

**RFA DSS-2026-01 Family Support Program Services
Frequently Asked Questions
December 15, 2025**

Logistics

1. Is participation in the 12/5 webinar mandatory? If not, will there be a replay?
 - *No, it is not mandatory for applicants to participate in the webinar. There will not be a replay. DSS has shared the slides from the webinar, but is unable to share the recording.*
2. Is the application going to be available as a fillable form, or do we just cut/paste the components as included in the RFA?
 - *No, the application is not available as a fillable form.*
3. Where do we access the budget?
 - *DSS is working on posting the attachments on the [Social Services Grant Opportunities](#) website. In the meantime, we have emailed them out. If you need a copy of the Contractor Package A, which includes the budget, please email family.support.rfas@dhhs.nc.gov*
4. What types of organizations have been funded for this grant for Family Support Services in the past? Has it all gone to local DSS offices or has it gone to other community organizations also? Has it ever been awarded to a hospital or Federally Qualified Health Center?
 - *In the past, different types of community-based agencies have received Family Support Program Services grants, including non-profit agencies, universities, and county public government organizations. Public agencies have included cooperative extension, public health, social services, school systems, county government, UNC schools, etc... Tribal organizations are also eligible to apply. This grant has not been awarded to a hospital or Federally Qualified Health Center in the past; but they would be eligible if they are a non-profit agency.*
5. How many evidence-based program models can we apply for? Can we include 2 programs such as PAT and CoP?
 - *Applicants must select one or two of the evidence-based or evidence-informed programs listed on page 3 of the Family Support RFA.*
6. If an agency is currently receiving funding from DHHS/DSS/CWS/Child Maltreatment Prevention, are they still eligible to receive funding from this grant?
 - *Yes, an agency that is currently receiving funding from DHHS/DSS/CWS/Child Maltreatment Prevention is eligible to apply for and receive funding from the Family Support grant.*

7. If the budget ends up being less than what is in the cover letter, is that allowed or does it need to be explained?
- *It is fine if the information provided in the cover letter, including the budget amount, changes in the actual application. No explanation is required.*
8. Can you change your mind about the model after submitting the letter of intent?
- Yes.
9. The application states that each agency can submit one application. If we subcontract with other agencies, are we able to submit one application for multiple awards? For example, if we would like to provide these services across multiple regions and will need to subcontract with different agencies in different regions, could we ask for 2 awards rather than 1 award?
- *Each agency may only submit one application for a maximum of \$150,000 regardless of the number of subcontractors that it contains. An agency may be listed as a subcontractor on applications from multiple agencies.*
10. Is there a link to the regional map? I couldn't find it in Attachment B.
- *DSS is working on posting the attachments on the [Social Services Grant Opportunities](#) website. In the meantime, we have emailed them out. If you need a copy of the regional map, please email family.support.rfas@dhhs.nc.gov*
11. Regarding the six principles under Project Design, are you referring to the 6 Guiding Principles to a Trauma-Informed Approach?
- *No, this does not refer to the Guiding Principles to a Trauma-Informed Approach. NCDHHS DSS developed a comprehensive Prevention Framework that provides a roadmap for the state, regional organizations, and local communities to support, empower, protect and strengthen families. The Prevention Framework has been modified to include 5 instead of 6 principles.*
12. Can you please confirm what the six Prevention Framework Principles are, or clarify whether this was meant to reference five principles?
- *There was an error in the RFA that did not reflect that the Prevention Framework has been modified to include 5 instead of 6 principles. The 5 principles are listed on page 14 of RFA DSS-2026-01 and include:*
 - Principle 1: Professionals, community members, and families work together in relationships based on mutual respect.
 - Principle 2: Families are valued as experts and resources to support the development of their own members, other families, programs and communities.
 - Principle 3: Families have access to quality trauma-informed services and systems to prevent initial child abuse and neglect, repeat child maltreatment incidents, and entry of children into out-of-home placement.

- Principle 4: Prevention programs are flexible and continually responsive to emerging family and community strengths and needs.
- Principle 5: Community members value positive parenting and know how to support families to prevent child abuse and neglect.

13. Can you provide more information on E-Verify

- *As stated in the RFA on page 5: “Applicants and subcontractors follow [E-Verify](#) requirements found in [HB36](#) & [HB786](#), which requires employers with 25 or more employees to verify the work authorization of new employees working 9 months or more in a 12 month period through E Verify. This law also requires Grantees and Subcontractors of public agencies to comply with [Article 2: Chapter 64 of the NC General Statutes: Verification of Work Authorization](#) requirements.”*
- *Click on the E-Verify link in the paragraph above to take you directly to the official website.*

14. Do we need to include letters of support?

- *Yes, the application should include 3 letters of support, including one written by a parent, caregiver, or consumer of your agency’s services.*

15. The application only lists 3 letters of support requested; however, our agency is serving several counties, and we have several agencies wanting to support us with letters, are only 3 allowed or accepted, or is that the minimum?

- *Applicants should only submit only 3 letters of support with their DSS Family Support Program Services application.*

16. Since the application is being emailed, do you allow support letters with Docusign or are the letters only allowed to be original signatures scanned into PDF only?

- *Letters of support may be signed with Docusign or with scanned as pdf with original signatures.*

Finances and Budgeting

17. Can you please further explain what is meant by “supplant”? i.e. if an agency currently receives funding to provide a specific program from Smart Start, could they receive these funds to expand this offering into another county?

- *It is considered supplantation if an agency uses DSS Family Support funding for a service that is currently being funded with a different funding stream without expanding or modifying the service – that involves replacing the current funding stream with DSS funding. For example, if an agency is providing the Circle of Parents support group to 10 grandparents through Smart Start funding, they may not use DSS funding to serve these parents while spending the Smart Start funds on Imagination Library. The agency may increase the number of*

participants in the Circle of Parents group, start another Circle of Parents group in another location, or start a Spanish-speaking Circle of Parents group. DSS funding must be used to implement, expand, or enhance an allowable Family Support evidence-based model.

18. What if you have existing PAT program that is not fully funded?

- *If the applicant is expanding or extending their program to serve more families, it is not considered supplanting funds.*

19. Is the \$150k max per year or per four years?

- *The maximum application amount is \$150,000 per year. The amount awarded will remain constant for each subsequent year of the grant cycle.*

20. Does the max amount have to include the concrete support?

- *No, applicants may include concrete supports in their annual budget, up to \$10,000 per year. These expenses are not required. Please note that regardless of whether the applicant includes concrete support expenses, the total NCDHHS DSS grant amount shall not exceed \$150,000 per year.*

21. What if I am applying for two programs in addition to concrete support?

- *The total amount may not exceed \$150,000 per year. This includes all the program and concrete support costs. Concrete support is limited to \$10,000 per year regardless of the number of programs offered under the grant.*

22. Are there specific allowable categories for concrete supports, or may agencies use discretion as long as supports meet immediate family needs and reduce risk factors?

- *The concrete support available in RFA DSS-2026-01 are designed to be flexible to meet individual family's needs. They tend to cover expenses like food, housing, utilities, furniture, transportation, child care, education, clothing, diapers & baby supplies, household items, etc... If a grantee has a specific request for concrete supports that falls outside of these general categories, they should contact their DSS Program Consultant for clarification.*

23. Would Concrete support include gift card/stipends?

- *Agencies may provide eligible participants with gift cards and stipends. Gift cards and stipends are also allowable for incentives.*

24. Must recipients of concrete supports be enrolled in a core program (Triple P/Stewards), or may supports be provided independently based on need?

- *No, recipients of concreted supports do not need to be enrolled in the EBPs provided under the DSS Family Support Program Services.*

25. May concrete supports be coordinated through community partners, or must they be distributed directly by the funded agency?

- *If the applicant would like to distribute or coordinate concrete supports through community partners, rather than directly, they must subcontract with the community partner(s) and include a separate subcontractor line item in their budget.*
26. If we do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate, may we elect the full 15% de minimis rate without additional approval?
- *The de minimis indirect cost rate set by the federal government is 15%. Applicants without a negotiated indirect cost rate may claim up to 15% on Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). No additional approval is required.*
27. If we choose to budget less than 15%, must we submit a letter formally declining the full rate?
- *Yes, if the applicant claims between 0% up to 15% indirect costs without a negotiated indirect cost rate, they must submit a letter on agency letterhead stating that they are declining the de minimis rate.*
28. Would you provide some clarity regarding the indirect cost percentage? Is the 15% listed a maximum?
- *An indirect cost negotiated rate is determined by an external CPA/auditing firm. If claiming indirect costs, the applicant must use the rate on the letter, even if it is less than de minimis rate of up to 15%. The agency's indirect cost rate letter must be submitted with the agency's application. The 15% de minimis rate is the maximum allowed for indirect costs if the applicant does not have a federally negotiated rate.*
29. If we do subcontract with another agency for this grant, do both agencies need to pay for the PCANC TA?
- *No, only one agency, which is usually the main applicant, needs to pay for the PCANC technical assistance.*
30. What amount should be included for technical assistance PCANC?
- *PCANC will charge each agency a flat fee of \$2,500 regardless of the type and number of EBPs that are included in the application. There will be no TA fee for agencies providing Stewards of Children exclusively.*
31. Will all the PAT program costs be allowed? Annual affiliate fee, fee per educator a year, etc?
- *Yes, all costs required to implement PAT are allowable under the DSS Family Support Program Services grant, including annual affiliate and educator fees*
32. Will there be a fee from PCANC of \$2,500 (well worth the cost) on top of the PAT affiliate fee?

- *Yes, applicants providing PAT will need to budget for both PAT Affiliate fees and PCANC Technical Assistance.*

Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs)

33. For Triple P, does this include Triple P for Baby?
- *No, RFA DSS-2026-01 will not fund Triple P for Baby.*
34. Could we incorporate Triple P Stepping Stones with Triple P Level 4 or Level 3?
- *No, RFA DSS-2026-01 will not fund Triple P Stepping Stones. The allowable Triple P programs are listed on page 4 of the Family Support RFA as follows:*
 - b. Level 3 Discussion Groups*
 - c. Level 3 Primary Care*
 - d. Level 4 Group Triple P*
 - e. Level 4 Standard Triple P*
- * If selecting Triple P as an evidence-based model, agencies must select Level 4 Group and/or Standard and may supplement with Level 3 Group and/or Primary Care. Agencies may not provide Level 3 alone with NCDHHS DSS grant funding.*
35. Is fidelity monitoring conducted separately for Triple P Standard vs. Group, or collectively at the Level 4 category?
- *Yes, fidelity monitoring is conducted separately for Triple P Standard and Triple P Group for Level 4 and Level 3.*
36. If we use Triple P Standard and Triple P Group, should these be listed as separate modalities or combined under “Triple P Level 4”?
- *Applications should list the type of Triple P (including Triple P Level 3 or Level 4 standard and group) separately. Please note that all Triple P modalities included will count as one of the two allowable EBPs.*
37. If families participate in both Triple P and Stewards of Children, should we categorize these programs separately by prevention level or may they be described together if they serve overlapping populations?
- *If proposed EBP models will share overlapping target populations and preventions levels, they may be described together. But, please mention that this is the situation for both EBPs.*
38. Should participant numbers (parents, children, families) be reported separately for each model or aggregated across all services?
- *Yes, Participants should be counted separately in the outputs for each EBP model rather than aggregated across all services. For instance, if a parent and child participated in both Circle of Parents and Incredible Years, they would be counted under both models.*

39. For families participating in more than one program, should they be counted once per modality or once overall?
- *Participants should be counted in the outputs in each EBP modality rather than once overall.*
40. Does Stewards of Children require demographic and outcome reporting similar to other EB programs (e.g., Triple P)?
- *Stewards of Children is a program that is typically delivered to adults living in the community or working in child serving organizations, such as child care providers, teachers, health care providers, sports team coaches, camp counselors, religious youth leaders, etc... Consequently, the output, demographic, and outcome reporting is different from EBPs that are serving families directly. For Stewards of Children, agencies would report the number of trainings, the date provided, the sponsor organization and county location, number of attendees, professional fields represented, and aggregate pre and post test scores of participants.*
41. Is there a minimum number of Stewards of Children trainings required each year?
- *No, there is not a minimum number of Stewards of Children trainings or minimum number of participants required each year. However, applicants for SoC should be mindful of the proposed number of trainings and participants compared to their proposed budget since application review will consider cost effectiveness.*
42. Would Circle of Security Parenting be considered eligible for this funding opportunity as a family support service aligned with the goals of the RFA?
- *No, Circle of Security Parenting is not eligible for funding under RFA DSS-2026-01. Applicants may apply for one or two of the evidence-based programs listed on page 4 of the RFA.*
43. If so, could you advise whether any additional documentation or justification would be needed to include COSP in an application?
- *As stated above, Circle of Security Parenting is not eligible for funding under RFA DSS-2026-01, so no additional documentation or justification will be accepted.*

Training & Technical Assistance

44. In the past, folk just providing childcare in COP and PAT groups did not have to attend all trainings, is that still the case?
- *Child care staff in all evidence-based programs do not need to attend Connecting with Families training or Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work. If the applicant will provide actual programming for children*

that is more than child care, child program staff will need to attend specific EBP model training.

- *Child care staff do need to complete the on-line courses:*
 - [Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment](#)
 - [What is Prevention?](#)

Please note: these training requirements for child care staff are the same for trainers providing Stewards of Children: Darkness2Light.

45. Is there a cost per person to be trained in the Connecting with Families training?

- *No, the applicant will not pay any registration costs to attend Connecting with Families.*

46. Is the 6-day training in person with travel related costs?

- *Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Connecting with Families has been provided virtually. NCDSS will continue to offer it virtually during this grant cycle, so there should be no travel-related costs.*

47. Many providers have had difficulty getting into PCANC trainings to become facilitators of some of these programs. Will there be a guarantee that the award recipients who will need facilitator training can get into a PCANC training prior to the July 1 start date?

- *The Family Support awards under RFA DSS-2026-01 will not begin until July 1, 2026. NC DHHS DSS discourages grantees from expending funding before this date because they will not be reimbursed. NCDHHS DSS staff will work with PCANC or the appropriate model purveyor (e.g. Triple P America or Parents as Teachers) to provide training in a timely manner. The timing of the training requires balance because some grantees may need time to hire staff before they can attend training.*

48. If our agency already implements Triple P Level 4 with fidelity, are we required to repeat training or coaching under this grant?

- *Every DSS Family Support Program Services grantee is required to participate in PCANC technical assistance and coaching every year of this grant.*
- *Individual staff members are only required to participate once in program model training, Connecting with Families, Bringing the Protective Factors to Life in Your Work, and online PCANC trainings: Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Children Maltreatment and What is Prevention? If a staff member has already participated in these trainings, they are exempt from this requirement.*

Evaluation & Reporting

49. Are participant-level data submissions required monthly or quarterly?

- *Family Support grantees will submit quarterly reports with output data. Please contact Erin Meehan, the PCANC Evaluation Director at*

emeehan@preventchildabusenc.org for the requirements for evaluation data submission.

50. Is the evaluation just for TP and COP? So, is this not required for PAT?

- *All EBPs listed in this RFA, except Stewards of Children, will be evaluated through the official evaluation coordinated by PCANC. This includes Parents as Teachers.*