

PUBLIC NOTICE

LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

Notice of Availability of Funds

SFY 2024-25 Essex County 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 anticipated 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 a Mental Health Diversion Program (“Program” or “MHDP”) in Essex County, Vicinage 5. This Program is 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.

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 a pilot Mental Health Diversion Program in Essex County, Vicinage 5. OACR is making available up to \$2,000,000 of appropriated State budget funds to support this pilot program.

The project period 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 contingent upon the entity having 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: Essex County Prosecutor’s Office is the designated applicant.

e) Qualifications needed by an applicant to be considered for funding: The applicant 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 the application to be submitted in accordance with the minimum application requirements from the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. The proposal will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the parameters set forth in this NOAF and the accompanying Program Administration and Funding Guidelines.

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

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

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

OACR reserves the right to decline an applicant who cannot demonstrate proof of compliance with program requirements.

To be considered for funding, the 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 the applicant's past performance meeting goals, objectives, and reporting requirement deadlines, as well as reimbursement request accuracy.

The applicant 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 Resumes of all staff budgeted with grant or match funds; no resumes are required for staff who are not yet hired

The following components must be included in your Program Narrative and Budget. The applicant should address the components that are relevant to its program depending on if it has an already-existing program ("Existing Program") or if it is establishing a new program ("New 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.

1. Plan and Implementation

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. The applicant must provide the following information depending upon whether they are applying for funding to support an Existing Program or a New Program, but the applicant must address the program requirements set forth in the MHDP statute.

The applicant 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 Programs 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.

The applicant 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

If the applicant currently has an Existing Program, describe the County’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

If the applicant is establishing a New Program, describe the County’s plan for establishing a MHDP, including the Mental Health Diversion Team members, program protocols, participant eligibility criteria, and the agencies anticipated to participate. The application 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

a) Existing Program

If the applicant has 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, 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 a pilot program, 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

If the applicant is 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, including data from other municipal, county, or judicial programs; explain what gaps in resources or services or unmet needs exist in the County; and describe how the plan will address any gaps in resources or services or unmet needs.

3. Objectives and Coordination of Resources

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.

The applicant must describe how its proposal will address each of the stated objectives. Discuss how the Plan aligns with, supplements, or complements other efforts undertaken by the 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.

4. Key Project Staff and Partners

a) Existing Program

If the applicant has 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

If the applicant is 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

a) Existing Program

If the applicant has 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

If the applicant is 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

The applicant 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.

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

7. Integration (Optional)

The applicant should describe how they will clearly integrate their MHDP plan into other deflection and diversion programs in the County, including, but not limited to, municipal court diversion, Recovery Court, or Veterans Diversion Court.

f) Procedures for Eligible Organizations to Apply: The application package is available on the OAG website at <https://www.njoag.gov/resources/grant-opportunities>. The applicant 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. The application 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.

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: The application must be submitted by email. Please submit the application 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 application must be submitted: The application must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on May 21, 2025. The application 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_NweBZPGVSGyveT5KRaa0Ew 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.