Waiver Application Guidance

Section 1115 of the Social Security Act provides waiver authority to the Department of Health and Human Services and Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) to fund activities to improve child support program performance that would otherwise not be allowable. ACF-OCSS-IM-24-03 outlines the waiver authority and clarifies funding, the waiver request or application, evaluation, and technical assistance available to you throughout the process.

1115 Waiver Request Components

The child support program submits their 1115 waiver requrest to ocse.dpi@acf.hhs.gov.
You can use a standalone proposal document or use our waiver application at https://acf.gov/css/grants/section-1115-waivers.

OCSE can provide technical assistance to help develop your proposal or review your draft before submission. A successful 1115 waiver request must include the following components and relevant information. Use this guidance as a checklist to develop your waiver request.

1. Executive Summary

Describe your project in one to two paragraphs and explain:

- ☐ What problem would this resolve?
- ☐ How will this help children and families?
- ☐ How will this improve program performance?
- ☐ What is the amount of new funding needed?
- ☐ How long will this project last?

2. Introduction and Background

Explain why this project is important to your state or tribe. Briefly discuss:

- ☐ Background relevant to your proposed project (for example, economic, social, and geographic information)
- ☐ The problem the project will address
- ☐ Prior attempts to address this issue, if you have any (can be by the child support agency or another state or tribal program)

3. Project Goals and Objectives

Describe the goals and how you hope the waiver project will help achieve them. This is where you can tell us about your vision for the project.

4. Waivers Requested

Tell us which state or tribal plan requirements under section 454 of the Social Security Act, or any other statutory or regulatory requirements or prohibitions, you are requesting to waive so you can use federal funds to implement this project.

5. Geographic Location

Briefly discuss where the project will take place. For tribes, if the project will include the same area you normally serve, you can use the geographic description in your tribal plan. If the project involves only part of your tribal service area, explain why you selected that part.

6. Duration of the Project

Estimate the full timeframe for planning, implementing, and evaluating this project. A chart like the following could help:

Project planning	Project implementation	Project evaluation
October 2024 - December 2024	January 2025 - December 2028	January 2029 - September 2029

7. Target Population and Estimated Number of Families to Serve

Describe the population of families or parents you propose to serve and how serving these families is likely to improve child support outcomes. This description may include:

- ☐ Demographics of your target population
- ☐ Number of families or parents eligible for project activities under the waiver
- ☐ Estimated number of eligible families you plan to serve during the waiver project
- ☐ Child support outcomes expected for these families

8. Project Plan

Describe the waiver project in detail. A logic model, shown below, may be helpful to describe who is served, what services are proposed, who will provide services, and what short– and long-term outcomes are expected.

Important questions to consider and describe are:

- ☐ Who will you serve?
- ☐ How will you recruit people?
- ☐ What services will you provide?
- ☐ Who will provide the services?
- ☐ How will the child support program coordinate with service providers?
- ☐ Who are your partners?
  - Have you partnered with these agencies in the past?
  - What experience do they have serving noncustodial parents?
  - What experience do they have providing the services proposed?

LOGIC MODEL TEMPLATE						
Project Title:						
Problem the Project Will Address:						
Inputs Resources needed to conduct project activities, including the human, financial, organizational, and community resources a program has available to direct toward doing the work.	→	**Activities** The actions and services that are part of program implementation. For example, activities may include creating products such as promotional materials and educational curricula, or services, such as education and training, counseling, or health screening.	→	**Outputs** A target number for activities completed. Outputs are the direct results of program activities. They are usually described in terms of the size and scope of the services and products delivered or produced by the program. They indicate if a program was delivered to the intended audiences at the intended "dose." A program output, for example, might be the number of classes taught, meetings held, or materials produced and distributed; program participation rates and demography; or hours of each type of service provided.	→	**Outcomes** The final intended result of an activity, which is usually changes in program participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status, or level of functioning.

* The definitions for *Inputs*, *Activities*, *Outputs* and *Outcomes* are from the W.K. Kellogg Found Foundation Logic Model Development Guide. They are slightly adapted to conform to definitions set by the Administration for Children and Families.

9. Evaluation Plan

Determine how you will know if this project was a success by describing what child support outputs will be collected and measured. An independent third-party evaluator or the child support agency may evaluate the project. In your proposal, describe:

- ☐ Major outcomes you will examine
- ☐ Data sources you will use
- ☐ Methodologies you will apply to analyze the data

10. Project Management and Staffing Plan

Decide who will manage the work, and describe the jobs for this project. Include:

- ☐ Primary point of contact for the waiver project
- ☐ Manager for the new work proposed under this waiver
- ☐ Short biographical information for key personnel, if known
- ☐ Role of each staff person involved in the project
- ☐ Draft job descriptions, if available
- ☐ Contractor or vendor staffing, if known

11. OCSE Monitoring and Technical Assistance

OCSE will schedule regular progress meetings with you during project start-up and implementation. Plan to include child support staff involved in the project as well as contractors, community partners, and other agencies affected by the project in these meetings.

12. Budget

The request should include a proposed budget and justification narrative anticipating the cost of implementing the entire project. The budget should use broad object class categories, clearly showing how the waiver funds will be spent. In addition, for each year of the project, indicate the anticipated annual costs.

Download the waiver application here:
https://acf.gov/css/grants/section-1115-waivers