Application Report

Applicant Organization:	Aveanna Healthcare Support Services
Project Name:	Remote Workforce Development & Technical Assistance Pilot
Application ID:	App-22-615
Funding Announcement:	FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount:	$350,000

Project Summary: Aveanna would like to launch a remote work pilot for eight (8) ethnically diverse and bilingual team members with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). We would focus on the current top three (3) threshold languages of Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese for the most impact. Although some RC providers strive to employee people with I/DD, there is still a large gap between those who seek gainful employment and job vacancy in the market. Employment rates for those with I/DD are substantially below those without I/DD. We are seeking to further prove the benefit of full-time employment of those with I/DD and establish a model that can be replicated by others throughout the state. Upon completion of this pilot, Aveanna will produce an in-depth case study examining a multi-faceted understanding of best practices and benefits of such a program. The parameters of our pilot will include remote work within the team members' own communities. As heard in community conversations, barriers exist within the I/DD population that prevent access to gainful employment environments. Our goal is to allow these team members to work in an inclusive environment within their own communities. Secondly, as we are still in a pandemic, the project will maintain the safety and health of our at-risk population. In addition, we will offer adjustable schedules to fit the needs of our I/DD team members as well as provide the technology necessary to succeed. Those employed through this program will receive all the benefits of every full-time employed Aveanna team member including, healthcare benefits, paid-time-off, and 401K; in addition to transferable vocational training involving email correspondence, external and interoffice communications, Microsoft office, and presentation skills. Aveanna will also focus on strengthening these team member's advocacy skills, customer service, and community training skills. This will include teaching their communities about services available, such as FMS for SDP and navigating the regional center system.

Authorized Certifying Official: Victor Lira   victor.lira@aveanna.com   949-484-4901

Project Director/Manager: Joseph Hernandez   joseph.hernandez@aveanna.com   (714) 468-1020

Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

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1. Applicant Question: Project Title

What is the Project Title?

Applicant Response:

Remote Workforce Development & Technical Assistance Pilot

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2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

$350,000

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3. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

Applicant Response:

Community Based Organization, non-501(c)(3) EIN

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4. Applicant Question: Description of Organization/Group

Provide a brief description of the organization or group. Explain what experience your organization has managing a project similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that project. You may upload your brochure or add a website link.

Applicant Response:

At Aveanna Healthcare Support Services, we work with all 21 of California's Regional Centers to provide Employer of Record, Respite, Personal Assistance, Daycare, and Financial Management Services (FMS). We are a proven and trusted partner of the I/DD community continuing our tradition of exceptional service, one person and one family at a time.

Aveanna has managed many similar initiatives including internal diverse workforce development and person-centered planning and thinking training. The success of these initiatives can be seen in our current multi-ethnic and multilingual staff (Latinx, Asian, LGBTQ+, BIPOC, I/DD, culturally and linguistically - Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese).

Aveanna remains closely aligned with California's I/DD communities and brings significant investments in technology, the stability of a healthcare leader, and an innovative and personal approach to all services. See attached list of our I/DD community impact. Visit our website: www.aveannasupportservices.com.

Attachment:
Aveanna Healthcare Support Services.pdf - PDF FILE
Aveanna Community Impact.docx - WORD DOCUMENT

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5. Applicant Question: Applicant in Good Standing

Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration? Please upload confirmation letter(s) or proof of good standing.

Applicant Response:

Yes

Attachment:
Orange Co Seal Beach DBA 06142019.pdf - PDF FILE
Certificate of Status_1665517089698.pdf - PDF FILE

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6. Applicant Question: Subcontractors in Good Standing

Are the applicant's subcontractors in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board,

and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Section Name: Grant Reapplication Information

Sub Section Name: Grant Reapplications Only

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1. Applicant Question: Previous Award(s)

Did your organization receive DDS grant funding in fiscal year 2020-21 or 2021-22? If yes, go to question 2 to complete each column. If no, skip this category and go to category 3.

Applicant Response:

No

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2. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Award(s)

Since fiscal year 2020, complete a row for each DDS Service Access and Equity grant your organization was awarded funding.

Applicant Response:

Year Awarded	Project Title	Grant Number	Award Amount
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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3. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Outcomes

Provide a brief grant summary of your project outcomes for fiscal year 2020-21 and/or 2021-22.

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:
Not Applicable

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4. Applicant Question: Project Transition

If awarded, how will your current project(s) transition into the 2022-23 proposed project? Does your proposed project expand or continue your current project, if so how? What activities, measures, or target groups are being added? Provide a summary of the differences and reasons why you are proposing the change.

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

Section Name: General Application

Sub Section Name: Proposal Summary

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1. Applicant Question: Project Type

Choose the project type that best describes your activities from the list below:

Applicant Response:

Workforce Capacity and Development

Applicant Comment:

Aveanna would like to launch a remote work pilot for eight (8) ethnically diverse and bilingual team members with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). We would focus on the current top three (3) threshold languages of Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese for the most impact. Although some RC providers strive to employee people with I/DD, there is still a large gap between those who seek gainful employment and job vacancy in the market. Employment rates for those with I/DD are substantially below those without I/DD.

We are seeking to further prove the benefit of full-time employment of those with I/DD and establish a model that can be replicated by others throughout the state. Upon completion of this pilot, Aveanna will produce an in-depth case study examining a multi-faceted understanding of best practices and benefits of such a program.

The parameters of our pilot will include remote work within the team members' own communities. As heard in community conversations, barriers exist within the I/DD population that prevent access to gainful employment environments. Our goal is to allow these team members to work in an inclusive environment within their own communities. Secondly, as we are still in a pandemic, the project will maintain the safety and health of our at-risk population. In addition, we will offer adjustable schedules to fit the needs of our I/DD team members as well as provide the technology necessary to succeed.

Those employed through this program will receive all the benefits of every full-time employed Aveanna team member including, healthcare benefits, paid-time-off, and 401K; in addition to transferable vocational training involving email correspondence, external and interoffice communications, Microsoft office, and presentation skills. Aveanna will also focus on strengthening these team member's advocacy skills, customer service, and community training skills. This will include teaching their communities about services available, such as FMS for SDP and navigating the regional center system.

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2. Applicant Question: Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

Applicant Response:

12 months

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3. Applicant Question: Regional Centers

Choose the Regional Center(s) that your project will serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, select the All Regional Centers/Statewide option.

Applicant Response:
- Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
- San Andreas Regional Center

4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

List the county or counties your project proposes to serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, the select All Counties / Statewide option.

Applicant Response:
- San Benito County
- Santa Clara County
- Santa Cruz County
- Monterey County
- Los Angeles County

5. Applicant Question: Community Based Organizations

Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organizations? If so, provide the name of the organization and how you will be working together.

Applicant Response:

Yes. We will work with the Employment Specialist and Cultural Specialist at ELARC and SARC to ensure that proper placement can be found, and we are furthering the employment strategy within each of their regions. We will also work with our regional center partners to target vendored supported employment providers who may have eligible candidates for this pilot project. Aveanna will explore, under the guidance of the regional centers, collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation as needed.

6. Applicant Question: Multiple Organizations

Does your project include partnership with one or more organizations either as a co-applicant or subcontractor? If "yes", please upload a letter of support from each organization, that includes an explanation of their role in the partnership.

Applicant Response:

No

7. Applicant Question: Strategies and Sustainability

How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?

Applicant Response:

Aveanna is committed to improving employment opportunities for those in the I/DD population. As a measure of good faith, we will invest in the necessary equipment needed to run this pilot successfully, such as computers, monitors, docking stations, and headsets. After a 12-month pilot period, Aveanna will have collected substantial data demonstrating the effectiveness and production of our I/DD teammates. Once demonstrated, Aveanna is committed to providing continued financial support from internal budgets to fund these positions in the future, reinforcing the program's return on investment.

Sub Section Name: Target Population

1. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Groups Served

Select the ethnicity group(s) the project will serve. For "Indian", "Pacific Islander", "Slavic" or "Other" use comment section to list specific groups.

Applicant Response:

- Hispanic
- Vietnamese
- Chinese

2. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Group(s), Language(s) and Number of Individuals Served

For each ethnicity group, provide the number of individuals your project intends to serve and the related language(s).

Applicant Response:

Ethnicity Group(s)	Individuals Served	Language(s)
Hispanic	5	Spanish
Vietnamese	2	Vietnamese
Chinese	1	Chinese

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

- 22 and older

Applicant Comment:

Aveanna will work with its partners to find the right mix of candidates for these roles and is aware that depending on the applicant pool these parameters may need to be adjusted.

Section Name: Project Application

Sub Section Name: Project Application

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1. Applicant Question: Project Summary and Organizational Experience

Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population and how your organization will work with the local RC(s).

Applicant Response:

The purpose of this program is to increase the current I/DD workforce by creating new positions tailored for those of the population who are bilingual in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese. These remote positions will be full-time and paid a gainful wage to further promote independence and financial stability.

The goals of this project are:
- Create a remote coordinator model for bilingual individuals with I/DD.
- Establish trainings and skills necessary for those with I/DD to impact their own communities.
- Reinforce sustainability and fiscal feasibility of project that can be duplicated by other agencies and organizations.

Target Population

Tier 1: Eight (8) bilingual individuals with I/DD. The targeted languages are Spanish (5), Vietnamese (2), and Chinese (1). The targeted ethnicities are Hispanic (5) and Asian (3). This designation is informed by DDS' threshold languages and ethnicity data published here. Dependent upon the applicant pool these parameters may need to be adjusted.

Tier 2: Consumers in ELARC and SARC region and potentially statewide who are monolingual Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

Catchment Area: Los Angeles, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties with the potential to reach statewide.

Strategies

Phase I: Pilot Team Member Recruitment and Training
- Aveanna will partner with regional centers and vendored supported employment providers to interview and recruit bilingual I/DD individuals into full-time remote positions. During the onboarding process, pilot hires will be oriented (phone, email, Microsoft Office, regional center services, and interoffice platform skills) and trained to provide technical assistance to populations who speak their language (Spanish, Vietnamese, or Chinese).

Phase II: Technical Assistance and Ongoing Training
- Pilot hires will implement technical assistance while ongoing professional and personal development trainings are

administered (presentation, outreach, and training skills).

Phase III: Community Outreach and External Training
- Pilot hires will attend inservices and events to train and educate on regional center services and navigating the regional center system.

Staff involved will include:
- Eight (8) pilot full-time hires (bilingual individuals with I/DD).
- Two (2) internal leaders overseeing and assisting pilot team members in their training, objectives, and goal achievement.

This project will benefit the I/DD community by employing eight (8) ethnically diverse and bilingual individuals with I/DD full-time. These pilot team members will be trained to educate their communities on regional center services and navigating the regional center system. Aveanna serves over 20,000 I/DD individuals and families with diverse backgrounds. Aveanna will continue to work with ELARC and SARC on this pilot project, specifically with the Cultural and Employment Specialists to ensure success. Upon success, Aveanna will continue to expand and recruit among the I/DD population.

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2. Applicant Question: Data and Community Input

Explain why you have selected your priority population(s) using RC POS data and other data as supporting evidence of the disparity or inequity. Include how your organization used input from the community, target population, and RC to design the proposal.

Applicant Response:

In 2020, ELARC reported that 15.6% of their consumers were receiving a wage. SARC, reported that 17.2% of consumers were receiving a wage. In 2021, the US Department of Labor (see attached report) reported that 63.7% of persons without a disability were employed, a vast gap in the employment rates of those with and without disabilities. The report went on to say that "Across all age groups, persons with disabilities were much less likely to be employed than those with no disabilities". The jobless rate of Hispanics with disabilities was higher than that of disabled Whites, and jobless "rates for Whites, Asians, and Hispanics decreased from 2020 to 2021, while the rate for Blacks showed little change.".

"Wage" was defined as any earnings through part-time, full-time, or contracted employment. In 2020, ELARC reported an average monthly wage for consumers at $953. SARC reported its average monthly wage at $967. These calculate to annual average wages of $11,436 (ELARC) and $11,604 (SARC). According to the CA Department of Public Health's 2022 Federal Poverty Guidelines found here this puts both regions below the federal poverty level of $13,590 annually. Pilot team members will be paid $41,600 annually.

Aveanna seeks to increase employment rates and offer gainful employment. Narratives from the Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese speaking I/DD populations reinforce the need of the I/DD population for job development that addresses their own linguistic needs.

See attached RC input.

Attachment:

Bureau of Labor Statistics 2021.pdf - PDF FILE
RC Input.docx - WORD DOCUMENT

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3. Applicant Question: Uniqueness

How is the proposed project unique from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed RC catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?

Applicant Response:

The Remote Workforce Development & Technical Assistance Pilot Project is unique because it directly employs members of the bilingual I/DD population instead of preparing them to join the workforce by teaching job search, interview, and employment skills. Aveanna is seeking to provide remote professional development and hands on experience working full-time at a gainful wage.

These pilot team members will learn firsthand the necessary skill sets to adequately use cloud- based phones, email, Microsoft Office, and interoffice platform skills. In addition, ongoing training will be provided on regional center services, community advocacy, presenting to a group, outreach, and training skills.

It is believed that the acquired hands-on knowledge will be transferable to multiple job opportunities and increase each team member's autonomy and financial self-sufficiency.

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4. Applicant Question: Improve Equity and Service Access

How will your project measurably improve equity, access, and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?

Applicant Response:

First, this project will allow eight (8) bilingual I/DD individuals to gain the experience needed to be competitive in today's job market. Second, these pilot team members will be trained on promoting RC services among their communities to increase awareness, understanding, and access to services (especially SDP and FMS services). Internal trainings will include presentation, advocacy, and networking skills with a strong emphasis on navigating RC systems.

This project will enable community inclusion across the service delivery system. It will support individuals in accessing the services they need and meaningfully participate in their community through the active outreach, training, and technical assistance of those of the Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese speaking population on RC services and systems.

These activities address various grant priorities such as:
- Expanding inclusive employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Increasing culturally and linguistically responsive service provider workforce.
- Developing culturally and linguistically competent resources and educational opportunities for self-advocates, aging caregivers and new parents.

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5. Applicant Question: Support of RC Plan

Does the project support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How

will your project collaborate with other organizations to promote community inclusion?

Applicant Response:

Both ELARC and SARC have long standing strategies focused on the employment of those with I/DD from diverse backgrounds. These strategies are directly linked to each Regional Center's Performance Contract. (see attached 2022 Performance Contracts)

One of ELARC's tactics is that the "ELARC Employment Specialist will increase employment resources through discussion with service provider community to expand employment exploration for individuals with developmental disabilities at local private, county and state agencies to improve employment rates within the catchment area." Aveanna is one such provider that is providing job placements for the targeted population.

Similarly, SARC states that it plans to "Partner with local businesses and corporations to increase the number of paid integrated work opportunities available" and "increase the number of individuals earning income by tracking the number of individuals with earned income, their annual wages, and their earnings compared to the statewide average for people with developmental disabilities". Aveanna seeks to provide eight (8) full-time positions at a gainful wage and can provide data once the pilot is completed.

This project will help to highlight the sustainability and effectiveness of an I/DD bilingual workforce among all vendors of the RCs. Aveanna will work with ELARC and SARC vendored supported employment providers on continued community feedback to ensure that a holistic approach is executed throughout the project

Attachment:

2022- ELARC Final Performance Contract.pdf - PDF FILE
2022-SARC Proposed Outcomes and Measures.pdf - PDF FILE

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6. Applicant Question: Project Activities and Measures

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Activities Template located in the middle tab directly above.

The schedule of activities clearly and specifically demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated objective and measures. Do the proposed measures appropriately track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of project, and demonstrate impact on the target population?

Applicant Response:

Project Objective: Create a remote employment model for bilingual individuals with I/DD.

Grant Activities and Measures
1) Pilot Team Member Recruitment
      Measure 1) Hire pilot team members. (Milestone)
Aveanna will work with RC partners and vendored providers to recruit bilingual I/DD individuals into full-time remote positions. This milestone will take place from January 1, 2023- February 28, 2023. It will be completed when eight (8) bilingual individuals with I/DD pilot team members have been recruited.
2) Pilot Team Member Training
        Measure 1) Pilot team member internal training. (Milestone)
During the onboarding process, pilot team members will be oriented (phone, email, Microsoft Office, regional center services, and interoffice platform skills) and trained to provide technical assistance to populations who speak their language (Spanish, Vietnamese, or Chinese). Aveanna will implement a pilot team member initial assessment survey as an initial data point for impact of the program. This milestone will take place from March 1, 2023 – March 31, 2023. It will be completed when all necessary internal training has been completed.
3) Technical Assistance and Ongoing Training
        Measure 1) Number of Technical Assistance calls. (25000)
        Measure 2) Ongoing vocational and education training. (Milestone)
Pilot team members will begin to offer technical assistance to Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese speaking population via phone. Our performance measure will be the number of calls assisted with a goal of 25,000 in total from April 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023. Pilot team members will be trained to participate in and conduct inservices and events to educate on regional center services with a focus on SDP FMS services and navigating the regional center system. This milestone will take place from April 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023. It will be deemed complete when all pilot team members have participated in a RC event or participated in or conducted an inservices for a RC or CBO.

4) Community Outreach and External Training
        Measure 1) Number of community events attended. (8)
        Measure 2) Number of Educational inservices provided. (8)
        Measure 3) Number of people attending educational inservices. (400)
Pilot team members will attend community events to educate the community on RC services and navigating the RC system. Our performance measure will be the number of events attended with a goal of (8) from May 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023. In addition, pilot team members will provide inservices in the community to educate the community on RC services and navigating the RC system. Our performance measure will be the number of inservices provided with a goal of (8) and the number of people educated with a goal of (400) from May 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023.

Upon completion of the pilot, Aveanna will implement a closing pilot team member assessment survey to be compared against the initial assessment survey to reinforce impact of the program.

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7. Applicant Question: Budget Template and Narrative

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above.

The project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and outcomes. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the activities and does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.

- Budget Template example is located at Attachment C.
- Budget Details and Restrictions are available here.

Applicant Response:

Personnel

Wages

Total wages for pilot team members is calculated at $20 an hour at 40 hours a week for 52 weeks. This comes to a total of $332,800 annually.

Benefits

Benefits are calculated with an employer burden rate of 20%. Total wages for pilot team members is calculated at $20 an hour at 40 hours a week for 52 weeks. This comes to a total of $332,800 annually. Total employer burden for all 8 pilot team members is $66,560 annually.

Operating Costs

Transportation

8 inservices and 8 events are noted in the project's activities. Each activity will include 2 pilot team members. Roundtrip transportation will be budgeted at $50. Total roundtrips needed is 32 at a total rate of $1600 annually.

Operating Costs

Operating costs will be capped at $500 per month for all 8 pilot team members. This will include the costs for software, phone service, overhead, internet, and other operating needs. Total operating costs are calculated at $6,000 annually.

Administrative Costs

Administrative costs for leaders to train all new pilot team members is calculated as follows. Workday New Hire Training at 3 hours each, Company and Systems Orientation at 8 hours each, Aveanna Services and Supports Training at 3 hours each, Software Training at 8 hours each, and 2 hours of ongoing training and coaching a week each. Total hours of training is 126 per pilot team member. Total hours for all team members is 1008. Aveanna Operations Managers will administer pilot team member training. Operations Managers are paid at $36.06 an hour for an hourly wage cost of training at $36,346.15. Employer burden is calculated at 20% for a total of $7,269.23 and a total cost of trainings of $43,615.38 annually.

Section Name: Proposal Certification

Sub Section Name: Certification

1. Applicant Question: Confirm Proposal Discussion with RC(s)

CBOs are required to discuss their proposal with each RC(s) the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with each RC you are intending to serve?

Applicant Response:

Yes

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2. Applicant Question: RC Contact

CBOs are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) catchment the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, state the name(s) of the contact person(s) at each RC you have emailed your proposal application. The RC contact list is available here at Attachment F.

Applicant Response:

SARC
- Cultural Specialist
    - Minerva Valdez- mvaldez@sarc.org
- Employment Specialist
    - Katherine Sanders- ksanders@sarc.org

ELARC
- Cultural Specialist
    - Adriana Roman- aroman@elarc.org
- Employment Specialist
    - George De La Loza- gdelaloza@elarc.org

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3. Applicant Question: Code of Conduct

Grantee Code of Conduct

The Department is committed to supporting services and programs with integrity that foster collaboration and professionalism. Grantees are expected to conduct project activities in a professional and respectful manner that include:

- **Valuing Diversity and Inclusion**. Grantees should embrace diversity that includes but is not limited to: ability, race, language, national origin, citizenship, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and religion.

- **Conducting Activities with Personal and Professional Integrity**. All activities with individuals, families, community organizations, regional centers, and state, local and federal agencies should be conducted with professionalism, dignity, respect, and fairness. Grantees should be open to listening to different points of view and fostering productive communication.
- **Providing a Positive Work Environment**: All projects should foster a positive and respectful work environment with their colleagues and other grantees.

Applicant Response:

- I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Code of Conduct.

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4. Applicant Question: Applicant Certification

By submitting this application, the Applicant is certifying the truth and accuracy of the proposal. The applicant also certifies that if you have subcontracting organizations, each participating organization has reviewed your project and agrees to their assigned activities, measures, and the budget.

Applicant Response:

Yes