



Department of Developmental
Services

Disparity Funds Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Fiscal Year 2019-20

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A. General Information

1. What is the intent of the 2019/20 Disparity Funds Program?

The Disparity Funds Program supports projects that aim to increase equity in service access. Proposals must link to an identified issue or barrier in the local community or statewide, which has been identified through purchase of service (POS) data, stakeholder feedback, and/or regional center plans and recommendations to promote equity and reduce disparities.

2. Who is eligible to apply for disparity grant funding?

Regional centers (RCs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) are eligible to apply.

3. What is the definition of a CBO?

For the purposes of the Disparity Funds Program, a CBO is defined as a public or private nonprofit, or private for-profit organization that is representative of and advocates for a community or significant segments of a community. Each CBO must describe its organization and clearly state how it meets the definition of a CBO as part of the application process.

4. Are CBOs required to have a qualifying Employer Identification Number (EIN)?

If the organization does not have an established EIN, a financial management service (FMS) must be utilized to facilitate invoicing and payments. The costs associated with an FMS must be included in the budget under operating expenses. A list of vendored FMS agencies by regional center catchment area is listed at: www.dds.ca.gov/SDP/FMSContactList.cfm.

5. Where do I find information about, or examples of, existing disparities?

Each regional center posts its POS data and annual report on its website. A link to the POS data and POS annual report for each regional center can also be found on page 56 of the Guidelines in enclosure B and online at: www.dds.ca.gov/rc/POSDData.cfm.

6. Is there a maximum approval amount (cap) for each proposed project?

No. The Department of Developmental Services (Department) will review proposals based on the -review process, which begins on page 8 of the Guidelines. During the review process, the proposed budget is evaluated to ensure that expenses are allowable and not prohibited by laws, regulations, or disparity funds program requirements. The budget is also evaluated to ensure that costs

are reasonable for project activities, related to the project goal, and that expenditures will be adequately documented.

7. Are proposals approved in previous years available for review?

Proposals approved by the Department in fiscal years 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19 are available at:

<http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/disparities.cfm>.

8. Who should I contact at the Department regarding other questions?

Send inquiries to disparityfundsprogram@dds.ca.gov. The Department can respond to general questions regarding the guidelines and proposal submittal but cannot give advice on your proposal since this is a competitive process.

B. Grant Requirements and Proposal Development

The following questions are alphabetized by category.

Budget/Financial

1. If I am using a subcontractor, where do I include them on the project budget worksheet and budget narrative?

A subcontractor, including an FMS, should be included under the operating expenses since the subcontractor is not an employee of the organization.

2. Do I need a budget sheet and budget narrative for each subcontractor?

Yes, you need to include a budget sheet for each subcontractor and have each subcontractor sign the proposal certification.

3. What kinds of expenses do I include under operating expenses?

Operating expenses are costs incurred as a result of activities performed as a service to the target population. Examples of operating expenses can be found in Enclosure A of the FY 19/20 Guidelines.

4. What is a direct cost?

A direct cost (personnel and operating expenses) can be identifiable with only one project or program.

5. What is an administrative/indirect cost?

Administrative expenses/indirect costs are organization-wide, general management costs (i.e., activities for the direction and control of the organization as a whole) that benefit more than one program/project. Indirect costs are costs that are not identifiable or incurred for the benefit of one project.

6. What is an allowable expense?

Allowable expenses are expenses that are not prohibited under state laws, regulations, or disparity grant program requirements; reasonable costs for project activities; related to the goal of the project; and be adequately documented.

7. Which expenses are not allowed?

A list of non-allowable expenses can be found in the Guidelines on page 51.

Catchment Area

8. What if a CBO proposes to serve more than one regional center?

The project must specify all regional center(s) that will be served in its catchment area. In addition, list all cities, and counties that your project proposes to serve. If the project proposes to serve the City of Los Angeles, include the zip codes that will be served.

Community Input

9. How do I collect community input for my proposal?

Community input can include but not be limited to meetings with the regional center or other stakeholders, and/or focus groups with the proposed target population.

10. Can a project have multiple activities to achieve the project goal(s)?

Yes, projects may consist of more than one activity. In developing your projects, please be mindful of how proposed activities are necessary to meet you projects' goal(s).

Grant Reapplication

11. How do I know if I should complete the grant reapplication section?

Complete the grant reapplication section if you are proposing to continue a previously awarded project without changes to the target population, geographic area, activities, goals or objectives; **OR** if you are proposing to expand a previously awarded project into other target populations, geographic areas, activities, goals or objectives.

12. What if my current project ends in December 2019, can I still submit a grant reapplication?

Yes, the Department anticipates to execute grant agreements by March 1, 2020, which is also the anticipated start date for projects.

13. What if I should have completed the grant reapplication section but didn't?

Failure to complete Section II when applicable may lead to your proposal for 2019/20 funding being removed from further funding consideration.

14. If I completed Section II (Grant Reapplication), how does that information differ from Section III (Proposal Summary)?

In Section II, you provide fiscal and project information for your previously awarded project, including project impacts and

outcomes. In Section III, you provide project information for your proposed future project.

POS Data

15. Where can I find POS data for the regional center(s) in my proposed catchment area?

Links to the regional center POS data can be found in Enclosure B of the FY 19/20 Guidelines.

16. Where do I find the regional center POS reports that include recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce disparities?

Links to the regional center POS Annual Reports can be found in Enclosure B of the FY 19/20 Guidelines.

Project Duration

17. Can projects have a duration of up to three years?

The Department encourages projects with a duration of up to twelve (12) months; however, projects with a term beyond twelve (12) months may be funded if necessary to achieve project goal and activities.

18. Do I need to submit a proposal for each catchment area that I want to serve?

It depends. If the same project proposes to serve multiple regional centers, then you only need to submit one proposal. If you are proposing multiple projects, then each project will need a separate proposal.

19. What date should I list as the project start date?

The Department anticipates to execute grant agreements by March 1, 2020, which is also the anticipated start date for projects.

Project Type and Target Population

20. How do I determine the project type and target population for my project?

All proposals must link to an identified issue or barrier in the local community or statewide, which has been identified through POS data, stakeholder feedback, and/or the regional center plans and recommendations to promote equity and reduce disparities, which are a component of the regional center POS annual report. Links to

the regional center POS data and POS annual reports can be found in Enclosure B of the FY 19/20 Guidelines.

21. Is the target population limited to current regional center consumers and their families?

No, the target population does not need to currently be regional center consumers; however, the proposal must indicate how the target population is underserved using POS data or other supporting evidence, and how the project will address the identified disparity.

22. For the Project Type, what do I do if the project will have more than one project type, such as outreach, and parent education?

The application allows up to three project type selections. If your project will have more than one project type, you will determine which is the primary project type based on the project goal(s) and activities, and check the primary box for that project type. Then, check the secondary box in the next column for the second project type. If needed, check the tertiary box in the next column for the third project type. In the target population, the proposed number impacted will be for the primary project type only.

Proposal Certification

23. Who needs to sign the proposal certification page?

The organization's authorized representative certifies the truth and accuracy of the proposal by signing the certification. If you have subcontracting organizations, each of them should sign as well.

C. Submission

1. What is considered a complete proposal?

Please refer to the FY 2019/20 Guidelines “Proposal Submittal Instructions” section for a list and description of a complete proposal package.

2. When are project proposals due for the Fiscal Year 2019/20 Disparity Funds Program?

Proposals must be received by the Department by 5:00 p.m. PST on September 30, 2019. Guidelines and related materials are located at <http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/disparities.cfm>.

3. Can I revise my proposal after I've submitted it?

No; however, the Department may request additional information regarding the original submission.

4. How will I know that my proposal was received?

The Department will provide a confirmation receipt by email to the contact person identified in the proposal. If you have not received an acknowledgement within two (2) business days after submission of your proposal, please send an email to:

disparityfundsprogram@dds.ca.gov

5. What supporting documentation is required?

Supporting documentation includes a list of the organization's board members, letters of support for collaborative/shared projects, and letters of support from each regional center that will be sharing data.

6. Are CBOs required to submit a copy of the proposal(s) to the regional center?

Yes. CBOs must submit proposals to the local regional center where the organization is located and to the Department concurrently. Regional centers are required to provide the Department with input regarding CBO proposals prior to the Department making a final determination.

7. Why are CBOs required to submit project proposals concurrently to the regional center and to the Department?

This is a requirement set forth in Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4519.5(h)(3).

8. How do I find out to which regional center I should submit my proposal?

Proposals should be submitted to the regional center serving the geographic area(s) corresponding to the community the project intends to serve. There are 21 regional centers throughout California.

To access the regional center directory, please visit:

<http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/RCList.cfm>.

For the Los Angeles area, a zip code directory is also available:

<http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/regionMap.cfm?view=laCounty>

9. How do CBOs submit proposals to regional centers?

Proposals can be submitted to regional centers by email or by postal mail.

10. How do CBOs provide proof that a copy of the proposal was sent to regional centers?

The Department will reach out to regional centers regarding all received proposals. CBOs can also copy the Department (disparityfundsprogram@dds.ca.gov) via email, when sending the proposal to a regional center.

11. Some regional centers have a spam filter setting, which may not allow certain emails to be received. How can I ensure that regional centers has received my proposal?

The CBO should follow up with the appropriate RC to ensure that the proposal has been received.

12. If a CBO is proposing a statewide project, does the proposal need to go to all regional centers?

Yes.

13. If I submit a proposal in collaboration with other CBOs, am I required to provide letter(s) of support from these CBOs?

Yes.

D. Review and Notification

1. What does the review process consist of?

The Department will use a merit-based review process so that each proposal receives a fair, equitable, and objective review. Please refer to the FY 19/20 Guidelines “Proposal Review Process” section for a description of the review process.

2. Are there criteria for evaluating proposals?

Yes. The Department will review proposals using the scoring guide provided in the Guidelines for Applicants. Please refer to the FY 2019/20 Guidelines “Scoring Guide” (Attachment E) for more information.

3. How will I know if the Department has approved or denied my proposal?

The Department will send a formal written notice to all applicants regarding whether a proposal has been approved or denied.

4. How will the Department receive input from the regional centers?

The Department will reach out to the appropriate regional center(s) and request feedback.