



COOK COUNTY JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Domestic Violence Intervention & Support Services Initiative



Funding Opportunity Questions & Answers *October 19, 2022*

This resource has been prepared by the Cook County Justice Advisory Council (JAC) to provide answers to questions posed about the 2022 Domestic Violence Intervention and Support Services funding opportunity. Questions have been consolidated and adapted for clarity, and questions pertaining to specific organizations are not included. Questions and answers will be made available to the public on the [JAC website](#) on October 19, 2022. Following this date, additional questions and answers may be added to the document but are not guaranteed. If you have a question that is not covered by the Request for Qualifications ([RFQ](#)) or this document, you may email JAC.Info@cookcountyil.gov. Please note that we are unable to answer some agency-specific questions.

Questions are grouped under the following categories:

- Eligibility
- Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Application Process
- Budgets and Financial Compliance
- Partnerships
- Next Steps and Contracting

Eligibility

Which type of organization is the right fit for this funding opportunity?

For this particular RFQ, we are focusing on services for survivors and those impacted by domestic violence. For the majority of the service categories under this funding opportunity, it will be important for the service provider to have a significant level of expertise serving those populations. This level of understanding and expertise will ensure the unique needs of the population are met and that best practices are followed at all levels of service coordination.

In response to the RFQ, your organization should prove it has an adequate level of understanding of the needs of these populations and ideally, have a track record of delivering services following best practices.

Victims of violent crime of all kinds have a lot in common. However, victims of domestic violence have some unique and needs and require special considerations. We are looking for organizations that understand those needs and have experience successfully supporting members of these populations.



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Is this RFQ limited to Domestic Violence only and specifically, or would other types of Gender Based Violence be allowable? (Ex. services for survivors of sexual assault and sex trafficking outside an intimate partner relationship.) Does there have to be a specific DV focus?

The JAC is interpreting domestic violence broadly to include gender-based violence. However, we anticipate many services to be targeted at intimate-partner or domestic relationships, specifically in cases where emergency re-housing and orders of protection may be necessary. Organizations that specialize in Gender Based Violence advocacy and services are encouraged to apply, as the RFQ's service categories are also applicable to that population, particularly counseling services.

For this funding opportunity, what does my organization need to demonstrate?

The key aspects the JAC will be looking for with this RFQ are:

- Information that demonstrates your organization is capable and has a track record of successfully providing supportive services to specific populations. Some examples are:
 - Detailed descriptions of the services you provided (ensuring they are under the eligible service area categories)
 - Length of time you provided the service
 - Data is (how many people you served, outcomes) is also helpful
- Information that demonstrates your organization has experience and expertise in successfully serving the specific populations of survivors and those impacted by of domestic violence.

Are organizations that have already been awarded ARPA funds eligible to respond to this RFQ to pursue this funding opportunity?

Yes.

Can a police department that has a nonprofit arm apply?

Yes, as long as the organization is a 501c3 or 501c4.

Will an organization that is focused solely on working to rehabilitate individuals who have harmed an intimate partner be eligible?

Yes, though the services provided would need to be those identified under one or more of the four main services areas identified in the RFQ.



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Can housing support include rental assistance to survivors?

It may. We would encourage such providers to apply.

Can housing support be for those accused to have caused harm?

The service category of housing supports will be limited to survivors and victims.

Could an organization that has historically focused on sex trafficking recovery be considered? There is overlap with DV.

Yes, if the applicant is able to show experience in providing services to victims of domestic violence.

Are organization that provide advocacy and support services to children and youth eligible to apply for funding?

Yes, so long as those services relate to one or more of the four service categories related to domestic violence detailed in the RFQ.

Are Partner Abuse Intervention Programs eligible?

Yes.

Will it have an impact on our application if we have no prior experience working with LGBTQ+ or disabled individuals?

A particular organization does not need to have experience with every population, but, amongst all contracted providers, the JAC will be aiming to serve all possible clients. In summary, a lack of experience serving disabled or LGBTQ+ populations does not preclude your organization from getting a contract, but it may make it less competitive depending on the rest of the applicant pool.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Application Process

How does the RFQ process work and how is it different from a grant?

The JAC and Cook County partners are currently developing a larger initiative, designed to provide responsive intervention and support services to survivors and those impacted by domestic violence.



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The purpose of the RFQ is form a list or pool of qualified services providers who provide at least one of the 4 types of services the county is planning to fund under this initiative.

In response to the RFQ, organizations are asked to speak to their areas of expertise and the existing services they provide. They are not being asked to design a program with a separate budget as is expected under a grant proposal.

Through reviewing the required RFQ documentation submitted with your application, the JAC will identify the pool of qualified services providers. From that pool, the JAC will contract with individual organizations selected to provide services. The larger DV initiative and the net of services is under development. At this time, it is not confirmed how many organizations we will contract with in each of the services categories.

If we are qualified in multiple areas, should we focus on just one?

Applicants are able to submit responses that include multiple service areas.

When you go to submit our response to the RFQ, can you save work in progress before submitting?

No, the online system does not allow you to save work and return to submit. We recommend working outside of the system to gather all required documents and information before you input your information and upload your documents. We also advise submitting in advance of the deadline to allow time to submit and troubleshoot if needed.

What do I put in for *Proposed Program Geographic Cluster(s) Served (Include # and indicate Chicago or Suburb)?

This RFQ has a county-wide reach. Indicate the specific community areas served, if any, within that section as you see fit. (e.g. list citywide, countywide, main municipalities served, main city neighborhoods served).

Does the demographics table count as one of the 5 pages in the first section of document 1?

Yes, you may format the demographics table as you choose, so it may or may not be a full page, but it will count toward the 5 page total of the first section of document 1.

Are all three of the financial qualifications documents listed in the RFQ required?

Yes, all three financial qualifications documents are required.



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Is document 2 an organizational or a program-specific budget i.e. if we provide DV counseling would you just want a budget for that program area?

Per the RFQ, applicants should provide the organization's current budget, and not a program specific budget.

Do references have to be organizations for whom we did PAID work?

No, references do not have to come from organizations for whom you did paid work. But, if you were paid by the organization providing a reference, please detail the amount of funding you have received from them.

If you already have contracts with Cook County for services listed should you provide that information? Can you use a Cook County contact as a reference?

Yes, if the work supports your experience in providing domestic violence services. Yes, Cook County contacts can be used as a reference, with the exception of staff of the JAC.

Can references be other County agencies?

Yes, with the exception of JAC staff.

Will organizations who applied for JAC gun-violence prevention grants receive feedback on their proposal in advance of this RFQ deadline?

It is possible, but not guaranteed; the timeline for feedback on gun violence prevention applications is being developed now and will be announced soon. The timeline for individualized feedback will be impacted by the volume of requests for feedback.

Will the financial documents submitted need to be based on the federal FY, State FY, or a specific time frame?

Financial documents submitted can be based on your organization's fiscal year.

Is there a fillable template for the demographic table?

You are welcome to copy/paste the demographic table within the RFQ to serve as a template. But, you may also format your answers to the questions posed by the demographic table to accommodate your needs, best reflect your organization's staff and work and meet needs for spacing within the application itself.



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Budgets and Financial Compliance

Will there be limitations on what can be paid for with these funds? For example, must it be used for salary, direct service only, client need supports etc.?

Yes, there will be allowable and unallowable costs. Budget limitations will be discussed during contract negotiations with organizations selected to be funded under the initiative.

Is there an organizational budget restriction for applicants?

No, there is no set limit, upper or lower, for budgets of organizations responding to the RFQ. For this opportunity, the most important aspect of the budget is that it demonstrates the organization is financially sound and capable of providing the services we would be contracting for.

Under this funding opportunity, are staff salaries able to be funded?

Staff salaries can be funded for staff that will be working directly on the program that provides the services contracted for.

If we are making attempts to bring the salaries of our staff up to market, can we use these funds to pay for salary increases?

Funds can be used to cover staff salaries and increases for staff working directly with the program.

What is the maximum amount of funding organization can request?

Under the initial RFQ process, organizations will not request a specific amount of funding. The amount organizations will receive to deliver services will be determined at the time of contracting for services.

Partnerships

Do you accept collaborations between organizations for this opportunity?

Yes.



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Can non-profits employ or contract with private practice counseling organizations or Licensed Counselors for this work?

Yes.

If our organization chooses to collaborate with another organization, are both of our materials and information required to be combined into a single document?

Yes.

Next Steps and Contracting

How will organizations selected from the RFQ process receive funding to provide services?

First, the JAC will review all responses to the RFQ. Organizations which are deemed qualified will be placed on the qualified list. Organizations selected to provide services from the list of qualified vendors will be contacted directly. Organizations will enter a contracting process with the JAC and funding will be received via contractual agreement.

Is this funding expected to last only for two years, or is it expected to be ongoing?

At this time, only two years.

When a contract is opened, will they be competitive with other providers for clients or will clients be assigned to one organization?

The program will be designed in such a way that, in their normal operations, the agencies we contract with will not be competing for the same clients under this program.

Will contracting organizations serve specific people that are referred to us, or are we expected to continue providing services as we currently do, with an expansion as determined by the initiative?

This will vary based on a number of factors, such as which of the service areas under the RFQ are provided for, existing referral pathways, existing connection with stakeholder agencies. Based on these factors, a referral pathway will either be created or service provision will continue as it currently does by the chosen vendor(s).



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What will be the "evaluative criteria" used to determine the selection of organizations for the awarding of contracts for services?

The Evaluation Process and Criteria can be found in Section 8 of the RFQ.

Is this opportunity designed to expand upon services currently offered? Will it require organizations to add new staff/services or is this designed to fund program services that currently exist?

Typically, we will be contracting with agencies to provide services they already to offer to new/more clients. This may require some expansion of staff and capacity to be paid for through the contract and will vary based on the type of service.

How many organizations do you anticipate qualifying? If an organization receives a contract for services, is there a minimum number of clients we can anticipate serving?

We are unable to anticipate the number of qualified organizations/vendors at this time. If a vendor makes the qualified list and is selected to be awarded, the number of clients to be served will be determined during the development of the scope of work.

If selected as a contractor, will we be paid as reimbursements or in advance?

Typically, we pay in advance. Depending on the circumstances of the particular service provision, we may opt for reimbursements in exceptional cases.

What is the average funding amount that an organization can expect?

No average funding amount can be determined at this time. Discussions about scope and funding amounts will take place during the contracting process.

Will this be the only opportunity to apply to be added to the list of providers for these funds, or will there be opportunities in subsequent years?

It is to be determined if the JAC will initiate a future RFQ for this (or a similar) initiative. Since this is an ARPA funded initiative, the JAC is currently planning to operate over the required two-year period. Future opportunities for a qualified domestic violence services provider-list will be determined as we learn from this first opportunity and evaluate available funding.



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Will other Cook County agencies (in addition to the JAC) be involved in the selection of organizations that will receive a contract under this initiative?

Yes.

Will the JAC select only one or multiple providers in each area of service?

While the number of services providers that will be contracted with for each for service category is to be determined, the JAC expects to contract with AT LEAST one, if not multiple, providers within each of the four service categories under this initiative.