

# MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM (MHSP)



**CFDA 84.184X**

**2022 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WEBINAR FOR  
PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS**

## WEBINAR INFORMATION

- Today's webinar will be recorded and archived on the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environment's website (NCSSE). -  
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/events/webinar/mhsp-grant-application-technical-assistance-webinar-1>
- Complete program and application information is available here: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe-supportive-schools/mental-health-service-professional-demonstration-grant-program/applicant-information/>
- If you have further questions, not covered in today's webinar, please email [mental.health@ed.gov](mailto:mental.health@ed.gov).



# ORDER OF QUESTIONS

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## **Q: WHEN IS THE GRANT START DATE AND IS THE FIRST YEAR A PLANNING YEAR?**

- A** The Department will make awards by December 30, 2022, and applicants should plan on a January 1, 2023, start date. The MHSP grant program does not provide for a planning year. Applicants are expected to start implementation no later than January 2023; however, applicants may build in time to scale-up the activities in their proposals.



## Q: CAN YOU PROVIDE CLARITY ON THE AWARD AMOUNTS?

A The Department estimates making 150-250 awards, ranging from \$400,000 to \$1,200,000 per award for each 12-month budget period for up to 5 years. These numbers are estimates. This program does not include a minimum or maximum award amount. And applicants may request an amount over or under the estimated range, if warranted. The estimated award size included in the NIA is for one 12-month budget period. Applicants should base their proposals on the needs in their LEA(s) and should propose a reasonable budget to accomplish the work described in the application.



## Q: WHAT ARE THE CURRENT RATIOS?

A According to recent national data, the ratios of students to providers are significantly greater than what experts recommend:

- The recommended student-to-counselor ratio is 250:1 by the American School Counselor Association.
- The recommended student-to-psychologist ratio is 500:1 by the National Association of School Psychologists.
- The recommended student-to-school social worker ratio is 250:1 by the National Association of School Workers.



## **Q: ARE THERE EQUITY AND PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THIS PROGRAM?**

**A** Yes. Applicants that receive an award under this program must ensure that any school-based mental health services provider offering services (including telehealth services) does so in an equitable manner and consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as all other applicable Federal, State, and local laws and profession-specific ethical obligations.







# ELIGIBILITY/PARTNERSHIPS

## Q: ARE IHES ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS FOR THIS PROGRAM?

A Yes. IHEs, high-need LEAs, and SEAs on behalf of one or more high-need LEA are eligible applicants for this program. Please review the definitions of “high-need LEA” and “eligible IHE” in the Notice Inviting Applications, available at:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/10/04/2022-21632/applications-for-new-awards-mental-health-service-professional-demonstration-grant-program>



## **Q: ARE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS FOR THIS PROGRAM?**

**A** No. Non-profit organizations (other than those that meet the definition of eligible IHE) are not eligible applicants for this program.



## **Q: CAN AN IHE SUBMIT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE IHE THAT INVOLVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH DIFFERENT LEAS?**

**A** Yes, an IHE can submit more than one application. However, the number of awards per single entity will be limited to one per UEI number. In addition, the Department will make only one award that serves any individual LEA. If sufficient funds remain after funding all high-quality applications, the Department may consider funding more than one high-quality application from a single entity so long as the entity's other applications propose separate projects. (See "III. Eligibility Information" in the Notice Inviting Applications for MHSP.)



**Q: CAN AN IHE PARTNER WITH MORE THAN ONE LEA? FOR EXAMPLE, CAN AN IHE SUBMIT AN APPLICATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A GROUP OF LEAS/SEAS AND BE LISTED AS A PARTNER ON A DIFFERENT GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY AN LEA THAT IS NOT PART OF THE FIRST GROUP?**

**A** Yes. However, the number of awards per single entity will be limited to one per UEI number. Therefore, it may not be in the IHE's interest to be the primary entity (i.e., the entity that submits the application on behalf of the partnership) on more than one application.



**Q: CAN AN LEA PARTNER WITH MORE THAN ONE IHE THAT WANTS TO INCLUDE THE LEA IN THEIR APPLICATION? IN OTHER WORDS, CAN AN LEA BE INCLUDED AS A PARTNER IN MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION?**

**A** While an LEA could be part of applications from multiple IHEs, the Department will make only one award that serves any individual LEA. Thus, it could potentially disadvantage an IHE to include an LEA that is already included in another IHE's application.



## Q: MAY CURRENT MHSP GRANT RECIPIENTS APPLY?

A Current MHSP grant recipients will not receive an award. See "III Eligibility Information" in the Notice Inviting Applications, which provides: "b. The Department will only make an award to LEAs that are not current MHSP grantees."



**Q: CAN THE SAME LEA APPLY AND/OR PARTICIPATE/PARTNER IN BOTH THE SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH GRANT PROGRAM AND THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM?**

- A** Yes, the same LEA may apply for both programs. However, in the MHSP program, the LEA must meet the definition of high-need LEA and enter into the partnership with an IHE as required in the absolute priority. In the SBMH program, the LEA must meet the definition of LEA with demonstrated need.





**Q: CAN WE INCLUDE A LEA PARTNER THAT DOES NOT QUALIFY AS HIGH NEEDS IF THEY HAVE A HIGH NEEDS SCHOOL WHERE WE WOULD PLACE INTERNS? WE ALSO HAVE HIGH NEEDS LEAS THAT WE ARE PARTNERING WITH FOR THE GRANT.**

**A** No. The Absolute Priority and Application Requirements indicate that each LEA in the partnership must meet the definition of “high-need LEA” from the Notice Inviting Applications.



**Q: TWO OF OUR PARTNER INSTITUTIONS ARE LOCATED 116 MILES (ROUND TRIP) AND 288 MILES (ROUND TRIP) AWAY FROM OUR LEA. CAN A HOUSING STIPEND BE PROVIDED FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING INTERSHIPS?**

**A** Yes, a lodging stipend for qualified graduate students interning in high-need schools may be an allowable cost under the MHSP program consistent with applicable rules under the Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR 200 et seq.



**Q: CAN A SINGLE, INDEPENDENT, PRIVATE, NON-PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL BE AN ELIGIBLE APPLICANT WITH AN IHE PARTNER?**

**A** Private schools are not eligible applicants or partners for participation in the MHSP program.



**Q: MUST LEAS PARTICIPATING IN AN SBMH GRANT OBTAIN PRIOR, WRITTEN CONSENT FROM THE PARENTS OF ANY CHILDREN RECEIVING SERVICES?**

**A** Yes. We remind applicants that sections 4001(a) and 4001(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7101) apply to this program. Section 4001(a) requires entities receiving funds under this program to obtain prior, written, informed consent from the parent of each child who is under 18 years of age to participate in any mental-health assessment or service that is funded under this program and conducted in connection with an elementary or secondary school.



## Q: HOW CAN AN IHE FIND OUT IF IT MEETS THE DEFINITION OF HBCU, TCU, OR OTHER MSI?

A To find out whether an IHE is an HBCU, TCU, or other MSI, in order to meet CPP 3, applicants may review MSI designations at: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/ides/eligibility.html#:~:text=The%20FY%202022%20Eligibility%20Matrix,filterable%20for%20individuals%20to%20review>. The link is titled "Eligibility Matrix 2022"

The spreadsheet includes a tab for the seven MSI designations. If the column titled "Meets 2022...Definition" indicates Yes for the IHE on any one of the seven MSI designation tabs, the IHE is considered to be an MSI for FY 22.

IHEs that are a Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) IHE and do not also meet one of the seven MSI designations are not eligible for this CPP.



**Q: AS AN IHE, CAN WE SUPPORT BOTH NEW CANDIDATES AND CANDIDATES WHO ARE CURRENTLY MATRICULATING IN THE PROGRAM?**

**A** Yes, partnerships can support both new candidates and current candidates.





**MOUS/MOAS/  
LETTERS OF AGREEMENT**

## Q: IS IT ACCEPTABLE TO SUBMIT A DRAFT OF THE MOU AND A DATE BY WHICH THE DOCUMENT WILL BE SIGNED?

- A No. Application requirement (d) requires the MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement to be signed. However, the MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement may be subsequently updated to provide additional details as the entities involved continue to finalize the terms of agreement.





**Q: IS A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE LEA TO THE IHE ACCEPTABLE? MOUS WITH OUR INSTITUTION OFTEN TAKE MONTHS TO ACHIEVE, AND THERE IS ONLY ONE MONTH BETWEEN THE ISSUING DATE OF THIS RFA AND ITS DUE DATE.**

**A** A letter of support is not acceptable. However, a letter of agreement is permissible, consistent with application requirement (d) in the Notice Inviting Applications. It must be signed by the authorized representatives of each entity.





**HIGH-NEED LEA**

## Q: DOES AN LEA HAVE TO MEET (A) AND (B) IN THE DEFINITIONS OF HIGH-NEED LEA?

- A** Yes. In order to meet the definition of "high-need LEA" an LEA must meet (a)(1) or (a)(2) or (a)(3) or (a)(4), as articulated in the definition below. **AND** the LEA must meet (b), as articulated in the definition.



## Q: IS THERE AN OFFICIAL DATABASE WE NEED TO USE TO DETERMINE IF A LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY IS HIGH NEED?

A No. To determine the eligibility under paragraph (a) of the definition of high-need LEA, applicants may rely on free and reduced-price lunch data for their LEA or census poverty data for their LEA. If an LEA does not meet the thresholds based on either of these data sources, they may also check the data for children in families receiving assistance under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act and the data for children eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid Program. Separately, applicants must also meet the criterion in (b) of the definition of high-need LEA, a high student to qualified mental health service provider ratio as compared to other LEAs statewide or nationally. Applicants can find ratio data at [nces.ed.gov](https://nces.ed.gov).



**Q: IF AN LEA CURRENTLY HAS RATIOS LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE, BUT ABOVE THE RECOMMENDED RATIOS, WOULD THE LEA STILL BE CONSIDERED A HIGH-NEED LEA?**

**A** An LEA must meet the definition of high-need LEA, in particular the LEA must have “a high student to qualified mental health services provider ratio as compared to other LEAs statewide or nationally.”

In addition, applicants should describe the nature and magnitude of the problem in response to application requirement (b) and within that description provide the most recent available ratios and the other required information. Peer reviewers will determine how well the applicant addresses the corresponding selection criteria, in particular selection criteria (a).



**Q: OUR LEA IS A HIGH-NEED, BUT NOT ALL INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS ARE HIGH-NEED. WHEN WE APPLY AS A LEA, MAY WE ONLY SERVE HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS OR CAN WE INCLUDE ALL SCHOOLS IN OUR DISTRICT?**

**A** Applicants may only propose to serve “high-need schools” as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications.



**Q: CAN WE ESTABLISH HOW WE WILL SELECT OUR PARTNER HIGH NEED LEAS THROUGH A COMPETITIVE PROCESS AFTER AWARDED A GRANT?/DO YOU HAVE TO IDENTIFY HIGH NEED LEAS IN THE APPLICATION?**

**A** The absolute priority and application requirement (d) require identification of the high-need LEA(s) in the application. Applicants must either identify, or describe how they will identify, in the application the high-need schools to be served in each high-need LEA that is part of the school-based mental health partnership.



**Q: WE ARE A HIGH-NEED SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT HAS BEEN ABLE TO EXPAND SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDERS THROUGH COVID RELIEF FUNDING. HOWEVER, THIS FUNDING SUNSETS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WOULD YOU CONSIDER THIS SCENARIO TO RETAIN AND EXPAND PROVIDERS TO BE ELIGIBLE AS A "NEED TO EXPAND CAPACITY" FOR THIS GRANT OPPORTUNITY.**

**A** We generally do not believe that this scenario with the facts presented addresses the Absolute Priority. This is not to say that an applicant definitely could not propose a project that includes this scenario and addresses the absolute priority.

Alternatively, we encourage your LEA to consider the School-Based Mental Health Services Program, which is also open for applications until November 3, 2022. For more information, please see: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe-supportive-schools/school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program/>







# ALLOWABLE SPECIALTIES

**Q: ARE STUDENTS WHO ARE TRAINING TO BECOME BOARD CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSTS OR OTHER MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTIES CONSIDERED “MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS” PER THE GRANT’S DEFINITION?**

- A** This is dependent on the State. To the extent this field of study is preparing a student for a State credential as a “school-based mental health service provider,” as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, it would count for this program.
- School-based mental health services provider means a State-licensed or State-certified school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, or other State licensed or certified mental health professional qualified under State law to provide mental health services to children and adolescents.



**Q: COULD BACHELOR LEVEL SOCIAL WORKERS BE INCLUDED IN THIS GRANT (IN ADDITION TO GRADUATE)? THE PROPOSAL STATES GRADUATE, BUT IN OUR STATE, BACHELOR LEVEL SOCIAL WORKERS CAN PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS AND IT WOULD HELP BUILD THE PIPELINE WITH A CONTINUATION FROM SECONDARY TO POST SECONDARY TO GRAD.**

**A** The Absolute Priority is specific to graduate students and each application will be scored based on how well its proposed project meets the application requirements and selection criteria that are aligned with the absolute priority. Grantees may also develop mental health career pathways as early as secondary school, through career and technical education opportunities, or through paraprofessional support degree programs at local community or technical colleges. However, these types of career pathway development should not be primary focus of the grant.





# **SERVICE OBLIGATION/ ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

**Q: ARE INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE STIPENDS WHILE CONTINUING THEIR STUDIES OR WHILE COMPLETING REQUIRED FIELD WORK, CREDIT HOURS, INTERNSHIPS, OR RELATED TRAINING AS APPLICABLE FOR THE DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL PROGRAM OF EACH STUDENT REQUIRED TO WORK IN THE FIELD FOR AN AMOUNT OF TIME?**

**A** According to application requirement (c), if an applicant intends to establish a program that directly benefits an individual graduate student, such as through a stipend and/or tuition credit, the applicant must describe its approach to implementing a service obligation for such graduate student as a school-based mental health services provider in a high-need LEA commensurate with the level of support the graduate student receives.



## **Q: IS THE SERVICE OBLIGATION FOR A STIPEND THE GRADUATE STUDENT IS PROVIDED WHILE INTERNING OR IS IT FOR A STIPEND PROVIDED IN ADDITION TO THE INTERNSHIP?**

**A** The service obligation is for any direct benefit provided to an individual graduate student, whether it's compensation for the internship or for student expenses.

Application Requirement (c) in the NIA states:

If the applicant intends to establish a program that directly benefits an individual graduate student, such as through a stipend or tuition credit, the applicant must describe its approach to implementing a service obligation for such graduate student as a school-based mental health services provider in a high-need LEA commensurate with the level of support the graduate student receives.



**Q: MAY CHILDCARE EXPENSES BE PAID FOR WITH MHSP FUNDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS WHILE TAKING CLASSES, OR ARE CHILDCARE EXPENSES ONLY ALLOWABLE WHEN GRADUATE STUDENTS ARE COMPLETING THEIR TRAINING IN THE HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS?**

**A** Childcare expenses may be allowable to facilitate a graduate student's attendance at class and while working at a high-need school in particular where the classes or training support Competitive Preference Priority 1 to increase the number of school-based mental health services providers who are from diverse backgrounds or who are from the communities served by the high-need LEA.



## **Q: CAN APPLICANTS PROPOSE TO USE MHSP FUNDS TO TRAIN MENTAL HEALTH STAFF THAT ARE CURRENTLY WORKING IN HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS?**

**A** Yes, training for current mental health staff may be allowable. However, applicants should keep in mind that the purpose of the program is to increase the number of school-based mental health services providers in high-need LEAs. While some training could be provided to current school-based mental health staff working in high-need LEAs under Competitive Preference Priority 2, the applicant must meet the absolute priority of the program, and its application will be scored based on how well its proposed project meets the application requirements and selection criteria that are aligned with the absolute priority. Therefore, any such training for current mental health staff should not be the primary focus of the application.





## **Q: ARE PAYMENTS TO GRADUATE STUDENT PRACTICUM SUPERVISORS AN ALLOWABLE EXPENSE?**

- A** Yes, this could be an allowable cost under the MHSP program for the time the supervisor spends working on project activities (e.g. supervising the graduate students who are funded under MHSP and placed in high-need schools).



**Q: CAN GRANT FUNDS SUPPORT A STUDENT IN YEAR 1 OF THEIR PROGRAM OF STUDY IF THE PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS FALL IN YEAR 2 OR YEAR 3 ONLY?**

**A** Yes. Expenses that facilitate a graduate student's attendance at class and while working at a high-need school, in particular where these activities support Competitive Preference Priority 1 to increase the number of school-based mental health services providers who are from diverse backgrounds or who are from the communities served by the high-need LEA, may be allowable.



## **Q: CAN THE FUNDS BE USED TO SUPPORT OUR CURRENT STAFF EARNING ADVANCED DEGREES AND CERTIFICATIONS RELATED TO MH AND SEL?**

**A** If your current staff do not meet the definition of "school-based mental health services providers": which "means a State-licensed or State-certified school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, or other State licensed or certified mental health professional qualified under State law to provide mental health services to children and adolescents;" and your LEAs meet the other relevant eligibility requirements, then you may propose to use MHSP funds to train current staff in a high-need school.





**TECHNICAL**

## Q: IS THERE A PAGE LIMIT FOR THE APPLICATION NARRATIVE?

A No. The Notice Inviting Applications recommends limiting the narrative to 25 pages; the application posted on grants.gov erroneously recommends limiting the narrative to 30 pages. In either case, these are not requirements, and applicants will not be penalized for going over the suggested limit.



**Q: DO COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES (CPPS) HAVE A SEPARATE NARRATIVE, OR ARE THEY INCLUDED WITHIN THE 25-PAGE NARRATIVE? IS THERE IS A PAGE LIMIT FOR THE RESUMES, LETTERS OF SUPPORT, AND REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY?**

**A** CPPs do not have a separate narrative and should be included in the application narrative. Please note, the 25-page narrative is not a set limit, it is a recommendation, and applicants will not be penalized if they go over the limit. Also, an applicant must clearly identify in the project abstract the CPP(s) it wishes the Department to consider for purposes of earning CPP points. There is no recommended page limit for the resumes, letters of support, and references/bibliography.



## Q: WHAT DO I DO IF I'M HAVING UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER ISSUES?

**A** If you are experiencing UEI issues, please forward the GSA Issue Ticket Number, a description of the problem, a time you will be available to take calls from the Federal Service Desk (FSD), and the Incident Ticket(s) generated from the FSD.

If you are contacted by the GSA FSD, you must take the call and must respond within five days or face the possibility of the Issue Ticket being closed by GSA. If the Issue Ticket is closed, your entity will have to begin the process anew.

Also, please note, there is no cost associated with applying for or maintaining a UEI. The process for receiving a UEI is intended to be completed by the entity itself and does not require an outside vendor for this process. It has come to the Department's attention that returning grantees across the Federal government are being contacted by businesses offering to complete and maintain an entity's UEI for a fee. This business could potentially gain access to an entity's proprietary information. Because these businesses do not represent the Department or any Federal agency, we do not encourage our grantee community to procure services to apply for or maintain a UEI from these businesses.



## Q: HOW CAN WE DO A CHART LOGIC MODEL IN NARRATIVE FORM WITH THE FORMAT DESCRIBED IN THE APPLICATION PACKAGE?

- A The suggested page limits and formatting information provided in the application package and Notice inviting applications are **RECOMMENDATIONS** not requirements. We find it is helpful for reviewers for font to be 12 point or larger, and for text to be double spaced where possible; but please be aware that these are only suggestions and applicants have discretion in how they format their application.





## Q: IS THERE A SCORING RUBRIC FOR THIS COMPETITION?

- A There are score range recommendations embedded in the peer reviewer Technical Review Form for the program. This form will be posted on the program website early next week if you wish to review it.



## **Q: WILL THE DEPARTMENT EXTEND THE DEADLINE?**

- A** Unfortunately, the timeline for obligating FY2022 funds does not permit the Department to extend the deadline.





**Please contact  
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THANK YOU



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