CITY OF TALLAHASSEE

Human Services

Bridge Program Manual

Table of Contents

Introduction

In 2020, the City established the Bridge program to support local organizations proposing to implement innovative solutions to address community needs but lack the eligibility requirements to participate in the Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP) grant process.

The City currently administers the Community Human Service Partnership in collaboration with the County to provide an efficient and effective method for allocating human services grant funds. The CHSP process is robust and has received a Best Practice award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. CHSP has several minimum requirements and operates on a two- year funding cycle. The Bridge program is an annual funding opportunity with less stringent requirements and enables nonprofit agencies that do not meet the minimum CHSP standards to strengthen its capacity while receiving funding up to a maximum of two years. Agencies are then required to apply to CHSP for continued funding. Agencies that have previously received or are currently receiving CHSP funding are not eligible for the Bridge program.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements

To apply to the Bridge program the agency must meet the following requirements:
- At the time of application submission, the agency is registered as a 501(c)(3) with the United States Department of Treasury.
    - Please note that Fiscal Agents are not accepted, the applying agency must have its own 501(c)(3) status.
- The agency can demonstrate a record of providing **or** intent to provide direct human services to residents of Leon County.
- The agency has not received CHSP funding.

Online Application and Application Cycles

To be considered for funding, the agency must complete an online application. The agency may submit only one application each funding cycle. Applications will be accepted between July 1st and July 31st, evaluated by September 30th.

Funding

The agency can receive up to $10,000 in a fiscal year. The City will process the awarded payment based on the City's fiscal year, which begins October 1st.

Evaluation, Awarding Process, and Action Plan

The Bridge Review Team (BRT), local citizen volunteers will serve as grant reviewers and make funding recommendations for each program. Agencies will be evaluated based on its service delivery model (e.g., potential to provide impactful, innovative services), potential

capacity, and ability to meet the CHSP eligibility requirements. The BRT has the discretion to request presentations, copies of legal documents, additional written responses, or site visits to aid in their ability to evaluate the proposals.
 The recommendations rendered by the BRT are not subject to appeal.

The BRT will utilize an evaluation rubric to assess all funding requests. Each agency will receive a decision letter that includes the funding recommendation.

Program Reporting and Evaluating Second-Year Agencies

Funded agencies are required to submit an Annual Report, due by November 1st. This report will be generated and completed through the Neighborly Software portal.

Agencies that have received Bridge funds for one year and are applying for funding for the second year will be held to a higher standard than in the first year of funding. The BRT will evaluate both the agency's progress towards meeting CHSP requirements as well as annual report regarding the agencies program development (e.g., achievements, shortfalls, collaborative partners, etc.).

CHSP Eligibility Requirements

One of the primary goals of the Bridge program is to support promising nonprofits to build its capacity, which includes obtaining the necessary qualifications to become eligible to apply to CHSP, and the ability to achieve one of the six Common Goals, Subgoals, and Measures, as referenced in the chart below. For your information, the CHSP eligibility criteria are provided below:

1. An agency must attend one of the mandatory workshops in order to apply for funding in the two-year grant cycle. The agencies official representative in attendance must be an employee or board member.
2. The agency must be a non-profit corporation, incorporated in Florida or authorized by the **Florida Department of State** to transact business in Florida, pursuant to Chapter 617, Florida Statutes.
3. The agency must have obtained a **501(c) (3) status** from the **U.S. Department of Treasury**.
4. The agency must be authorized by the **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services** to solicit funds, pursuant to Chapter 496, Florida Statutes.
5. The agency must have obtained a sales tax exemption registration from the **Florida Department of Revenue**, pursuant to Chapter 212, Florida Statutes.
6. The agency must have a **local board of directors and/or a local advisory board**.
7. The agency must have **by-laws** adopted by the board of directors.
8. The agency must have a comprehensive **Fiscal Management Policy** that includes appropriate internal controls to protect the fiscal integrity of the agency.
9. The agency must have a **Check Signing Policy** that requires two or more signatures based on certain fiscal thresholds approved by the agencies board of directors. This policy must

specify that no agency staff, including the executive director, can sign a check written to themselves or written for cash. The policy must also include specifications and internal safeguards board oversight) regarding making withdrawals from the agencies account(s).

10. The agency must demonstrate that it has adequate internal fiscal controls in place to clearly document how grant funds are spent and it has the appropriate personnel (including volunteers) capacity to carry out the stated program goals and objectives.

11. If required by federal or state law, the agency must have its books and records audited annually by an independent certified public accountant who has no affiliation with the agency and whose examination is made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The **audit report** must be no more than two years old. The audit report must include a management letter and financial statements showing the following: all the agencies income, disbursements, assets, liabilities, endowments, and other funds, as well as the agencies reserves and surpluses during the period under study and be consolidated with the statements of any affiliated foundations or trusts.

12. If the audit contains a schedule of findings, a corrective action plan must be included with the audit.

13. The agency must show proof of filing an IRS Form 990, 990EZ, Postcard or extension within the last fiscal year.

14. The agency must have an **administrative cost of 25%** or less as evidenced by the IRS Form 990 and/or audit.

15. The agency must have a **Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy**.

16. The agency must have **proof of general liability** insurance coverage.

17. The agency must have a **Records Retention Policy**.

18. The agency must have a **Conflict of Interest Policy**.

19. The executive director and board president (or vice president) must sign the application.

CHSP Common Goals, Subgoals, and Measures

In 2022, the CHSP process established standard Performance Metrics to measure the Return on Investment and to evaluate the performance and outcome measures reported by CHSP agencies. To ensure Bridge Applicants will meet the new CHSP Performance Metrics the applicant will need to demonstrate their ability to align with the below Major Goals, Subgoals and Measures.

In the application, the applicant will need to choose one Major Goal, at least one Subgoal and at least one Performance Metric for the proposed program.

COMMON GOALS, SUBGOALS, AND MEASURES

Major Goal Areas & Subgoals						
Support Healthy Families	**Support Individuals & Families in Crisis & Emergency Situations**	**Enhance Quality of Life for Persons With Disabilities**	**Improve Healthcare for Vulnerable Populations**	**Enhance Quality of Life for Elders**	**Strengthen Academic Performance & Reduce Risk Factors for At-Risk Youth (K-12)**	**Reduce Homelessness**
Improve early childhood & achieve developmental milestones	Support emergency recovery	Support social connections & physical activity	Improve access to health & supportive Services	Support social connection & physical activity	Improve academic achievement	Make homelessness a rare occurrence (<.1%)
Improve academic achievement	Support family safety & self-sufficiency	Support family safety & self-sufficiency		Provide nutritional stability	Improve youth behavior & positive life outcomes	Brief shelter stays (<90 days)
Secure & maintain employment	Secure & maintain employment	Improve access to health & supportive services		Provide caregiver support	Secure & maintain stable housing (youth)	Rapid Rehousing
Support family safety & self-sufficiency	Secure & maintain stable housing	Provide caregiver support		Secure and maintain stable housing	Secure & maintain employment (youth)	Reduce homelessness recurrence
Improve access to health & supportive services	Expand access to legal representation	Achieve developmental milestones (youth)				Provide adequate temporary shelter
Improve youth behavior & positive life outcomes	Improve access to health & supportive services					
Secure & maintain stable housing	Provide nutritional stability					

Uniform Metrics

Support Healthy Families	Support Individuals and Families in Crisis & Emergency Situations	Enhance Quality of Life for Persons With Disabilities	Improve Healthcare for Vulnerable Populations	Enhance Quality of Life for Elders	Strengthen Academic Performance & Reduce Risk Factors for At-Risk Youth (K-12)
Youth with improved childhood development (higher assessment score / meet developmental milestones)	Persons receiving improved access to healthcare (health / dental / mental health / supportive services)	Persons receiving improved access to healthcare (health / dental / mental health / supportive services)	Persons receiving improved access to healthcare (health / dental / mental health / supportive services)	Persons obtaining / maintaining stable housing	Students promoted to next grade (Kindergarten readiness / K-12)
Students promoted to next grade (Kindergarten ready / K-12)	Persons receiving emergency needs support (households / elders)	Caregivers receiving respite support		Persons receiving nutritional support (elders)	Students completing high school & enrolling in postsecondary education
Youth with lower negative behavioral outcomes (disciplinary & delinquency incidents / teen pregnancy / substance abuse / gang involvement)	Persons with legal needs met	Persons gaining self-sufficiency skills to manage disability and health issues		Caregivers receiving respite support	Youth with lower negative behavioral outcomes (disciplinary & delinquency incidents / teen pregnancy / substance abuse / gang involvement)
Students completing high school & enrolling in postsecondary education	Persons receiving nutritional support	Youth meeting developmental milestones		Elders receiving social supports to manage health care risks & end-of-life decisions	Youth attaining management & self-protections skills
Persons obtaining / retaining employment (parents)	Persons obtaining / retaining employment (parents/youth)	Persons linked to service provision			Youth obtaining / retaining employment
Persons in at-risk neighborhoods receiving family safety net & supplemental education services (households / youth)	Persons obtaining / maintaining stable housing	Caregivers receiving respite supports			Youth obtaining / maintaining stable housing
Persons receiving improved access to health, dental, mental health & supportive services	Persons linked to service provision				Persons receiving family safety net & supplemental education services (households / youth)
Persons obtaining / maintaining stable housing					
Persons linked to service provision					

Bridge Staff Contact Information

If you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact Bridge staff at Bridge@talgov.com