



**Texas Opioid Abatement Fund Council
Peer-to-Peer Workforce Enhancement Program Grant**

RFA NO.	O AFC-24-0003	ADDENDUM NO.	1
----------------	---------------	---------------------	---

The purposes of this Addendum are to (1) provide a clarification and (2) answer written questions regarding this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

1. Tables 1 (Budget Summary) and 2 (Itemized Expenses) of the Project Budget spreadsheet in the Grant Management System refer interchangeably to a “de minimis rate” and a “default rate” of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Pursuant to updates of the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS), this indirect cost rate (de minimis rate) has been increased to 15% of MTDC. The de minimis rate is available to applicants pursuant to the provisions of TxGMS (see TxGMS Version 2.0, Page 36, 15 percent de minimis Indirect Cost Rate). See Section IV.B of the NOFA for information regarding administrative costs, including indirect costs, which remains unchanged.
2. Written questions and answers are incorporated herein as Exhibit A of this Addendum.

THIS ADDENDUM SHALL BE ATTACHED TO AND FORM A PART OF THE NOFA AND THE GRANT AGREEMENT. APPLICANT MUST ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THIS ADDENDUM BY SIGNING AND RETURNING THE ADDENDUM WITH ITS APPLICATION.

APPLICANT ENTITY NAME

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE PRINTED
NAME

EXHIBIT A

WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Subcontractors:** Is the prime contractor allowed to name known subgrantees and subcontractors, and leave placeholders for additional subgrantees and subcontractors to be selected post-award? Or, would it be preferable to identify all possible collaborators before submission?

Answer: An applicant must identify any known subgrantees and subcontractors in its application, but it may also select subgrantees and subcontractors following any grant award as needed. See Section III.C.1 of the NOFA for applicable requirements.

2. **Needs Assessment:** RFA states that needs assessment must be completed within six months. The RFA also lists (in section 3.D) approximately 20 expected performance measures—many of which are directly in-line with known industry gaps/needs. Is the expectation that no work is being completed until the assessment is complete? Or, can the selected contractor begin implementing a work plan to immediately start addressing the performance measures identified in Section 3.D, with a plan to refine the work plan based on lessons learned through the needs assessment?

Answer: The needs assessment must be completed by the Grantee and approved by OAFB before any other work is performed. See Sections III.C.2 and 3 of the NOFA.

3. **Supervision:** People often conflate “administrative supervision”, focused on ensuring someone is meeting their job requirements with “service fidelity supervision”, making sure someone is doing work in-line with professional standards. The RFA seems to call for both (more Supervisors across Texas, and more access for Peers to receive supervision). The nuance is important. Is CPA interested in potentially expanding the breadth of supervision (more Supervisors in all settings) and depth of supervision (more high-quality touchpoints for improved mentorship of new Peers)? Or, is there only interest in increasing breadth of supervision (eg, adding more part-time supervisors)?

Answer: Supervision as it relates to this NOFA means supervision needed for peer specialist certification in Texas. Section III.3.C of the NOFA contains guidelines related to Peer Review Specialists and Peer Supervisors regarding creation of a placement system, and applications will be evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria (Section VII.B.2) and requirements set out in the NOFA.

4. **Budget Structure:** Budget limits appear to be \$5M for the first two year term. Does contractor have discretion in how those funds would be allocated over the two years (eg. \$2M in year 1 and \$3M in year 2), or is there an expectation that funds would be approximately \$2.5M per year?

Answer: Yes, applicants may propose how to allocate funds over the initial two-year term, as well as the renewal period, if applicable, subject to the requirement that no more than \$5 million may

be allocated to each two-year period. Applicants are not required to budget \$2.5 million per year. See Section V.B.5 of the NOFA.

5. **Administrative Costs:** Per 4.B.1/2/3, administrative cost limits are 10%, inclusive of all indirect costs. Is it reasonable to assume that Program Managers, working directly on the project and in-line with Texas Grant Management Standards (ie, in ways directly attributable to the project, etc), are considered direct costs?

Answer: Yes, allocable salary and fringe benefits of key personnel, as described, are direct costs.

6. **Proposed Project Work Plan:** Per RFA, Work Plan must address all the grant objectives and include schedules, milestones, and deliverables. Is it reasonable to assume that Contractor will be able to start on the proposed project plan, in order to meet project deliverables, and then update the project plan based on the findings of the needs assessment? Or does Contractor need to create a plan where all work activities begin AFTER the completed needs assessment?

Answer: The needs assessment must be completed by the Grantee and approved by OAFC before any other work is performed. The Grantee must complete the needs assessment within the first six months of the grant term but may propose a shorter time period for that task. See Sections III.C.2 and 3 of the NOFA.

7. **Reserve funds:** RFA lists that applicant qualifications include review to ensure “Applicant has reserve funds sufficient to cover program costs prior reimbursement”. Is CPA looking for a specific amount of funds to be available, or simply to know that organization will have access to necessary funds?

Answer: This program will not advance funds. Grantee must be financially capable of covering all costs prior to reimbursement, which depends in part on projected expenditures. A portion of each applicant’s scoring will be based on this financial capacity criterion as set out in the NOFA.

8. **Funding structure:** Is CPA amenable to providing a payment advance (30 to 60 days of funding) at the beginning of the project?

Answer: No. OAFC will only reimburse Grantee for costs already incurred (and otherwise allowable under the NOFA and grant agreement).

9. **Indirect Rate:** The sample budget sheet lists an indirect “default rate” tied to 10% of salary/wages. Does this include the salaries and wages paid to subcontractors, or is the 10% rate limited to the salaries/wages of prime contractor?

Answer: The indirect costs base for the default rate referenced in the Budget Sheets in the Sample Grant Agreement (Appendix A of the NOFA) is comprised of direct salary and wages of only the Grantee. We note that for parties who qualify for the de minimis rate pursuant to Texas Grant Management Standards, the de minimis rate is 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC is defined in response to Question No. 10, immediately below.

In addition, the Project Budget spreadsheet in the Grant Management System refers to both a “default rate” and a “de minimis rate” of 10% of MTDC, which, as mentioned, has now been increased to 15% of MTDC. See No. 1 on page 1 of this Addendum.

10. **Indirect Rate:** Can CPA please define “modified total direct costs”?

Answer: According to Texas Grant Management Standards 2.0, Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$50,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$50,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of OAF and CPA.

11. The RFA mentioned that a grantee must “perform statewide peer-to-peer workforce enhancement activities”. Are grantees permitted to submit an application for local program or should all applicants have statewide focus?

Answer: Grant activities must be performed on a statewide basis. See Section II.B of the NOFA. Information regarding upcoming grant opportunities for local programs will be posted on the website soon. [See this link to the grant information webpage.](#)

12. Can grant funds be utilized to support salaries employees providing peer support services?

Answer: Grant funds may not be used for peer specialist salaries but may be used to provide support through financial incentives as described in Section III.C.3.b of the NOFA.

13. Are there any unallowable costs?

Answer: Yes. Grant funds may only be used for allowable expenditures as set out in the Grant Agreement and may not be used for costs that will be reimbursed by another funding source. See Section IV.B of the NOFA.

14. Can new activities/deliverables (outside of those currently identified in the RFA) be identified based on the findings of the needs assessment and can these be budgeted or re-budgeted for?

Answer: No. Only activities expressly described in the NOFA are eligible for funding.

15. Approximately what proportion of the award is recommended to be allotted to direct peer payments, such as for tuition reimbursement, sign on bonuses, retention bonuses, etc.?

Answer: Applicants must propose a plan following the NOFA guidelines. That plan is left to the judgment of the applicants and will be evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria and requirements set out in the NOFA.

16. Can the needs assessment include regional collaborations with local health departments and community-based organizations, or is it expected to be conducted solely by the applicant? Are there specific data sources or frameworks the OAFc recommends or requires for the assessment?

Answer: Yes. See Section III.C.2 of the NOFA, which provides: “The plan shall include a method to obtain existing data sources from counties and regional health agencies across the state.”

17. Does the OAFc have any specific eligibility criteria or preferred methodologies for designing the certification assistance program (e.g., income thresholds, prioritization of underserved populations)? Should this program align with existing state certification programs?

Answer: Following completion of the needs assessment, Grantee shall, in consultation with CPA, establish the eligibility criteria and application process, as well as the means to monitor and report on outcomes. See Section III.C.3. of the NOFA.

18. Are there particular types of partnerships (e.g., with educational institutions, employers, or healthcare systems) that the OAFc currently holds and/or views as critical for this program's success?

Answer: No. Applicants may propose partnerships that they consider critical to success and applications will be evaluated based on the criteria set out in Section VII.B.2 of the NOFA.

19. Do the allowable expenditures include funding any portion of newly certified peer-to-peer specialist salaries?

Answer: Grant funds may not be used for peer specialist salaries but may be used to provide support through financial incentives as described in Section III.C.3.b of the NOFA.

20. May the funds be used to pay supervisory costs associated with the specialist obtaining necessary supervisory hours?

Answer: Yes. Funds may be used for supervisory costs as described in Section III.C.3.a of the NOFA.

21. May the funds in this solicitation be used to employ peer-to-peer specialists for the purposes of continuing this service? In addition to increasing the number of individuals who are certified, expanding the number of specialists available to the courts and other entities for use in coaching and supporting individuals who are in recovery from SUD, and/or otherwise involved with DFPS or the courts, could be a huge benefit to the communities of Texas. The ability to pay the salaries of these newly certified peer-to-peer specialists for deployment in these areas can have a tremendous impact on success rates, reduction in recidivism and reunification with children!

Answer: Grant funds may not be used for peer specialist salaries but may be used to provide support through financial incentives as described in Section III.C.3.b of the NOFA.

22. The RFP states that the max of 10% of grant amount, not to exceed 250,000 which includes direct and indirect costs. Please clarify if this is separate from the program costs.

Answer: The maximum available funding amount stated in Section IV.A of the NOFA, or any reduced award amount, is inclusive of any allowable administrative costs (i.e., there is no additional funding available for administrative costs beyond the maximum available funding stated in the NOFA, or any reduced award amount). Administrative costs may not exceed 10% of the grant award. (The NOFA does not state an amount or figure of \$250,000. See Section IV.B.)

23. Would an allowable use of funds be to subsidize partner organizations participating in the provision of services.

Answer: The Grantee may utilize subgrantees or subcontractors to perform work under the project, subject to the requirements described in Section III.C.1 of the NOFA and applicable law. Grant funds may only be used on allowable costs under the NOFA and grant agreement, so costs incurred by a subgrantee or subcontractor are only reimbursable to the extent the subgrantee is performing authorized grant activities under the grant agreement or the subcontractor is providing goods and services needed to carry out the project.

24. I am reaching out to ask if a program area within a state agency such as Health and Human Services Commission, can apply for the following funding opportunity?

Answer: Eligible applicants include political subdivisions of this state, nonprofit 501(c)(3) entities, and any other entity that engages in business in the State of Texas by (a) maintaining employees in the State of Texas, (b) having a fixed place of business in the State of Texas, or (c) providing any service in the State of Texas, whether or not individuals performing the service are residents of the state. See Section III.A of the NOFA. Texas state agencies are eligible to apply for this grant. Applicants should consult legal counsel with additional questions about whether an applicant entity is eligible under these requirements.