



**Administration for Children and Families**

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Evaluation of the Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) Demonstration

HHS-2016-ACF-OCSE-FD-1171

Application Due Date: 07/08/2016

Evaluation of the Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) Demonstration

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Overview
- Executive Summary
- I. [Program Description](#)
- II. [Federal Award Information](#)
- III. Eligibility Information
  - 1. [Eligible Applicants](#)
  - 2. [Cost Sharing or Matching](#)
  - 3. [Other](#)
- IV. Application and Submission Information
  - 1. [Address to Request Application Package](#)
  - 2. [Content and Form of Application Submission](#)
  - 3. [Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#)
  - 4. [Submission Dates and Times](#)
  - 5. [Intergovernmental Review](#)
  - 6. [Funding Restrictions](#)
  - 7. [Other Submission Requirements](#)
- V. Application Review Information
  - 1. [Criteria](#)
  - 2. [Review and Selection Process](#)
  - 3. [Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates](#)
- VI. Federal Award Administration Information
  - 1. [Federal Award Notices](#)
  - 2. [Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#)
  - 3. [Reporting](#)
- VII. [HHS Awarding Agency Contact\(s\)](#)
- VIII. [Other Information](#)

**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families**

**Program Office:** Office of Child Support Enforcement  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Evaluation of the Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) Demonstration  
**Announcement Type:** Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** HHS-2016-ACF-OCSE-FD-1171  
**Primary CFDA Number:** 93.564  
**Due Date for Applications:** 07/08/2016

### Executive Summary

*Notices:*

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

In order to inform state and tribal child support agencies about the effectiveness of incorporating procedural justice principles into child support business practices as an alternative to contempt, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) will award Section 1115 grant funds under a cooperative agreement to a single state or tribal child support agency. Under this cooperative agreement, the selected grantee will procure and manage an evaluation through an independent third-party evaluator (i.e. a university or research firm) of the demonstration grantees approved under the companion funding opportunity announcement (FOA), Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) ([HHS-2016-ACF-OCSE-FD-1172](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/foa/HHS-2016-ACF-OCSE-FD-1172)). This cooperative agreement will allow the selected state or tribal agency to use the grant award and the Federal Financial Participation (FFP) associated with these grant funds to support a multi-site random assignment evaluation of all of the demonstration grantees approved under the separate companion FOA.

Under the companion FOA, PJAC, the Department of Health and Human Services, ACF, OCSE has invited state and tribal child support agencies to submit competitive grant applications to develop and implement programs that provide an alternative to contempt by incorporating procedural justice principles into child support business practices as part of a national demonstration framework. Compliance with evaluation requirements is a condition of award under this companion FOA.

The state or tribal child support agency that is awarded the cooperative agreement under this FOA must: (1) demonstrate the capacity to procure and manage an independent, third-party evaluator (i.e., university or research firm) to conduct a multi-site, multi-component evaluation that is incrementally funded based on the anticipated schedule of fund availability (see *Section II. Federal Award Information*); (2) agree to substantial involvement by and cooperation with OCSE as specified in this FOA; and (3) require that the third-party evaluator agree to fully cooperate with OCSE as a condition of its evaluation award.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the demonstration projects, the evaluation will include an impact analysis using random assignment in which eligible noncustodial parents are randomly assigned into treatment and control groups in each of the demonstration sites. The evaluation will also include: (1) an implementation study component (with interviews of program staff and stakeholders), and (2) a benefit-cost analysis. Further, the selected evaluator will provide evaluation-related guidance and assistance to the companion FOA grantees (e.g., guidance regarding how to implement random assignment; feedback and input to ensure treatments under the demonstrations are substantially different than the services the control group members may access; etc.).

Applicants for this grant may also submit an application under the companion funding opportunity announcement, but it is not a requirement for application or selection under this announcement. A successful applicant under this FOA may also be selected as a successful applicant under the companion funding opportunity announcement but one award is not related to the other. The recipient of this award will select a third-party organization to conduct the evaluation, and will maintain impartiality with regard to the evaluation of all project sites.

## **I. Program Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

[Section 1115 of the Social Security Act](#) (42 U.S.C. 1315) authorizes funds for experimental, pilot, or demonstration projects that are likely to assist in promoting the objectives of Part D of Title IV. Section 1115(b) provides that “the project-- (1)(A) must be designed to improve the financial well-being of children or otherwise improve the operation of the child support program; (B) may not permit modification in the child support program which would have the effect of disadvantaging children in need of support; and (C) must not result in increased cost to the Federal Government under part A of such title.”

In 2014, Section 302(b) of [Public Law 113-183](#) amended Section 1115(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315(b)) to expand the eligibility for OCSE research and demonstration grants to include Tribal IV-D programs.

The statute authorizes funding recipients to draw FFP on the grant award amount according to the federal cost share formula for the state or tribe.

### **Description**

## A. Background

Every child support program has a portion of the caseload that is noncompliant with child support orders. Child support and other social responsibility programs, like child welfare, seek strategies to engage parents and encourage parental compliance and responsibility. Key to compliance with child support orders is the parent's (1) ability to pay the amount ordered, and (2) willingness to pay consistently.

One strategy that some jurisdictions use in response to noncompliance is civil contempt proceedings, including the threat of incarceration, to enforce child support (Gardiner, 2002). Although standard contempt practices sometimes result in one-time "purge" payments to avoid jail, there is no evidence that these practices result in future compliance with the support order through ongoing support payments that families can count on to make ends meet. In fact, incarceration and the threat of incarceration can be counterproductive when the noncustodial parent is indigent (Solomon-Fears, Smith, & Berry, 2012), resulting in the accumulation of additional child support debt and reduced employment (Thoennes, 2002). See [Incarceration as Last Resort Penalty](#). Incarceration has the potential to reduce future earnings, erode a child's relationship with his or her parent, and negatively impact family and community stability (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010). Even the threat of incarceration can have unintended consequences, by dissuading parents who owe child support from contact with the child support system and driving them into the underground economy (Bartfeld & Meyer, 2003). In addition, contempt procedures are more expensive than other enforcement remedies (Coffin, 2014).

Most unpaid child support arrears are owed by parents with reported incomes below \$10,000 per year (Sorensen, Sousa, & Schafer, 2007). In *Turner v. Rogers*, 564 U.S. \_\_\_, 131 S. Ct. 2507 (2011) the U.S. Supreme Court found that holding a parent who owes child support in contempt and ordering him to be incarcerated without finding that he has the ability to pay his arrearage deprives him of his liberty without due process of law. The Court stated that "the critical question likely at issue in these cases concerns, as we have said, the defendant's ability to pay."

Recognizing these realities, some child support programs have redirected their resources away from civil contempt to practices that increase compliance and reduce the build-up of unpaid arrears by working proactively with both parents to address the underlying impediments to payment. Innovative strategies that encourage voluntary compliance with child support orders include enhanced investigation, case conferencing, setting income-based orders, early intervention, timely modification, and employment services. For example, following the *Turner* decision, one state reduced its use of civil contempt procedures by almost two-thirds, bringing 2,783 actions in 2013 compared to 7,796 actions in 2010. During that same time period, collections increased by 14 percent, with collections of nearly \$120 million in 2013 compared to \$105 million in 2010 (Lowry & Potts, 2010). See [Illinois Update on Using Civil Contempt to Collect Child Support](#).

OCSE [Information Memorandum 12-01](#), (IM-12-01) issued in June 2012, offers detailed information on promising and evidence-based practices to help state IV-D programs increase reliable child support payments, improve access to justice for parents without attorneys, and

reduce the need for jail time. Research suggests that the practices highlighted in IM-12-01 can improve compliance with child support orders, increasing both the amount of child support collected and the consistency of payment. These practices include setting accurate orders based upon the noncustodial parent's actual income, improving review and adjustment processes, developing debt management programs, incorporating employment services into the child support program, and encouraging mediation and case conferencing to resolve issues that interfere with consistent child support payments. OCSE intends for the PJAC demonstration to add to the evidence base of innovations in child support business practices that jurisdictions can use to increase reliable child support and reduce the use of costly contempt proceedings and jail time for noncompliant obligors.

**What is Procedural Justice?** Procedural justice is sometimes referred to as “procedural fairness”. Very simply, it is “the idea that how individuals regard the justice system is tied more to the perceived fairness of the *process* and how they were treated rather than to the perceived fairness of the *outcome*” (Bradley, 2013). See [The Case for Procedural Justice: Fairness as a Crime Prevention Tool](#). Dozens of studies conducted in criminal and civil legal proceedings, including family law, show that when individuals believe the process and outcome are fair, they are more likely to accept decisions made by courts and other public authorities and are more willing to comply in the future (Tyler, Procedural Justice and the Courts, 2007). See [Procedural Justice and the Courts](#).

Focusing on procedural justice strategies in the child support program may result in a parent paying child support reliably if he or she feels that the outcome is arrived at fairly. And reliable payments can lead to other favorable outcomes for the parent, including reduction in potential arrears, avoidance of contempt proceedings, and improved relationships with the custodial parent and child(ren).

Research shows that procedural justice is “effective in both creating positive dynamics within families and in facilitating long-term adherence to agreements” (Tyler, Procedural Justice and the Courts, 2007). Perhaps most interesting to the child support program is the finding that studies show trust and confidence in legal authorities increases when people experienced procedural justice, despite receiving less than desired outcomes (Tyler & Fagan, Legitimacy And Cooperation: Why Do People Help the Police Fight Crime in Their Communities?, 2008).

The literature identifies five key elements of procedural justice:

**(1) Voice and Participation** – the litigants’ perception that they have had the opportunity to tell their side of the story and that the decision-maker has taken the story into account in making the decision;

**(2) Neutrality of the Process** – the litigants’ perception that the decision-making process is unbiased and trustworthy;

**(3) Respect** – the litigants’ perception that system players treat the litigants with dignity;

**(4) Understanding** – the litigants’ perception that they understand the process and how decisions are made;

**(5) Helpfulness** – the litigants’ perception that the system players are interested in their personal situation to the extent the law allows (Jensen & Gold LaGrada, 2015). See [Measuring Perceptions of Fairness: An Evaluation Toolkit](#).

## Works Cited

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## **B. Purpose and Goals**

The purpose of this award is to allow a state or tribal child support agency to enter into a cooperative agreement with OCSE to provide for an independent, third-party evaluation of the demonstration projects funded by OCSE under the companion FOA, Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC). This award will provide actionable information, through a rigorous evaluation, about the benefits and costs of using procedural justice informed business practices to provide alternatives to contempt in child support agencies. The evaluation findings will enable the sharing of lessons learned about implementing and

operating such demonstrations, while supporting refinements and corrective actions as needed by demonstration grantees. Numerous additional parties, including non-participating child support agencies; community-based and other service providers working with parents; and local, state, tribal, and federal policy makers and program administrators will find the information developed through the evaluation informative and valuable. Ultimately, this award will give child support agencies information needed to run their programs more effectively and improve their performance. The awarded state or tribal agency will also increase their own knowledge and capacity to manage rigorous program evaluations.

The goal of the companion FOA is to increase reliable child support by implementing an alternative to contempt that is guided by procedural justice principles. The evaluation of PJAC demonstrations will result in information on how to design and incorporate alternatives to contempt that include procedural justice components into regular child support business operations and produce evidence on whether or not these alternatives to contempt practices improve reliable child support payments and impact other program outcomes. PJAC also seeks to increase parent's experience of fairness in the child support process, reduce arrears, reduce the need for continued enforcement actions/sanctions, and reduce the inappropriate use of contempt.

### **C. Program Design**

This grant will be awarded to a state or tribal child support agency for the procurement of a qualified third-party evaluator to conduct a rigorous evaluation of the approved demonstration projects under the companion PJAC announcement and disseminate evaluation findings to state, tribal and local child support agencies and other stakeholders. The state or tribal agency will be responsible for the management and oversight of the selected evaluation entity (i.e., university or research firm) and ensuring that a rigorous state-of-the-art evaluation is conducted in accordance with the guidelines and specifications cited in this announcement and as further agreed upon with OCSE.

The PJAC demonstration will test the efficacy of alternatives to contempt that incorporate procedural justice principles into the business practices of child support programs to improve the reliability of child support payments. The national evaluation will look at the impact of the demonstration projects on factors such as the amount and regularity of child support payments, child support debt, the use of enforcement actions, and the employment and earnings of parents who owe support. Other potential outcomes of interest include perceptions of fairness and levels of trust of the child support program as well as engagement with the other parent.

The evaluation provider will use a randomized control trial to evaluate the impacts of the PJAC demonstration projects and their benefits and costs. OCSE anticipates that there will be eight grantees selected for the PJAC demonstration and each grantee will have a research sample of approximately 3,000 participants over a 3-year enrollment period. Participants will be randomly assigned through an administrative process, developed by the evaluation provider and consistent with rigorous evaluation methodology, to the treatment and control groups after readily available enforcement remedies typically applied to noncompliant parents have been exhausted and prior to filing for contempt.

The recipient state or tribal agency of this cooperative agreement is responsible for and



required to:

1. Develop, in consultation with OCSE, a solicitation to procure an independent, third-party evaluator to conduct the national evaluation. This may require the state or tribal agency to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) or similar mechanism to procure the services of an evaluator. Alternatively, applicants may identify an independent, third-party evaluator in the grant application with assurances that state or tribal agency regulations regarding the selection of a third-party contractor have been met.
2. Ensure that the evaluator completes the following evaluation requirements, all of which will be reviewed by OCSE and are subject to final agreement with OCSE:
  - Conduct impact, implementation, and benefit-cost analyses of the OCSE-funded PJAC demonstration projects. Impact analyses will be based on an experimental research design with the random assignment of eligible participants to treatment (program) and control groups. Implementation analyses will be based on program data obtained from each grantee, an on-line survey of relevant personnel, and site visits by evaluators to observe demonstration operations, conduct interviews with key persons (e.g., managers, staff, representatives of partner agencies, etc.), and learn about enrollee/participant experiences (e.g., using focus groups). Benefit-cost analyses will be based on demonstration program costs and short- and longer-term benefits such as increased child support payments and additional savings/costs to participants, agencies, and the public.
  - Obtain and analyze child support administrative data and other relevant administrative data for the research sample from each of the PJAC demonstration grantees over the 5-year grant period. Include a plan for securing these data and ensuring that the administrative data are appropriately safeguarded. OCSE will assist the evaluator in determining which administrative data can be most useful and will assist in communicating to the PJAC demonstration grantees the type, amount, and condition of the data that must be gathered.
  - Develop a method of collecting 12-month follow-up survey data, with a high response rate of 80 percent, from approximately 2,400 members of the research sample. The purpose of the survey is to measure the extent to which study participants interacted with the child support program and court system during the 12 months following enrollment, understand perceptions of fairness with regard to these processes, examine the relationships with the other parent and children, obtain demographic information, and gain other information not available through administrative data.
  - Provide evaluation-related guidance and assistance to the demonstration grantees through site visits and regular telephone communication with each of the PJAC demonstration grantees (e.g., guidance regarding random assignment; feedback and input to ensure treatments under the demonstrations are substantially different than the services control group members may access; etc.); and
  - Prepare an evaluation design document that describes, in detail, the elements of the evaluation, including data that will be needed, methods that will be used, and outcomes that will be analyzed. The evaluator must ensure OCSE involvement in all decisions regarding the evaluation design.

3. Ensure that the evaluator has continuous access to technical child support expertise through involvement of grantee personnel with in-depth knowledge of the child support program or by training and transfer of knowledge provided by the grantee or other third party.
4. Ensure that the evaluator undertakes all tasks necessary to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of study protocols and works with OCSE to verify Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval of all information collections, on a schedule that will support the time frames established for the evaluation overall and data collection specifically (e.g., allowing OCSE at least 240 days for completion of the OMB clearance process). IRB approval must comply with 45 CFR Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects
5. Ensure that the evaluator disseminates the impact, implementation, and benefit-cost reports and hosts a remote forum on the final evaluation results for the program grantees and the general public. OCSE will support dissemination by posting reports on the OCSE website
6. Ensure that the evaluator develops, executes, and hosts monthly webinars and annual in-person workshops for the PJAC grantees that are based on OCSE guidance and designed to promote coordination, information sharing, and access to resources, training and learning opportunities. The annual workshops should involve, based on OCSE guidance, outside speakers and specialized trainers, including trainers who specialize in procedural justice, alternative dispute resolution, motivational interviewing, trauma-informed practices, and other innovative practices
7. Further collaborate with OCSE as described in the *Section II. Federal Award Information, Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement*.

#### **D. Program Management**

The recipient of this cooperative agreement must ensure appropriate project management, which requires knowledge of federal cost principles and successful stewardship of federal funding through close monitoring of budgets and expenditures. The evaluation management responsibilities must be procured through the evaluation provider.

OCSE expects the recipient of this cooperative agreement and the third-party evaluator will have regular telephone communication with OCSE to discuss the progress of the evaluation and any challenges that the evaluator may be facing and efforts to resolve those challenges as quickly and effectively as possible.

The grantee must provide at least one key, experienced, staff person to serve as a program manager to successfully manage and oversee the requirements laid out in *Section I. Program Description, C. Program Design*. The program manager will be employed for the appropriate number of hours needed for project oversight. OCSE anticipates that this position will require approximately 10 hours per week.

The program manager will:

1. Be responsible for ensuring that required federal reports are submitted in a timely manner.

2. Manage the contract with the third-party evaluator.
3. Ensure the evaluator, in consultation with OCSE, has continuous access to child support expertise through grantee personnel or by training and transfer of knowledge.
4. Monitor the performance of the evaluator to ensure high standards for quality are met.
5. Monitor expenditures under the grant, including evaluator expenditures.
6. Review major deliverables in consultation with OCSE and ensure that OCSE comments are appropriately addressed by the evaluator.

### **E. Waiver Requirements**

The applicant may need to request a waiver of certain provisions of the Act. Section 1115(a)(1) of the Act allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to waive a state plan requirement in Section 454, and Section 1115(a)(2)(A) allows the Secretary to treat certain unallowable expenditures as allowable state expenditures for purposes of the demonstration project. Waivers requested in the application will be covered as part of the cooperative agreement unless noted upon award. Waivers requested after award will be granted if it is determined they are essential to the demonstration.

A request to waive state-wideness and other state plan requirements that facilitate the conduct of the project or enable the state or tribe to accomplish the purposes of the project may also be needed.

For more information on program components specific to this FOA, please reference *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission, The Project Description, and The Project Budget and Budget Justification.*

## **II. Federal Award Information**

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$900,000
Expected Number of Awards:	1
Award Ceiling:	\$900,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$900,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$900,000 Per Budget Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	09/30/2016

### **Length of Project Periods:**

Length of Project Period: 60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

### **Additional Information on Awards:**

**Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If

the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

Estimated award ceilings for the 5-year project period are as follows: FY 2016 - \$900,000. FY 2017 - \$1,800,000. FY 2018 - \$300,000. FY 2019 - \$350,000. FY 2020 - \$150,000.

### **Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement**

A cooperative agreement is federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement in project activities is anticipated. Responsibilities of federal staff and the successful applicant are reviewed prior to award.

OCSE anticipates substantial involvement in the following activities, in addition to those activities mentioned in *Section I. Program Description*:

- Facilitating the exchange of information among funded state or tribal demonstration projects, the state or tribal agency awarded this grant, the third-party evaluator and other entities or organizations engaged by OCSE for purposes related to this new program;
- Providing consultation to the recipient state or tribal agency and the third-party evaluator with regard to the design of the evaluation, methods to carry out the evaluation, approaches to address problems that arise, and identification of areas needing corrective actions;
- Advising and directing approaches to address problems and strengthen grantee capacity to meet the PJAC evaluation requirements;
- Providing timely review, comments, and decisions on key issues related to the design and procurement for and conduct of the evaluation, and on inquiries and documents submitted by the recipient state or tribal agency or third-party evaluator;
- Working together to address issues or problems identified by the recipient state or tribe, OCSE, or others with regard to the recipient state or tribe's ability to carry out the full range of activities included in the approved application in the most efficient and effective manner;
- Working together to develop monthly webinars and an annual workshop held in Washington, DC that will be funded by this grant and hosted by the third-party evaluator for recipients of the companion FOA to promote coordination, information sharing, and access to resources, training and learning opportunities.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### III.1. Eligible Applicants

State Title IV-D agencies (including the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) and Tribal Title IV-D agencies or the umbrella agency of the IV-D program are eligible to receive awards under this FOA.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

### III.3. Other

#### Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

### **Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "Request an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

### **Missing the Application Deadlines (Late Applications)**

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

## **Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applications that are disqualified under these criteria are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

Jessica Lohmann  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
330 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20201  
Phone: (202) 401-4852

#### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

#### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov synopsis at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). They are also available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

#### **Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):**

Available at the Grants.gov Forms Repository website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>.

#### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

### **IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

## **FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

**In FY 2013 ACF implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.**

### ***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

#### **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM).

#### **Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

#### **Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

#### **Accepted Font Style**

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font.

#### **Page Limitations**

**Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

#### **Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**



The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

### **Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to determine the actual number of pages to be removed. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed. Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

### **Signatures**

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the

authorized representatives.

### **Accepted Application Format**

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page.

### **PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

With the exception of Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, the application submission is limited to 100 pages in its entirety. The application should be uploaded in two files:

#### File One (Project Description)

- Project Summary/Abstract
- Table of Contents
- Project Narrative
- Budget and Budget Justification

#### File Two (Appendices)

- Letters of Support
- Resumes and CVs (exempt from the page limitation)
- Third-Party Agreements and/or Other Supporting Material

### **ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One:** Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget

Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

### **Adherence to the Two-File Requirement**

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

### **Application Upload Requirements**

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under the topic “Find Answers Online.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grant.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package. There is also a help page for configuring Firefox and Chrome to open PDFs using Adobe software.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or with SAM.gov, please refer to ACF’s “Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues” document for complete guidance at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf) under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

### **Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms**

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

### **Naming Application Submission Files**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).** Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov's naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF's systems, are listed in the instructions available in the Download Application Package at Grants.gov. Please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

### **Use only file formats supported by ACF**

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

### **ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

### **Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

### **FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options* for more information.

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

### **Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

### **Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications**

**Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Other versions of required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

<b>Forms / Assurances / Certifications</b>	<b>Submission Requirement</b>	<b>Notes / Description</b>
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate

	Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award.  Disclosures must be sent in writing to:  The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human	Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113

	<p>Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201</p> <p><b><u>And</u></b></p> <p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201</p>	
<p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in</p>

		accordance with its instructions.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants may cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a> .  General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/</a> . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email ( <a href="mailto:ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov">ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov</a> ) or by phone (240-453-6900).
DUNS Number (Unique Entity Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) is required of all applicants.  To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a> .  Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.	A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.  See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.



	SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a> .	
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### **Non-Federal Reviewers**

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

## **The Project Description**

### **The Project Description Overview**

#### **Purpose**

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

#### **General Expectations and Instructions**

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

### **General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

#### **Introduction**

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.I. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

### **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

### **Understanding of Technical Approach**

Applications should include:

- Evidence that the applicant organization has a comprehensive understanding of child support business processes related to noncompliant parents as well as procedural justice principles and how to apply them to alternatives to contempt in a child support setting;
- Evidence that the applicant has developed appropriate criteria for judging the soundness of a high-quality, third-party evaluator. If a third-party evaluator has already been identified in this application, then provide evidence that this organization meets the criteria of a high-quality, third-party evaluator;
- Evidence that the applicant understands how to meet the requirements of this FOA, including the ability to secure a third-party evaluator with experience implementing random assignment using an administrative process; analyzing administrative data; completing follow-up surveys; conducting impact, implementation, and benefit-cost

studies; and providing evaluation-related guidance to recipients of the companion FOA as described in *Section I. Program Description, C. Program Design*;

- A detailed project management plan that adequately reflects the complex nature of the work to be undertaken and demonstrates an effective communication plan with the evaluation provider, and provides evidence that the approach is feasible to implement in the timelines required for the project;
- A sound approach for working with PJAC demonstration grantees to ensure timely communication and collaborative working relationships with the evaluator to support the requirements of the evaluation (e.g., collection and monitoring of appropriate data, disseminating evaluation findings to child support agencies and other stakeholders); and
- An effective plan for timely communication and collaborative working relationship with OCSE that reflects *Section II. Federal Award Information, Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement*.

### **Personnel and Resources**

Applications should include:

- A proposal to utilize qualified personnel who have knowledge of federal cost principles and relevant experience managing federal grants that involve complex, multi-year projects and contracting with other entities;
- A proposal to utilize qualified personnel who have experience working with evaluators and familiarity with randomized control trials, implementation studies, and benefit-costs analyses to effectively monitor the performance of the third-party evaluator, including reviewing major deliverables;
- A biographical sketch or resume for each key person proposed to work on the project. Resumes should be no more than two pages in length;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff are appointed, biographical sketches or resumes will be required;
- An assurance that the evaluator has continuous access to child support expertise through grantee personnel or by training and transfer of knowledge; and
- Contact persons and telephone numbers.

### **Experience and Capacity**

Applications should include:

- Explanation and evidence of prior experience creating, awarding, and managing contracts for activities that are similar to those proposed here or are similarly complex and multi-year in nature;
- Explanation and evidence of ability to procure the services of a high quality independent third-party evaluator with experience in evaluating child support business practices and conducting large-scale, multi-site random assignment evaluations (e.g. through a contract or inter-agency agreement);
- Explanation and evidence of prior experience working with evaluation providers;
- Explanation and evidence of prior experience coordinating and working with representatives from other state, tribal, or federal agencies (e.g., other child support agencies or ACF or OCSE);

- A list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution;
- An organizational chart that explains how the project will be organized; and
- Any other pertinent information the applicant deems relevant to support the experience and capacity required to complete the activities describe in the grant application.

### **Project Timeline and Milestones**

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

### **Geographic Location**

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

### **Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

### **Letters Of Support**

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions must be included in the application package.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See

Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

***Special Note:*** *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, (Division E, Title VII, General Provisions – Government-Wide), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$185,100. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for each year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

The application must include:

- A detailed budget that contains reasonable cost estimates for the project, including adequate funding for the evaluation conducted by a third-party evaluator, and justifications for the amounts requested.

Applicants should provide a detailed budget for the first 12-month budget period, as well as a detailed 5-year budget for the entire project period. Refer to *Section II. Federal Award Information* for 5-year budget estimates.

Budgets and budget narratives should include details on FFP funding, however, the SF-424 and SF-424A should only detail the SECTION 1115 FUNDING request for YEAR ONE.

The budget proposal must include:

- A program manager employed for an appropriate number of hours (approximately 10 hours per week) that is an employee of the child support agency; and
- Attendance of the program manager and key evaluation staff at a 2-day kickoff grantee workshop in Washington, DC on December 1-2, 2016.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

## **Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages.

**Justification:** Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

## **Fringe Benefits**

**Description:** Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

**Justification:** Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

## **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

**Justification:** For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

## **Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and

installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

**Justification:** For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

### **Supplies**

**Description:** Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

**Justification:** Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

### **Contractual**

**Description:** Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

**Justification:** Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

### **Other**

**Description:** Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

**Justification:** Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

### **Indirect Charges**

**Description:** Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

**Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent de minimis. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

### **Program Income**

**Description:** The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds.

**Justification:** Describe the nature, source, and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**



**Description:** Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**Justification:** If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards). **A recipient's failure to provide a statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I.* of this announcement.

## Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## Application Submission Options

### Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

After a grant application package is submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), a confirmation screen will appear on the applicant's computer screen. This screen confirms that an application has been submitted an application to Grants.gov. This page also contains a tracking number to identify the status of the application submission in the Track My Application feature.

When the application has completed the Grants.gov submission process, Grants.gov will send email messages to advise the applicant of the progress of the application through its system. **Over the next two business days, an applicant should receive two emails from Grants.gov:**

- **Submission Receipt Email:** Confirms successful receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and indicates the application's status as "Received."
- **Submission Validation –OR– Rejection with Errors Email:** Indicates that the application was either successfully validated or rejected by Grants.gov. Either the application has been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or the application has been rejected due to errors.

### Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

After an application has been successfully submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is re-submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the applicant will receive a new **Submission Receipt Email**. Only applications with on-time date and time stamps in Submission Receipt Email, and that pass validation, will be transmitted to ACF. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check are not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

**NOTE:** The Grants.gov validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Similarly, if an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, and the resubmitted application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

### **Grants.gov Support Center**

- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Support Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Support Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Support Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Support Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

### **Issues with Federal Systems**

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance

at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

### **Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard

copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

**Please Note:** [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission. All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate agency contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the

Internet.

**Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date**, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m, ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

### **IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that**

**registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.**

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### **IV.4. Submission Dates and Times**

##### **Due Dates for Applications**

Due Date for Applications: **07/08/2016**

##### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at:  
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required*

*Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

### **Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

### **Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:**

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

## **IV.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

## **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**



Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

#### **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

##### **Submission By Mail**

Jessica Lohmann  
Office of Child Support Enforcement  
Administration for Children and Families  
Mary E. Switzer Building  
330 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

##### **Hand Delivery**

Jessica Lohmann  
Office of Child Support Enforcement  
Administration for Children and Families  
Mary E. Switzer Building  
330 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

##### **Electronic Submission**

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.

## V. Application Review Information

### V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

#### Understanding of Technical Approach

Maximum Points:40

Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which the proposed approach includes the types of activities described in *Section I. Program Description*.

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate and/or provide the following:

- A comprehensive understanding of child support business processes related to noncompliant parents? (2 points)
- A comprehensive understanding of how to apply these business processes to alternatives to contempt in a child support setting? (3 points)
- Appropriate criteria for judging the soundness of a high-quality, third-party evaluator or has already identified a third-party evaluator in the application that meets the criteria of a high-quality, third-party evaluator? (5 points)
- An understanding of and ability to meet the requirements of this FOA, including all of the elements described in *Section I. Program Description, C. Program Design?* (15 points)
- A detailed project management plan that adequately reflects the complex nature of the work to be undertaken and demonstrates an effective communication plan with the evaluation provider and with OCSE, and provides evidence that the approach is feasible to implement in the timelines required for the project? (5 points)
- A sound approach for working with PJAC demonstration grantees to ensure timely communication and a collaborative working relationships with the evaluator to support the requirements of the evaluation (e.g., collection and monitoring of appropriate data)? (5 points)

- A sound approach for timely communication and collaborative working relationship with OCSE that reflects *Section II. Federal Award Information, Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement?* (5 points)

#### Personnel and Resources

Maximum Points:20

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate and/or provide the following:

- Qualified personnel with relevant experience and resources to adequately manage a complex, multi-year project that includes contracting with another entity? (5 points)
- Qualified personnel who have experience working with evaluators and familiarity with randomized control trials, implementation studies, and benefit-costs analyses to effectively monitor the performance of the third-party evaluator, including reviewing major deliverables? (5 points)
- A biographical sketch or resume for each key person proposed to work on the project? (5 points)
- Assurances that evaluator will have continuous access to child support expertise through grantee personnel or by training and transfer of knowledge? (5 points)

#### Experience and Capacity

Maximum Points:27

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate and/or provide the following:

- Prior experience creating, awarding, and managing contracts or inter-agency agreements for activities that are similar to those proposed here or are similarly complex and multi-year in nature? (5 points)
- The ability to procure the services of a high quality independent third-party evaluator with experience in evaluating child support business practices and conducting large-scale, multi-site random assignment evaluations (e.g. through a contract or inter-agency agreement)? (5 points)
- Prior experience working with evaluation providers? (5 points)
- Prior experience coordinating and working with representatives from other state, tribal, or federal agencies (e.g., other child support agencies or the Administration for Children and Families or federal Office of Child Support Enforcement)? (5 points)
- A list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution? (5 points).
- An organizational chart that explains how the project will be organized? (2 points)

#### Project Timelines and Milestones

Maximum Points:5

To what extent does the applicant provide the following:

- A quantitative monthly or quarterly projection of the timeline for project development and implementation for each function or activity? (5 points)

#### Budget Details

Maximum Points:8

To what degree does the applicant demonstrate and/or provide the following:

- A detailed budget that contains reasonable cost estimates for the services of an independent, third-party evaluator (including all components of the evaluation and dissemination of findings), as well as for services provided by the state or tribal agency? (6 points)
- A budget proposal that includes the following: (1) salary for at least one evaluation manager employed for an appropriate number of hours, and (2) costs for the attendance of key staff and evaluators at the mandatory workshop in Washington, DC? (2 points)

## V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number ([www.dbn.com](http://www.dbn.com)) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

### Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

### Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be

funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

### **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

As required by 2 CFR 200 of the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), <https://www.fapiis.gov/>, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200\\_1205&rgn=div8](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications determined as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of the determination by email.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

## **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements>.

### **Award Term and Condition for Federal Recognition of Same-Sex Spouses/Marriage**

A standard term and condition of award will be included in the final Notice of Awards (NOA) that states: “In any grant-related activity in which family, marital, or household considerations are, by statute or regulation, relevant for purposes of determining beneficiary eligibility or participation, grantees must treat same-sex spouses, marriages, and households on the same terms as opposite-sex spouses, marriages, and households, respectively. By “same-sex spouses,” HHS means individuals of the same sex who have entered into marriages that are valid in the jurisdiction where performed, including any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory or in a foreign country, regardless of whether or not the couple resides in a jurisdiction that recognizes same-sex marriage. By “same-sex marriages,” HHS means marriage between two individuals validly entered into in the jurisdiction where performed, including any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory or in a foreign country, regardless of whether or not the couple resides in a jurisdiction that recognizes same-sex-marriage. By “marriage,” HHS does not mean registered domestic partnerships, civil unions or similar formal relationships recognized under the law of the jurisdiction of celebration as something other than a marriage.”

## **VI.3. Reporting**

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2>.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Performance Progress Reports:	Annually
Financial Reports:	Annually

## VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

### Program Office Contact

Elaine Sorensen  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Child Support Enforcement  
Division of Program Innovation  
330 C Street, SW.  
Washington, DC 20201  
Phone: (202) 401-5099  
Email: [elaine.sorensen@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:elaine.sorensen@acf.hhs.gov)

### Office of Grants Management Contact

Bridget Shea  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Grants Management  
Administration for Children and Families  
330 C Street, SW.  
Washington, DC 20201  
Phone: (202) 401-5542  
Email: [bridget.shea@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:bridget.shea@acf.hhs.gov)

### Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## VIII. Other Information

## Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast/index.cfm>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

ACF Grants Homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

ACF Funding Opportunities <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/>.

ACF "How to Apply for a Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

For submission of a paper format application, all required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page through <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Standard grant forms are available at the [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) Forms Repository webpage at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html>

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

The *Federal Register* <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

OCSE may post applicant resources online at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css/grants>. Please check the site periodically for updates.

## Application Checklist

**What to Submit**

**Where Found**

**When to Submit**



Commitment of Non-Federal Resources	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A or SF-424C. It must be submitted with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> .  For electronic application submission, these forms are	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in

	<p>available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p><i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>Project Summary/Abstract</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>. The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Letters of Support</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>

	<p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>These forms are <b>required</b> for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include only non-construction activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul>	
<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov page under the</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>

	<p>"Application Package" tab in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	<p>Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" entry in the table in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i>.</p>	<p>Concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.</p>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is available in the electronic application kit at Grants.gov and at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>

	<p>person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.</p>	
<p>SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>Additional information and necessary forms are available at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under</p>	<p>Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> If the information is not available at the time of application, it</p>

	<p>"Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>	<p>must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>DUNS Number (Unique Entity Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>