



**Administration for Children and Families**

Office of Head Start

Early Head Start Grantee - Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas

HHS-2014-ACF-OHS-CH-R06-0766

Application Due Date: 10/21/2013

Early Head Start Grantee - Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas

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**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families**

**Program Office:** Office of Head Start  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Early Head Start Grantee - Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas  
**Announcement Type:** Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** HHS-2014-ACF-OHS-CH-R06-0766  
**Primary CFDA Number:** 93.600  
**Due Date for Applications:** **10/21/2013**

### Executive Summary

**Notices:**

- On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for discretionary grant applications. Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.

The Head Start program provides high-quality, comprehensive early education programming to low-income children and families so that children start school ready to succeed. In 2007, Congress enacted legislation that required, for the first time in the program's history, greater competition within communities for Head Start funding. The goal of the legislation and the subsequent regulations, which were effective on December 9, 2011, is to ensure that federal Head Start funding is directed to the organizations that are most capable of delivering high-quality early education that puts children on a pathway to improved outcomes, school success, and opportunity.

This funding opportunity announcement is the mechanism for implementing this new competitive requirement as well as competitions that result from grantee relinquishments and terminations. This announcement solicits applications from public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations that seek to provide high-quality Early Head Start services to children and families residing in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas.

Funds in the amount of \$1,338,272 annually will be available to provide Early Head Start program services to eligible infants, toddlers and pregnant women in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas. This dollar amount includes base funding of \$1,303,862 (for use in program operations, staffing, materials, equipment, facilities, etc.) and \$34,410 in technical assistance (T/TA) funding. The appropriate use of T/TA funds for the purposes of improving program quality and helping prepare children to succeed in school are described in Section 645A(g) of the Head Start Act.

The Head Start program is administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an operating division (OPDIV) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). ACF intends

to fund applications that demonstrate an organization's commitment and capacity to operate an Early Head Start program that raises the quality of early care and education in the community and helps children eventually start school ready to succeed. School readiness requires that children are cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally prepared to continue to make progress as they grow and eventually enter preschool and Kindergarten. Effective Early Head Start programs help children develop in each of these areas. ACF is seeking applicants that are able to utilize the best evidence-based early care and education practices and home visiting services, in their programs and provide effective family engagement and health promotion.

Early Head Start is governed by Program Performance Standards that define the scope of services necessary to support children's development. These Program Performance Standards are found in 45 CFR Parts 1301-1310 and in *Section VI.2. Award Administration Information, Administrative and National Policy Requirements* of this funding opportunity announcement.

The evaluation criteria in this funding opportunity announcement are structured into two phases. Phase One is organized around six core elements of an effective Early Head Start program that is focused on school readiness and ongoing academic success. They are as follows:

- (1) Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options;
- (2) Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children;
- (3) Past Performance;
- (4) Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce;
- (5) Organizational Capacity and Governance; and
- (6) Budget and Budget Justification.

Phase Two focuses on an organization's ability to effectively implement and oversee operations that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. ACF is interested in awarding federal funds to entities that can demonstrate strong organizational capacity as supported by their internal fiscal systems.

Eligibility is limited to public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations, or for-profit organizations that can provide Early Head Start services to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women residing in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas.

### **Public Comment**

ACF welcomes public comments from the community listed in this funding opportunity announcement. We are particularly interested in hearing from parents of children presently enrolled in Early Head Start, persons employed by such agencies, local government officials, and other representatives of the community to be served. The intent of the public comment is to inform ACF about the needs of the service area and any pertinent information commenters may wish to provide about potential applicants. Comments should be sent to the OHS Operations Center at [OHS@headstartgrants.org](mailto:OHS@headstartgrants.org).

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

The Head Start program is authorized by the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9831 et seq.

### **Description**

## **Program Background and Purpose**

The Head Start program provides grants to public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to predominately economically disadvantaged children and families. Head Start's primary purpose is to prepare children to be ready for school. In FY 1995, the Early Head Start program was established to serve pregnant women and children from birth to 3 years of age in recognition of the mounting evidence that the earliest years matter a great deal to children's growth and development. Since its beginning in 1965, Head Start has served more than 30 million children and their families. In FY 2012, Head Start served 956,497 children and families; of these, more than 113,000 participants were served in Early Head Start programs. There are approximately 1,600 Head Start grantees, including 950 grantees providing Early Head Start.

Early Head Start programs must provide directly or through referral, early, continuous, intensive and comprehensive child development and family support services that will enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of participating children; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

Given the need for continuity of care for pregnant women, and infant and toddler age children, the Office of Head Start (OHS) expects that applicants will propose serving children in a full-year model with a minimum of 48 weeks. OHS expects that applicants requesting to implement a full-year model will propose per-child costs that will, in most circumstances, be higher than the costs needed to provide part-year services. It is also expected that applicants, based on community and family need, will select program options that best meet the changing needs of families over the time they are in the program.

Programs providing Early Head Start services will:

- Provide high-quality early education services that promote the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language development of young children and families during pregnancy, upon birth, and during the early years;
- Provide services through appropriate program options: center-based, home-based, family child care, combination option, or with the approval of OHS, a locally designed option;
- Assure continuity of services and smooth transitions between program options when the needs of families change, such as when children are enrolled in full-day options with child care subsidies and families lose subsidies due to job loss;
- Assist enrolled pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care, through referrals;
- Provide pregnant women and other family members, as appropriate, with prenatal education on fetal development;
- Provide information on the benefits of breast-feeding to all pregnant and nursing mothers;
- Provide arrangements for nursing mothers who choose to breast-feed in center-based programs;
- Provide services in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner to support the home environment of the child;
- Provide early opportunities for infants and toddlers to grow and develop in warm, nurturing and inclusive environments;
- Recruit, train and supervise high-quality staff to ensure the kind of warm and continuous relationships between caregivers and children that are crucial to learning and development for infants and toddlers;
- Provide professional development plans for each staff member to ensure that each staff person maintains qualifications for his/her position, including meeting all requirements for staff working with infants and toddlers (Head Start Act Sections 645A(h)(1) and (2));
- Ensure that the level of services provided to families responds to their needs and circumstances; including appropriate screening for all children and referral for children with documented behavioral problems;

- Ensure that infants, toddlers, and pregnant women receive health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health screenings, services, as well as follow up evaluation and treatment.
- Ensure that services provided meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families, including procedures to identify such children, and plans to coordinate with programs providing services as described in Section 645A(b)(11) of the Head Start Act.
- Ensure parent involvement in policy and decision making;
- Provide comprehensive health and mental health services for children and pregnant women, including helping the family to identify and access a medical home to assure ongoing care;
- Provide parent education that supports healthy parent and child relationships; including working with fathers;
- Ensure formal linkages with other agencies in the community providing services to pregnant women, infants and toddlers, including local Head Start programs;
- Support transition planning with families that ensures each pregnant woman and child experiences smooth transitions into Early Head Start, and from Early Head Start to Head Start or other preschool programs.

Early Head Start grantees must, unless a waiver is granted, contribute 20 percent of the total cost of the program from non-federal funds. A waiver may be granted for any of the grounds listed in Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act. No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for an Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1301.32).

OHS is responsible for monitoring the quality of Early Head Start program services and the grantee's compliance with federal and other applicable requirements. The federal government uses several mechanisms to conduct its oversight. Most notably, each Early Head Start grantee is subject to onsite monitoring reviews. These reviews can either be announced or unannounced. During onsite visits, all aspects of a grantee's program are reviewed, including compliance with health and safety requirements, compliance with rules related to children's eligibility for the program, and compliance with financial management requirements. New grantees are reviewed at the end of their first year of operation based on the authority in Section 641A(c) of the Head Start Act.

As a condition of acceptance of an award under this funding opportunity announcement, all grantees are required to participate fully in ACF-sponsored evaluations and adhere to all evaluation protocols established by ACF to be carried out by its designee contractors.

### **Eligible Participants**

Early Head Start provides services for predominantly low-income pregnant women and children from birth to three years of age. Families must either be below the poverty line or be eligible for public assistance in order to be income eligible for Early Head Start. In addition, homeless children and children in foster care are categorically eligible for Early Head Start. Children are selected for enrollment based on age and income eligibility and relative level of need with regard to other criteria that are identified within each community (45 CFR § 1305.6).

Head Start regulations permit up to 10 percent of enrolled children and pregnant women to be from families that do not meet these low-income criteria. (NOTE: Please see Section 645(a) of the Head Start Act for a complete discussion of Early Head Start eligibility. It is not expected, however, given the relatively low Early Head Start participation rates, that the provisions of Section 645(a)(1)(B) regarding serving up to an additional 35 percent of a program's enrollment from families with incomes greater than or equal to 100 percent, but less than 130 percent, of the poverty line would apply for this announcement).

Additionally, Head Start programs must ensure that at least 10 percent of the total number of children enrolled by the Head Start agency and delegates are children with disabilities unless a waiver is granted.

Federal Head Start funds must be used to serve eligible children as described above. Additional children

who are not income eligible for Early Head Start can be served so long as their participation is supported through other funding sources including child care subsidies, public school pre-K allocations, parent paid tuition, or other sources. Such program designs may be beneficial in promoting socioeconomic diversity within classrooms. All costs must be allocated to appropriate funding sources in compliance with federal requirements.

### **Early Head Start Grantee: Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas**

ACF solicits applications from public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations that wish to compete for funds that are available to provide Early Head Start services to infants, toddlers and pregnant women residing in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties except the Townships of College Station, Sweet Homes, Higgins, and Wrightsville to Oak Street; City of Little Rock, Pulaski County, except the township of Granite Mountain; and in east Little Rock, the area east of Main Street to include West Broadway North and South; Interstate 30 South, Scott Hamilton Road, Baseline Road, and Geyer Springs Road, Arkansas.

Funds in the amount of \$1,338,272 annually will be available to provide Early Head Start program services to eligible infants, toddlers, and pregnant women in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas. This dollar amount includes base funding of \$1,303,862 (for use in program operations, staff, materials, equipment, facilities, etc.) and \$34,410 in training and technical assistance (T/TA) funding. The appropriate use of T/TA funds for the purposes of improving program quality and supporting children's development are described in Section 645A(g)(2) of the Head Start Act.

Early Head Start regulations allow for a variety of program options and designs. Applicants should propose a design or designs that best address the needs of the proposed service area. Applicants have flexibility in determining the appropriate number of children to be served by the various program options (center-based, home-based, or combination) and program designs (hours per day, days per week, weeks per year).

### **Mortgages and Long-Term Lease Agreements**

If so directed by OHS, the newly funded grantee must accept assignment of any existing mortgages, long-term lease agreements, or security agreements (in the case of a modular unit) on properties subject to a federal interest occupied by the current grantee.

### **Applicant Support Website**

OHS strongly encourages entities interested in applying for this Early Head Start funding opportunity to visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/grants>. This interactive website offers a robust collection of resources intended to support organizations in gaining a deeper understanding of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, the funding opportunity announcement, and evaluation criteria. A profile of current grantee services, equipment, and inventory can also be found through this website. Head Start is a federal program with important regulations that grantees must meet. At the applicant support website, applicants can familiarize themselves with these requirements. Finally, the website includes helpful tips for applying via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). All interested applicants are reminded to frequently refer back to this funding opportunity announcement when preparing their application.

Prospective applicants will also have the opportunity to send questions to OHS by email through the website listed above. A summary of the questions and OHS responses will be posted for public view on the applicant support website as soon as they become available.

Interested applicants may also contact the OHS Operations Center at (866) 796-1591 or TTY: 711 if they have additional questions.

## **II. Award Information**

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Estimated Total Funding:	\$1,338,272
Expected Number of Awards:	1
Award Ceiling:	\$1,338,272 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$1,338,272 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$0 Per Budget Period

**Length of Project Periods:**

60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

**Additional Information on Awards**

**Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.**

**Expected Number of Awards**

Please note that the expected number of awards represents an estimated **range** of awards that OHS might make as the result of this funding opportunity announcement. If the expected number of awards is 1, applicants are expected to submit proposals for the entire service area. If the expected number of awards is 2 or greater, applicants may submit 1 application to apply to serve either the entire service area, or a portion of the service area.

**Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the “Award Ceiling Disqualification.” that is explained in *Section III.3. Other, Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the “Award Ceiling Disqualification” will apply.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-Federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee’s failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of Federal funds.**

The Designation Renewal System (DRS), as established in 45 CFR Part 1307 - Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees, went into effect on December 9, 2011. This regulation requires all Head Start and Early Head Start grants be transitioned from indefinite project periods with 12-month budget periods to 5-year grants (60 months with five 12-month budget periods).

**Start-up/Pre-Award Costs**

In the following, funding provided for the operation of the program is referred to as “base operating funds” or “base funding;” funding provided for training and technical assistance is referred to as “T/TA.” Pre-award costs, including start-up costs, may be requested by an applicant in addition to the base operating and T/TA grant funds. If requested, applicants must provide a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs, in addition to a 12-month budget for the base funding awarded, within the page limitations stated for the Budget and Budget Justification in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application*

*Submission.* If awarded, start-up/pre-award costs would apply to costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date. Examples of start-up activities are facility renovations, purchase of classroom supplies, building purchase, licensing, background checks, etc.

Approval of start-up/pre-award costs is **not** guaranteed; they are negotiated at the time of award and are based on reasonableness, necessity, and the availability of funds. The incurrence of start-up/pre-award costs in anticipation of an award is done at the applicant's own risk and imposes no obligation on ACF either to make an award or to increase the amount of the approved budget if an award is made for less than the amount anticipated and is inadequate to cover the start-up/pre-award costs incurred. It is possible that ACF may honor start-up/pre-award costs by reducing the base amount of the award to include these costs.

**Estimates for start-up/pre-award costs must be separately identified on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.** The start-up/pre-award funding amount must **not** be included in the funding amount listed on Line 18a (Federal) of the SF-424. The funding amount listed in Line 18a of the SF-424 must represent only the total annual federal funding the applicant is requesting for base and T/TA funding. Start-up/pre-award costs, if requested, should be included only on the Other Estimated Funding line (Line 18e) and clearly labeled as "Start-up/Pre-Award Costs" in a separate line item on the SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs. Additionally, if applicants are requesting start-up/pre-award costs, these costs must be easily identified as a separate budget in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" that is explained in *Section II. Award Information* and in *Section III.3. Other, Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.

**Note:** Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered an approved use of pre-award costs and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

### **Grant Awards**

Due to the availability of current year appropriated funds, the successful applicant(s) under this funding opportunity announcement *may* receive grant awards with a 5-year project period (60 months) that include 6 budget periods. In cases where a full 12 months of funding is not available at the time of the grant award, the first and sixth budget periods within the 5-year project period will be pro-rated, so that when combined, they equal 12 months of funding. The second, third, fourth, and fifth budget periods would be a full 12 months.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **III.1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are any public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or for-profit agencies pursuant to the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) and Section 645A(d), 42 U.S.C. § 9840A(d).

Eligibility is limited to public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations in the service area that can provide Early Head Start services to children and families residing in Communities within Pulaski and Garland Counties, Arkansas.

In accordance with 45 CFR § 1307.5, grantees terminated for cause by ACF within 5 years prior to the

posting date of this funding opportunity announcement are ineligible for competition.

A Head Start or Early Head Start agency is ineligible for competition when it has had a "denial of refunding" (45 CFR § 1303.2) within 5 years prior to the posting date of this funding opportunity announcement.

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review the ACF Policy on Grants to Faith-Based Organizations at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf-policy-on-grants-to-faith-based-organizations>.

See "Legal Status of Applicant Entity" in *Section IV.2* for documentation required to support eligibility.

### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with **Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9835 (b)**.

Grantees must provide at least **20** percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (federal) share and the non-federal share. The non-federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting **\$1,338,272.00** in ACF (federal) funds must provide a non-federal share of the approved total project cost of at least **\$334,568.00**, which is **20** percent of total approved project cost of **\$1,672,840.00**.

**Note:** Grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications, even when the projected non-federal commitment exceeds the required amount of matching or cost share. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of federal funds. However, lack of supporting documentation at the time of application submission will not exclude the application from competitive review.

To receive a waiver or a reduction in the required non-federal share, the applicant must provide ACF with written documentation of need. This request must identify which of the five waiver criteria found at Section 640(b)(1-5) of the Head Start Act it believes to be relevant. It may be submitted with the grant proposal document or during the budget negotiation period. Approval of the waiver request cannot be assumed by the applicant without written notice from ACF. Waiver requests will not result in a deduction of points in the evaluation of the application. In light of the current economic climate, ACF will be receptive to reasonable arguments based on the grounds recognized in the statute for such waivers.

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

Non-federal resources will be evaluated under criteria found in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

### III.3. Other

#### DUNS Number and System for Award Management Eligibility Requirements (SAM.gov)

All applicants must have a DUNS number ([www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com)) and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM, [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. Finalize a new, or renew an existing, registration at least two weeks before the application deadline. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application or receive an award. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: [https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM\\_Quick\\_Guide\\_Grants\\_Registrations-v1.6.pdf](https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM_Quick_Guide_Grants_Registrations-v1.6.pdf).

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

#### Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification," as explained in *Section II. Award Information*. (See directions for listing these costs in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission, Budget and Budget Justification*.) **However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs (SF-424 18e, Other) from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.**

#### Application Submission Disqualifications

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format.

Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.** Electronic applications submitted to

[www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

### **Additional Application Disqualifications**

In accordance with 45 CFR Part 1307 titled "Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees," grantees terminated for cause by ACF within 5 years prior to the posting date of this funding opportunity announcement will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

A Head Start or Early Head Start agency that has had a "denial of refunding," defined in 45 CFR § 1303.2, within 5 years prior to the posting date of this funding opportunity announcement will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

Shawna Pinckney  
Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Phone: (866) 796-1591

### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

**Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):**  
Available at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](http://www.Grants.gov/Forms_Repository) website and at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

#### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

## **Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

### **Formatting the Application Submission**

#### **For All Applications:**

##### **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

The individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards.

Each applicant must designate an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). An AOR is named by the applicant, and is authorized to act for the applicant, to assume the obligations imposed by the federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to the grant application or awards.

AOR Authorization is part of the registration process at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

##### **Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

##### **Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

**ALL APPLICATIONS MUST FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED IN THIS FORMATTING SECTION IN ORDER FOR THE FULL APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPETITIVE REVIEW. Failing to adhere to the page limitations and formatting restrictions may result in part of the application being excluded from competitive review.**

##### **Observe Page Limitations**

All applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section. Be sure to print all attachments (components) on paper and count the number of pages before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files. **All pages in excess of the required page limitations will be**

**removed from the application and excluded from competitive review.**

**Page limitations are identical for electronically-submitted and paper format application submissions.**

### **Observe Formatting Restrictions**

All applicants **must** follow the formatting instructions provided in this section. If any portion of the application exceeds the cited page limitation for that section, **the extra pages will be removed and will not be considered for competitive review.** In addition, if the Project Description/Phase One or Phase Two narrative is single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part), because the requirement for those sections is that pages be double-spaced, the total number of these lines will be doubled. This page calculation will also be applied if any non-numerical charts, tables, or other inserts are single-spaced. This adjustment may result in an increased total number of pages, which may cause the application to be over the page limit. All pages in excess of the required page limitations after calculation of correct formatting will be removed so that the application conforms to the cited double-spaced page limitation.

Applications must not include any page that contains two or more reduced-sized pages on a single sheet. If an application contains two or more reduced-sized pages on a single sheet, ACF will count each reduced-sized page as if it were a full-sized page. For example, two pages printed onto one sheet of paper would be counted as two pages. This calculation may cause the application to be over the page limit, which would result in all pages over the page limit being removed from the end of the section (Abstract, Project Description/Phase One narrative, Budget Justification, Appendices, or Phase Two), and the removed pages being excluded from competitive review.

**Note:** Be sure to print each of the four electronic files on paper and count the number of pages for each file before submission. Please keep the printed copy as a hard copy of the application for your files.

**All narrative documents** (e.g., Abstract, Project Description/Phase One, Budget Justification, Phase Two) **must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman.** The formula for page removal when font size is less than 12-point entails calculating the number of characters an applicant could use if following directions versus what the applicant submitted. For example, an application using Times New Roman with 1-inch margins, single-spaced in 11-point font would have an additional 26 lines or 1500 character advantage over an applicant who submitted using Times New Roman with 1-inch margins, double-spaced in 12-point font. All tables, charts, and inserts must also be in 12-point Times New Roman. If any non-numerical table, chart, or insert is in text smaller than 12-point Times New Roman, the page calculation will be applied. If the resulting page length (after the required font size is calculated) is over the stated page limit for any section, ACF will remove all pages over the page limit from the end of the section and exclude those pages from competitive review.

### **Formatting for Appendices (Including the Phase Two supporting documents)**

If the font size of pages in the appendices or the financial statements, notes, audit reports, or other supporting documents in Phase Two is not readable, **all unreadable pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.** For example, pages that contain blurred text or text that is too small to read comfortably will be removed. In addition, applicants are prohibited from submitting two or more pages per page in reduced size onto one page. In the event that an application contains two or more pages on one page, each of the reduced-size pages will be counted as one page. This may result in the appendices being over the page limit, and all pages over the page limit **will be removed from the application and excluded from competitive review.**

### **Application Package Components**

Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the table. (The order in which components are submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or included in a paper application may not be the same as listed in the table.)

**Contents of the application must include the following components, meeting all of the page limits and formatting specifications described in this section.**

<b>Application Package Components</b>	<b>Page Limitations</b>	<b>Formatting Requirements</b>
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.	
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.	
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.	
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.	Single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman.
Project Description/Phase One Narrative	Limited to 100 double-spaced pages.	Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman. Only <i>numerical</i> budget tables included as part of the application narrative may be single-spaced. Any non-numerical tables, charts, or inserts must be double-spaced and in 12-point font.
Budget and Budget Justification	Limited to 15 single-spaced pages.	Single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman.
Appendices	Limited to 100 pages.	Documents must be readable and adhere to the formatting requirements specified in this section. Include the signed Absence of Non-Compete Agreement Assurance in this section.
Phase Two Narrative, Financial Statements and Notes, and Audit Reports	Limited to 50 pages.	Narrative portion must be double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman. Documents other than the narrative that are included in Phase Two must be readable and adhere to the formatting requirements specified in this section.

**ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov):**

**Notice: The Administration for Children and Families has implemented required electronic application submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants are now required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See Section IV.2. Application Submission Options.**

Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile. Only applications, which pass the Grants.gov validation check, will be acknowledged.

**Please read this section carefully before beginning application submission.** It is mandatory to follow

the instructions provided in this section to ensure that your application can be printed efficiently and consistently so that no pages are excluded from competitive review.

## **Application Upload Requirements**

Applicants must submit a single complete copy of the application package electronically in exactly four separate files (not including Standard Forms, and OMB-approved forms, which are submitted separately at Grants.gov). **Each applicant is required to upload ONLY four electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than four files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed and excluded from competitive review. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.** Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). Details on the content of each of the four files, as well as page limitations for each, are listed later in this section.

To adhere to the four file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software. Grants.gov offers a listing of several free PDF conversion programs. These programs can be found on Grants.gov by clicking on ‘Applicant Resources’ on the far left side of the home page, and then by following the link to ‘Download Software’ near the top of the screen, or by clicking on [http://www.grants.gov/help/download\\_software.jsp#pdf\\_conversion\\_programs](http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs). Free PDF software is available on this page that will allow users to convert and merge PDF documents. As an example, ACF is providing written instructions on downloading and using one type of free software listed at Grants.gov at the following link: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf995\\_instructions\\_for\\_video.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf995_instructions_for_video.pdf). A video demonstrating this process is also available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOly0HwXPpA>. ACF does not endorse any of the software listed on Grants.gov, and applicants are not required to use a specific type of PDF conversion software to submit an application.

**NOTE:** Applications submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* and *Section IV.3. Submission Due Dates and Times, Explanation of Due Dates* for more information. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review. If an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date and the application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

## **Signatures**

Follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

## **Required OMB-Approved and Standard Forms (SFs)**

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

## Application Package Components

Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the tables below. **Applicants must submit exactly four electronic files as described below.** Standard forms and assurances are uploaded separately at Grants.gov.

### FIRST ELECTRONIC FILE

Components must be in the following order within the electronic file. This file should be uploaded to the “Project Narrative File(s)” section of the Application Package. The file name must include “PhaseOne.”

Components	Page Limitations
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description/Phase One Narrative	Limited to 100 double-spaced pages, except the Table of Contents, which may be single-spaced. Only <i>numerical</i> budget tables included as part of the application narrative may be single-spaced. Any non-numerical tables, charts, or inserts must be double-spaced and in 12-point font.

The Project Description/Phase One section of the application narrative should be submitted in the following order:

- Table of Contents (single-spaced)
- Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options
- Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children
- Past Performance
- Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce
- Organizational Capacity and Governance

### SECOND ELECTRONIC FILE

This file should be uploaded to the “Budget Narrative File(s)” section of the Application Package and must include “Budget” in the file name.

Component	Page Limitations
Budget and Budget Justification	Limited to 15 single-spaced pages.

### THIRD ELECTRONIC FILE

This file should be uploaded to the “Other Attachment File(s)” section of the Application Package and must include “Appendices” in the file name.

Component	Page Limitations
Appendices	Limited to 100 pages. Include the signed Absence of Non-Compete Agreement Assurance in this section.

Appendices may include resumes, letters of support, organizational charts, financial statements, and other supporting documents.

### FOURTH ELECTRONIC FILE

This file should be uploaded to the “Other Attachment File(s)” section of the Application Package and

must include “PhaseTwo” in the file name.

Component	Page Limitations
Phase Two Narrative, Financial Statements and Notes, and Audit Reports – must be clearly labeled as “Phase Two”	Limited to 50 pages. Narrative portion must be double-spaced.

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs), all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the application component, i.e., Project Description, Budget Justification, Appendices, must be sequentially numbered.** Applicants should print all attachments on paper and count the number of pages before submitting the application. Applicants should keep a hard copy of the submitted application package for their files.

**Accepted Font Styles:**

Applicants must use 12-point font in Times New Roman (TNR).

**Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section:**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).**

Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,\*,%/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore ( \_ ) may be used to separate a file name.

**Use only file formats supported by ACF.**

It is critical that applicants only submit application components using the supported file formats listed here. **Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review.** This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

**ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

**Do not encrypt or password protect the electronic application files!**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they have been encrypted or are password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

**PAPER FORMAT APPLICATIONS:**

**The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order to submit an application in paper format.** See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options*.

The application should be submitted in the following order:

Components	Page Limitations
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Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description/Phase One Narrative	Limited to 100 double-spaced pages, except the Table of Contents, which may be single-spaced. Only <i>numerical</i> budget tables included as part of the application narrative may be single-spaced. Any non-numerical tables, charts, or inserts must be double-spaced and in 12-point font.
Budget and Budget Justification	Limited to 15 single-spaced pages.
Appendices	Limited to 100 pages. Include the signed Absence of Non-Compete Agreement Assurance in this section.
Phase Two Narrative, Financial Statements and Notes, and Audit Reports – must be clearly labeled as “Phase Two”	Limited to 50 pages. Narrative portion must be double-spaced.

The Project Description/Phase One section of the application narrative should be submitted in the following order:

- Table of Contents (single-spaced)
- Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services
- Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children
- Past Performance
- Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce
- Organizational Capacity and Governance

Appendices may include resumes, letters of support, organizational charts, financial statements, and other supporting documents.

Only *numerical* budget tables included as part of the Phase One or Phase Two application narrative may be single-spaced. Any non-numerical tables, charts, or other inserts must be double-spaced and in 12-point Times New Roman.

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must provide one original and two copies of all application materials when submitting an application in paper format.

### **Signatures**

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section.

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the paper application submission must be sequentially numbered.** Application materials must be printed on one side only of each page so that they may be easily reproduced. If two-sided pages are submitted, only the "front" page will be used.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate subsections of the application, including supporting documentation. Use a clip (not a staple) to securely bind the application together. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. Application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

**Accepted Font Styles:**

Applicants must use 12-point font in Times New Roman (TNR) for all application narratives.

**Packaging the Application:**

All copies of a mailed or hand-delivered paper application must be submitted in a single package. The package must be clearly labeled for the specific funding opportunity it is addressing.

**Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper application submissions.

**Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications**

**Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at [ACF Funding Opportunities Forms](#) or at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#) unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Submission of a certification is required prior to award for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for the first budget year of a multi-year project; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a one-year (12 months) project period; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a multiyear project to be fully funded.	Applicants are advised of the following requirement contained in Section 523 of the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008," (P.L. 110-161, Division G). This requirement remains in effect:  Sec. 523. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract in an amount greater than \$5,000,000 or to award a grant in excess of such amount unless the prospective contractor or grantee <b>certifies in writing to the agency awarding the</b>

		<p><b>contract or grant</b> that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, the contractor or grantee has filed all Federal tax returns required during the three years preceding the certification, has not been convicted of a criminal offense under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and has not, more than 90 days prior to certification, been notified of any unpaid Federal tax assessment for which the liability remains unsatisfied, unless the assessment is the subject of an installment agreement or offer in compromise that has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service and is not in default, or the assessment is the subject of a non-frivolous administrative or judicial proceeding. [Emphasis Added]</p> <p>Accordingly, if applicants request more than \$5 million in Federal funds for the first budget year of a multiyear project to be funded in FY 2010, or as a multiyear project to be fully funded in FY 2010, the applicant will be required to submit a certification complying with the requirements, prior to receiving an award.</p>
<p>DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>A DUNS number is required of all applicants.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http:// fedgov.dnb. com/ webform</a>.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See <i>Section III.3. Other</i> for information on obtaining a DUNS number at <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http:// fedgov. dnb.com / webform</a> and registration at SAM.gov at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>

<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying</p>	<p>Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.</p>
<p>Assurance: Absence of Non-compete Agreement</p>	<p>Submission is required with the application package for all applicants wishing to receive bonus points. Signed assurance must be submitted by the application due date. The format for the assurance is available in the <i>Appendix</i> at the end of this funding opportunity announcement. See <i>Section V.1. Criteria</i> for more information on bonus points.</p>	<p>Applicants that wish to receive the bonus points must include in their applications the following signed statement, "On behalf of (organization), I, (name), attest that (organization) does not have a non-compete or other agreement with any entity, at the time this application is submitted, which prohibits the entity from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on its own behalf or imposes a penalty on that entity for making such application." The statement must be signed by the person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant.</p>
<p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>If applicable, submission of this form is due at the time of application.</p>	<p>If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.</p>
<p>Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants</p>	<p><b>Submission is voluntary.</b> Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>. Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>Private, non-profit organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Submission of the survey is voluntary. Applicants applying electronically may submit the survey along with the application as part of an appendix or as a separate document. Hard copy submissions should include the survey in a separate envelope.</p>

SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for non-construction <b>and</b> construction activities under the proposed project. Standard Forms must be used. Standard Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for non-construction and/or construction activities under the proposed project. Please see special instructions in the <i>Checklist</i> in <i>Section VIII. Other Information</i> in this announcement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include <b>non-construction and construction</b> activities must submit the SF-424A, B, C, and D, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul> By signing and submitting the SF-424B and/or SF-424D, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.

## The Project Description

### Part I: The Project Description Overview

#### Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

#### General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

## **Part II: General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

### **Introduction**

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

### **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

### **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

## **PHASE ONE**

### **1. Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options**

The application must identify the specific geographic location(s) to be served and provide data about why that geographic area is in high need of Early Head Start services, such as the number of eligible infants and toddlers, the extent to which infants and toddlers from low-income families are not meeting school readiness goals, the number of families in extreme poverty, jobless rates, high incidents of community health problems or violence, or other similar factors. Applicants should leverage existing needs assessment and school readiness data for the proposed service area where appropriate and applicable, and if necessary, applications can include other methods to collect data on the need for services such as informal surveys, community meetings, questionnaires, and interviews.

The application must describe proposed program options. This includes how many infants, toddlers, and pregnant women will be served; the types of Early Head Start services the applicant will provide; as well as the number of hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and home visits that meet the needs of families, including the role of child care partners. Applications that propose the home-based option must include the proposed number of home visits and socializations. The application must describe how the Early Head Start program will partner with other programs or services in the community to meet the needs of low-income families to be served.

Early Head Start is designed to increase the number of low-income infants and toddlers receiving high-quality, comprehensive early education services that help facilitate healthy development, including physical and social/emotional development, and prepare them for eventual school success. To meet this goal, it is critical that Early Head Start funds awarded through this funding opportunity announcement do not supplant existing services. Thus, an entity receiving an Early Head Start grant must 1) expand the number of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women it is serving relative to the number it would serve in the absence of the grant; and/or 2) improve the services provided to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women it would serve in the absence of the grant. In this section, applicants must describe how the number of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women served and the type of services received would be affected if the applicant is awarded a grant to implement the proposed set of services.

Please see *Section V.I. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

### **2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

Early Head Start is designed to help children start preschool, and eventually school, ready to succeed. School readiness requires that children are cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally prepared to continue developing and learning. Early Head Start is governed by Program Performance Standards that define the scope of services necessary to support infant and toddler development across all domains. The application must demonstrate the capacity to implement and sustain comprehensive, high-quality, individualized educational, health, mental health, nutritional, oral health, and other social services to infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families that provide children with the foundations of school readiness. To this end, the applicants must describe how they will implement program components. The application must name the curriculum or curricula that will be used, describe why that curriculum/curricula was selected, and present the evidence basis that the curriculum/curricula effectively supports infant and toddler development that is foundational to school readiness. The application also must include information about how the applicant will meet the health, nutrition, and family engagement needs of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Applicants must describe how service effectiveness and quality will be measured, monitored, and improved upon over time. The applicant must show how it will use child assessment data and other program data to individualize services and learning opportunities for children

and to inform continuous program improvement; how they will provide ongoing professional development, including regular observation and feedback; how they will engage parents in their roles as teachers and advocates for their infants and toddlers; and how they will partner with preschools, including Head Start, and local education agencies, child care programs, and other programs serving young children and their families to create continuity for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women across systems.

The application must also describe how the applicant will meet the unique needs of special populations, including infants and toddlers with disabilities, dual language learners, homeless infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, working families, and children in foster care.

The application will be evaluated on the degree to which the proposed program will meet the comprehensive needs of pregnant women, infants and toddlers in the community, including the special populations described above. The applicant must provide information about why it made various programmatic choices, including, where applicable, how its choices reflect the best practices in the field as well as the unique needs of the community it will serve. In addition, the application must propose the coordination of services within a community that support transitions for children and families in accordance with 45 CFR § 1304.41 of the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

If applicable, the application provides information about proposed delegate agencies, how those delegate agencies were chosen, and how the grantee's oversight will ensure the delegate agencies implement high-quality programs that adhere to the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Please see *Section V.I. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

### **3. Past Performance**

The applicant provides evidence of organizational experience (including the experience of key leaders in the organization) that supports its ability to implement a comprehensive child development program for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Reviewers will evaluate the degree to which the application demonstrates a high-functioning program with a competent management team and effective systems with demonstrated capacity to use data to inform continuous improvement in such areas as professional development, instructional practices, and family engagement.

The application must provide detailed information about how the applicant's past experience in early education (or related fields) and in communities similar to the targeted community, will enable them to operate a successful Early Head Start program. The application must provide evidence of the quality of the early education programs or related programs they have operated in the past. The applicant must demonstrate their capacity and experience serving pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschool-age children. The applicant must provide evidence of the quality of services to be provided based on licensing, accreditation, ratings, or independent evaluations of programs, outcome data for children, or other information provided.

The application must also provide information about the past experience of organizations with which it proposes to delegate all or part of its services to infants, toddlers, pregnant women and families. Please note that if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, ACF will retrieve and review the grantee's last two OHS triennial monitoring reports, plus any other OHS monitoring reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this funding opportunity announcement.

The application must explain the ways (if any) in which their past experience - or the past experience of any delegate agencies - differs from operating an Early Head Start program, both generally and as compared to the program the applicant is proposing to implement. The applicant must discuss how it will address these differences and succeed in providing effective, high-quality, comprehensive Early Head Start services.

Please see *Section V.I. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

#### **4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce**

The application must describe the qualifications and experience of the applicant staff in planning, organizing, and providing comprehensive child development services at the community level. The application must address: (1) how the applicant will facilitate strong educator-child relationships that support infant and toddler development; (2) how it will ensure that staff are prepared for and supported in implementing evidence-based instructional practices that are individualized based on the ongoing assessment of each child to support positive child outcomes; and (3) how it will ensure that all staff will successfully partner with families in supporting children's development. The application also must describe how the applicant will attract and retain qualified staff; how it will support staff, through the regular provision of feedback, supervision, coaching, and other mechanisms; and how it will assess staff performance and address under-performing staff.

The application also must describe the management staff's knowledge of Head Start's broad requirements and how it will ensure that all program staff understand how those standards are applicable to them.

Please see *Section V.I. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

#### **5. Organizational Capacity and Governance**

This section measures the applicant's ability to effectively implement and oversee operations that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The applicant describes its internal systems for communication, record keeping, reporting, and ongoing monitoring. The application provides evidence of past success in organizational management and successful governance.

The applicant must address how its management system supports its ability to direct change based on the ongoing collection and analysis of relevant data (child assessment, community assessment, assessment of professional development and training, ongoing monitoring, and other sources).

Applicants must also demonstrate capacity to effectively implement a system of governance, taking into account the ultimate responsibility of the agency Board as well as the crucial role of the Policy Council and parents in decision making. The applicant provides information about how its current governance structure would change (if at all) to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

The application describes mechanisms for ensuring fiscal integrity, timely implementation of services, and strong coordination with broader early childhood systems.

Please see *Section V.I. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

### **PHASE TWO**

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Moderate (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk).

This review will not change the Phase One scores determined by the objective review panel, but will assist ACF in making award decisions.

The financial review of Head Start applicants serves to determine the financial health of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted financial statements

adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants, grantee monitoring reports, and A-133 compliance audits.

Applicants **must** submit a narrative response that addresses all elements listed in *Section V.1. Criteria, PHASE TWO*; their two most recent fiscal years' financial statements and related notes to the financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); and the last 2 years of audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants.

### **Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

Legal Status means being established as a public agency under state law or a non-profit under state or federal law. ACF will accept proof of status as a for-profit organization under state or federal law.

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

When applying electronically, it is strongly suggested that the applicant attach proof of non-profit status with the electronic application.

### **Additional Eligibility Documentation**

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

Applicants that are current Head Start or Early Head Start grantees must provide proof of policy council approval of the application required by section 642(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Head Start Act and 45 CFR § 1304.50(d)(1)(i).

### **Organizational Capacity**

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- List of Board of Directors;
- Financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), if available, submit statements for up to the two most recently completed fiscal years (this requirement does not

- apply to start-up organizations);
- Audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants/Licensed Public Accountants, if available, submit statements for up to the two most recently completed fiscal years (this requirement does not apply to start-up organizations);
  - Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
  - Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
  - Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
  - Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;
  - Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

### **Letters Of Support**

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions must be included in the application package.

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds**

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Project budget Standard Forms (424A and/or 424C) will not count toward page limitations; however, the budget and budget justification are limited to 15 single-spaced pages total with fonts of no less than Times New Roman 12-points.

**Special Note:** Section 653 of the Act provides that “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to pay any part of the compensation of an individual employed by a Head Start agency, if such compensation, including non-Federal funds, exceeds an amount equal to the rate payable for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.” The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$179,700 (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp>). The statute also defines the term “compensation” as:

“(A) includes salary, bonuses, periodic payments, severance pay, the value of any vacation time, the value of a compensatory or paid leave benefit not excluded by subparagraph (B), and the fair market value of any employee perquisite or benefit not excluded by subparagraph (B); and

(B) excludes any Head Start agency expenditure for a health, medical, life insurance, disability, retirement, or any other employee welfare or pension benefit.”

Additional information on the “Statutory Requirement regarding compensation of Head Start staff” is available in the Program Instruction: [ACF-PI-HS-08-03](#).

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for the first year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative budget and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

**Please see Section V.1. Criteria for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.**

Please see Section III.2. *Cost Sharing or Matching* for information on the matching requirement.

Applicants may only request funding up to the *Award Ceiling* listed in Section II. *Award Information*, which is inclusive of base and T/TA funding.

### **Start-up/Pre-Award Costs**

In the following, funding provided for the operation of the program is referred to as “base operating funds” or “base funding;” funding provided for training and technical assistance is referred to as “T/TA.” Pre-award costs, including start-up costs, may be requested by an applicant in addition to the base operating and T/TA grant funds. If requested, applicants must provide a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs, in addition to a 12-month budget for the base funding awarded, within the page limitations stated for the Budget and Budget Justification in Section IV.2. *Content and Form of Application Submission*. If awarded, start-up/pre-award costs would apply to costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date. Examples of start-up activities are facility renovations, purchase of classroom supplies, building purchase, licensing, background checks, etc.

Approval of start-up/pre-award costs is **not** guaranteed; they are negotiated at the time of award and are based on reasonableness, necessity, and the availability of funds. The incurrence of start-up/pre-award costs in anticipation of an award is done at the applicant’s own risk and imposes no obligation on ACF either to make an award or to increase the amount of the approved budget if an award is made for less than the amount anticipated and is inadequate to cover the start-up/pre-award costs incurred. It is possible that ACF may honor start-up/pre-award costs by reducing the base amount of the award to include these costs.

**Estimates for start-up/pre-award costs must be separately identified on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.** The start-up/pre-award funding amount must **not** be included in the funding amount listed on Line 18a

(Federal) of the SF-424. The funding amount listed in Line 18a of the SF-424 must represent only the total annual federal funding the applicant is requesting for base and T/TA funding. Start-up/pre-award costs, if requested, should be included only on the Other Estimated Funding line (Line 18e) and clearly labeled as "Start-up/Pre-Award Costs" in a separate line item on the SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs. Additionally, if applicants are requesting start-up/pre-award costs, these costs must be easily identified as a separate budget in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" that is explained in *Section II. Award Information* and in *Section III.3. Other, Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.

**Note:** Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered an approved use of pre-award costs and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

In the operation of an Early Head Start program, applicants should consider supplementing federal funds with resources from other early childhood programs or funding streams, including state, local, and private sector funding for child care, pre-Kindergarten, and special education services. Early Head Start funds must be tracked separately.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

## **Personnel**

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

## **Fringe Benefits**

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

## **Travel**

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

Justification: For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

## **Equipment**

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

## **Supplies**

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

## **Contractual**

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than states that are required to use 45 CFR Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134 and currently set at \$100,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

## **Construction**

Description: Costs of construction by applicant or contractor.

Justification: Provide a detailed budget and narrative in accordance with the instructions for other object class categories. Identify which construction activities/costs will be contractual and those that the applicant will assume.

## **Other**

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

## **Indirect Charges**

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

## **Program Income**

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds.

Justification: Describe the nature, source, and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

## **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. The match calculation applies to the total project cost (including match) and not just to the federal share.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter or other documentation) is required with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

**Note:** Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching or cost-sharing requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s) and, for in-kind contributions, a justification of how the stated valuation was determined.

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 10/31/2015. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

### **Application Submission Options**

#### **Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp).
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

#### **Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

After an application has been successfully submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

## Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

**Please Note:** [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

**Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date**, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

### **IV.3. Submission Dates and Times**

Due Date for Applications: **10/21/2013**

#### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors.*

#### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp).

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

#### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*

#### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers,

or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

**No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

**Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements**

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

**Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application**

ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

**IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs**

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/). Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

#### **IV.5. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

**Note:** Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered allowable costs under an award and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for an Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1301.32).

#### **IV.6. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

##### **Submission By Mail**

Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road  
Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## Hand Delivery

Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road  
Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

## V. Application Review Information

### V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

The review of applications under this funding opportunity announcement is structured in two phases. Phase One will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. Phase Two criteria will **not** be used by reviewers to score applications, but will assist ACF in making award decisions. Please see *Section V.2. Review and Selection Process* for more information on the Phase One and Phase Two reviews.

### PHASE ONE

#### 1. Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options

**Maximum Points: 20**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Identifies the geographic location the applicant proposes to serve. The application defines the area(s) of greatest need and show how the applicant will direct Early Head Start resources to these areas.
- Provides evidence of presence in the community proposed to be served. (For example, being a provider of services in the community or indicating support from community agencies, service

provider organizations, community agencies serving low-income families, or other relevant sectors.)

- Demonstrates community engagement. The applicant discusses its plans or the process for involvement of service providers, public or private entities, and other members of the community in determining the need for services in the geographic locations proposed by the applicant. The applicant must include evidence of plans to collaborate with public or private entities providing early childhood education and development programs, and services for young children in the proposed service area in order to improve the efficiency of service delivery, increase access to needed services, and prevent duplication. Demonstration of community engagement may include memoranda of understanding that provide commitments of exchange of services, resource support, referrals, or other agreements.
- Provides a detailed description of the plan to meet the need for child development services for Early Head Start eligible children and families (including the estimated number of eligible infants, toddlers, and pregnant women by geographic location, and the estimated number of children needing full-day and full-year care); the needs of children with disabilities, including procedures to identify such children; the needs of dual language learners; as well as the needs of homeless infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, children in foster care, and the transportation needs of these children. Include data regarding the education, health, nutrition, social, child care, and other service needs of the proposed infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families.
- Justifies the program option or options as most appropriate for the communities in which the applicant proposes to provide services (e.g., full-day center-based, home-based, family child care or combination option, including the number of children to be served by each option). If proposing to serve in multiple communities, the applicant specifies the number of pregnant women, infants, and toddlers to be served in each community. The application specifies how the proposed number of hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and home visits meets the needs of families, including the role of child care partners. Early Head Start programs must provide a minimum of 48 weeks per year to ensure the continuity of services that best supports positive outcomes. Applicants proposing the home-based option must include the proposed number of home visits and socializations. The applicant's proposed program option(s) support(s) the needs of children and families as described in response to the evaluation criteria listed above. If the identified need in the community includes working families, the applicant describes how its proposed program option will meet this need either through direct services and/or referrals to other services in the community. Applicants proposing to enroll pregnant women must explain how the services will support the needs of expectant families.
- Describes how infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families will be recruited and selected for the program to ensure that services will be provided to those who have the most serious need for Early Head Start services. The applicant describes how the program will ensure that not less than 10 percent of the total number of infants and toddlers actually enrolled will be children with disabilities.
- Describes a plan to increase the number of low-income infants and toddlers the applicant proposes to serve, and/or how it will improve quality for children currently served. The applicant includes the number of children it currently serves in early education and other related programs, how many it would serve in the absence of this grant, and how many it would serve if awarded this grant.

## **2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

**Maximum Points: 40**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides a plan to implement a high-quality, comprehensive program for the population the applicant proposes to serve, using a curriculum that:
  - Is based on scientifically valid research;
  - Is developmentally appropriate;
  - Provides continuity of care to promote attachment and a secure foundation for learning in all program options. Explains an approach to staffing continuity across the days, months, and years of service;
  - Promotes the healthy development and foundations of school readiness of participating infants and toddlers in each of the following domains: language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development; and
  - Is aligned with all relevant state early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, as appropriate.
- The application specifies the name of the curriculum or curricula proposed to be used, the process for selecting the curriculum, why the curriculum was chosen over specific other options, and the evidence supporting how the curriculum is tied to outcomes for children. The applicant discusses what tools it will use to support domains that the selected curriculum does not support.
- Describes the process for establishing and measuring school readiness goals, including the plans to address the following domains, as appropriate for the age and developmental needs of enrolled infants and toddlers:
  - Language and literacy development,
  - Cognition and general knowledge,
  - Approaches toward learning,
  - Physical well being and motor development, and
  - Social and emotional development.

Goals must reflect the ages of infants and toddlers who will be participating in the program and must be culturally and linguistically appropriate. The application explains the extent to which goals were or will be established in consultation with the parents of infants and toddlers participating in the program, and in alignment with state early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, as appropriate.

- Describes how the applicant will meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities, including procedures to identify such children, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist the infants and toddlers in making meaningful progress in attaining age-appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and development.
- Describes how the applicant will meet the unique needs of its targeted population, including infants and toddlers in the child welfare system, dual language learners, and homeless infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. The application describes procedures to identify such children, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist these infants and toddlers in making meaningful progress in attaining age-appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and development.
- Describes how the applicant will meet the health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health needs of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. The application describes the system for health screening and services that will ensure infants and toddlers are accurately referred for necessary follow-up evaluation and treatment within timeframes specified by Head Start regulations. Screening and services for identified needs include, at a minimum, health, sensory, developmental, and oral health, and may be provided directly or through community partner providers.

- If proposing center-based or family child care services, the applicant describes a plan for observing teacher practice, including teacher-child interactions. If proposing home-based services, the applicant describes a plan for observing home visitor practice, including interactions with the family and child, and supporting the parents in their role as the child's primary caregiver/teacher. For all program services, the applicant describes using this information to inform professional development and practice improvements. The application includes the name of any instruments to be used.
- Describes a plan to use child assessment data to individualize the instruction and learning for each child and, as necessary, refer for additional evaluation and intervention, and to aggregate and analyze child-level assessment data at least three times per year (except for programs operating less than 90 days, which will be required to do so at least twice within their operating program period) and use that analysis in combination with other program data to determine grantees' progress toward meeting its goals, to inform parents and the community of results, and to direct continuous improvement related to curriculum, instruction, professional development, program design, and other program decisions, in accordance with 45 CFR § 1307.3(b)(2). Applicants are reminded that assessment of infant and toddler development must be developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate and most often involves observation.
- Describes a plan to coordinate with public and private entities that are willing to commit resources to assist the Early Head Start program in providing high-quality child health and developmental services and program management services. Such partnerships must include a plan to coordinate the proposed Early Head Start program with other child care and preschool programs, State pre-kindergarten programs, programs under Part C and Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and with the educational programs that children to be served will enter upon leaving Early Head Start.
- Describes the system of how the applicant will deliver services to enrolled pregnant women post-pregnancy, and how the newborn infant and family will transition into the appropriate program option at the appropriate time; how the program will support transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or other community-based programs. Additionally, the application describes how the program will support transitions within the Early Head Start program, which might include a child moving from one center or program option to another, adjusting to staff turnover, moving from one classroom to the next, or to new grantees in different communities as families move for economic or other reasons. The application describes how the applicant will ensure that infants, toddlers, and their families participating in the Early Head Start program will have the opportunity to receive Head Start or other appropriate preschool services for which they are eligible through the age of mandatory school attendance.
- Provides a plan to facilitate the meaningful engagement of parents (including mothers, fathers, grandparents, foster parents, and kinship caregivers, as appropriate) in activities (at home and, if practicable, at the location of the Early Head Start program) designed to help them become full partners in the education of their children. Such engagement includes participation in the conduct of the program, leadership opportunities, support of the child's development and health, support for the parent-child relationship, opportunities for employment, and other paths to improved financial well-being. The application identifies and addresses barriers to parent participation, such as lack of transportation access or need for child care.
- Explains the plan to implement the Head Start Parent Family and Community Engagement Framework and to offer family literacy and parenting skills training using evidence-based curricula and approaches either directly or through referral to local entities, public and school libraries, and entities carrying out family support programs. The application includes a plan to offer (either directly or through referrals) other support for families struggling with mental health challenges, domestic violence, homelessness, or substance abuse, including information on the effect of drug exposure on young children and fetal alcohol syndrome.

### 3. Past Performance

Maximum Points: 20

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates how the applicant's history and experience, based on past performance providing high-quality early education or other related programs, support its ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women of the size, complexity, and scope of their proposed program. Reviewers will evaluate evidence of experience, including:
  - Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) rating,
  - Record of high performance in the early primary grades by children formerly enrolled in the program,
  - Evidence from use of teacher-child interaction rating system,
  - Evidence of successful staff development system leading to highly qualified staff, and
  - Evidence of high level of success improving family self-sufficiency.

Applicants that serve or have served as delegate agencies to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees must provide documentation of their past performance.

- Demonstrates how the applicant has a strong track record of successfully preparing young children for school.
- Documents how the professional experience of the applicant's proposed management team (executive director, program director, managers), based on past performance providing comprehensive, high-quality early care and education, demonstrates an ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project of this size, complexity, and scope within the service area.
- Explains how the applicant's past performance and experience will inform its administration of the Early Head Start program being proposed and will help ensure a high-quality Early Head Start program. To the degree that the applicant is currently operating a program that differs from the Early Head Start program being proposed - such as differences in the target population, the set of services provided, the structure of the program (the hours, days, or weeks of operation), the mechanisms for quality assurance and improvement, the early learning standards to be used, and the performance measurement system - the applicant acknowledges these differences and explains how it will successfully adapt to the differences between its current program and the proposed program.
- Applicants that are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantees must include a description of any repeat violations, such as deficiencies, areas of non-compliance, and/or audit findings. These repeat violations should represent findings from the last two OHS triennial monitoring reports plus any other OHS monitoring reports and any audit reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this funding opportunity announcement. Applicants must describe the actions they have taken to address any repeat violations. If the applicant does not have repeat violations, this criterion is not applicable.

### 4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce

Maximum Points: 20

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Documents that the proposed program director and proposed key staff are qualified and knowledgeable about administering complex social service programs or early education services. The applicant describes its key staff's major functions and responsibilities in the narrative and includes their resumes in the appendix.
- Provides a clear plan to attract and retain qualified staff with the ability to implement a research-based curriculum, aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and state early learning guidelines (as appropriate), effective instructional strategies, and a high-quality comprehensive program.

- Demonstrates that employees of the agency will meet the requirements of the Head Start Act for staff qualifications set in Section 645A(h) for Early Head Start. The applicant provides documentation showing that all center-based Early Head Start teachers have an Infant Toddler Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and have been trained (or have equivalent coursework) in early childhood development with a focus on infant and toddler development as required by Section 645A(h) of the Head Start Act. If applicable, the applicant describes how it will hire Early Head Start home visiting staff qualified or trained to conduct home visits that include the full range of comprehensive Early Head Start services.
- Describes the plan to maintain child-to-teacher, home visitor, or family child care provider ratios and family service worker caseloads that comply with appropriate regulations, reflect best practices, and are tied to high-quality service delivery in the event of staff absences or vacancies.
- Describes the plan to provide opportunities for qualified parents and other community residents to seek employment and how these opportunities will be designed to improve the quality of the proposed program. The applicant explains how it will provide career development opportunities for professional, paraprofessional, and other staff, and how those opportunities will improve the quality of the proposed program.
- Describes a clear plan to evaluate job applicants, including existing grantee staff, to determine which applicants are most capable of contributing to the implementation of a high-quality comprehensive program, including the implementation of a research-based curriculum aligned with state early learning guidelines, as appropriate.
- Describes an ongoing strategy for professional development, peer support, supervision, ongoing observations, coaching and mentoring, and evaluation of staff and program managers, oriented to improving the skills, knowledge, effectiveness, and career opportunities of all employees. The application describes the process for how it will manage underperforming staff. The applicant also describes how it has used these strategies in the past, its past successes and challenges, and any modifications it would make in the context of implementing the Early Head Start program it is proposing.

## 5. Organizational Capacity and Governance

**Maximum Points: 25**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides a plan identifying the capacity of the applicant's senior executive managers and governing board to: (1) exercise effective oversight of program operations and accountability for federal funds; (2) include the Policy Council in the planning and decision-making process; (3) assure representation of the diverse community served; (4) set and monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems; and (5) conduct community assessment, annual self-assessments, ongoing monitoring, and outcome-based evaluations.
- Explains how its organizational oversight meets the program governance requirements established in Section 642 (c) of the Head Start Act. The applicant provides information about how its current governance structure would change (if at all) to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.
- Demonstrates the existence of management systems for program planning, internal and external communication, recordkeeping, issuance of internal and external reports and program self-assessment and monitoring.
- Demonstrates an ability to provide effective financial management in operating an Early Head Start program, based on experience.
- If proposing to delegate all or part of its responsibility for operating an Early Head Start program, the application identifies proposed delegate agencies, including the communities in which they will operate, the number of children served, and their proposed program option(s). If the applicant is not proposing to delegate with other agencies, this criterion is not applicable.
- Describes plans to meet or exceed state and local requirements concerning licensing for facilities

and to be accessible by state and local authorities for purposes of monitoring and ensuring compliance, unless state or local laws prohibit such access. Where facilities are not available, the application provides a plan to acquire facilities in accordance with the requirements provided for the purchase, construction, and major renovation of facilities described in 45 C.F.R. Part 1309.

- Demonstrates the ability to provide timely and efficient implementation of all program components and services, including planning during the transition period, the availability of classroom space and facilities that meets applicable state and local licensing standards, the ability to provide necessary transportation and the ability to recruit eligible infants, toddlers, and their families. The applicant includes an implementation timetable that expressly states when infants and toddlers will begin receiving Early Head Start services.
- Provides plans to coordinate with other state programs and to participate in state systems of early childhood development, including the QRIS or the state equivalent. If the applicant participates in QRIS, includes rating. If applicable, the applicant explains why it does not participate if there is a QRIS in its geographic area.

## **6. Budget and Budget Justification**

**Maximum Points: 15**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates that funds are budgeted to provide all required comprehensive Early Head Start services to eligible infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families in a cost-effective manner as indicated in the application narrative.
- Demonstrates that start-up/pre-award costs, if proposed, are justified, reasonable and applicable based on the applicant's proposed Early Head Start program. Start-up/pre-award costs may include 1) ensuring that proposed facilities comply with state and local requirements and are adequately equipped, 2) purchasing classroom equipment and supplies, and/or 3) conducting staff background checks. If the applicant is not requesting start-up/pre-award costs, this criterion is not applicable.
- Demonstrates that the applicant will contribute the required non-Federal share/match of the total project cost, using allowable sources. Identifies each source of non-federal share match, including the estimated amount per source and the valuation methodology.

## **Bonus Points**

**Maximum Points: 10**

In the interest of ensuring a robust competition for high-quality, comprehensive early care and education service providers, ACF is awarding bonus points to applicant organizations that do not have agreements that prohibit other entities from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on their own behalf or that impose a penalty on any entity for making such application. Applicants that wish to receive the bonus points must include in the appendices of their applications the following signed statement, "On behalf of (organization), I, (name), attest that (organization) does not have a non-compete or other agreement with any entity, at the time this application is submitted, which prohibits the entity from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on its own behalf or imposes a penalty on that entity for making such application." The statement must be signed by the person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant.

## **PHASE TWO**

**Maximum Points: 0**

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Moderate (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk).

This review will not change the Phase One scores determined by the objective review panel, but will assist ACF in making award decisions. Please see *Section V.2. Review and Selection Process* for more

information on the Phase Two financial review.

The financial review of Head Start applicants serves to determine the financial health of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants, grantee monitoring reports, and A-133 compliance audits.

**Section 1: Financial Capability** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to sustain operations and perform the planned program. The contracted financial experts will assess an applicant's financial capability based on the applicant's financial statements. Their assessment will cover a variety of criteria primarily focusing on unrestricted net assets (or retained earnings, as applicable), financial statement ratios, access to commercial credit facilities, and diversity of funding sources.

- All applicants **must** submit their two most recent fiscal years' financial statements and related notes to the financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), as well as the last 2 years of audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants.

**Section 2: Financial Management Systems** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to account for and administer federal funds properly and collects information on the applicant's cost allocation methodology (if applicable).

**Section 3: Additional Information** - Collects information on the applicants' Single Audit opinions (if applicable) for the past 2 years and financial statements for the past 2 years.

In response to Sections 2 and 3, applicants **must** address all of the following elements in a narrative response.

### **Internal Control, Compliance, and Ethical Values**

Each applicant shall:

- Demonstrate the existence of internal control characteristics described in the context of the Internal Control-Integrated Framework (COSO Report) by describing how its internal control framework relates to the five components of internal controls explained in the COSO Report.
- Describe its policies and procedures to achieve compliance with **all** post-award requirements established by 45 CFR Parts 74 and 92 that are identified in the Matrix of Compliance Requirements in the OMB Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement.
- Describe its ability to meet the 15 percent limitation on development and administrative costs (45 CFR § 1301.32).
- Describe its commitment to high ethical standards in relation to written policies and programs inherent within the organization.

### **Accounting System(s) Design and Chart of Accounts**

Each applicant shall:

- Describe the current accounting system it uses and the date of implementation of the system. Identify any modules currently in use, such as billing, indirect rate application, and payroll modules.
- Describe the accounting system it expects to implement upon award if it expects to employ a new system.
  - Outlines the timeframe for the implementation of the new system.
- Describe the groupings of accounts associated with the following cost elements:
  - Direct costs and expenditures;
  - Indirect costs, including fringe benefits, if not allocated directly to final cost objectives; and
  - Unallowable costs.

- Describe the timekeeping system it uses to identify the employees' labor by intermediate or final cost objectives.
  - Identify whether the timekeeping system is manual or automated.
  - If the timekeeping system is automated, identify the name of the system utilized.

### **Accounting Policies**

Each applicant shall:

- Describe its accounting policies, specifically addressing how it segregates and identifies direct and indirect costs within the organization.
- Describe its purchasing policies and system(s) for the review of costs, both direct and indirect.
- Describe its policies related to the exclusion of costs charged to government contracts and grants that represent amounts deemed unallowable under the cost principles appropriate for the applicant.
- Describe its system for identifying and distributing labor cost to the appropriate cost objectives, both direct and indirect.
  - Describe its review process of payroll costs applied to individual grants.
- Describe how it utilizes a logical and consistent method for the allocation of indirect costs to intermediate and final cost objectives.
 

If the applicant has an indirect rate agreement:

  - Reference the indirect rate agreements.
  - Identify the process for the collection of indirect costs, calculation of rate(s), and the application or allocation of costs to specific grants.
- If the applicant utilizes the direct allocation method:
  - Describe its process for identifying and prorating joint costs using a base that is most appropriate to the particular element of cost that is being prorated.
- Describe how Head Start resources will be combined with other early childhood funding sources, if applicable, and describe how it will properly allocate costs.

### **Additional Information**

Each applicant shall:

- State whether the applicant received a Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion in the past 2 years for any federal grant program.
- State whether or not the materially non-compliant finding(s), which caused the Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion, have been resolved.

## **V.2. Review and Selection Process**

**No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number ([www.dbn.com](http://www.dbn.com)) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section III.3. Other.***

### **Initial Application Screening**

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or

- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*. See also *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

## **Objective Review and Results**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds, as well as the distribution of services to pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children in its award decisions.

This funding opportunity announcement is structured into two phases.

### **Phase One**

Phase One is organized around six core elements of effective Head Start and Early Head Start programs that are focused on school readiness and ongoing academic success. Phase One will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. Applications that score highly in the Phase One review will proceed to Phase Two.

### **Phase Two**

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Medium (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk).

This review will not change the scores or rankings determined by the objective review panel, but will assist ACF in making award decisions.

The financial review of Head Start and/or Early Head Start applicants serves to determine the financial health of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants/Licensed Public Accountants, grantee monitoring reports, and A-133 compliance audits.

The financial review consists of three sections:

- **Section 1: Financial Management Systems** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to administer federal funds properly.
- **Section 2: Financial Capability** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to sustain operations and perform the planned program.

All applicants **must** submit their two most recent fiscal years' financial statements and related notes to the financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) as well as the last two years of audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants or Licensed Public Accountants.

- **Section 3: Additional Information** - Collects information on the applicants' Single Audit opinions (if applicable) for the past two years, financial statements for the past two years, as well as the applicant's cost allocation methodology (if applicable).

The following questions will be used in the Phase Two financial review:

### **Section 1: Financial Management Systems**

#### **A. Internal Control**

1. Are standard financial and operating controls in place to ensure assets and information are protected against fraud, waste and abuse, and mismanagement of federal funds?

#### **B. Accounting System**

2. At a minimum, does the organization prepare financial statements annually?

### **Section 2: Financial Capability**

1. Is the applicant's current liquidity ratio of 1:1 or higher? The current liquidity ratio = current assets/current liabilities.

2. Is the applicant's overall debt-to-asset ratio of 1:1 or less? The debt-to-asset ratio = total debt/total assets.

### **Section 3: Additional Information**

1. Has the applicant received a Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion in the past two years for any Federal grant program?

2. Have the materially non-compliant finding(s), which caused the Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion, been resolved?

3. If indirect costs are requested, does the organization have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement that covers some or all of the project period?

4. Is there a methodology to allocate indirect costs to intermediate and final cost objectives relating to specific grants or contracts? The methodology should:

- Describe the process of collection of indirect costs, calculation of rate, and the application or allocation of costs to specific grants;
- Describe how Head Start resources will be combined with other early childhood funding sources, if applicable, and describe how the applicant will properly allocate costs.

### **Additional Review and Funding Considerations**

The Head Start Act gives priority to organizations based on their ability to serve target populations. In keeping with Section 641(d)(3) of the Head Start Act, HHS shall give priority to applicants for Head Start funding that have demonstrated capacity in providing effective, comprehensive, and well-coordinated early childhood education and development services and programs to children and their families. Section 645A(e) of the Head Start Act gives priority in Early Head Start funding to entities with a record of providing early, continuous, and comprehensive childhood development and family services.

Please note that, if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider the grantee's last two OHS triennial monitoring reports. In addition, OHS will retrieve, review, and consider any monitoring reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of

this funding opportunity announcement. ACF will also retrieve, review, and consider state licensing documentation on the applicant. These reports and documents may be considered in making final funding determinations

ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant that is presently designated as "high risk," probationary or not in good standing, or has been debarred or defunded by any federal agency. ACF reserves the right not to fund applicants with unacceptably high federal Head Start per-child costs when other highly ranked applications are available. Additionally, ACF may decide not to fund projects that would require unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or that propose such a low number of children that the project may require unreasonably high ongoing funding levels relative to the number of additional children and families proposed to be served.

Applications proposing a Head Start program that are not from entities "in the community" to be served do not meet the requirements for designation as a Head Start agency in Section 641 of the Head Start Act. ACF will consider all "qualified applicants in such community" as required by Section 641(d) where the application demonstrates that the applicant has an organizational base within the community to be served. This could be established by virtue of the applicant being a provider of services in the community or having a clear relationship to the community as evidenced, for example, by board representation from the community or by evidence of the support of community leaders, including, but not limited to, mayors, city council members, school principals, presidents of local chambers of commerce, county government officials, social service provider organizations, community organizations representing low-income, minority, or other relevant sectors of the community, including child care providers and organizations.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NOA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NOA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head.

Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NOA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions*.

## **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 CFR Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 CFR Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

### **Prohibition Against Profit**

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 CFR Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 CFR § 74.81\_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "... no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

### **Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations**

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 CFR § 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against federal funding of inherently religious activities, Understanding the Regulations

Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the [Capacity Building Toolkits for Faith-based and Community Organizations](#).

### **Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-and-condition-for-trafficking-in-persons>. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

### **Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace**

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101-8106) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government-wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 CFR part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 CFR § 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 CFR § 382.225. The rule is available at [Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace](#).

### **Debarment and Suspension**

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR Part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR Part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.sam.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

### **Pro-Children Act**

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance

order on the responsible entity.

## **HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

## **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

Applications funded by federal grant programs are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and are frequently requested under the FOIA. In accordance with the FOIA requirement to proactively disclose frequently requested materials at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D), and as part of on-going efforts to promote openness in government programs, ACF will post some of the top-ranked applications funded under this FOA in its online FOIA Reading Room at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/e-reading-room>. As required under the FOIA, each of the top-ranked applications will receive appropriate redaction of specific information to protect personal privacy and competitively sensitive commercial information. Applications chosen for posting to the FOIA Reading Room will be placed on the internet website without further notice to the applicants.

## **Other Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

**The regulations relevant to Head Start (known as the Program Performance Standards) are:**

- 45 CFR Part 1301, Head Start Grant Administration
- 45 CFR Part 1302, Policies and Procedures for Selection, Initial Funding and Refunding of Head Start Grantees, and for Selection of Replacement Grantees
- 45 CFR Part 1303, Appeal Procedures for Head Start Grantees and Current or Prospective Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1304, Program Performance Standards for the Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantee and Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1305, Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start
- 45 CFR Part 1306, Head Start Staffing Requirements and Program Options
- 45 CFR Part 1307, Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees
- 45 CFR Part 1308, Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities
- 45 CFR Part 1309, Head Start Facilities Purchase, Major Renovation and Construction
- 45 CFR Part 1310, Head Start Transportation
- And all applicable grant regulations

Copies of the current applicable Head Start regulations are available at the websites identified at the end of this announcement. In addition, copies of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars that are used to determine whether expenditures by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are allowable can be found at: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants\\_circulars.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_circulars.html)

## **VI.3. Reporting**

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

### **Performance Progress Reports (PPR)**

Notice of Award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their Notice of Award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. For awards that implement the use of the SF-PPR, that form may be found under "Reporting" at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

### **Federal Financial Reports (FFR)**

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

#### **For budget periods ending in the months of:**

January 01 through March 31

April 01 through June 30

July 01 through September 30

October 01 through December 31

#### **The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:**

April 30

July 30

October 30

January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms), [www.forms.gov](http://www.forms.gov), and on at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis.

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports:	Semi-Annually
Financial Reports:	Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 170. See ACF's Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

### **SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report**

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families has been requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The **SF-428** is a standard form used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet, SF-428, and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The **SF-429** is a standard report used by recipients of federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that has been/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using federal funds and real property that was donated to a federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is used for awards that establish a federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012, and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees are required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as required in the terms and conditions of their award(s).

The forms are available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

### **Program Office Contact**

Shawna Pinckney  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Head Start  
Portals Building

1250 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
Phone: (866) 796-1591  
Email: [OHS@headstartgrants.org](mailto:OHS@headstartgrants.org)

### **Office of Grants Management Contact**

Administration for Children and Families  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW  
Aerospace Building - 6th Floor East  
Washington, DC 20447  
Email: [ACFOGMREGE-grants@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:ACFOGMREGE-grants@acf.hhs.gov)

### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **Reference Websites**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet [http:// www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet [http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families - GRANTS homepage [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants).

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) [https:// www.cfda.gov/](https://www.cfda.gov/).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [http:// www.gpo.gov](http://www.gpo.gov).

United States Code (U.S.C.) [http:// www.gpoaccess.gov /uscode/](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/) .

All required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page at [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants -forms](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms).

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at [http://www.grants.gov /agencies /afoms repository information .jsp](http://www.grants.gov/agencies/afoms_repository_information.jsp).

Versions of other Standard Forms (SF) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at [http:// www. whitehouse.gov /omb /grants forms/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/).

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at [http:// www07.grants.gov /aboutgrants / accessibility compliance.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp).

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

[http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email\\_subscription.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp).

### Head Start Information on the Internet

The Head Start Act as amended by The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, (Pub.L. 110-134) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs>.

Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR Parts 1301-1311)  
[http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_07/45cfrv4\\_07.html#1301](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_07/45cfrv4_07.html#1301).

### Applicant Support Website

OHS strongly encourages entities interested in applying for this Early Head Start funding opportunity to visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/grants>. This interactive website offers a robust collection of resources intended to support organizations in gaining a deeper understanding of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, the funding opportunity announcement, and evaluation criteria. A profile of current grantee services, equipment, and inventory can also be found through this website. Head Start is a federal program with important statutory requirements and regulations that grantees must meet. At the applicant support website, applicants can familiarize themselves with these requirements. Finally, the website includes helpful tips for applying via Grants.gov. All interested applicants are reminded to frequently refer back to this funding opportunity announcement when preparing their application.

Prospective applicants will also have the opportunity to send questions to OHS by email through the website listed above. A summary of the questions and OHS responses will be posted for public view on the applicant support website as soon as they become available.

Interested applicants may also contact the OHS Operations Center at (866) 796-1591 or TTY: 711 if they have additional questions.

### Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> of the announcement. The Certification may be found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms</a> .	If applicable to the applicant, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C) is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

<p>Commitment of Non-Federal Resources</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i></p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section III.3. Other</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http:// fedgov. dnb.com / webform</a>. To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http:// www.sam. gov</a>.</p>	<p>A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> Found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">http:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants-forms</a>.</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> Available at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms</a>. For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional Documents." These forms are <b>required</b> for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include <b>non-construction and construction</b> activities must submit the SF-424A, B, C, and D, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>

<p>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms</a>.</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.</p>	<p>If applicable, submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants</p>	<p>Private, non-profit organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Applicants applying electronically, may submit this survey along with the application as part of the appendix or as a separate document. Applicants submitting in paper, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with the application package.</p> <p>The survey is referenced in <i>Section IV.2</i>. The survey may be found at <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms</a>.</p> <p>The survey will not count in the page limitations.</p>	<p><b>Submission is voluntary.</b> Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>. Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>The Project Description</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>. This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>

<p>SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms</a> and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp">http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp</a>.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Project Summary/Abstract</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>. The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Table of Contents</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>.</p>	<p>Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Phase Two</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> and <i>Section V.1. Criteria</i>.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Assurance: Absence of Non-compete Agreement</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2</i> and template provided in <i>the Appendix</i> at the end of this funding opportunity announcement.</p>	<p>Signed assurance is required of applicants that wish to receive bonus points. Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Third-Party Agreements</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i>.</p>	<p>If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3</i>. If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.</p>

Letters of Support	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Resumes of Key Staff in the organization and proposed Head Start program.	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of existing Policy Council approval of application (required of current Head Start and Early Head Start grantees)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description, Additional Eligibility Documentation</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities"	Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/">http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/</a> as indicated in <i>Section IV.4. Intergovernmental Review</i> of this announcement. The Executive Order and CFR require that applicants submit all required application materials to their State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and indicate the date of submission on the SF-424 at item 19.	Submission of application materials is due to SPOC by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

**Assurance Template: Absence of Non-compete Agreement**

If the applicant wishes to receive bonus points, this assurance must be completed, signed and dated, and submitted as part of their application in the appendices.

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of (organization), I, (name), attest that (organization) does not have a non-compete or other agreement with any entity, at the time this application is submitted, which prohibits the entity from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on its own behalf or imposes a penalty on that entity for making such application.

(Signature)

(First and Last Name)

(Title)

Must be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization.