

## Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program

### *FY25 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*

**Overview:** This document contains FAQs from the FY25 Informational Webinars for Year 1 and Year 6 applicants. Any additional inquiries can be sent to the DFC NOFO Inbox [DFC\\_NOFO@cdc.gov](mailto:DFC_NOFO@cdc.gov). For fiscal-related questions, please reach out to the Office of Grant Services at [DFC\\_OGS@cdc.gov](mailto:DFC_OGS@cdc.gov).

### **About the Program**

**1. What population does this grant focus on? What substances are addressed under the DFC Support Program?**

The DFC Support Program supports the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent substance use among youth ages 12-18 years old (middle school and high school youth). Coalitions are required to address a minimum of two substances used by youth (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, prescription drugs, methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, and other drugs). Note: Vaping is not considered a substance; rather, it is a delivery method. Also, no specific substance will give an applicant an advantage.

**2. What is the grant's period of performance?**

The grant has a five-year period of performance starting on September 30, 2025 and ending September 29, 2030.

**3. How often is this grant awarded?**

The DFC Program awards funds to new (year 1) and competing continuation (year 6) applications every year.

**4. How many coalitions will receive funding from DFC during the FY25 cycle?**

Approximately 100 coalitions are expected to be awarded DFC funding for the FY25 funding cycle. Please note that this is a competitive funding opportunity, so funding is awarded to coalitions according to highest scoring applications based on the criteria defined in the NOFO.

**5. How does the DFC Support Program disburse grant funds?**

The DFC Support Program funds are disbursed to recipients as a reimbursement.

**6. Where can we check to see who has previously received funding and if there is zip-code overlap?**

You can see what coalitions were funded in your area by clicking on this website and entering your zip code in the table: <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/php/drug-free-communities/coalitions.html>

### **Eligibility**

**1. How can I check whether my coalition has received DFC Support Program funding in the past?**

To find out whether your organization has participated in the DFC Support Program in the past, please visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov), and enter the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) to search for a history of previously funded organizations. You can also check past awards in the [Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System \(TAGGS\)](#).

**2. We have gotten SAMHSA funding before, but never a DFC grant. Are we considered a “new” applicant?**

If your organization has never received DFC funding, you are considered a new applicant. DFC applications are considered independently of other funding opportunities.

If your organization has received five years of funding from the DFC Support Program or experienced a gap in funding, you may be eligible for an additional five years of funding through the Competing Continuation (Year 6) NOFO.

Note: No coalition may receive more than 10 years of funding from the DFC Support Program.

**3. Where can I find a list of active DFC coalitions or determine if there is a coalition serving my community?**

You can visit the [Drug-Free Communities Coalitions webpage](#) to locate additional information about active coalitions within your area.

**4. Can a fiscal agent who has previously received 10 years of funding apply again?**

If you are a fiscal agent applying on behalf of a new coalition, the 10-year funding limit does not apply to you.

Note: Fiscal agents can only apply on behalf of and serve one coalition at a time.

**5. Can a coalition who has already received 10 years of funding apply as the same coalition, but serve a different community or address different substances?**

No, once a coalition has received 10 years of DFC funding, it is no longer eligible for the DFC Support Program grant.

Note: Coalitions may apply as new, unique, and distinct coalitions if they meet the following criteria:

- Must be made up of different leadership and sector representatives from the community.
- Must have a new name and mission statement.
- Must have a 12-Month Action Plan based on a newly conducted community needs assessment.
- Must serve a new population.

**6. Does a fiscal agent applying on behalf of a community coalition need to be in the same state as the community coalition?**

The fiscal agent must be physically based in the same state as the coalition.

**7. Can the fiscal agent be a member of the coalition?**

The fiscal agent cannot be a member of the coalition if the fiscal agent is the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) receiving payment as part of the grant funds.

**8. Is a coalition eligible if it has been in existence for 6 months when the funds are awarded?**

The coalition must have been in existence since January 2025 in order to be eligible for this award.

**9. Do meeting minutes submitted at the time of application need to indicate participation of all 12 sector representatives?**

It is not required that all 12 sectors be present at the coalition meeting as described in the coalition meeting minutes. The meeting minutes must include the meeting date as well as the names of attendees and the sector they represent.

**10. Can a school district serve as both the fiscal agent and lead applicant for the DFC Support Program grant? What proof is required?**

A school district may serve as a fiscal agent or as the legal applicant to the grant. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is required to show the relationship between the school district serving as the fiscal and the community coalition. Please refer to the 'Eligible Applicants' section of the NOFO to review the list of entities eligible to serve as fiscal agent.

**11. Are Indigenous communities eligible to apply for this program?**

Yes, indigenous communities are eligible to apply.

**12. Are there any considerations for tribal populations when selecting sector representative?**

For tribal applicants, appropriate sector representatives may hold different titles and positions than non-tribal applicants. For example:

- A traditional healer or spiritual leader can serve as the religious and fraternal organization sector representative.
- A tribal Elder that enforces tribal law can serve as a law enforcement sector representative.
- A storyteller can serve as the media sector representative.

If there are positions or titles for other sectors that you believe meet DFC requirements, please provide the rationale in the sector table.

**13. What are the match requirements for tribal populations?**

Coalitions that are serving a tribal community and include a representative with expertise in the field of substance use from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian Health Service, or a tribal government agency can use additional federal funding as match.

**14. How often do coalition involvement agreements need to be submitted and/or updated?**

Signed Coalition Involvement Agreements (CIAs) are no longer required. Instead, as part of your application, you must submit the Sector Table that lists the names of each sector representative along with the rationale for his/her selection.

The Sector Table can be found on grants.gov in the 'Other Supporting Documents' for your funding opportunity.

**15. Is there a continuation grant for years 11-15?**

The reauthorization bill of the DFC Program proposes some changes, including a third five years of funding, namely for years 11-15. However, this bill has not been signed into law, so the 10-year funding limit still applies.

**16. Is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required for a fiscal agent that has been previously awarded but currently working with a new coalition?**

Yes, an MOU is required between the fiscal agent and the new coalition.

**1. How much money can a coalition request per year as part of the Drug-Free Communities Program (DFC)?**

A coalition can request up to \$125,000 per year.

**17. If a coalition is planning to apply for 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, are they eligible to apply for funding during this application cycle?**

Coalitions can apply if they are their own 501c3. However, that process takes time. We advise coalitions that do not currently have 501(c)(3) status to work with a fiscal agent that is eligible to receive federal funds instead of applying independently for this application cycle.

**18. Do you have to be a part of a coalition to apply for this grant or can you be a recovery community organization?**

The community coalition must be a 501(c)(3) organization, or the coalition can partner with an outside organization that is eligible to receive federal funds to serve as the Fiscal Agent on behalf of the coalition.

**19. Can a coalition serve multiple zip codes?**

DFC Coalitions can serve multiple zip codes. However, if a new coalition proposes to serve a ZIP code that overlaps with (1) that of an existing DFC coalition, and/or (2) another new DFC applicant, you must provide a Letter of Mutual Cooperation as part of your application.

**20. If the coalition is part of our organization, do we still need to provide the MOU as the fiscal agent?**

Yes, you will still need to provide an MOU. Please note that the 2 signatures should be from two different people.

**21. Can a youth coalition apply with the 12 sectors represented as an adult advisory council? If so, can the minutes submitted be from the youth coalition?**

The coalition must be made up of the 12 sectors as outlined in the NOFO. This should be an adult coalition that provides leadership to a youth coalition.

### ***Organizational Capacity (Key Personnel/Sectors)***

**1. What key personnel are required for the DFC Support Program?**

The following key personnel are required:

**Authorized Organization Representative (AOR):** The AOR is the representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a

grant is awarded. These responsibilities include overseeing the financial aspects of the grant and the performance of the grant-supported project or activities as specified in the approved application. This person must be an employee of the recipient organization. The AOR cannot be the same person as the PD/PI or Program Coordinator.

**Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI):** The PD/PI is the person who provides programmatic oversight of the grant and is accountable to officials of the recipient organization. The PD/PI cannot be the same person as the AOR.

**Project Coordinator:** The Project Coordinator manages the work of the coalition and program activities, including training, coalition communication, data collection, and information dissemination. The PD/PI and the Project Coordinator can be the same person.

2. **Does the Program Director have to be an employee of the organization that is submitting the application?**

No, the Program Director/Principal Investigator (**PD/PI**) does not have to be an employee of the applicant organization. However, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) is required to be an employee of your organization and must be identified in the Personnel budget category as either federal or non-federal.

3. **What do you mean by “sector representatives”?**

The community coalition must have representation from the 12 sectors identified in the DFC statutory eligibility requirements. Those sectors are:

- **Youth:** Someone 18 years of age or younger in a public, private, home-schooled, or alternative school (you must list their age).
- **Parent:** A person who is legally responsible for a child, grandchild, or foster child.
- **Business:** A representative of a business-related organization that provides services that are not in conflict with the goals and objectives of the DFC program.
- **Media:** A representative of a communication outlet that provides information to the community. Through an appropriate media platform, this representative should be capable of communicating and disseminating information (i.e., in print, digitally, or through social media) that furthers the coalition’s mission.
- **School:** A representative of the school system with influence in school policies and procedures.
- **Youth-serving organization:** A representative of an organization that provides services to support youth.
- **Religious or fraternal organization:** A representative of a faith-based organization or from a fraternal organization based on a common tie or pursuit of a common goal. The organization must have a substantial program of fraternal activities.
- **Law enforcement:** A representative of a law enforcement agency. The representative must be an active sworn law enforcement officer, not retired.
- **Civic or volunteer groups:** A representative of an organization that provides civic or volunteer activities that serves the community (not a coalition member). Examples include Lions clubs, Rotary clubs, and so on.

- **Healthcare professional:** An individual or representative of an organization licensed to provide physical, mental, or behavioral healthcare services, like a pediatrician, pharmacist, and so on.
- **State, local, or tribal governmental agency with expertise in substance use:** A representative of a government-funded agency focusing on substance use prevention, treatment, or recovery support services.
- **Other organizations** involved in reducing substance use.

Note: Coalitions must have 12 unique individuals – in other words, a single individual cannot represent multiple sectors. Additionally, while sector representatives cannot be paid by using DFC funds, (i.e., coalition members are volunteers), you may count their time towards the as match requirement.

**4. Does our coalition need to have representation from all 12 sectors at the time we submit our application, or can we expand our coalition after award?**

Yes, at the time of application, your coalition must consist of 12 unique sector representatives. While it is required that the coalition be in existence for at least six months prior to submitting an application, it is not required for all 12 sector representatives to be active throughout the entire six-month period. Please refer to the 'Organizational Capacity' section of the NOFO to reference additional information on sector representative requirements.

**1. What constitutes “a set of meeting minutes” required to demonstrate evidence of a coalition’s six-month existence?**

A set of meeting minutes from one meeting is required to be submitted with your application. The meeting must have taken place between January 2024 and the deadline for the submission of the application. Meeting minutes must include the meeting date and the names of attendees (including the sector they represent).

**2. What trainings are required for recipients of the DFC Support Program grant?**

First-year recipients are required to participate in the New Recipient Virtual Training hosted by ONDCP and the National Coalition Academy (NCA) training program hosted by the National Coalition Institute (NCI).

Sixth year recipients are required to participate in the New Recipient Virtual Training. They are not required to attend the NCA.

There are no costs associated with either training; however, if you choose to attend in person, the coalition will incur travel/lodging costs.

**3. If we attend training at a conference and the hotel costs exceed what is outlined in the local GSA rates, can we still stay there since it is the hotel rate negotiated by the sponsoring organization?**

Travel costs including lodging, must be reasonable and should not exceed the local General Services Administration set rates. Please refer to [45 CFR 75.474, Travel costs](#) for further travel cost guidance.

**4. Can school districts serve as a fiscal agent for the coalition?**

Yes, a school district can serve as a fiscal agent.

## Budget and Match

**1. How does the match requirement differ in Year 1 versus Year 6 of the program?**

The DFC program requires recipients to match the federal share 100% in the first five years of the program. For Competing Continuation (Year 6) recipients, the match amount is 100% in year 6; 125% in years 7-8; and 150% in years 9-10.

**2. How do federal vs. non-federal funds contribute to the match requirement?**

Federal funds, including those passed through a state or local government, cannot be used toward the required match. The only exception is in the case of a coalition that includes a representative from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian Health Service, or a tribal government agency with expertise in the field of substance use and misuse prevention and serving a tribal community. Non-federal funds can be used as match dollars.

**3. Do in-kind contributions (e.g., time) count towards the match requirement?**

Yes, in-kind contributions count towards the match requirement. There are multiple forms of acceptable in-kind support recipients can draw upon. You must provide an itemized match separately in the budget and explain the match within your Budget Narrative. Please refer to the *Budget Narrative* section of the NOFO for additional information.

Note: Time spent by non-federal personnel (e.g., the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) or a Grants Manager) can be counted towards the match requirement.

**4. What is the average salary for Key Personnel?**

Salaries are within the purview of the recipient organization. Please keep in mind the level of effort needed for a grant of \$125,000.

**5. Can DFC funding be used as a stipend for youth who participate in coalition activities? Food?**

No, DFC funds cannot be used for any stipends. However, a coalition may use incentives to support coalition engagement. Incentives should be the minimum value that is deemed necessary to meet the program goals. Please refer to the NOFO "Budget, funding policies, and limitations" section under '*Special Considerations*' for additional details.

**6. Is match funding required at the time of application?**

Proposed matched funds up to \$125,000 are required in the budget template but the actual funds can be secured over time once awarded.

**7. Can FTE staff count towards in-kind support?**

Yes, you can count their services as in-kind in the non-federal match part of your budget.

**8. Is there a specific budget template we should use?**

There is no specific budget worksheet required for the application; however, you can refer to the CDC grants webpage that provides CDC's budget preparation guidelines: [Budget Preparation Guidelines](#).

## Application Information

**1. What are the NOFO opportunity numbers for the FY25 funding cycle?**

- NEW (Year 1): **CDC-RFA-CE-25-0114**
- Competing Continuation (Year 6): **CDC-RFA-CE20-20040601CONT25**

**2. When can recipients expect to be notified about the results of their applications?**

CDC anticipates informing all newly awarded recipients prior to the start of the award period, which is September 30, 2025.

**3. Have any requirements from previous years been removed?**

Previously, separate, signed Coalition Involvement Agreements were required. Instead, for the FY 25 application, you must submit the Sector Table that lists the names of each sector representative along with the rationale for their selection. The sector representatives do not need to provide signatures.

Note: Only information for one representative for each sector type is needed for the table.

**4. What are the formatting expectations for submitted applications?**

Documents should be single-spaced with 1-inch margins and include page numbers. Text should be 12-point Calibri font. You may use 10-point font in tables, footnotes, and graphics. The use of color in submitted graphics is allowed.

**5. Where is the best place to submit the application on grants.gov or GrantSolutions?**

Applications must be submitted only through Grants.gov.

**6. Where can I locate supporting materials (i.e., the Statutory Eligibility Checklist, evidence-based resources, statistics, relevant glossary, and templates) for the attachments required to be submitted with my application?**

These resources and attachments may be accessed by selecting the 'Related Documents' tab on the funding opportunity that you are applying for (i.e., Year 1 or Year 6) and opening the folder 'Other Supporting Documents.' Templates and instructions for completion and submission may be found in each respective document included within this folder.

**7. Can signatures required within the application be submitted electronically?**

Yes, electronic signatures are allowed on all required documents.

**8. The length of the project narrative is restricted to 20 pages. What should be included within these 20 pages?**

Within the 20-page limit, you must include the following sections:

- **Background**
- **Approach**
  - Strategies and Activities
  - Outcomes
- **Communities of Focus**
- **Workplan**
- **Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan**



- **Organizational Capacity**
  - Organizational structure
  - Community coalition
  - Collaborations

Citations included within the text will count towards the 20-page limit for the 'Project Narrative'. You can choose to include citations within your application as footnotes.

**9. Is there a page limit for the budget narrative.**

The budget narrative is a separate section from the project narrative, and it does not have a page limit.

**10. Is a logic model required with the application?**

No, the application does not require a logic model.

**11. The grants.gov link is currently not active for the revised full announcement. How can I find it?**

You do not need to access the "Revised Full Announcement". Instead, when viewing the grants.gov opportunity page, click the 'Full Announcement' and 'Other Supporting Documents' links under the related documents tab. Both file descriptions have a last update date of March 19, 2025.

**12. What are the meeting minute requirements for the application?**

You must include coalition minutes from one coalition meeting that took place between January 2024 and the deadline for submission of this application. Meeting minutes must include:

- Meeting date.
- Names of attendees.
- Sectors represented.

**13. Are letters of intent/commitment required?**

No, letters of intent/commitment are not required for this application.

Note: Additional attachments or appendices outside of those explicitly mentioned in the NOFO will not be scored.

**14. Should the workplan cover strategies and activities spanning the entire 5-year period or only the first 12 months?**

The workplan should outline what you plan to implement over the first 12-months after award.

**15. I noticed on grants.gov there was the option to reuse forms. How does this work?**

It is not advised to reuse forms.

**16. How many people review each application?**

One CDC staff member completes the statutory review for eligibility and engages ONDCP to confirm additional information, where needed. Once complete, a merit review process is completed by three reviewers.

**17. Is a Data Management Plan required in the application if a coalition does not have one available within the past five years?**

While you are not required to submit a Data Management Plan with your application, you must comply with the evaluation requirements once awarded. Please refer to the Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation section of the NOFO for additional details on those requirements.

**18. Where can we find the application checklist?**

The application checklist can be found in the section titled “Application Contents and Format” on pages 35-36 of the NOFO.

**19. Is the fiscal agent an entire agency (e.g., municipality) or an individual (e.g., CFO)?**

The fiscal agent refers to the organization, not an individual.

**20. Do you need an eRA commons login in order to apply?**

No, an eRA common login is not required in order to apply.

**21. If a particular attachment is not relevant for my application, should I still include it?**

No, if an attachment does not apply, there is no need to include it.

**22. Are we required to complete the chart in the strategies and activities section on page 14?**

The table provided in the NOFO is intended to serve as a reference and does not need to be completed.

**23. Since a table of contents is required, should the pages be numbered continuously throughout the application? If so, should the attachments also be numbered?**

The way the pages are numbered will not impact your application. Please outline your complete application in the table of contents.

## **Other**

**1. Where can I access recordings of the Applicant Informational Webinars for either the NEW (Year 1) NOFO or the Competing Continuation (Year 6) application?**

The slides and recorded webinars are available at <https://dfc.cmpinc.net>.

**2. I am having difficulties accessing or submitting my application (i.e., creating an account, uploading attachments, etc.). Who should I contact?**

Please contact the [grants.gov](https://grants.gov) help desk. The help desk is available by phone at 1-800-518-4726, and/or by e-mail at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

**3. What if our agency name has changed since our original application, but our EIN number is the same. Will this be an issue for verifying previous years of funding?**

The organization name in SAM.gov and Grants.gov must match, so please make any necessary updates prior to submitting your application. Please verify this before the due date to avoid problems. In addition, one of the attachments, "Disclosure of Prior DFC funding", allows you to indicate how many years of funding you have received from the DFC program.