
West Virginia Department of
Health and Human Resources
Bureau for Children and
Families

Funding Announcement

**JUVENILE VICTIM OFFENDER
MEDIATION**

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I. Introduction

The Department of Health and Human Resources (Department), Bureau for Children and Families (BCF) is soliciting applications from legal entities interested in developing and implementing Restorative Justice programming, in the one or more counties throughout the state. The Department seeks to expand upon the use of Restorative Justice programming that includes Victim Offender Mediation services, as well as, case management services to referents in need of additional services.

The goals of victim-offender mediation include the following:

- Supporting the healing process of victims by providing a safe, controlled setting for them to meet and speak with offenders on a strictly voluntary basis.
- Allowing offenders to learn about the impact of their crimes on the victims and take direct responsibility for their behavior.
- Providing an opportunity for the victim and offender to develop a mutually acceptable plan that addresses the harm caused by the crime.

Applicants interested in applying for the Juvenile Victim Offender Mediation program are limited to legal entities with experience working with at-risk juveniles and their families and are familiar with the juvenile justice system. The initial grants will be for the period of February 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016. Renewal of these grants will be contingent on continued funding and grantee performance.

II. Background

West Virginia's juvenile justice system has been plagued with "get tough" policies that have failed to provide for the needs of youth and have resulted in high rates of recidivism and out-of-home placement. Between 2002 and 2012 the number of court referrals for status offenders rose nearly 124% and subsequently, the number of status offenders placed outside of the home increased nearly 255%. These staggering numbers are only offset by the fact that just under 50% of those youth were first-time offenders. The Final Report of the West Virginia Intergovernmental Task Force on Juvenile Justice concluded: the state lacks a comprehensive network of alternatives for youth and that "insufficient access to

community-based options is the main reason large numbers of low level, nonviolent offenders go through the court process”.

During the 2015 Legislative session the legislators recognized the urgent need to change these ineffective policies and provide for an evidence-based approach to rehabilitating juveniles. As a result, the use of programs and agreements designed to divert juveniles from the justice system was codified to include diversionary (49-4-702) and restorative justice (49-4-725) programs. The Department intends to expand the availability of Restorative Justice and diversion programs. These programs are to include targeted case management services aimed at reducing further involvement in the judicial system for all youth referred and repairing the harm done by delinquent youth’s actions through the use of victim-offender mediation.

Victim-Offender mediation is a federally recognized promising practice model of restorative justice that has been gaining support throughout the United States and the world as it begins to provide an evidence base. Mediation calls for creativity in the development of restitution agreements which satisfy victim and offender. These agreements often require the juvenile to complete community service or personal service instead of paying a financial sum, which often proves impossible for poor families.

BCF currently funds one mediation program in the Northern Panhandle of the state. Mediation Programs are designed to divert juvenile misdemeanants from the juvenile court system but still provide for accountability of the offending juvenile.

Mediation programs are voluntary programs in which juveniles must face the individuals they have victimized and hear the first-hand accounts of the damage the offense caused. Mediation also provides the offender the opportunity to inform the victim of the events that led to the offense. Not only have mediation programs been shown to curb recidivism, but existing programs report high levels of satisfaction from offenders and victims.

Mediation programs must provide victim-sensitive trained mediators, as well as case management services and a variety of contracted services to meet the needs of the identified youth. To learn more about victim-offender mediation programs and the implementation process, visit:

https://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojdp/2001_2_1/page1.html and

https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/reports/96517-gdlines_victims-sens/ncj176346.pdf

III. Program Requirements

A. Target Population

The target population is limited to males and females between the ages of 12-18, whom:

- Have been charged, or are at risk of being charged, with a status offense, and a clear victim is present or;
- Have been charged, or at risk of being charged, with a misdemeanor, and;
- Have been referred by the youth's school, Juvenile Probation Officer or other court official, or local DHHR.

B. Required Services

Restorative Justice programs must provide trained victim-sensitive, victim-offender mediators and case managers. Mediators may be community volunteers who have received the appropriate training as a victim-offender mediator. The applicant must recruit, retain, and train victim-offender mediators and must accept referrals from courts, prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, probation officers, and DHHR staff.

Additionally, the applicant must provide case management services to offenders in need of support and to resolve factors contributing to criminal behavior. Services offered may be provided directly or through contract with another agency. Other sources of payment such as Medicaid/private insurance must be exhausted before payment with grant funds. Services must include:

- Crisis intervention
- Behavior management
- Individual and family counseling
- Life skills
- Cognitive therapy
- Substance abuse treatment
- Psychological testing
- Family conferencing
- Limited transportation assistance
- Community Service Supervision

Applicants must describe the established working relationships with necessary community stakeholders within the proposed counties to establish a viable restorative justice program.

C. Service Delivery Area

Applicants may apply to develop programs in one or more counties throughout the state. Applicants may propose several counties to be served under one program.

D. Time Frames/ Mandatory Start Dates

Grants will be for the period of **February 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016**. Grants will be monthly schedule of payments. Applicants will be expected to begin accepting referrals upon completion of the Victim-Offender mediation training.

E. Organizational Experience/Capability

Applicants must demonstrate experience providing case management and service delivery and referral for youth and their families.

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the target population.

Applicants must describe experience working with at-risk juveniles.

Applicants must demonstrate experience in recruiting and retaining community volunteers to provide services to youth and families.

Applicant must include a letters of support from the judicial circuit and the probation office in the proposed counties.

Applicants must include letters of agreement with sources of referral for the programs.

Applicants must agree to seek and participate in an evidence-based model of Victim-Offender Mediation training.

F. Staffing Requirements

Discuss the plan for recruitment and on-going training of victim-offender mediators, case managers, and/or family therapists.

Case managers of VOM models must have a bachelor's degree in a human service field such as psychology, social work, or counseling and have demonstrated a commitment to working with at-risk youth and their families.

Victim-Offender mediators must have minimally a high school diploma and have demonstrated a commitment to working with at-risk youth and their families.

G. Outcomes

Applicants must include information on expected outcomes and the plan to measure the proposed outcomes. Specific performance measures will be provided in the statements of work for the selected grantees. The measurement of program success will likely include:

- The number of youth, families, and/or communities served
- The number of cases opened
- The number of cases closed as completed treatment/agreement
- The number of cases successfully diverted from the court system
- The number of youth who remained uninvolved with the juvenile system at follow-up at six months.
- The number of youth who participated in victim-offender mediation and the result of agreement

IV. Narrative/Work Plan Requirements

Victim-Offender Mediation program applicants must include a detailed description of VOM and the importance of victim-sensitive mediation.

Applicants must describe the plan for ongoing training for new staff and volunteers in the future.

Applicants must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the target population and the challenges of working with that population.

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the necessity and importance of the voluntary nature of VOM, and the importance of providing additional services for youth who cannot or will not participate in VOM.

Applicants must describe the step by step process for implementing the victim offender medication program with activities, dates, and responsible parties.

V. Department Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Department include, but are not limited to grant payments, referrals, and work with the selected grantees to obtain training from an approved source.

VI. Application Process

A. Intent to Apply:

The Application is available online at <http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/bcf/>. Anyone interested in submitting an application must submit a “Letter of Intent” form electronically by **December 16, 2015** and must submit an original and 7 copies of the application by **December 21, 2015**.

Telephone calls regarding the Funding Announcement will not be accepted. All questions must be submitted electronically by **December 4, 2015. Responses will be posted December 10, 2015.** The Deadline for Applications is **December 21, 2015**. Applications must be received by the Bureau for Children and Families by close of business **December 21, 2015**. Applications not received by this date will not be reviewed.

Applicants must use 12pt. Arial or Times New Roman font, single line spacing, and one (1) inch margins. Page numbers must also be included in the footer.

B. Administrative Data:

The Application cover page and Assurances shall include: name of Applicant; service delivery area to be covered; Applicant’s business address; telephone number; name of authorized contact person; signature of person authorized to act in agency’s behalf; and date.

Applicant shall provide a summary of the agency’s organization, its size

and resources.

- Identifying information
- Date organization established
- Type of ownership
- Copy of current license to do business in the State of West Virginia
- List of current services being provided
- Organizational chart

C. *Applicant Capability/ Personnel Experience*

Discuss the capability and experience of the applicant organization.

D. *Program Narrative*

Detailed description of services to be provided under this grant

E. *Work Plan*

Step-by-step process for implementing the program with actions, timeframes, and responsible parties

F. *Budget*

Detailed line item budget and narrative for all costs for the grant period

VII. Evaluation

Eligible applicants must comply with all requirements provided within this Funding Announcement. Applications that fail to comply with the requirements provided within this document, incomplete applications or applications submitted after the application deadline will not be reviewed. A Statement of Assurance agreeing to these terms is required of all applications. This statement must be signed by the applicant organization's CEO, CFO, and Project Officer. All applications will be forwarded to an independent grant review team which will score the application in accordance with the criteria stated. Applicants who best meet the specifications of the Funding Announcement will be eligible for an award. The maximum number of points available is one hundred (100).

The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the applications, in whole or in part, without prejudice if to do so is felt to be in the best interests of the Department. The Department also reserves the right to contact applicants to clarify applications and negotiate changes.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

A. Applicant Capability/Experience 30 points

1. Did Applicant must demonstrate experience providing case management and service delivery and referral for youth and their families?
2. Did Applicant describe experience working with at risk juveniles?
3. Did Applicants demonstrate experience in recruiting and retaining community volunteers to provide services to youth and families?
4. Did Applicants demonstrate the ability to obtain and provide the necessary and appropriate evidence based training to victim-offender mediators?
5. Did Applicant include a letter(s) of support from the judicial circuit and the probation office in the proposed counties?
6. Did Applicants include letters of agreement with sources of referral for the programs?
7. Did the applicant discuss the plan for recruitment and on-going training of victim-offender mediators, case managers, and/or family therapists?
8. Are case managers of VOM models required to have a bachelor's degree in a human service field such as psychology, social work, or counseling and have demonstrated a commitment to working with at-risk youth and their families?
9. Are Victim-Offender mediators required to have high school diplomas and a commitment to working with at-risk youth and their families?

B. Narrative 30 points

1. Did the applicant include a detailed description of VOM and the importance of victim-sensitive mediation?

2. Did the Applicant must describe the plan for ongoing recruitment and training for new staff and volunteers?
3. Did the Applicant demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the target population and the challenges of working with that population?
4. Did the Applicant demonstrate an understanding of the necessity and importance of the voluntary nature of VOM, and the importance of providing additional services for youth who cannot or will not participate in VOM?.

C. Work Plan 20 points

Did the Applicant describe the step-by-step process for implementing the victim offender medication program with activities, dates, and responsible parties?

D. Budget and Budget Narrative 20 points

1. Did the applicant include a budget for total operating budget for the grant period for all costs.
2. Are calculations correct?
3. Are all costs allowable?
4. Are costs reasonable?
5. Is sufficient funding available to fund the program for 12 months?