

California Health Facilities Financing Authority Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Revised: February 2020

About the Program Overall

What types of projects may be funded by the Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program (“CSI Grant Program”)?

The CSI Grant Program may fund capital projects for jail and prison diversion programs that offer any combination of mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and/or trauma-centered services in local communities (Section 7413 (q) of the regulations).

Where can I find the CSI Grant Program application, regulations, and statute?

The application, regulations, and statute can be found on the [Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program](#) page of California Health Facilities Financing Authority’s (“CHFFA” or “Authority”) website.

How often will grant opportunities under the CSI Grant Program be available?

The CSI Grant Program is a one-time competitive grant program with limited funding available. The first funding round application submission period ended on April 30, 2019, awarding approximately \$18.2 million with approximately \$47.6 million left for subsequent allocations. Therefore, a second funding round was opened without limitations on the county maximums, and the application submission deadline closed on December 2, 2019. If funds remain after the second funding round, then a subsequent funding round may be opened. If a subsequent funding round is opened, then the application submission deadline will be posted on the [Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program](#) page of CHFFA’s website (Section 7417 of the regulations).

Does the jail diversion program need to be pre-adjudication, or does it need to be post-sentencing as well?

The diversion program can be pre-adjudication and/or post-sentencing just as long as the justice-involved individuals have not already served their sentences in jail or prison (Section 7413 (p) and (r) of the regulations).

What if the applicant can prove that the targeted re-entry population has a high recidivism rate and would like to divert that population from future arrests? Would a facility that provides diversion services to the re-entry population be eligible?

Diversion programs directed toward the re-entry population are not eligible under the CSI Grant Program. For the purposes of this grant program, the definition of “jail diversion” is “the avoidance of or reduction in jail and/or prison time, through a directive or court order, to a mental health

treatment facility, substance use disorder treatment facility, and/or trauma-centered services facility as an alternative to incarceration.” (Section 7413 (p) of the regulations). The target population must be individuals subject to the arrest and/or adjudication process (the definition of “justice-involved individual” is found in Section 7413 (r) of the regulations), and must not have already served their sentences in jail or prison for the current offense.

What type of data is expected to be provided in an application for the evaluation criteria on outcomes?

The application must show a plan for what outcomes will be tracked and how the outcomes will be measured. The application asks for the methodology, timeline, and assignment of responsibility to measure and demonstrate outcomes of the program (Section 7419 (a)(3) of the regulations).

Eligibility

What are eligible applicants?

A county or counties applying jointly are eligible to apply (Section 7414 (a) of the regulations).

Can funds be used for youth diversion programs, or is the target population specific only to adult jail populations?

The Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5848.51 establishes the CSI Grant Program and indicates that community alternatives should be expanded to reduce the need for treatments in jails and prisons and does not mention youth detention facilities. The Authority has made the determination that only adult jail and prison diversion programs are eligible.

Can counties apply jointly with local nonprofit service providers?

No, only counties and counties applying jointly are eligible applicants, but the county or counties applying jointly can contract with a local nonprofit corporation to provide services.

There are two cities (Berkeley and Tri-Cities) that function as counties for the purpose of being the public managed care plan for mental health services. Would these cities be able to apply?

No, a city cannot apply. Only a county or counties applying jointly can apply for and receive grant funding from the Authority.

Is a mobile structure or prefabricated facility eligible as a facility under the CSI Grant Program?

Yes, a mobile structure or prefabricated facility is eligible as a facility under the CSI Grant Program, as long as the facility will be used for program services for the useful life of the project.

Can a county apply for CSI Grant Program funding if it has an open grant with CHFFA?

Yes, a county that has an open grant with CHFFA can apply.

Application

Will the applications be approved on a rolling basis, or will counties be notified when the application submission period closes?

Applications are submitted during an application submission period, and the submission deadlines are announced on the [Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program](#) page of CHFFA's website. The first funding round application submission period ended on April 30, 2019, and the second funding round submission period ended on December 2, 2019. If funds remain after the second funding round, then subsequent funding rounds may be opened. If a subsequent funding round is opened, the application submission period will be posted on the [Community Services Infrastructure Grant Program](#) page of CHFFA's website (Section 7417 of the regulations).

Is there a version of the application that can be copied and pasted?

CHFFA's website will have a PDF version of the application that can be copied and pasted and a fillable MS Word version.

Does the application need to be submitted by both email and mail/delivery, or will one method suffice?

One method will suffice. Please do not submit the application both by email and mail/delivery.

When submitting an application by email, will any special arrangements need to be made for large files?

If submitting an application by email, and the file size is larger than 25 MB, an account will need to be set up to access a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) service. Please send a message to the CHFFA email address at least one full week in advance of the application due date to make arrangements and begin the process of setting up an account.

Under what circumstances should the applicant submit more than one application?

If the applicant has multiple project sites planned, then the applicant shall submit one application for each project site (Section 7416 (c) of the regulations).

How should the timeline, budgets, graphs, and charts be provided? Do they need to be included in the 20-page narrative limit, or can they be referenced in the narrative as attachments?

Timelines, budgets, graphs, and charts may be referenced in the narrative as attachments, but do not count towards the 20-page limit.

Do the questions themselves need to be restated and included in the narrative?

It is not a requirement that questions need to be restated in the narrative. Please be aware, however, that if raters have to search for required information, they may miss it. The clearer and more organized your application, the more likely all the information it contains will be located and reviewed by the raters.

Will a grant not be awarded if the applicant receives a score of zero in any of the Evaluation Criteria?

Applications receiving a score of zero points in Evaluation Criteria 1 through 3 shall not be considered for an Initial Allocation (Section 7420 (e)(2) of the regulations). Additionally, applications shall score a minimum of 35 points in Evaluation Criteria 4 to be considered for an Initial Allocation (Section 7420 (e)(1) of the regulations).

Does a project need to expand capacity and serve more clients than the amount currently served in an already existing program?

Yes, the project must increase or expand access to and capacity for mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and/or trauma-centered services that offer relevant alternatives to incarceration, as explained in Evaluation Criteria 1 (Section 7419 (a)(1) of the regulations). Depending on the program, the project must add more beds or expand service capacity if there is a program that already exists.

Is it sufficient to provide screening and referral to treatment in a jail diversion program model or does it have to provide other services?

Screening and referral to treatment is not sufficient under the CSI Grant Program. The jail diversion program must provide mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and/or trauma-centered services at the facility being financed with grant funds.

Funding

What is the amount of grant funding available statewide?

A total of \$65,813,000 was available to be awarded statewide under the CSI Grant Program. Approximately, \$18.2 million was awarded in the first funding round, leaving approximately \$47.6 million for allocation in subsequent funding rounds.

If a county was awarded funding in the first funding round, will it be eligible to apply for additional funding in a future funding round?

Yes, a county receiving funding in one round may still apply for additional funding in subsequent rounds (Section 7418 (c) of the regulations).

Will there be a minimum number of awards in each county population size range?

Awards based on county population size (county maximums) only applied to the first funding round, which closed on April 30, 2019. For subsequent funding rounds, there are no county maximums and no minimum number of awards in each county population size range. Applicants will be awarded based on the scores received on their applications (from the highest scoring to the lowest scoring application) as determined by the Authority (Section 7420 (c) of the regulations).

What are considered eligible costs under the CSI Grant Program?

Eligible costs include:

- Facility acquisition (Section 7415 (a)(1) of the regulations)
- Renovation (not including rebuilding from the ground up) (Section 7415 (a)(2) of the regulations), which may include hardscaping and/or landscaping essential to the completion of the project not to exceed 5% of the total grant award (Section 7415 (a)(2)(E) of the regulations)
- Furnishings and/or equipment (Section 7415 (a)(3) of the regulations)
- Information technology software and hardware (not to exceed 3% of the total grant award except when approved by the Authority, and only upon justification that the additional information technology costs are necessary for the project to achieve the desired goals and outcomes set forth in Section 7419 (a)(3) of the regulations) (Section 7415 (a)(4) of the regulations)
- Up to three months of program startup or expansion costs consisting of training, personnel salaries, and personnel benefits (Section 7415 (a)(5) of the regulations)

Why is construction not an eligible cost under the CSI Grant Program?

Construction is not an eligible cost because the Authority is not authorized by the CSI Grant Program statute (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5848.51) to disburse Grant funds for construction costs. Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5848.51, subdivision (c) states that “Grant awards made by the authority shall be used to expand local resources for facility acquisition or renovation, equipment acquisition, and applicable program startup or expansion costs to increase availability and capacity to diversion programs ...”

What is the grant period?

The grant period is the time period from the date of Final Allocation to the date set by the Authority for the grant to end and the program to be operational (Section 7413 (m) of the regulations).

Is there a deadline for expending grant funds?

The deadline set by the state legislature for which all funds are to be awarded is June 30, 2020 and for which all grant funds are to be expended and disbursed is June 30, 2022. However, grant funds must be incurred within the grant period (Section 7415 (c) of the regulations), which may be sooner than the legislative deadline. The grant period will vary depending on several factors (e.g., when the county or counties applying jointly specified that the program will be operational).

When does the three-month startup period begin?

The county determines when the three-month startup period begins, as long as the three months are consecutive and are near the time the program begins providing services.

Can funding be requested for furnishings and/or equipment for expanding a program without the purchase or renovation of a facility?

Yes, as long as the application demonstrates that the project will increase or expand access to and capacity for community based jail diversion programs providing mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and/or trauma-centered services that offer relevant alternatives to incarceration.

Project Readiness, Feasibility, Sustainability and Release of Funds

Does the term “readiness” mean the project is complete and ready to offer services or that the plan for the project is ready to begin (e.g., starting renovation)?

The term “readiness” refers to how soon the primary activities associated with the grant project (e.g., renovation, facility acquisition, etc.) can begin. A project need not be “ready” to be considered for a grant, but rather needs to present a plan that shows likeliness of readiness within 12 months of the Final Allocation (Section 7419 (a)(4)(G) of the regulations). “Readiness” does not refer to program services; rather, it means that the project has all applicable approvals and/or documents for the project to begin (Section 7413 (u) of the regulations).

How long must the jail diversion program be sustainable after the project period ends?

The jail diversion program must be sustainable for at least the useful life of the project, which is determined by the county’s legal counsel or accounting division (Section 7423 (e) of the regulations). “Sustainable” is defined in Section 7413 (x) of the regulations as the program having “reasonably foreseeable funding to operate on a continuous basis, or at least for the useful life of the project.”

What is the anticipated timeline from application submission to funding? When will the Authority release funds to the grantees?

While the Authority would like to disburse funds as quickly as possible, the timeline will vary depending on the number of applications to be evaluated, any appeals of initial allocations to be decided, and on the amount of time for a grantee to meet all of the requirements necessary for the Authority to release grant funds per Section 7425 of the regulations.

Are there any specific requirements for zoning or permitting for the selected site? For example, is it required that the space have a conditional use permit for ten years?

In order for Grant funds to be released, the Grantee must provide evidence of or an execution plan to obtain legally required zoning for the program(s) (Section 7425 (a)(2)(B)(ii) of the regulations). Legally required zoning may vary by county or city, depending on where the facility is located. The Grantee may need a conditional use permit, depending on the county or city where the facility is located. If needed, then the permit must not expire for the duration of the useful life of the project to ensure the services are provided for the duration of the useful life of the project.

Owned/Leased Facility

May grant funds be used to renovate a property owned or leased by the contracted service provider?

No, the facility being renovated must be owned or leased by the county. Under the CSI Grant Program, contracted service providers are not eligible to apply for nor receive grant funds.

In order for funds to be released, why must the Grantee provide a letter from the Grantee's legal counsel or an authorized officer certifying that the lease agreement (if applicable) conforms to Section 7426 of the regulations?

This requirement is to ensure that lease agreements (if the county is leasing) conform to the requirements as specified in Section 7426 (a)(1) through (a)(5) of the regulations. By requiring review of the lease by the Grantee's legal counsel, the Authority can be assured that the stipulations applicable to lease agreements are met. The Authority does a cursory review of each lease agreement, but the responsibility for compliance rests with the Grantee (Section 7426(a) of the regulations).