) in at least one (1) domain of completed Program Experience Surveys.	80%
Outcome 5: Percentage of Index Children who remain Safe while receiving programming.	100%
Outcome 6: Percentage of primary caregiver(s) who demonstrate progress toward financial stability, through education or employment.	20%

A. Applicants will propose the following (refer to **Section 6.1, Narrative Proposal**, for required forms and instruction):

1. Total number of families to be served monthly; and

2. Total number of families to be served annually.

Proposed number of families to be served must be based on proposed staffing.

- B. Final Outputs and Outcomes will be determined through the negotiations process, prior to award of a Grant Agreement, and based on available funds and requirements. HHSC reserves the right to make final determination on Outputs and Outcomes for any Grant Agreement awarded as a result of this RFA. Additional Outputs or Outcomes may be added during the Grant Term.
- C. Grantees are required to enter data related to required Outputs and Outcomes in PEIRS.

If requested by System Agency, Grantee shall report on the progress towards completion of the Grant Project and other relevant information as determined by System Agency during the grant Project Period. To remain eligible for renewal funding, if any, Grantee must be able to show the scope of services provided and their impact, quality, and levels of performance against approved goals, and that Grantee's activities and services effectively address and achieve the Project's stated purpose.

2.9 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Grantee must have a financial management system in place to maintain internal controls, ensure proper management of federal and State funds, maximize non-federal resources, and maintain solvency. Grantee's accounting and internal controls 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 be capable of producing expenditure reports, cost center analyses, Budget formats, and automated reports as required by, and without additional support from, HHSC.
- D. The systems must include records that adequately identify the source and application of funds for federally funded activities. These records must contain information on federal awards, authorizations, financial obligations, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income and interest, and be supported by source documentation.
- E. The systems must demonstrate Grantee's effective control over, and accountability for, all funds, property, and other assets. The systems must ensure all funds and assets are adequately safeguarded and are solely used for authorized purposes.
- F. The internal controls system must safeguard the Grantee's assets, produce accurate accounting data, promote efficient operations, and ensure adherence to prescribed accounting policies and procedures.
- G. Effective internal controls must 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.

- H. The systems must meet the minimum standards for financial management systems under 7 CFR § 277.6, Standards for Financial Management Systems, and under 2 CFR § 200.302, Financial Management.
- I. Grantee must use the accrual basis accounting method for all financial deliverables. This includes, but is not limited to, Invoices or any other financial documents or reports as requested by HHSC. This requirement does not constitute a change to Applicant's financial management system. Refer to 45 CFR § 75.302, Financial Management and Standards for Financial Management Systems.

2.10 FINAL BILLING SUBMISSION

Unless otherwise directed by System Agency, Grantee shall submit a reimbursement or payment request as a final close-out Invoice not later than 45 calendar days following the end of the term of the Grant Agreement. Reimbursement or payment requests received after the deadline may not be paid.

2.11 DATA USE AGREEMENT

By submitting an Application in response to this RFA, Applicant agrees to be bound by the terms of **Exhibit E, HHS Data Use Agreement, v.8.5**, or **Exhibit E-1, Governmental Entity Version HHS Data Use Agreement v.8.5**, including, but not limited to, the terms and conditions regarding **Exhibit E-2, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement - Attachment 2 Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)**, , attached to this RFA.

2.12 LIMITATIONS ON GRANTS TO UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In each Grant Agreement with a unit of local government, grant funds appropriated under the General Appropriations Act will be expended pursuant to the General Appropriations Act, Article IX, Section 4.04, subject to limitations and reporting requirements similar to those provided by:

- A. Parts 2, 3, and 5 of Article IX of the General Appropriations Act (except there is no requirement for increased salaries for local government employees);
- B. §§556.004, 556.005, and 556.006, Government Code; and
- C. §§2113.012 and 2113.101, Government Code.

In this section, "unit of local government" means:

- A. A council of governments, a regional planning commission, or a similar regional planning agency created under Chapter 391, Local Government Code;
- B. A local workforce development board; or
- C. A community center as defined by Health and Safety Code, §534.001(b).

Section III. Applicant Eligibility Requirements

3.1 LEGAL AUTHORITY TO APPLY

By submitting an Application in response to this RFA, Applicant certifies that it has legal authority to apply for the Grant Agreement that is the subject of this RFA and is eligible to receive awards. Further, Applicant certifies it will continue to maintain any required legal authority and eligibility throughout the entire duration of the Grant Term, if awarded. All requirements apply with equal force to Applicant and, if the recipient of an award, Grantee and its Subgrantees or Subcontractors, if any.

Each Applicant may only submit one Grant Application.

3.2 APPLICATION SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

To be considered an Applicant eligible for evaluations, Applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A. Applicant must be a nonprofit entity as described by Chapter 22 of the Texas Business Organization Code, governmental entity, public or private entity, including counties, municipalities, or other political subdivisions of the State.
- B. Applicant must submit a complete Application by the date identified as the “Deadline for Submission of Applications,” established at **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**.

3.3 GRANT AWARD ELIGIBILITY

By submitting an Application in response to this RFA, Applicant certifies that:

- A. Applicant and all of its identified subsidiaries intending to participate in the Grant Agreement are eligible to perform grant-funded activities, if awarded, and are not subject to suspension, debarment, or a similar ineligibility determined by any State or federal entity;
- B. Applicant is in good standing under the laws of Texas and has provided HHS with any requested or required supporting documentation in connection with this certification;

- C. Applicant shall remain in good standing and eligible to conduct its business in Texas and shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Texas Secretary of State and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts;
- D. Applicant is currently in good standing with all licensing, permitting, or regulatory bodies that regulate any or all aspects of Applicant's operations; and
- E. Applicant is not delinquent in taxes owed to any taxing authority of the State of Texas as of the Effective Date of the Grant Agreement.

3.4 GRANTS FOR POLITICAL POLLING PROHIBITED

Pursuant to the General Appropriations Act, Article IX, Section 4.03, none of the funds appropriated by the General Appropriations Act may be granted to or expended by any entity which performs political polling. This prohibition does not apply to a poll conducted by an academic institution as part of the institution's academic mission that is not conducted for the benefit of a particular candidate or party. By submitting a response to this RFA, Applicant certifies that it is not ineligible for a Grant Agreement pursuant to this prohibition.

Section IV. Project Period

4.1 PROJECT PERIOD

The Project Period is anticipated to be **September 1, 2026**, through **August 31, 2031**.

Extension of Project Period: The System Agency may, at its sole discretion, extend the Project Period for up to one (1) year to allow for the full expenditure of awarded funding and completion of Grant activities. The Grant Term may not exceed six (6) years.

4.2 PROJECT CLOSEOUT

System Agency will programmatically and financially close the grant award and end the Grant Agreement when System Agency determines Grantee has completed all applicable actions and work in accordance with Grant Agreement requirements. Grantee must submit all required financial, performance, and other reports as required in the Grant Agreement. The Project close-out date is 90 calendar days after the Grant Agreement end date, unless otherwise noted in the original or amended Grant Agreement. Funds not obligated by Grantee by the end of the Grant Agreement term and not expended by the Project close-out date will revert to System Agency.

Transition Plan: At the end of the Grant Term, or upon termination or cancellation of a Grant Agreement, Grantee will work in coordination with HHSC to transition programming, data, and Participation records to a new grantee, if applicable.

Section V. Grant Funding and Reimbursement Information

5.1 GRANT FUNDING SOURCE AND AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total amount of federal and State funding available for the TNFP grant program is **\$134,480,753.00** for the entire Project Period. It is System Agency's intention to make multiple awards to Applicants that successfully demonstrate the ability to provide Nurse-Family Partnership programming in the State of Texas.

HHSC estimates the total amount of funding for the TNFP program is \$17,930,767.00 per State fiscal year. Annual awards per individual Grant Agreement typically range between \$500,000.00 and \$2,000,000.00. HHSC estimates the value of the RFA based on the stated annual amount multiplied by five (5) years, plus an additional 50% to allow for any potential increases in funding during the Project Period.

Applicants are strongly cautioned to only apply for the amount of grant funding they can responsibly expend during the Project Period to avoid lapsed funding at the end of the Grant Term. Successful Applications may not be funded to the full extent of Applicants' Requested Budgets in order to ensure grant funds are available for the broadest possible array of communities and programs.

Reimbursement will only be made for actual, allowable, and allocable expenses that occur within the Project Period. Spending or costs incurred prior to the Effective Date of the Grant Agreement will be allowed to the extent that the costs would have been allowable if incurred after the date of award and only with the written approval of System Agency through a Pre-Agreement Cost Letter.

5.2 NO GUARANTEE OF REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS

There is no guarantee of total reimbursements to be paid to any Grantee under any Grant Agreement, if any, resulting from this RFA. Grantees should not expect to receive additional or continued funding under future RFA opportunities and should maintain sustainability plans in case of discontinued grant funding. Any additional funding or future funding may require submission of a new application through a subsequent RFA.

Receipt of an Application in response to this RFA does not constitute an obligation or expectation of any award of a Grant Agreement or funding of a grant award at any level under this RFA.

5.3 GRANT FUNDING PROHIBITIONS

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

- 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;
- 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;
- 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 Population**;
- 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.

5.4 COST SHARING

Cost Sharing must be treated consistently with grant funds and used only for allowable and allocable purposes.

HHSC does not require Cost Sharing for the TNFP 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.

All Cost Sharing funds and contributions must meet all of the following criteria:

- A. Are verifiable from Grantee's records;
- B. Are not included as contributions for any other State or federal award;
- C. Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of Grant Project objectives;
- D. Are allowable under the Grant Agreement;
- E. Are not paid by the State or federal government; and
- F. Are provided for in the approved Grant Project Budget.

Donations: The value of donated services may be used as Cost Sharing. 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 TxGMS, Cost Sharing or Matching Section.

Applicant may provide Cost Sharing funds through local philanthropic, private, city, or county funds, or through pooled funds from partner organizations committed specifically to the TNFP Program. Applicant may not use State or federal funds as Cost Sharing funds. Applicant should calculate the value of donated materials, professional services, and volunteer time in accordance with TxGMS (for more details see <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/grant-management/>).

Applicants should reflect any Cost Sharing, including in-kind or cash investments, in the requested Budget. Refer to **Section 6.2, Requested Budget**.

5.5 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 on a monthly basis and

supported by adequate documentation. No additional payments will be rendered unless an advanced payment is approved.

System Agency may disperse to Grantee(s) a one-time initial advance payment for eligible start-up costs of no more than 10% of the funding awarded.

5.6 NOTICE TO PROCEED

The State fiscal year funding amounts are subject to increase or decrease as funds are appropriated throughout the Grant Term from the federal government, Texas Legislature, or both. 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 Grantee. No expenses may be incurred and no work may begin until HHSC issues an NTP to Grantee. HHSC may send the NTP to Grantee by regular mail, electronic mail, or facsimile transmission. Grantee will be notified of a change to the availability of funds through the NTP.

Although the NTP may issue a Budget amount less than the total not-to-exceed amount of the Grant Agreement, the NTP must not effectuate a total Budget of the Grant Agreement that results in a total not-to-exceed Grant Agreement amount that exceeds the amount specified in the Budget section of the Grant Agreement. Such changes to the total not-to-exceed amount specified in the Grant Agreement must be effectuated by amendment. Any expenditures made beyond the dollar amounts specified in the NTP(s) will be at Grantee's sole risk.

Section VI. Application Exhibits and Forms for Submission

Note: Applicants must refer to **Section XIII, Submission Checklist**, for the complete checklist of documents that must be submitted with an Application under this RFA.

6.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

Using **Forms E** through **G** of this RFA, Applicants must provide an executive summary, a program narrative, and a PWP that describe their capacity, proposed activities, and approaches to satisfy all objectives described in **Section II, Scope of Grant Project**. Applicants should identify all proposed tasks to be performed, including all Project activities, during the Grant Term. Applicants must complete and submit all required attachments.

6.2 REQUESTED BUDGET

The attached **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**, of this RFA is the template for submitting the Requested Budget. Applicant must develop the Requested Budget in alignment with the requirements described in this RFA to support its proposed Project.

Applicants must ensure that Project costs outlined in the Requested Budget are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable State and federal grant requirements. Reasonable costs are those that, in nature and amount, do not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. A cost is allocable to a particular cost objective if the cost is chargeable or assignable to such cost objective in accordance with relative benefits received. See 2 CFR Part 200.403 or TxGMS Cost Principles, Basic Considerations (pgs. 31-32), for additional information related to factors affecting allowability of costs.

Applicants must utilize the Budget template provided, **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**, and identify all Budget line items and matching costs. Budget categories must be broken out into specific Budget line items that allow System Agency to determine if proposed costs are reasonable, allowable, and necessary for the successful performance of the Project. Applicants must enter all costs in the Budget tables and explain why the cost is necessary and how the cost was established. Cost Sharing funds must also be identified in the Requested Budget, if applicable.

If selected for a grant award under this RFA, only System Agency-approved Budget items in the Requested Budget may be considered eligible for reimbursement.

Submission of Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template, is mandatory. Applicants that fail to submit a Requested Budget as set forth in this RFA with their Application will be disqualified.

6.3 INDIRECT COSTS

Applicants must have an approved Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) or request the de minimis rate to recover Indirect Costs. All Applicants are required to complete and submit **Form D, Texas Health and Human Services System Indirect Costs Rate (ICR) Questionnaire**, with required supporting documentation. The questionnaire initiates the acknowledgment or approval of an ICR for use with System Agency cost-reimbursable contracts. Entities declining the use of Indirect Cost cannot recover Indirect Costs on any System Agency award or use unrecovered Indirect Costs as Cost Sharing.

HHS typically accepts the following approved ICRs:

- A. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; and
- B. State of Texas Approved Indirect Cost Rate

System Agency, at its discretion, may request additional information to support any approved ICR agreement.

If Applicant does not have an approved ICR agreement, Applicant may be eligible for the 15% de minimis rate or may request to negotiate an ICR with HHS.

For Applicants requesting to negotiate an ICR with HHS, the HHS Federal Funds Indirect Cost Rate Group will provide the ICR Proposal Package to successful Grantees. The ICR Proposal Package must be completed and returned to the HHS Federal Funds Indirect Cost Rate Group no later than three (3) months post-award.

The HHS Federal Funds Indirect Cost Rate group will contact applicable Grantees after Grant Agreement execution to initiate and complete the ICR process. Grantees should respond within 30 Business Days, or the request will be cancelled, and Indirect Costs may be disallowed.

Once HHS acknowledges an existing rate or approves an ICR, Grantee will receive one (1) of the three (3) Indirect Cost Rate approval letters: ICR Acknowledgement Letter, ICR Acknowledgement Letter – 15% Percent De Minimis, or ICR Agreement Letter.

If an Indirect Cost Rate Letter is required but is not issued at the time of Grant Agreement execution, the Grant Agreement will be amended to include the ICR Letter after the ICR Letter is issued.

Approval or acceptance of an ICR will not result in an increase in the amount awarded or affect the agreed-upon service or performance levels throughout the life of the award.

6.4 ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICANT INFORMATION

Using **Forms A** through **C** attached to this RFA, Applicant must provide satisfactory evidence of its ability as an organization to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this RFA.

A. Litigation and Contract History

Applicant must include in its Application a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual or grant 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 (see **Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v2.9**). Applicant certifies it does not have any existing claims against or unresolved audit exceptions with the State of Texas or any agency of the State of Texas.

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 or grant obligations.

B. Financial Management and Administrative Questionnaire

Applicant must complete **Form C, Financial Management and Administrative Questionnaire**, and submit with its Application.

Section VII. RFA Administrative Information and Inquiries

7.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE/TIME
Funding Announcement Posting Date Posted to HHS Grants RFA and Texas eGrants websites.	January 26, 2026
Applicant Conference Attendance is Optional.	February 13, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. Central Time
Deadline for Submitting Questions or Requests for Clarification	February 17, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time
Tentative Date Answers to Questions or Requests for Clarification Posted	February 24, 2026
Deadline for Submission of Applications NOTE: Applications must be <u>RECEIVED</u> by HHSC by this deadline if not changed by subsequent Addenda to be considered eligible.	March 11, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time
Anticipated Notice of Award	August 1, 2026
Anticipated Project Start Date	September 1, 2026

Applicants must ensure their Applications are received by HHSC in accordance with the Deadline for Submission of Applications (date and time) indicated in this Schedule of Events or as changed by subsequent Addenda posted to the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website.

All dates are tentative and HHSC reserves the right to change these dates at any time. At the sole discretion of HHSC, events listed in the Schedule of Events are subject to scheduling changes and cancellation. Scheduling changes or cancellation determinations made prior to the Deadline for Submission of Applications will be published by posting an Addendum to the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website. After the Deadline for Submission of Applications, if there are delays that significantly impact the anticipated award date, HHSC, at its sole discretion, may post updates regarding the anticipated award date to the [Procurement Forecast](#) on the HHS Procurement Opportunities [web page](#). Each Applicant is responsible for checking the HHS Grants RFA website and Procurement Forecast for updates.

7.2 SOLE POINT OF CONTACT

All requests, questions, or other communication about this RFA shall be made by email **only** to the Grant Specialist designated as HHSC's Sole Point of Contact listed below:

Name	Julia Solis
Title	Grant Specialist, HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services
Address	Procurement and Contracting Services Building 1100 W 49th St. MC: 2020 Austin, TX 78756
Phone	(512) 438-4367
Email	julia.solis@hhs.texas.gov

Applicants shall not use this email address for submission of an Application. Follow the instructions for submission as outlined in Section VIII, Application Organization and Submission Requirements.

However, if expressly directed in writing by the Sole Point of Contact, Applicant may communicate with another designated HHS representative, e.g., during grant negotiations as part of the normal grant review process, if any.

Prohibited Communications: Applicants and their representatives shall not contact other HHS personnel regarding this RFA.

This restriction (on only communicating in writing by email with the sole point of contact identified above) does not preclude discussions between Applicant and agency personnel for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this RFA.

Failure of an Applicant or its representatives to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of the Application.

7.3 RFA QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Written questions and requests for clarification of this RFA are permitted if submitted by email to the Sole Point of Contact by the Deadline for Questions and Requests for Clarification established in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or as may be amended in Addenda, if any, posted to the HHS Grants RFA websites.

Applicants' names will be removed from questions in any responses released. All questions and requests for clarification must include the following information. Submissions that do not include this information may not be accepted:

- 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.

The following contact information must be included in the email submitted with questions or requests for clarification:

- A. Name of individual submitting question or request for clarification;
- B. Organization name;
- C. Phone number; and
- D. Email address.

Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Sole Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 7.1, Schedule of Events, or as may be amended in Addenda, if any, posted to the HHS Grants RFA website.

HHSC may review and, at its sole discretion, may respond to questions or other written requests received after the deadline.

7.4 AMBIGUITY, CONFLICT, DISCREPANCY, CLARIFICATIONS

Applicants must notify the Sole Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specification, omission, or other error in the RFA in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions. Each Applicant submits its Application at its own risk.

If Applicant fails to properly and timely notify the Sole Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specification, omission, or other error in the RFA, Applicant, whether awarded a Grant Agreement or not:

- A. Shall have waived any claim of error or ambiguity in the RFA and any resulting Grant Agreement;
- B. Shall not contest the interpretation by HHSC of such provision(s); and
- C. Shall not be entitled to additional reimbursement, relief, or time by reason of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specification, omission, or other error or its later correction.

7.5 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS OR REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATIONS

HHSC will consolidate its responses to questions or other written requests for clarification and will post the responses in one (1) or more Addenda on the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website. HHSC will not provide responses individually to requestors.

HHSC reserves the right to amend answers previously posted at any time prior to the Deadline for Submission of Applications. Amended answers will be posted on the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website in a separate, new Addendum or Addenda. It is Applicant's responsibility to check the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website or contact the Sole Point of Contact for a copy of the Addendum with the amended answers.

7.6 CHANGES, AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION TO RFA

HHSC reserves the right to change, amend, modify or cancel this RFA. All changes, amendments, and modifications or cancellation will be posted by Addendum on the HHS Grants RFA website.

It is the responsibility of each Applicant to periodically check the HHS Grants RFA website for any additional information regarding this RFA. Failure to check the posting website will in no way release any Applicant or awarded Grantee from the requirements of posted Addenda or additional information. No HHS agency will be responsible or liable in any regard for the failure of any individual or entity to receive notification of any posting to the website or for the failure of any Applicant or awarded Grantee to stay informed of all postings to the website. If Applicant fails to monitor the website for any changes or modifications to this RFA, such failure will not relieve Applicant of its obligation to fulfill the requirements as posted.

7.7 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 an **Exhibit I, Exceptions Form** or questions or requests for clarification pursuant to **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 System Agency.

7.8 APPLICANT CONFERENCE

HHSC will conduct an Applicant conference on the date and time set out in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, to review the key elements of this RFA. Attendance is optional and not required.

People with disabilities who wish to attend the meeting and require auxiliary aids or services should contact the Sole Point of Contact identified in **Section 7.2, Sole Point of Contact**, at least 72 hours before the meeting in order to have reasonable accommodations made by HHSC.

The conference may be held by webinar, conference call, or both.

During the conference, HHSC may provide responses; however, HHSC will consolidate the official responses to all questions and requests for clarifications received during the conference and include in an Addendum posted on the HHS Grants RFA website.

HHSC reserves the right to amend responses to questions and requests for clarification after posting at any time prior to the Deadline for Submission of Applications. Amended answers will be posted on the HHS Grants RFA website in a separate, new Addendum or Addenda.

WEBINAR INFORMATION:

The Applicant conference will be held through GoToWebinar, which may be accessed at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4974285613378037593>

Webinar Instructions:

- A. Enter Webinar ID: 621-088-307
- B. Enter Attendee's business email.
- C. To register, the Participants must have the following information ready:
 1. First and last name of each attendee/registrant.
 2. Email address for the attendee/registrant.

3. Applicant's legal name.
4. Job title of attendee/registrant.

Section VIII. Application Organization and Submission Requirements

8.1 APPLICATION RECEIPT

Applications must be received by HHSC by the Deadline for Submission of Applications specified in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda. HHSC will date and time stamp all Applications upon receipt. Applications received after the Deadline for Submission of Applications may be ruled ineligible. Applicants should allow for adequate time for submission before the posted Deadline for Submission of Applications.

No HHS agency will be held responsible for any Application that is mishandled prior to receipt by HHSC. It is Applicant's responsibility to ensure its Application is received by HHSC before the Deadline for Submission of Applications. No HHS agency will be responsible for any technical issues that result in late delivery, non-receipt of an Application, inappropriately identified documents, or other submission issue that may lead to disqualification.

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

Applicants understand and acknowledge that issuance of this RFA or retention of Applications received in response to this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment to award Grant Agreement(s) as a result of this RFA.

8.2 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

By submitting an Application in response to this Solicitation, Applicant represents and warrants that the individual submitting the Application and any related documents on behalf of Applicant is authorized to do so and to bind Applicant under any Grant Agreement that may result from the submission of an Application.

8.3 REQUIRED SUBMISSION METHOD

Applicants must submit their completed Applications by the Deadline for Submission of Applications provided in the **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda, using one (1) of the approved methods identified below. Applications submitted by any other method (e.g., facsimile) will not be considered and will be disqualified.

- A. **Submission Option #1 HHS Online Bid Room:** Applicants shall upload the following documents to the Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures in **Exhibit G, HHS Online Bid Room Information**. **File Size Limitation:** Restriction to 250MB per file attachment.
1. One (1) copy marked as “Original Application” that contains Applicant’s entire Application in a Portable Document Format (“.pdf”) file.
 2. One (1) copy of the completed **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**, in its original Excel format.
 3. One (1) copy of the complete Application marked as “Public Information Act Copy,” if applicable, in accordance with **Section 12.1, Texas Public Information Act-Application Disclosure Requirements**, in a Portable Document Format (“.pdf”) file.
- B. **Submission Option #2 Sealed Package with USB Drives:** Applicants shall submit each of the following on separate USB drives:
1. One (1) USB drive with the complete Application file marked as “Original Application” in a Portable Document Format (“.pdf”) file. Include the USB in a separate envelope within the sealed Application package and mark the USB and envelope with “Original Application.” USB drive must include the completed **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**, in its original Excel format.
 2. One (1) USB drive with a copy of the complete Application file marked as “Public Information Act Copy,” if applicable and in accordance with **Section 12.1, Texas Public Information Act-Application Disclosure Requirements**. The copy must be in a Portable Document Format (“.pdf”) file. Include the USB in a separate envelope within the sealed package and mark the USB and envelope with “Public Information Act Copy” or “PIA Copy.”
 3. Sealed packages must be clearly labeled with the following:
 - a. RFA number;
 - b. RFA title;
 - c. Deadline for submission of Applications;
 - d. Sole Point of Contact’s name; and
 - e. Applicant’s legal name.

Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring the USB drives are submitted in sealed packaging that is sufficient to prevent damage to contents and delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or via hand delivery to the addresses below. No HHS agency will be responsible or liable for any damage.

Overnight/Express/Priority Mail	Hand Delivery
Health and Human Services Commission ATTN: Julia Solis Tower Building Room 108 1100 W. 49th St., MC 2020 Austin, Texas 78756	Health and Human Services Commission ATTN: Julia Solis Procurement & Contracting Services Building 1100 W. 49th St., MC 2020 Austin, Texas 78756

8.4 COSTS INCURRED FOR APPLICATION

All costs and expenses incurred in preparing and submitting an Application in response to this RFA and participating in the RFA selection process are entirely the responsibility of Applicant.

8.5 APPLICATION COMPOSITION

All Applications must:

- A. Be responsive to all RFA requirements;
- B. Be clearly legible;
- C. Be presented using font type Verdana, Arial, or Times New Roman, font size 12-point, with one-inch margins and 1.5 line spacing; the sole 12-point font size exception is no less than size 10-point for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- D. Include page numbering for each section of the proposal; and
- E. Include signature of Applicant’s authorized representative on all exhibits and forms requiring a signature. Copies of the Application documents should be made after signature.

8.6 APPLICATION ORGANIZATION

The complete Application file .pdf must:

- A. Be organized in the order outlined in the **Section XIII, Submission Checklist**, and include all required sections (e.g., “Administrative Applicant Information,” “Narrative Proposal,” “Requested Budget,” “Indirect Costs,” “Exhibits to be Submitted with Application,” and “Signed Addenda”).
 1. **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**, is to be submitted in its original Excel format.

2. Each Application section must have a cover page with Applicant's legal name, RFA number, and name of grant identified.
- B. Include all required documentation, exhibits, and forms completed and signed, as applicable. Copies of forms are acceptable, but all copies must be identical to the original. All exhibits must be submitted and obtained directly from the posted RFA package; previous versions and copies are not allowed or acceptable.

8.7 APPLICATION WITHDRAWALS OR MODIFICATIONS

Prior to the Deadline for Submission of Applications set forth in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda, an Applicant may:

- A. Withdraw its Application by submitting a written request to the Sole Point of Contact; or
- B. Modify its Application by submitting an entirely new submission, complete in all respects, using one (1) of the approved methods of submission set forth in this RFA. The modification must be received by HHSC by the Deadline for Submission of Applications set forth in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda.

No withdrawal or modification request received after the Deadline for Submission of Applications, set forth in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda, will be considered. Additionally, in the event of multiple Applications received, the most timely received and/or modified Application will replace Applicant's original and all prior submission(s) in its entirety and the original submission(s) will not be considered.

Section IX. Application Screening and Evaluation

9.1 OVERVIEW

HHSC uses a three-step selection process:

- A. Application screening to determine whether Applicant meets the minimum requirements of this RFA;
- B. Evaluation based upon specific criteria; and
- C. Final selection based upon State priorities and other relevant factors, as outlined in **Section 10.1, Final Selection**.

9.2 INITIAL COMPLIANCE SCREENING OF APPLICATIONS

HHSC will screen all Applications received by the Deadline for Submission of Applications as outlined in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or subsequent Addenda, to determine which Applications meet all the minimum requirements of this RFA and are

deemed responsive and qualified for further consideration. Refer to **Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements**.

At the sole discretion of HHSC, Applications with errors, omissions, or compliance issues may be considered non-responsive and may not be considered. The remaining Applications will continue to the evaluation stage and will be considered in the manner and form as which they are received. HHSC reserves the right to waive minor informalities in an Application. A “minor informality” is an omission or error that, in the determination of HHSC if waived or modified, would not give an Applicant an unfair advantage over other Applicants or result in a material change in the Application or RFA requirements. **Note:** Any disqualifying factor set forth in this RFA does not constitute an informality (e.g., **Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v2.9**, or **Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template**).

HHSC, at its sole discretion, may give an Applicant the opportunity to submit missing information or make corrections at any point after receipt of the Application. The missing information or corrections must be submitted to the Sole Point of Contact email address in **Section 7.2, Sole Point of Contact**, by the deadline set by HHSC. Failure to respond by the deadline may result in the rejection of the Application and the Applicant not being considered for award.

9.3 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION FOR APPLICATIONS

System Agency reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification or revised documents for a submitted Application from any Applicant at any time prior to award. System Agency reserves the right to select qualified Applications received in response to this RFA without discussion of the Applications with Applicants.

9.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

System Agency will evaluate and score Applications in accordance with the following scoring criteria using **Exhibit H, Evaluation Tool**.

Scoring Criteria: Qualified Applications will be evaluated based upon:

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

9.5 PAST PERFORMANCE

System Agency reserves the right to request additional information and conduct investigations as necessary to review any Application. By submitting an Application, Applicant generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing information about Applicant at the request of System Agency.

System Agency may examine Applicant's past performance which may include, but is not limited to, information about Applicant provided by any governmental entity, whether an agency or political subdivision of the State of Texas, another state, or the federal government.

System Agency, at its sole discretion, may also initiate investigations or examinations of Applicant performance based upon media reports. Any negative findings, as determined by System Agency in its sole discretion, may result in System Agency removing Applicant from further consideration for award.

Past performance information regarding Applicants may include, but is not limited to:

- A. Notices of termination;
- B. Cure notices;
- C. Assessments of liquidated damages;
- D. Litigation;
- E. Audit reports; and
- F. Non-renewals of grants or contracts based on Applicant's unsatisfactory performance.

System Agency may also reject Applicants as a result of unsatisfactory past performance under any grant(s) or contract(s) as reflected in vendor performance reports, reference checks, or other sources. System Agency may consider an Applicant's past performance in the initial screening process and prior to making an award determination.

Reasons for which System Agency may deny an Applicant a Grant Agreement at any point after Application submission include, but are not limited to:

- A. If applicable, Applicant has an unfavorable report or grade on the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) Vendor Performance Tracking System (VPTS). VPTS may be accessed at: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/programs/vendor-performance-tracking/>; OR
- B. Applicant is currently under a corrective action plan through HHSC or DSHS; OR
- C. Applicant has received multiple negative vendor performance reports about the same failure(s); OR
- D. Applicant has a record of repeated non-responsiveness to performance issues; OR
- E. Applicant has contracts or purchase orders that have been cancelled in the previous 12 months for non-performance or substandard performance; OR

- F. Any other performance issue that demonstrates that awarding a Grant Agreement to Applicant would not be in the best interest of the State.

9.6 COMPLIANCE FOR PARTICIPATION IN STATE CONTRACTS

Prior to award of a Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA and in addition to the initial screening of Applications, HHSC will conduct all required verification checks.

HHSC will use the information (e.g., legal name and, if applicable, assumed name (d/b/a), tax identification number, Unique Entity Identifier) provided by Applicant to conduct these checks. At System Agency's sole discretion, Applicants found to be barred, prohibited, or otherwise excluded from award of a Grant Agreement may be disqualified from further consideration under this Solicitation, pending satisfactory resolution of all compliance issues.

Checks include:

A. State of Texas Debarment and Warrant Hold

Applicant must not be debarred from doing business with the State of Texas (<https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/programs/vendor-performance-tracking/debarred-vendors.php>) or have an active warrant or payee hold placed by the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA).

B. U.S. System of Award Management (SAM) Exclusions List

Applicant must not be excluded from contract participation at the federal level. This verification is conducted through SAM, the official website of the U.S. Government, which may be accessed at: [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) | [Search](#)

C. Divestment Statute Lists

Applicant must not be listed on the Divestment Statute Lists provided by CPA, which may be accessed at: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/publications/divestment.php>

D. HHS Office of Inspector General

Applicant must not be listed on the HHS Office of Inspector General Texas Exclusions List for people or businesses excluded from participating as a provider: [Search the Exclusions Database](#) | [Office of Inspector General](#)

E. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Applicant must not be listed on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General's List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE), excluded

from participation as a provider, unless a valid waiver is currently in effect:
<https://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/>.

Additionally, if a subrecipient under a federal award, Grantee shall comply with requirements regarding registration with the U.S. Government's System for Award Management (SAM). This requirement includes maintaining an active SAM registration and the accuracy of the information in SAM. Grantee shall review and update information at least annually after initial SAM registration and more frequently as required by 2 CFR Part 25.

For Grantees that may make procurements using grant funds awarded under the Grant Agreement, Grantee must check SAM Exclusions that contain the names of ineligible, debarred, and/or suspended parties. Grantee certifies through acceptance of a Grant Agreement that it will not conduct business with any entity that is an excluded entity under SAM.

HHSC reserves the right to conduct additional checks to determine eligibility to receive a Grant Agreement.

Section X. Award of Grant Agreement Process

10.1 FINAL SELECTION

After initial screening for eligibility and Application completeness, and initial evaluation against the criteria listed in **Section 9.4, Evaluation Criteria**, System Agency may apply other considerations, such as program policy or other selection factors, that are essential to the process of selecting Applications that individually or collectively achieve program objectives. In applying these factors, System Agency may consult with internal and external subject matter experts.

System Agency will make final awards based on Applicant eligibility, evaluation score rankings, geographic distribution across the State, existing infrastructure, State priorities, availability of funding, Applicant past performance (if applicable), cost-effectiveness, and other relevant factors. 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.

10.2 NEGOTIATIONS

After selecting Applicants for award, System Agency may engage in negotiations with selected Applicants. As determined by System Agency, the negotiation phase may involve direct contact between the selected Applicant and HHS representatives by virtual meeting, by phone, and/or by email. Negotiations should not be interpreted as a preliminary intent to award funding unless explicitly stated in writing by System Agency and is considered a step to finalize the Application to a state of approval and discuss proposed grant activities. During negotiations, selected Applicants may expect:

- A. An in-depth discussion of the submitted Application and Requested Budget; and
- B. Requests from System Agency for revised documents, clarification, or additional detail regarding Applicant's submitted Application. These clarifications and additional details, as required, must be submitted in writing by Applicant as finalized during the negotiation.

10.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTED PARTIES

Subject to certain specified exceptions, Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code, Disclosure of Interested Parties, applies to a contract of a State agency that has a value of \$1 million or more, requires an action or vote by the governing body of the entity or agency before the contract may be signed, or is for services that would require a person to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 of the Texas Government Code.

One (1) of the requirements of Section 2252.908 is that a business entity (defined as "any entity recognized by law through which business is conducted, including a sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation") must submit a Form 1295, Certificate of Interested Parties, to System Agency at the time the business entity submits the signed contract.

Applicant represents and warrants that, if selected for award of a Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA, Applicant will submit to System Agency a completed, certified, and signed Form 1295, Certificate of Interested Parties, at the time the potential Grantee submits the signed Grant Agreement.

The Form 1295 involves an electronic process through the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC). The online process for completing the Form 1295 may be found on the TEC public website at: <https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/filinginfo/1295/>.

Additional instructions and information to be used to process the Form 1295 will be provided by System Agency to the potential Grantee(s). Grantee may contact Sole Point of Contact or designated contract manager for information needed to complete Form 1295.

If the potential Grantee does not submit a completed, certified, and signed TEC Form 1295 to System Agency with the signed Grant Agreement, System Agency is prohibited

by law from executing the Contract, even if the potential Grantee is otherwise eligible for award. System Agency, as determined in its sole discretion, may award the Grant Agreement to the next qualified Applicant, who will then be subject to this procedure.

10.4 EXECUTION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRANT AGREEMENT(S)

System Agency intends to award one (1) or more Grant Agreements as a result of this RFA. However, not all Applicants who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving a Grant Agreement.

At any time and at its sole discretion, System Agency reserves the right to cancel this RFA, make partial award, or decline to award any Grant Agreement(s) as a result of this RFA.

The final funding amount and the provisions of the grant will be determined at the sole discretion of System Agency.

HHSC may announce tentative funding awards through an “Intent to Award Letter” once the HHSC Program Deputy Executive Commissioner and relevant HHSC approval authorities have given approval to initiate and/or execute grants. Receipt of an “Intent to Award Letter” does not authorize the recipient to incur expenditures or begin Project activities, nor does it guarantee current or future funding.

Upon execution of a Grant Agreement(s) as a result of this RFA, HHSC will post a notification of all grants awarded to the [HHS Grants RFA](#) website.

Section XI. General Terms and Conditions

11.1 GRANT APPLICATION DISCLOSURE

In an effort to maximize State resources and reduce duplication of effort, System Agency, at its discretion, may require Applicant to disclose information regarding the application for or award of State, federal, and/or local grant funding to Applicant or Subgrantee or Subcontractor (i.e., organization who will participate, in part, in the operation of the Project) within the past two (2) years to provide evidence-based home visiting services.

11.2 TEXAS HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES (HUBS)

In procuring goods and services using funding awarded under this RFA, Grantee must use HUBs or other designated businesses as required by law or the terms of the State or

federal grant under which this RFA has been issued. See, for example, 2 CFR 200.321. If there are no such requirements, System Agency encourages Applicant to use HUBs to provide goods and services.

Section XII. Application Confidential or Proprietary Information

12.1 TEXAS PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT – APPLICATION DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

Applications and resulting Grant Agreements 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 System Agency to post grants and applications on its public website and to provide such information to the Legislative Budget Board for posting on its public website.

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

A. Mark Original Application:

1. Mark the Original Application, at the top of the front page, with the words “CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION” in large, bold, capitalized letters (the size of, or equivalent to, 12-point Times New Roman font); and
2. Identify, adjacent to each portion of the Application that Applicant claims is exempt from public disclosure, the claimed exemption from disclosure (NOTE: no redactions are to be made in the Original Application);

B. Certify in Original Application – HHS Solicitation: Certify, in the designated section of the **Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v2.9**, Applicant’s confidential information assertion and the filing of its Public Information Act Copy; and

C. Submit Public Information Act Copy of Application: Submit a separate “Public Information Act Copy” of the Original Application (in addition to the original and all copies otherwise required under the provisions of this RFA). The Public Information Act Copy must meet the following requirements:

1. 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);
2. Each portion Applicant claims is exempt from public disclosure must be redacted (blacked out); and
3. Applicant 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 Application as required in **Subsection A(2)**, above. The only difference in required markings and information between the Original Application and the “Public Information Act Copy” of the Application will be redactions – which can only be included in the “Public Information Act Copy.” There must be no redactions in the Original Application.

By submitting an Application under this RFA, Applicant agrees that, if Applicant does not mark the Original Application, provide the required certification in Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations, and submit the Public Information Act Copy, the Application 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 System Agency’s public website, and posted on the Legislative Budget Board’s public website.

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

No Applicant should submit a Public Information Act Copy indicating that the entire Application is exempt from disclosure. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire Application 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 Application subject to release under the PIA.

Applications should not be marked or asserted as copyrighted material. If Applicant asserts a copyright to any portion of its Application, by submitting an Application, Applicant agrees to reproduction and posting on public websites by the State of Texas, including System Agency and all other State agencies, without cost or liability.

System Agency will strictly adhere to the requirements of the PIA regarding the disclosure of public information. As a result, by participating in this RFA, Applicant acknowledges that all information, documentation, and other materials submitted in its Application may be subject to public disclosure under the PIA. System Agency 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. Applicants 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. System Agency assumes no obligation or responsibility relating to the disclosure or nondisclosure of information submitted by Applicants.

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 Texas Attorney General's website at <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov>.

12.2 APPLICANT 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 AND HHS FROM ANY CLAIM OF INFRINGEMENT REGARDING THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE SUBMITTING PARTY OR ANY THIRD PARTY FOR ANY MATERIALS SUBMITTED TO HHS BY THE SUBMITTING PARTY.

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Section XIII. Submission Checklist

HHSC, in its sole discretion, will review all Applications received and will determine if any or all Applications which do not include complete, signed copies of these exhibits and/or Addenda will be disqualified or whether additional time will be permitted for submission of the incomplete or missing exhibits. If additional time is permitted, Applicants will be notified in writing of the opportunity to provide the missing documentation by a specified deadline. 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 v2.9 (completed and signed), and Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template (completed), may be disqualified. See Section 9.2, Initial Compliance Screening of Applications, for further detail.

This Submission Checklist identifies the documentation, forms, and exhibits that are required to be submitted as part of the Application.

The Application must be organized in the order below and include each required section and the forms and exhibits identified within a section:

A. Administrative Applicant Information

- 1. Form A, Face Page – Applicant Information _____
- 2. Form B, Administrative Information _____
- 3. Form B-1, Governmental Entity, if applicable _____
- 4. Form B-2, Non-Governmental Entity, if applicable _____
- 5. Form C, Financial Management and Administrative Questionnaire _____

B. Narrative Proposal: The Narrative Proposal must be titled “Narrative Proposal” and include the Applicant’s legal name, the RFA No., and the name of the Grant Program. Use the titles below for each required section.

- 1. Form E, Executive Summary _____
- 2. Form F, Program Narrative _____
 - a. Attachment F-1, Letter of Feasibility Determination (Applicant provides) _____
 - b. Attachment F-2, Letters of Support (optional) (Applicant provides) _____

For the attachments listed above that state “Applicant provides,” a template is not attached to this RFA nor being provided by HHSC. Applicants are responsible for labeling the requested information with the attachment title.

- 3. Form G, Project Work Plan _____

C. Indirect Costs

Form D, Texas HHS System Indirect Costs Rate (ICR) Questionnaire _____

D. Exhibits to be completed, signed, and submitted with Application.

- 1. Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v2.9 _____
Per Section 9.2, Initial Compliance Screening of Applications, Exhibit A is mandatory and must be completed, signed, and submitted for the Application to be considered responsive. Applications received without Exhibit A or with an unsigned Exhibit A may be disqualified.
- 2. Exhibit E-2, Texas HHS System Data Use Agreement Attachment 2-Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI), to _____
- 3. Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template (Excel) _____
This Requested Budget Template is mandatory and must be submitted with the Application, in the original format (Excel), for the Application to be considered responsive. Applications received without the completed Requested Budget Template will be disqualified.
- 4. Exhibit I, Exceptions Form (If applicable) _____
- 5. Exhibit J, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs _____
- 6. Exhibit K, Certification Regarding Lobbying _____
- 7. Exhibit L, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Certification Form _____

E. Signed Addenda:

Each Addendum, if any, must be signed and submitted with the Application. _____

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Section XIV. List of Exhibits and Forms Attached to RFA

Exhibits

- Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v2.9
- Exhibit B, HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant, Version 3.5
- Exhibit C, Additional Provisions – Grant Funding, Version 1.0
- Exhibit D, Example Texas Nurse Family Partnership (TNFP) Statement of Work
- Exhibit E, HHS Data Use Agreement, v.8.5
- Exhibit E-1, Governmental Entity Version HHS Data Use Agreement v.8.5
- Exhibit E-2, Texas HHS System -Data Use Agreement- Attachment 2, Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI),
- Exhibit F, Requested Budget Template
- Exhibit G, HHS Online Bid Room Information
- Exhibit H, Evaluation Tool
- Exhibit I, Exceptions Form (If applicable)
- Exhibit J, Assurances – Non-Construction Program
- Exhibit K, Certification Regarding Lobbying
- Exhibit L, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Certification

Forms

- Form A, Face Page – Applicant Information
- Form B, Administrative Information
- Form B-1, Governmental Entity – Authorized Officials
- Form B-2, Non-Governmental Entity – Board of Directors and Principal Officers
- Form C, Financial Management and Administrative Questionnaire
- Form D, Texas HHS System Indirect Costs Rate (ICR) Questionnaire
- Form E, Executive Summary
- Form F, Program Narrative
- Form G, Project Work Plan