

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Application due Wednesday, July 22, 2026



Administration for Community Living

Administration on Disabilities





Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

# University Centers for Developmental Disabilities in Education, Research, and Service

Opportunity number: HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-DDUC-0022



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# Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registrations are active and up to date.

## **SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)**

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

## **Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)**

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

## **Apply by the application due date**

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, July 22, 2026.



To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.



# Step 1:

# Review the Opportunity

## In this step

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# Basic information

## Administration for Community Living (ACL)

Administration on Disabilities

Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Supporting the independence and inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life.

## Summary

The Administration on Disabilities (AoD) within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will support two University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) with five-year funding awards.

UCEDDs are interdisciplinary education, research, and public service units of universities, or of public or not-for-profit entities associated with universities that carry out four core functions, including interdisciplinary training, community services, research, and information dissemination, to address:

- Quality assurance.
- Education and early intervention.
- Childcare.
- Health.
- Employment.
- Housing.
- Transportation.
- Recreation.
- Other services offered to people in a community.



Have questions?

See [Contacts and Support](#).

## Key facts

### Opportunity name:

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service

### Opportunity number:

HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-DDUC-0022

### Federal assistance listing:

93.632

### Cost sharing: 25%

### NOFO version: Original

## Key dates

### Application submission deadline:

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

### Expected award date:

September 30, 2026

### Expected project start date:

September 30, 2026

See [intergovernmental review](#) for other submission processes that may apply to this NOFO.

## Funding details

**Type:** Grant

**Expected total program funding over the performance period:** \$3,145,210

**Expected total program funding per budget period:** \$629,042

**Total expected awards:** 2

**Funding range per applicant per budget period:** \$629,042 to \$636,192

We plan to fund awards in five 12-month budget periods for a five-year period of performance from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2031.

# Eligibility

## Eligible applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- Section 151(a) of the DD Act states that appropriations authorized under section 156(a)(1) of the DD Act shall be used to make five-year grants to entities in each state designated as UCEDDs. Only UCEDD grantees awarded five-year core funds in FY 2021 may apply.

## Other eligibility criteria

You are only eligible to apply for funds under this NOFO if:

- You received a five-year UCEDD grant in FY 2021.
- Your designation as a UCEDD expires on June 30, 2026.

## Disqualifying factors

We will review your application to make sure it meets these responsiveness requirements.

We won't consider an application that:

- Is submitted after the [deadline](#).
- Is from an individual, including a sole proprietorship, or a foreign entity.
- Is received in paper format that didn't have a previously approved exemption from ACL.

## Application limits

If you submit the same application more than once under this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), we will only acknowledge the last on-time submission.

## Cost sharing

This program requires you to contribute 25% of the project's total cost.

To calculate your cost-sharing requirement, use this formula:

$$(\$ \text{ Federal share} \times 25) / 75 = \$ \text{ Your cost-sharing requirement}$$

To calculate it:

- Start with the federal share.
- Multiply the federal share by 25.
- Divide that product by 75.

Here's an example with a federal share of \$620,675:

$$(\$620,675 \times 25) / 75 = \$206,891 = \text{Your cost sharing requirement}$$

## Types of cost sharing

You can meet your match requirement through any combination of:

- Cash contributed by your organization, partners, or other third parties.
- In-kind (non-cash) contributions from partners or other third parties.

## Cost-sharing commitments

If awarded, you must provide the amount of cost-sharing funds you promised, even if you promised more than the required minimum. We put these commitments in the Notice of Award.

If you don't provide your promised amount, we may decrease the amount of funding we give you or use other enforcement actions.

You'll have to include your cost-sharing funds when you fill out your [federal financial reports](#).

## Reduced cost-sharing

In certain circumstances, the minimum cost-sharing requirement may be less than 25% of the total project cost. For example, if a project's activities target people with developmental disabilities who live in an urban or rural poverty area (as determined by the Secretary), the federal share of the cost of the project can be up to 90% of the necessary costs of the project (Section 154 (d)(2) of the DD Act).

## Two-tiered eligibility system for reduced cost-sharing

**(Optional)** To meet the requirements in the DD Act, we use a two-tiered system to determine eligibility for reduced cost-sharing:

- **Tier 1:** UCEDDs in states where the poverty rate is equal to or greater than the official national poverty rate automatically qualify for the reduced cost-sharing.
- **Tier 2:** UCEDDs in states with a poverty rate not equal to or greater than the official national poverty rate show that the UCEDD activities will target people with developmental disabilities in urban or rural poverty areas.

To demonstrate that at least 25% of your UCEDD projects target people with developmental disabilities who live in urban and rural poverty areas, include the following in your [budget narrative](#):

- The current state poverty rate.
- A full listing of all your current projects. You can generate this from the National Information Reporting System (NIRS).
- State whether the activity is associated with any of the urban and rural poverty indicators in [Appendix A](#).
- Or explain if your activities target people with developmental disabilities in an urban and rural poverty area in other ways.

Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands do not have federal poverty rates. They can qualify for reduced cost-sharing by establishing that the UCEDD activity:

- Is associated with any of the urban and rural poverty indicators in [Appendix A](#).

### Post-award requirements

Before you apply, make sure you understand the requirements that come with an award.

See [Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award](#) for information on regulations that apply, reporting, and more.

## Statutory authority

The purpose of the DD Act is to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

To achieve this purpose, the DD Act authorizes the following programs:

- State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (Subtitle B).
- Protection and Advocacy Systems (Subtitle C).
- University Centers for Excellence in Developmental disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDDs) (Subtitle D).
- Projects of National Significance (Subtitle E).

Each of these programs engage in systemic change, capacity building, and advocacy activities. They work as a collaborative network and as independent entities to improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and enhance participation in community life in the state.

Section 151(a) of the DD Act states that appropriations authorized under section 156(a)(1) of the DD Section 151(a) of the DD Act shall be used to make five-year grants to entities in each state that are designated as UCEDDs.

# Program description

This NOFO supports the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). The goal of the DD Act is to promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration in the community.

The DD Act defines developmental disability as a severe, chronic disability of an individual that:

- Can be attributed to a mental or physical impairment, or combination of both.
- Manifests before the individual is 22 years old.
- Is likely to continue indefinitely.

Developmental disabilities result in substantial limitations in three or more of the following functional areas:

- Self-care.
- Receptive and expressive language.
- Learning.
- Mobility.
- Self-direction.
- Capacity for independent living.
- Economic self-sufficiency.

The DD Act identifies several significant findings, including:

- Disability is a natural part of the human experience. It does not diminish the right of people with developmental disabilities to enjoy the opportunity for independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion into the community.
- People whose disabilities occur during their developmental period frequently have severe disabilities that are likely to continue indefinitely.
- People with developmental disabilities often require lifelong specialized services and assistance that should:
  - Be provided by many agencies, professionals, advocates, community representatives, and others.
  - Eliminate barriers.
  - Meet the needs of individuals and their families.

The DD Act promotes best practices and policies. People with developmental disabilities:

- And their families make the decisions about the services and supports they receive. They also play decision-making roles in relevant policies and programs.
- Can achieve independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion into their communities, with services and support that meet their individual needs. This includes those with the most severe developmental disabilities.
- Are competent, capable, and have personal goals that should be recognized and supported.

Any supports provided to advance these outcomes should be individualized and consistent with the unique strengths, resources, and priorities of the person.

This NOFO seeks to support these practices and policies and accomplish the following:

- Increase the ability of people with developmental disabilities to promote self-determination, person-centered practices, and meaningful inclusion in all aspects of community life.
- Enhance the capabilities of families assisting people with developmental disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.
- Promote systemic change that ensures that people with developmental disabilities actively and meaningfully participate in community-based programs.
- Invite people with developmental disabilities and their families to participate in all aspects of grantee programs, activities, and services.
- Ensure the legal and human rights of people with developmental disabilities are protected.
- Ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families enjoy the same level of meaningful opportunities to access and use community services, individualized support, and other forms of assistance that are available to other people with developmental disabilities and their families.

UCEDDs are expected to:

- Lead and advise federal, state, and community policymakers about people with developmental disabilities.
- Promote opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to be self-determined, independent, productive, and integrated in their communities.

## Four core functions

The four core functions to achieve the DD Act are:

- Interdisciplinary pre-service preparation and continuing education for students and fellows.
- Community services of training and technical assistance (TA). It may also include direct services and model demonstrations of services.
- Research.
- Information dissemination.

## Funding policies and limitations

### Changes in HHS regulations

As of October 1, 2025, HHS adopted [2 CFR 200](#), with some exceptions included in [2 CFR 300](#). These regulations replace those in 45 CFR 75.

### Policies

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations, and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.

- We will only make awards if this program receives funding. If Congress appropriates funds for this purpose, we will move forward with the review and award process.
- Support beyond the first budget period will depend on:
  - Appropriation of funds.
  - Satisfactory progress in meeting your project's objectives.
  - A decision that continued funding is in the government's best interest.
- If we receive more funding for this program, we will consider:
  - Funding more applicants.
  - Extending the period of performance.
  - Awarding supplemental funding.

- You may not use funds from this NOFO for any diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI and DEIA) activities. This includes:
  - DEI- or DEIA-related research.
  - Activities that discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or other protected traits.
- Under this NOFO, you can't continue existing projects without expansion or new and innovative approaches.
- Meals are allowed only in limited circumstances linked to program activities, like during travel or when approved in advance by ACL. See Allowable Costs and Activities, Exhibit 4: Selected Items of Cost, Meals in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#).
- There are restrictions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance equipment. See [2 CFR 200.216](#) to make sure this does not apply to any proposed equipment in your application.

## Unallowable costs

- Construction or major rehabilitation of buildings.
- Basic research, such as scientific or medical experiments.
- For guidance on other types of costs that we restrict or do not allow, see General Provisions for Selected Items of Costs of the Uniform Guidance, [2 CFR 200.420](#).

## Program-specific limitations and policies

For guidance on some types of costs we do not allow or restrictions, see 45 CFR 75.420, [General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost](#).

This NOFO meets the ACL definition for training grants. This means you must limit the indirect cost rate to eight percent of total direct costs.

This NOFO excludes equipment, tuition and stipends, rental of space, major contracts or subgrants, and renovation and alteration.

According to Section 152 of the DD Act, awards must be made to each UCEDD that existed in the preceding fiscal year that meets the requirements of subtitle D. Awards pay for the federal share of the cost of the administration and operation of the UCEDD. The DD Act, Section 155, defines a state as the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam. Funds made available under this NOFO will pay for the federal share of the cost of administering and operating UCEDD centers.

## Indirect costs

Indirect costs are those shared across multiple projects and not easily separated.

To charge indirect costs you can select one of two methods:

**Method 1 — Approved rate.** If you currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency, you may use that rate.

**Method 2 — *De minimis* rate.** If you do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate (see [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#)). This rate may be up to 15% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). See the definition of MTDC ([2 CFR 200.1](#)). You can use this rate indefinitely.

You may not charge costs included in your indirect cost pool as direct costs.

## Subawards

As the prime recipient, you must maintain a substantive role in the project. This means that you conduct funded activities and provide services necessary and integral to completing the project.

Monitoring your subrecipient's activities alone as described in [2 CFR 200.332](#) is not a substantive role.

We do not fund awards where your role is primarily a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

All subrecipients must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Subrecipients must meet the [eligibility requirements](#) of this NOFO.

## Salary rate limitation

The salary rate limitation in the current appropriations act applies to this program. You may not use awarded funds to pay a salary at a higher rate than the rate for Executive Level II.

For the Executive Level II salary, please see [the Office of Personnel Management information on executive and senior level employee pay](#).

The salary limitation reflects a person's base salary (including any portion of the salary that is paid with indirect costs). It does not include fringe benefits or any income the person is allowed to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization.

This salary limitation also applies to subawards, contracts, and subcontracts under an ACL grant or cooperative agreement.

## Program income

If you earn any money from your award-supported project activities (known as program income), you must use it for the purposes and under the conditions of the award. Find more about program income at [2 CFR 200.307](#).



# Step 2: Get Ready to Apply

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# Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can search for it at [Grants.gov](#) using opportunity number HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-DDUC-0022. Then select the Package tab.

We recommend that you select the **Subscribe button** from the View Grant Opportunity page for this NOFO to get updates.

You can also find materials at [Applying for Grants on ACL's website](#).

If you can't use Grants.gov to download application materials or have other technical difficulties, including issues with application submission, [contact Grants.gov](#) for assistance.

# Get registered

## SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov to apply. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register:

- Go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and select Get Started. From the same page, you can also select the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.
- You must agree to the [financial assistance general certifications and representations \[PDF\]](#) specifically. Those for contracts are different.

When you register, you will also receive your required Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Once you register:

- You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.
- If your organization has multiple UEIs, use the one associated with your physical location.

## Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

**Need help?** See [Contacts and Support](#).



# Step 3:

# Build Your Application

## In this step

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# Application checklist

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply. You will find the forms in Grants.gov.

## Narratives

Item	Grants.gov form	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Project narrative</a>	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form.	60 pages
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Budget narrative</a>	Use the Budget Narrative Attachment form.	None

## Attachments

Insert each in a single Other Attachments Form.

Item	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Indirect cost agreement	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Commitment letters	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Proof of nonprofit status	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Resumes and job descriptions	None

## Other required forms

Use each required form in Grants.gov.

Item	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Key Contacts Form	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Grants.gov Lobbying Form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Project/Performance Site Location Form	None

# Application contents and format

This section includes guidance on each component found in the application checklist.

**Application page limit:** 60 pages.

Submit your information in English and express whole number budget figures using U.S. dollars.

## Required format

Required format for project and budget narratives.

**Font:** Times New Roman or Arial

**Format:** PDF

**Size:** 11-point font

Footnotes and text in graphics may be 10-point.

**Spacing for project narrative main content:** Double-spaced

**Spacing for budget narrative:** As needed

**Spacing for project summary, tables, footnotes:** Single-spaced

**Margins:** 1-inch

Include page numbers.

## Project narrative

**Page limit:** 60

The project narrative is the most important part of the application. We use it as the primary basis to decide whether your project meets the statutory requirements and to review its merit. The project narrative should give a clear and concise description of your project.

Be sure to cite all your sources. Merit reviewers may lower your score if you do not.

Also study the merit review criteria under each section to make sure you answer all questions and cover all topics reviewers will look at.

## Project summary

Provide a brief project summary of no more than 265 words. Write it for the general public. You will need to include:

- **Goals:** Broad overall purpose, like a mission statement that says what you want to do and where you want to be.
- **Objectives:** Narrow, specific, and clear steps toward the goals. These are the “hows” to achieve the goals.
- **Overall approach:** General overview of what you will do.
- **Outcomes:** These are the measurable results of a project. Include expected changes among those served, such as clients, systems, organizations, and communities. These should tie directly to your goals and those of this funding.
- **Products:** The materials and other deliverables you expect to generate through the project.
- **Duration:** The anticipated start and end dates of the period of performance.

## Project relevance and current need

### Problem statement

Describe in both quantitative and qualitative terms, the nature and scope of the problem your proposed intervention is designed to address. Include how the project will potentially affect:

- People with developmental disabilities across the age span.
- Their families and caregivers.
- The healthcare and social services systems.

Also note any major barriers you anticipate encountering, and how your project will be able to overcome those barriers.

Be sure to describe the role and makeup of any strategic partnerships you plan to involve to ensure effective delivery, including other organizations, supporters, and the Consumer Advisory Council.

### Goals and objectives

Describe the project’s goal(s) and major objectives. Unless the project involves multiple, complex interventions, we recommend you have only one overall goal.

**Table: Scoring criteria**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Project relevance and current need that meets these criteria.	10 points

## Approach

### Proposed intervention

Clearly and concisely describe the intervention or approach you propose to address the problem identified in the problem statement section.

You should also describe why you chose the intervention, including:

- Lessons learned from similar projects previously tested in your community, or in other areas of the country.
- Factors in the larger environment that have created the right conditions for the intervention (e.g., existing social or economic factors that you will be able to take advantage of).

### Project management

Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of project staff, consultants, and partner organizations. Note how they will contribute to achieving the project's objectives and outcomes.

Specify who will be responsible for day-to-day tasks such as:

- Leadership of project.
- Monitoring the project's on-going progress, (i.e., measure of performance towards the goals stated in the funding opportunity announcement, and for your specific intervention/activities).
- Preparation of reports.
- Communicating with other partners and ACL.

You should also describe how you will monitor and track progress on the project's tasks and objectives.

### Work plan

You must provide a work plan for your project. The work plan connects your period of performance outcomes, strategies and activities, and measures. It provides more detail on how you will measure outcomes and processes.

To create your work plan:

- Use the [Project Work Plan Sample Template](#) on our website.
- Include the project's overall goal, expected outcomes, key objectives, and the major action steps needed to achieve them.
- For each major action step, include start and end dates and the lead responsible person.

**Table: Scoring criteria**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
An approach that meets these criteria.	45 points

## Project impact

### Special target populations and organizations

This section should describe how you plan to meaningfully involve the following as you plan and implement your proposed plan:

- Other UCEDDs in your state.
- State Councils on Developmental Disabilities.
- Protection and Advocacy Systems.
- Centers for Independent Living.
- Consumer Advisory Council.

This section should describe how the plan will target and include people in unserved or underserved communities, such as in urban and rural areas.

### Outcomes

Clearly identify the measurable outcome(s) that will result from the project. **ACL will not fund** any project that does not include measurable outcomes.

Examples of measurable outcomes include:

- Number of individuals who received specialized services from the UCEDD to enhance the well-being and status of the recipient.
- Percent of UCEDD long term trainees reporting an increase in knowledge or skills and/or change in attitude.
- Average dollar amount leveraged per core dollar across five-year period.
- Percent of individuals with DD receiving services from former UCEDD long-term trainees.
- Percent of former UCEDD long-term trainees in leadership positions.
- Impact statement(s) for TA projects/activities over the five years.

Also describe how the project's findings might benefit the field at large, (e.g., how the findings could help other organizations throughout the nation address similar problems).

You can list measurable outcomes in the [example, optional work plan grid](#).

Keep the focus of this section on the outcome(s) that will be produced by the project. Use the evaluation section to describe how the outcome(s) will be measured and reported.

## Evaluation

Evaluation (project impact) should describe the method(s), techniques, and tools that will be used to:

- Determine whether the proposed intervention achieved its anticipated outcome(s).
- Document the lessons learned, both positive and negative, that will be useful to people interested in replicating the intervention, if it proves successful.

In this section, you also need to:

- Address how the conduct of the project and its results will be evaluated.
- State what measures will be used to determine how well the project has achieved its stated objectives.
- Explain the extent to which the accomplished objectives can be attributed to the project.
- Discuss the criteria you will use to evaluate results.
- Explain the methodology you will use to determine if:
  - The needs identified and discussed are being met.
  - The project results and benefits are being achieved.
- Define how you will determine whether the project is consistent with the presented work plan.
- Discuss the impact of the project's various activities and their effectiveness.
- Explain the methodology you will use to annually gather and report data, outcomes, and impacts, using the UCEDD Annual Report Template. Use the UCEDD logic model to report five-year outcomes.
  - Use quantitative and qualitative techniques.

## Dissemination

Describe the method you will use to share the project's results and findings widely, in a timely manner, and in easily understandable formats. These results are for parties who might be interested in using them to inform their practice, service delivery, program development, and policymaking. This includes those who would be interested in replicating the project.

**Table: Scoring criteria**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Project impact that meets these criteria.	15 points

## Capability and expertise

### Organizational capability

Include an organizational capability statement and short, two-page vitae for key project personnel. These do not count towards the project narrative page limit.

In the organizational capability statement:

- Describe how your agency (or the particular division of a larger agency which will have responsibility for this project) is organized, the nature and scope of its work, and its capabilities.
  - Include the organization's capability to sustain some or all project activities after federal financial assistance has ended.
- Cover capabilities that you did not cover in the program narrative. This might include any current or previous relevant experience, or the record of the project team in preparing cogent and useful reports, publications, and other products.
- Include an organizational chart showing the relationship of the project to the current organization.
- Include information about any contractual organization(s) that will have a significant role(s) in implementing project and achieving project goals.
- Describe the qualifications of the faculty and staff assigned to the UCEDD grant. The UCEDD staff should include a director [section 154 (a)(3)(G)] with:
  - Appropriate academic credentials.
  - Demonstrated leadership.
  - Expertise regarding developmental disabilities.
  - Significant experience in managing grants and contracts.
- The ability to leverage public and private funds.

### Experience of the project team

- Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of project staff, consultants, and partner organizations. Describe how they will help achieve the project's objectives and outcomes.
- Specify who will be responsible for day-to-day tasks such as:
  - Leading the project.

- Monitoring the project's on-going progress, (i.e., measure of performance towards the goals stated in the funding opportunity announcement, and for your specific intervention/activities).
- Preparing reports.
- Communicating with other partners and ACL.
- Tracking progress on the project's tasks and objectives.

**Table: Scoring criteria**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Capability and expertise that meets these criteria.	20 points

## Budget narrative

**Page limit: None**

The budget narrative supports the information you provide in [Standard Form-424A](#).

It includes added detail and justifies the costs you ask for. As you think about your budget, consider:

- If the costs are reasonable and consistent with your project's purpose and activities.
- The restrictions on spending funds. See [funding policies and limitations](#).

When you develop your budget narrative:

- We encourage you to use the [ACL Budget Narrative Sample Format \[PDF\]](#). This format shows the level of detail we are looking for in your application.
- Justify all the costs and show how you calculated them.
- You will need to create a budget narrative that shows all years combined along with separate, detailed budget narratives for each year.
- Include a combined UCEDD five-year budget justification narrative, as well as a detailed budget justification narrative for each year of the five-year potential grant funding is required.
- Include a description of cost-sharing commitments (e.g. [reduced cost-sharing](#) and the two-tiered eligibility system).

Reviewers will assess your budget (SF-424A) and your budget narrative to score this section.

**Table: Scoring criteria for budget and budget narrative**

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
A budget narrative that meets these criteria.	10 points

## Attachments

You will upload attachments in Grants.gov using the Other Attachments Form.

### Indirect cost agreement

If you include indirect costs in your budget using an approved rate, include a copy of your current agreement approved by your [cognizant agency for indirect costs](#). If you use the *de minimis* rate, you do not need to submit this attachment.

### Commitment letters

Include letters from any organization that will have a significant role in carrying out your project. The letter should explain their role and their commitment to the project.

### Proof of nonprofit status

If your organization is a nonprofit, you need to attach proof. We will accept any of the following:

- A copy of a current tax exemption certificate from the IRS.
- A letter from your state's tax department, attorney general, or another state official saying that your group is a nonprofit and that none of your net earnings go to private shareholders or others.
- A certified copy of your certificate of incorporation. This document must show that your group is a nonprofit.
- Any of these documents for a parent organization. Also include a statement signed by an official of the parent group that your organization is a nonprofit affiliate.

### Resumes and job descriptions

For key personnel, attach resumes for positions that are filled. For positions that aren't filled, attach the job descriptions with qualifications.

## Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms in Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and their instructions at [Grants.gov Forms](#).

Form	Submission requirement
<input type="checkbox"/> Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Key Contacts Form	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Grants.gov Lobbying Form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Project/Performance Site Location Form	None

### Important: Public information

When filling out your SF-424 form, pay attention to Box 15: Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project.

We share what you put there with [USAspending](#). This is where the public goes to learn how the federal government spends their money.

Instead of just a title, insert a short description of your project and what it will do.

[See instructions and examples \[PDF\]](#).



# Step 4:

## Learn About Review and Award

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# Application review

## Initial review

We will review your application to make sure that it meets the responsiveness requirements listed in the [disqualifying factors section](#). If your application does not meet these criteria, we will disqualify it and we will not move it to the merit review (scoring) phase.

We will not review any pages over the page limit.

## Scoring process

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. The members use the merit review scoring criteria in the project narrative and budget narrative sections of this NOFO. You can find the specific criteria in each section of the project narrative and in the budget narrative section.

## Criteria summary

Heading	Points
Project summary	0 points
Project relevance and current need	10 points
Approach	45 points
Project impact	15 points
Capability and expertise	20 points
Budget narrative	10 points

## Risk review

Before making an award, we review the risk that you will mismanage federal funds or fail to complete the project objectives. We need to make sure you've handled any past federal awards well and demonstrated sound business practices.

We use [SAM.gov](#) Responsibility/Qualification to check this history for all awards likely to be over \$250,000. We also check Exclusions.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific conditions on the award.

You can see more details about risk review at [2 CFR 200.206](#).

## Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- Merit review results. These are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.
- The larger portfolio of agency-funded projects, including project type and geographic distribution.
- The past performance of the applicant. We may choose not to fund applicants with management or financial problems.
- Reasonableness of proposed costs to the expected results and the likelihood you will achieve those results.
- Available funding.

We may:

- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a prime recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.
- Choose to fund no applications under this funding opportunity.

The ACL administrator makes all final award decisions.

## Funding priorities for alignment with agency priorities

Before we make final funding decisions, ACL leadership will review all potential awards.

They will check for:

- Adherence to applicable laws.
- Alignment to agency priorities (see [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#)).

To the extent allowed by law and court orders, we will give a funding priority to applications that align with agency priorities.

Your application may receive this priority if it aligns with ACL operational drivers.

Merit review criteria also include factors related to ACL's priorities.

# Award notices

If your application is successful, we will email a Notice of Award (NoA) to your authorized official. We will email you or write you a letter if your application is disqualified or unsuccessful.

The NoA is the only official award document. The NoA tells you the amount of the award, important dates, and the terms and conditions you need to follow. Until you receive the NoA, you don't have permission to start work.

[See an example NoA on our website \[PDF\].](#)



# Step 5: Submit Your Application

## In this step

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# Application submission and deadlines

See [find the application package](#) and the [application checklist](#) to make sure you have everything you need.

Make sure you are current with SAM.gov and UEI requirements. See [get registered](#). You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.

## Application

### Deadline

**Due on Wednesday, July 22, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.**

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept the last on-time submission.

The grants management officer may extend an application due date based on emergency situations such as documented natural disasters or a verifiable widespread disruption of electric or mail service.

### Submission method

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. See [get registered](#).

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

If you can't submit your application because of problems with Grants.gov, you will need verification for us to consider accepting your application. Call the [Federal Service Desk](#) before the application due time and record your tracking number. Save your tracking number and any error messages you receive.

See [Contacts and Support](#) if you need help.

## Intergovernmental review

[Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs](#) does not apply to this NOFO. You do not need to take any action.



# Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award

## In this step

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# Post-award requirements and administration

## Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you need to know if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the Notice of Award. You can find information at [Managing a Grant on our website](#). We incorporate this NOFO by reference.
- The rules listed in [2 CFR 200](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, effective October 1, 2025. These replace those in 45 CFR 75, with some exceptions in [2 CFR 300](#).
- The HHS [Grants Policy Statement \(GPS\)](#). This document has terms and conditions tied to your award. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your Notice of Award.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#), Appendix D: HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- All anti-discrimination laws: By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, recipients certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements and that complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. Recipients are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.

## Compliance and oversight

Recipients must demonstrate ongoing compliance with the [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#) through program design, implementation, performance reporting, fiscal management, and evaluation.

Failure to meaningfully align funded activities with applicable statutory authorities and agency priorities may result in corrective action, additional reporting requirements, enforcement actions, or other remedies consistent with 2 CFR Part 200 and the terms and conditions of the award.

Through alignment with these priorities, funded projects will help ensure that older adults and people with disabilities can live with dignity, independence, and full participation in the communities they call home.

## Managing award changes

After award, either you or ACL may request changes. We manage these using the rules at 2 CFR 200 and 300, including [2 CFR 200.308](#) and [2 CFR 300.308](#).

## Reporting

If your application is successful, you will have to submit financial and performance reports. To learn more about reporting, see [Managing a Grant, Funding Requirements on our website](#).

### Financial and performance reports

The terms and conditions in the Notice of Award will have information on performance and financial reports including:

- How often you will report.
- Any required form or formatting.
- How to submit them.

### FFATA and FSRS reporting

The Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires:

- Data entry at the FFATA Subaward Reporting System for all subawards and subcontracts you issue for \$30,000 or more.
- Reporting executive compensation for both recipient and subaward organizations.



# Contacts and Support

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# Agency contacts

## Program and eligibility

**David Jones**

[David.Jones@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:David.Jones@acl.hhs.gov)

202-795-7367

## Financial and budget

**Rasheed Williams**

[Rasheed.Williams@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Rasheed.Williams@acl.hhs.gov)

202-401-5481

# Help with systems

## Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. Hold on to your ticket number.

- Phone: 1-800-518-4726
- Email: [support@Grants.gov](mailto:support@Grants.gov)

## SAM.gov

If you need help, you can:

- Call 866-606-8220.
- Live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

# Reference websites

- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#)
- [Home Page | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Applying for Grants | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Application Tips | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [How to Apply for a Competitive Grant | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](#)
- [United States Code \(U.S.C.\)](#)

# Appendix A: Urban or rural poverty indicators

In accordance with the DD Act, AoD will review all the information submitted by the UCEDD to determine eligibility for the reduced cost-sharing.

## Definitions

**Poverty area:** Census tracts or block numbering areas (BNAs) where at least 20% of residents are below the poverty level.

**Urban area:** Collective term referring to all areas that are urban. For Census 2000, there are two types of urban areas:

- **Urban cluster (UC):** A densely settled territory that has between 2,500 to 50,000 people.
- **Urbanized area (UA):** An area consisting of a central place(s) and adjacent territory, with a general population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile, with a minimum residential population of 50,000 persons.
- The U.S. Census Bureau uses published criteria to determine the qualification and boundaries of UAs.

**Rural:** Territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban.

- Rural classification cuts across other hierarchies and can be in metropolitan or non-metropolitan areas.
- Rural can include frontier: places with a population density of six or fewer people per square mile.

**Table 1: Urban and rural poverty indicator descriptions**

Urban and rural poverty indicator	Description
Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC)	Areas designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as communities with high rates of poverty.
Food stamps	The food stamp program helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health. The UCEDD project would have to target individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who receive food stamps.
National School Lunch Program (NSLP) - also referred to as free and reduced lunch program	NSLP is a federally-assisted meal program that provides low-cost or free lunches to children. The UCEDD project would have to be implemented in a school that qualifies for the NSLP.
Head Start	The Head Start program provides grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families. The UCEDD project would have to work with a Head Start program.
Housing assistance	The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has a variety of housing assistance programs, such as Section 8 housing assistance programs. The UCEDD project would have to target individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who are receiving federal housing assistance.
Medicaid	Title XIX of the Social Security Act is a federal/state entitlement program that pays for medical assistance for certain individuals and families with low incomes and resources. The UCEDD project would have to target individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who are eligible for Medicaid.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	SSI is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income. It provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. The UCEDD project would have to target individuals with developmental disabilities who receive SSI benefits.
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	TANF is a federal program that provides assistance and work opportunities to needy families through grants to states. The UCEDD project would have to target individuals with developmental disabilities, children with developmental disabilities, and their families who receive TANF benefits.
Other	The UCEDD may provide other indicators of poverty not included in this list. The UCEDD would have to provide adequate information to justify using this category. The UCEDD would have to demonstrate the project targets individuals with developmental disabilities in rural and urban poverty areas. AoD will determine the adequacy of the justification for eligibility for reduced cost-sharing.

**Table 2: Example format for submitting information to AoD**

item	item
Official national poverty rate	10.6
UCEDD project title and description	Poverty indicators
Provide name of project and project description	List name of poverty program targeted by project
Of the total UCEDD projects, the percent that targets people with developmental disabilities living in urban and rural poverty areas	Fill in percentage

## Tier I States

**Table 3: States in tier I**

State	Poverty rate
Louisiana	18.7%
Mississippi	17.8%
District of Columbia	17.3%
West Virginia	16.7%
New Mexico	16.4%
Kentucky	15.6%
Arkansas	15.5%
Alabama	15.2%
Oklahoma	14.9%
New York	14.0%
Tennessee	13.5%
Michigan	13.4%
Texas	13.4%
South Carolina	13.3%
Ohio	12.7%
Georgia	12.6%

State	Poverty rate
North Carolina	12.5%
Missouri	12.3%
Indiana	12.2%
Rhode Island	12.2%
Florida	12.0%
California	11.8%
Oregon	11.8%
Arizona	11.7%
Illinois	11.6%
Nevada	11.6%
Pennsylvania	11.6%
Iowa	11.3%
North Dakota	11.1%
Kansas	10.9%
Nebraska	10.9%
Maine	10.6%

## Tier II States

Table 4: States in tier II

State	Poverty rate
Idaho	10.5%
South Dakota	10.4%
Wisconsin	10.3%
Montana	10.2%
Alaska	10.2%
Connecticut	10.2%

State	Poverty rate
Hawaii	10.1%
Wyoming	10.1%
Washington	9.9%
Massachusetts	9.7%
Virginia	9.7%
Delaware	9.6%
Colorado	9.6%
Minnesota	9.3%
New Jersey	9.2%
Maryland	9.1%
Vermont	9.0%
Utah	8.3%
New Hampshire	7.2%