

PUBLIC NOTICE

LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

Notice of Availability of Funds

SFY 2024-25 Mental Health Diversion Grant Program

Take notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4, the Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS), Office of Alternative and Community Responses (OACR) announces the availability of the following grant program funds:

a) Name of the Program: Mental Health Diversion Grant Program. This program is supported by 2024 and 2025 state budget allocations via the “Mental Health Diversion Support Program Fund” established pursuant to section 14 of P.L.2023 c.188.

b) Purpose: The purpose of this funding, allocated pursuant to P.L.2023 c.188 (C.2C:43-32 et al.), is to establish Mental Health Diversion Programs (“Programs” or “MHDP”) in three vicinages of the State. These Programs are intended to divert individuals with serious mental disorders from having a public record of conviction or serving custodial time in the county jail or State prison, to allow participants to engage in mental health treatment and social services, and to reduce recidivism, thereby increasing public safety.

This funding will support the creation of three pilot Programs in no fewer than three judicial vicinages, with at least one program operating in each of the northern, central, and southern regions of the State. As used in this act “northern region” means Bergen, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren Counties; “central region” means Middlesex, Monmouth, Mercer, and Union Counties; and “southern region” means Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem Counties. Essex County (Vicinage 5) is not included in the list of eligible counties as it is being funded through a separate Notice of Availability of Funds.

For reference, below is the designation of vicinages.

Vicinages in the northern region:

Vicinage 1 (Bergen)

Vicinage 6 (Hudson)

Vicinage 13 (Hunterdon, Somerset, and Warren)

Vicinage 10 (Morris and Sussex)

Vicinage 11 (Passaic)

Vicinages in the central region:

Vicinage 8 (Middlesex)

Vicinage 9 (Monmouth)
Vicinage 7 (Mercer)
Vicinage 12 (Union)

Vicinages in the southern region:
Vicinage 1 (Atlantic and Cape May)
Vicinage 3 (Burlington)
Vicinage 4 (Camden)
Vicinage 15 (Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem)
Vicinage 14 (Ocean)

c) Available Funding: The State of New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of Alternative and Community Responses, received funds from the SFY 2024 and SFY 2025 state budgets (“Mental Health Diversion Support Program Fund” established pursuant to section 14 of P.L.2023 c. 188) to support at least one pilot Mental Health Diversion Program in vicinages in each of the north, central, and southern regions for a minimum of three sites. OACR is making available up to a total of \$6,000,000 of appropriated State budget funds to support these pilot programs. These funds will be awarded through a competitive process. Individual awards cannot exceed \$2,000,000 per vicinage for a two-year program.

The number of awards provided and the funding amount of each award will be subject to the total available funding, as well as the geographic requirements, discussed above. Funding decisions will be made based on a variety of considerations to ensure the broadest and deepest level of service coverage practicable taking into account the type of service to be delivered, the desired outcomes, identified need, and the geographic distribution of the project.

The project period for funded recipients is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Continuation funding may be available but is contingent upon the availability of funds. If available, continuation funding will be limited to those recipients who have met the goals and objectives of the program, met all reporting requirements, and any other factors that LPS determines to be relevant in practicing responsible fiscal and programmatic management

d) Organizations that may apply for funding under this program: County Prosecutor’s Offices (CPOs). As the pilots are intended to be vicinage-wide, CPOs within the same vicinage are encouraged to coordinate programming and designate a single CPO to submit an application. The Designated CPO would be considered the applicant, and the coordinating CPO(s) would be a subrecipient of the applicant entity. Only one application per vicinage will be accepted.

e) Qualifications needed by an applicant to be considered for funding: Applicants must have an established Mental Health Diversion Program that meets the eligibility requirements of the statute or a plan to establish a Mental Health Diversion Program that complies with the parameters set forth in P.L.2023 c.188 (C.2C:43-32 et seq.). These parameters include considerations such as eligibility criteria and the inclusion of a Mental Health Diversion Team.

OACR requests applications from CPOs interested in participating in the pilot program. The proposals will be reviewed, scored by a panel, and awarded to applicants receiving the highest scores in each of the three regions (i.e., north, central, and south), but in no event shall an applicant receiving a total score of less than 40 points be funded. OACR reserves the right to issue more than one award per region dependent upon the number and quality of applications, as well as the amount of funding requested in each application and approved by OACR.

The grant awards will be announced on or before June 30, 2025.

Applicants must also be in good standing with all State and federal agencies with which they have had a grant or contractual relationship. Entities with outstanding balances and that are in arrears with LPS are not eligible to apply for funding unless they resolve such balances prior to the end of the application period.

Where appropriate, all applicants, including staff and program service providers, must hold current professional and State licenses and certifications.

OACR reserves the right to decline any and all applicants who cannot demonstrate proof of compliance with program requirements.

To be considered for funding, an eligible applicant must file a completed application, in accordance with the requirements of this NOAF and the Program Administration and Funding Guidelines, by the May 21, 2025, submission deadline. The State of New Jersey may also take into account an applicant's past performance meeting goals, objectives, and reporting requirement deadlines, as well as reimbursement request accuracy.

Applicants must complete and return the following:

1. Application Authorization Form
2. Applicant Information Form
3. Program Narrative
4. Project Work Plan
5. Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative
6. Federal Single Audit Certification
7. Proof of Federal Single Audit (if applicable)
8. New Jersey Single Audit Requirement Certification
9. LPS High-Risk Grantee Applicant Disclosure and Justification (if applicable)
10. Job Descriptions and Resumés of all staff budgeted with grant or match funds; no resumés are required for staff who are not yet hired

Applications missing any of the required application components will not be scored or considered for funding.

The following scored components must be included in your Program Narrative and Budget. Applicants with an already existing program ("Existing Program") should address those components, while applicants who are establishing a new program ("New Program") should

address the components that are relevant to their program. NOTE: The Program Narrative must be double-spaced using standard 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, and must not exceed 20 pages. Points will be deducted for applications exceeding the page limit or applying different font/margin size. Any information provided beyond the 20-page limit will not be considered.

1. Plan and Implementation (25 points)

Although some counties operate mental health diversion programs that are managed by their CPO and others have programs managed by the Administrative Office of the Courts, the MHDP statute sets forth specific program requirements, including that the MHDP must include an application process, a legal determination of eligibility to be made by the prosecutor, a clinical determination, any additional terms of the specific program, and a determination of the length of program participation; additionally, the statute specifies participant eligibility criteria. Applicants must provide the following information depending upon whether they are applying for funding to support an Existing Program or a New Program, but all applicants must address the program requirements set forth in the MHDP statute.

All applicants must submit a plan ("the Plan"); however, all New Programs must be developed in collaboration with the Vicinage leadership and other necessary partners, including the Office of the Public Defender and members of the defense bar; and all New Program applicants must provide a letter of intent or similar representation indicating consultation with and approval of the Plan from the Vicinage's Assignment Judge and the Regional Office of the Public Defender.

All applicants must include a Project Work Plan using the form provided that specifies each objective along with the major activities, including, but not limited to start date, responsible staff, and a feasible timeframe for completion of each activity.

a) Existing Program

For applicants with an Existing Program, describe the County's (or, as appropriate, the Vicinage's) current and planned MHDP, including the Mental Health Diversion Team members, program protocols, participant eligibility criteria, and participating agency partnerships and referral process.

b) New Program

For applicants who are establishing a New Program, describe the County's (or, as appropriate, the Vicinage's) plan for establishing a MHDP, including the Mental Health Diversion Team members, program protocols, participant eligibility criteria, and the agencies anticipated to participate. Applications should include letters of intent from all agencies that will partner on the New Program. Any agencies that are expected to receive funding under this grant opportunity and are included in the Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative must submit letters of intent with this application. Additionally, all New Programs must be developed in collaboration with the Vicinage leadership and other necessary partners, including the Office of the Public Defender, and must provide a letter of intent or similar representation indicating

approval of the Plan from the Vicinage's Assignment Judge and the Regional Office of the Public Defender. All New Program plan submissions must be consistent with the requirements outlined in the MHDP statute.

2. Historical Data and Demonstrated Need (10 points)

a) Existing Program

For applicants with an Existing Program, describe the need for a diversion program, which must include information gathered from the Existing Program and may include data related to crisis calls, overdoses, or other relevant information in the County or Vicinage, including data from other municipal, county, or judicial programs; explain whether the existing program is sufficient for the need or if expansion is necessary; and describe how the plan will address any gaps in resources or services or current unmet needs. This funding is intended to establish pilot programs, so existing programs must establish a need that is not being met through current funding or will not be met by other available or existing funding, describe a need that is not currently met that this funding will address, and explain how this funding will allow the Vicinage to transition into a sustainable plan.

b) New Program

For applicants who are establishing a New Program, describe the need for a diversion program, which may include data related to crisis calls, overdoses, or other relevant information in the County or Vicinage, including data from other municipal, county, or judicial programs; explain what gaps in resources or services or unmet needs exist in the County or Vicinage; and describe how the Plan will address any gaps in resources or services or unmet needs.

3. Objectives and Coordination of Resources (40 points)

The MHDP statute sets forth objectives for the Program, which include:

- (1) reducing incarceration rates for the appropriate target population through effective diversion away from the criminal justice system;
- (2) increasing quality of life for the target population through efficient linkage to available social entitlements and community-based mental health treatment providers, in conjunction with supportive monitoring to ensure compliance;
- (3) increasing community awareness and understanding through cross training of law enforcement and mental health communities; and
- (4) reducing recidivism and re-hospitalization rates for the target population leading to an increase in public safety.

For all applicants, describe how your proposal will address each of the stated objectives. Discuss how the Plan aligns with, supplements, or complements other efforts

undertaken by your County to accomplish these goals, which may include other deflection and diversion programs such as ARRIVE Together, Operation Helping Hand, Opt for Help and Hope, Superior or municipal court diversion programs, Recovery Court, Veterans Diversion Program; or capacity building and linkage programs like Crisis Intervention Team training.

Describe any partnerships, collaborations, and coordination with other entities or resources. Describe proposed partnerships, collaborations, or coordination and explain how your entity will use these to strengthen the success, awareness and/or reach of your project. Applicants may attach graphs, tables, charts, or other visual representations of this intersection; these optional depictions will not be counted toward the 20-page limit.

4. Key Project Staff and Partners (5 points)

a) Existing Program

For applicants with an Existing Program, describe the key project staff, including their responsibilities and how that work fits within the Plan's workflow. If additional personnel are requested in the Budget, explain why those positions are necessary to expand or continue the Program. If existing personnel are requested in the Budget, explain the history of the funding source and the need for funding from this grant opportunity.

Job descriptions and resumés of all staff budgeted with grant or match funds must be submitted with the application. For positions that are yet to be hired, resumés are not required with the application but will be required upon hiring.

b) New Program

For applicants who are establishing a New Program, describe the key project staff, including their responsibilities and how that work fits within the Plan's workflow. Key project staff must include, at a minimum, members of the Mental Health Diversion Team as required by the statute. For any personnel included in your Budget, explain whether you will use existing staff or if you will recruit new staff for each position requested.

Job descriptions and resumés of all staff budgeted with grant or match funds must be submitted with the application. For positions that are yet to be hired, resumés are not required with the application but will be required upon hiring.

5. Data Collection and Evaluation (10 points)

a) Existing Program

For applicants with an Existing Program, describe how data is collected while ensuring participant privacy. Explain the protocols in place to comply with the expungement rules set forth in N.J.S.A. 2C:52-6.

b) New Program

For applicants who are establishing a New Program, describe how data will be collected while ensuring participant privacy, including who is responsible for data collection, analysis, and reporting. Explain the protocols your Program will put in place to comply with the expungement rules set forth in N.J.S.A. 2C:52-6.

6. Budget Detail and Narrative (10 points)

Applicants must provide a budget and narrative explanation, on the form provided, that detail why those costs are necessary to the success of the project. Costs must be specific and tied to the project objectives. Any expenses that are necessary for the operation of the Program but for which no funding is requested should be listed as a match to the Program.

7. Discretionary Award (10 points)

Applicants may be awarded up to 10 additional points for demonstrating the adoption and clear integration of their MHDP plan into other deflection and diversion programs in the County or Vicinage, including, but not limited to, municipal court diversion, Recovery Court, or Veterans Diversion Court. NOTE: This optional section may duplicate some of the explanation provided in Section 3. Applicants are not required to demonstrate the adoption and integration of their MHDP plan with other diversion programs; however, applicants who demonstrate such integration are eligible for up to 10 points in addition to the total of 100 points available under Sections 1 through 6.

Applicants should refer to the Program Administration and Funding Guidelines for a description of budget categories, allowable expenses, and match requirements.

f) Procedures for Eligible Organizations to Apply: Application packages are available on the OAG website at <https://www.njoag.gov/resources/grant-opportunities>. Applicants must submit a completed application with all applicable documents provided and signatures by the submission deadline. The provided documents must be used and may not be altered. Applications must be emailed to the following email address: OACRgrants@njoag.gov. Place your agency name and “Mental Health Diversion Grant Program” in the subject line.

Applications that do not comply with the requirements of this Notice of Availability of Funds or the Program Administration and Funding Guidelines will not be considered.

LPS reserves the right to decline any and all applications for funding and to award grants in amounts that may be other than requested. Agencies previously funded are not guaranteed continued funding or funding at previous levels.

Please be aware that the submitted application may be subject to public disclosure pursuant to the Open Public Records Act, N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.

g) Address: Applications must be submitted by email. Please submit applications to the following email address: OACRgrants@njoag.gov.

For reference only, the address of the office receiving the application:

Tiffany Wilson, Director of the Office of Alternative and Community Responses
Department of Law & Public Safety
Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex
25 Market Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

h) Deadline by which applications must be submitted: Applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on May 21, 2025. **Late applications will not be eligible for funding.** Applications must include all of the required documents and be emailed to OACRgrants@njoag.gov.

i) Date by which notices shall be sent of approval or disapproval of applications: Funding decisions will be made on or before June 30, 2025.

j) Webinar (optional): In an effort to assist candidates in applying for these funds, an application webinar will be held on **April 16, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.** Attending the application webinar is optional. Please read this NOAF, the Program Administration and Funding Guidelines, and associated grant documents in their entirety prior to attending the webinar.

Please RSVP at

https://njoag.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_NweBZPGVSGyveT5KRaaEw by April 15, 2025, if you plan on attending the application webinar. If you do not attend the live version of the webinar or did not register in time, you may view the webinar on the Office of the Attorney General Grant Opportunities page under “Mental Health Diversion Grant Program” (<https://www.njoag.gov/resources/grant-opportunities/>).

Please allow 48 hours for the recording to be posted.

Please note that funding allocations and individual subaward amounts are subject to change. Recipients shall recognize and agree that both the initial provision of funding and the continuation of such funding under a grant agreement is expressly depending upon the availability to the Department of funds appropriated by the State Legislature or through Federal funding from State and/or Federal revenue or such other funding sources, as may be applicable. A failure of the Department to make any payment under a grant agreement or to observe and perform any condition on its part to be performed under a grant agreement as a result of the failure of the State Legislature or through Federal funding to appropriate funds shall not in any manner constitute a breach of a grant agreement by the Department or an event of default under a grant agreement and the Department shall not be held liable for any breach of a grant agreement because of the absence of available funding appropriations. In addition, future funding may not be anticipated from the Department beyond the duration of the award period set forth in a grant agreement and in no event shall a grant agreement be construed as a commitment by the Department to expend funds beyond the termination date set in a grant agreement.