

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) Grant Program

GENERAL

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The purpose of the SBMH grant program is to provide competitive grants to State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), and consortia of LEAs to increase the number of credentialed mental health services providers providing school-based mental health services to students in LEAs with demonstrated need.

KEY SBMH RESOURCES

Program Webpage: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe-supportive-schools/school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program/>

Notice Inviting Applications (NIA): <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04358/applications-for-new-awards-school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program>

Application Package: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2024/03/84.184H-FY24-SBMH-Application-Package.pdf>

SBMH Brochure: https://oese.ed.gov/files/2024/03/SBMH-Brochure_FY24.pdf

AWARD DATE/START DATE

We anticipate making awards by September 30, 2024. Applicants should propose a start date of October 1, 2024, when developing their applications. The SBMH grant program is up to 60 months (5 years).

AMOUNT OF AWARDS

The estimated range of awards are between \$500,000 to \$3,000,000 per-year depending on the scope of work. We have approximately \$19,000,000 available, THIS FISCAL YEAR, for grants under the SBMH program and plan to make approximately 15 - 25 awards. The average estimated size of the grant will be \$1,750,000 per year.

MATCHING REQUIREMENT & IN-KIND SERVICES

The SBMH program does have a matching requirement. To promote the sustainability of the school-based mental health services, all applicants must include non-Federal matching funds in the amount of at least 25 percent of their budgets. Budgets must describe how the applicant will meet the matching requirement for each budget period awarded under this grant and must indicate the source of the funds, such as State, local, or private resources. Matching funds cannot be Federal funds. The required match may be met using in-kind services toward the match requirement.

INDIRECT COSTS

This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please visit:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/abouticg.html>

DOLLARS/CENTS

Do not include cents when completing your budget information. Please only use whole dollars.

PLANNING YEAR

This grant does not allow for a planning year.

BUDGET ALLOCATION

The Department does not have particular percentages that we would recommend/not recommend to support school-based mental health for students. We encourage applicants to propose activities and a budget that are most likely to achieve the project's goals and objectives. Peer reviewers will determine how well applicants address the Competitive Preference Priorities and selection criteria.

Determination of costs allowable under a Federal award is made in accordance with the government-wide cost principles in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in [2 CFR part 200](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/part-200) (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/part-200>).

ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

There are four absolute priorities for the 2024 SBMH program.

Applicants should either address Absolute Priority 1 (the applicant is an SEA) or Absolute Priority 2 (the applicant is an LEA or consortia of LEAs)

AND

Applicants should either address Absolute Priority 3 (the applicant is new to the SBMH grant program) or Absolute Priority 4 (the applicant is not new to the SBMH grant program).

Please read the NIA carefully regarding the full text of these priorities:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04358/applications-for-new-awards-school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program>

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The required forms and documents are listed on page 13 of the application packet. MOUS/MOAs, and Letters of Support are NOT required for the SBMH grant.

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

SEAs, as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(49), or LEAs, as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(30), including consortia of LEAs.

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Nonpublic K-12 schools are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

DEFINITIONS

LEA WITH DEMONSTRATED NEED

LEA with demonstrated need means an LEA that has a significant need for additional school-based mental health services providers based on —

(1) High student to mental health services provider ratios as compared to other LEAs statewide or nationally; (2) High rates of community violence (including hate crimes), poverty, substance use (including opioid use), suicide, or trafficking; or (3) A significant number of students who are migratory, experiencing homelessness, have a family member deployed in the military or with a military-service connected disability (including veterans), have experienced a natural or man-made disaster or a traumatic event, or have other adverse childhood experiences, such as repeated disciplinary exclusions from the learning environment.

CREDENTIALLED

Credentialed means an individual who possesses a valid license or certificate from the SEA or relevant regulatory body as a school psychologist, school counselor, or a school social worker, or other mental health services provider, approved by the State to provide school-based mental health services.

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDER

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.

COMPLETE LIST OF SBMH PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

A complete list of SBMH program definitions is available in the SBMH NIA (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04358/applications-for-new-awards-school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program>), which also provides information about the priorities for this program.

ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

SERVICES TO NON-STUDENTS

Services to staff and the community are not allowable under the SBMH grant program. Services to families (separate from any provision of services to students) are not allowable under the SBMH grant program.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

The SBMH NIA includes language about recruitment and retention strategies: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04358/applications-for-new-awards-school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program>

TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Telehealth mental health services are allowable, ensuring that these services are being provided to students in LEAs with demonstrated need.

RESPECIALIZATION

Respecialization is allowable and defined in the SBMH NIA:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04358/applications-for-new-awards-school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program>

APPLICATION INFORMATION

BUDGETS

Budgets should be prepared for each year of the grant. The SBMH grant program is up to 60 months (5 years). If an applicant wishes to submit a 5-year project, then the application must provide a budget for each of the 5 years. You do not reapply for funding each year; it all must be presented in your application, broken down by year.

Do not include cents in your application; please only use whole dollars.

Applicant budgets should include a description of how they propose to meet the 25% required match for each grant year using non-Federal funds and or in-kind services.

When completing the 524 budget charts in the application, only use Section A Budget Summary for your project's total budget request for each year of the grant (including administrative costs), and Section B Non-Federal funds to demonstrate your 25% match using non-Federal funds and or in-kind services. Do not use any other section budget chart.

PRIORITIES

Applicants must respond to the two absolute priorities that apply to them. Competitive preference priorities are optional.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should address each of the application requirements in their applications.

SCORING

An application should address the selection criteria. The extent to which an application addresses a criterion is determined by the peer reviewers. Selection criteria are available in the SBMH NIA. The total points possible for the selection criteria is 100. SEAs may earn up to 5 additional points for addressing the competitive preference priority for SEAs. LEAs may earn up to 10 additional points for addressing the competitive preference priority for LEAs.

SEAs vs. LEAs

SEAs and LEAs do not compete against one another.

QUESTIONS

Estimated average awards are \$500,000 – \$3,000,000 per year. Can we request less than \$500,00 in a year?

Yes, these are estimates and not requirements.

Does "new" apply to this program only?" or to any federal grant?

New only applies to being new to the SBMH grant program.

Can grantees make subgrants?

Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) an SEA grantee under this competition may award subgrants to directly carry out project activities described in its application to the following types of entities: LEAs. The SEA grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantees. However, an SEA grantee is not required to award subgrants and may instead administer the program directly.

Additionally, under 34 CFR 75.708 (b) and (c) LEAs are not authorized to make subgrants.

What is the program webpage?

The program webpage offers information and resources for the SBMH grant, such as links to the application webinar slides, the SBMH brochure, the SBMH NIA and the SBMH Application Package, and previous SBMH grantee abstracts. The webpage can be accessed here: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe-supportive-schools/school-based-mental-health-services-grant-program/> . Be sure to click on the hyperlinks for additional information.

Is there a page limit for the project narrative?

No. The application package suggests a narrative of up to 30 pages. However, this is not a requirement, and applicants will not be penalized for going over the suggested limit.

May we apply as an LEA and also be included in an SEA SBMH grant?

No. The Department will make only one award that serves any individual LEA.

Can funds be used for required clinical supervision of certain provider categories?

Yes, this is allowable.

Can SBMH grant funds be used to sustain ESSER or ARP- funded positions in LEAs?

Yes, this is allowable and does not pose an issue with the supplement not supplant funding requirement because the position has only been funded with Federal funds.

Are there extra points for being new to the SBMH grant program, or for being a novice grantee?

No, only the competitive preference priorities carry extra points with them.

HELP WITH GRANTS.GOV

Please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk or <https://www.grants.gov/support> for any questions or issues within the Grants.gov system. First, please look at helpful hints and tips in the Application Package, beginning on page 9: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2024/03/84.184H-FY24-SBMH-Application-Package.pdf>

For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Applicant FAQs found at this Grants.gov link: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>.

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or email at: support@grants.gov.

