

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY
Department of Family Administration
Administrative Office of the Courts

SPECIAL PROJECT GRANTS - FY 2014

Issue Date: February 1, 2013

Applications Due: March 22, 2013

**Please note the change in submission policy for FY14: Only HARDCOPIES of grant applications are required. Please do not email your application. Applications must be POSTMARKED no later than March 22, 2013. Please NO staples or bindings.*

General Information

The Maryland Judiciary began an important initiative to improve its responsiveness to families and children when it created circuit court family divisions and family services programs in 1998. Since that time, the circuit courts have reoriented their case management practices and developed programs to assist the many families and children that come before the court. The Maryland Judiciary is committed to ensuring that services provided by the courts are accessible to all litigants regardless of their ability to pay for the services, and without regard to representational status.

The Maryland Judiciary receives state funding each year to enhance the courts' ability to provide a fair and efficient forum for resolving domestic and juvenile matters. To that end, the Department of Family Administration (DFA) at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is requesting applications for Special Project Grants. Subject to the provision of funds for Fiscal Year 2014, grants will be awarded to applicable programs that increase access to justice and enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland's legal system.

Funding Priorities

For best consideration, applicants should demonstrate a need within the community to be served and that the project will provide services to meet that need that will be complimentary to those provided by the court.

Priority will be given to the continuation of projects currently funded through a DFA Special Project Grant who are meeting their FY13 performance measures.

The Special Projects grant category funds a broad range of programs, including but not limited to, those in the following categories:

Domestic Violence
Juvenile Justice
Foster Care
Alternative Dispute Resolution

The DFA gives priority to projects that:

- Promote access to the family and juvenile justice system; and/or

- Establish programs for court involved youth to reduce the rate of reoffending and /or to support compliance with court orders; and/or
- Provide innovative family services that address unmet needs of litigants and their families; and/or
- Enhance the court’s ability to serve families and children.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include state and local courts and governments within the state of Maryland, non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education within the state of Maryland that work in collaboration with the courts to increase access to justice or enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland’s legal system.

CASA grantees are eligible to apply for Special Projects grants. CASA grantees Special Project awards will be limited to funding requests for projects outside of the regular CASA advocacy activities. (Examples include: Collaborative training between CASA programs, Collaborative training with DSS, DJS, Children’s Attorneys or other stakeholders, independent living skills training for older youth, etc.)

For applicants who received AOC funding in the prior year (FY 13), all required reports and documentation must have been submitted prior to this grant’s submission deadline.

Grant Review

The AOC is committed to a fair and open process in awarding grants. Grant applications will be reviewed by a committee of staff members. Optional participation is also solicited from the following groups: the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, Problem Solving Courts, and the Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office.

For applicants previously funded by the AOC in the prior year (FY13), the following factors will be considered in addition to the grant application:

- program performance during previous and current funded years,
- progress towards meeting FY13 performance measures,
- compliance with financial and program reporting requirements, and
- compliance with reporting deadlines.

Final award determinations will be made based on the recommendations of the review committee.

Award Information

The availability of funds for this program is contingent upon the provision of funds in the Maryland Judiciary budget by the Maryland General Assembly for Fiscal Year 2014. The DFA intends to make funding decisions by the end of May. Grantees will be asked to submit an adjusted budget if the amount awarded did not equal the amount requested, or otherwise upon request of the DFA.

Funding

Funding Cycle

All granted funds must be expended during the period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. No extensions can be granted.

Grant Payments

If awarded, and unless otherwise provided for in the grant agreement, grant funds will be paid on a ***reimbursement basis*** only, upon submission of timely financial expenditure reporting and a request for payment.

Reporting Requirements

Statistical/Program

All Special Project Grantees are required to comply with quarterly reporting. Each program’s reporting requirements will be developed by the DFA based on the program’s goals and expected outcomes outlined in the program’s application. Specific statistical reporting requirements, including required Excel reporting forms, will be provided to each the grantee prior to the start of the funding period.

Financial

All Special Project Grantees are required to submit quarterly financial reports reflecting their expenditures for the quarter. Each grantee will be provided with a personalized Excel financial workbook containing their project’s budget information. Expenditure Reports and Request for Payment forms will be contained within these workbooks for each quarter.

Quarterly Reports and Requests for Payment are to be received no later than 15 days after the close of the quarter based on the following schedule:

<u>Reporting Period</u>	<u>Report Due Date</u>
1 st Quarter (July 1 thru Sept 30)	October 15
2 nd Quarter (Oct 1 thru Dec 31)	January 15
3 rd Quarter (Jan1 thru Mar 31)	April 15
4 th Quarter (April 1 thru June 30)	July 15

Information collected from the quarterly reports will be used to monitor funded programs and assist the DFA in determining if the program is meeting its stated goals and objectives.

Additionally, the AOC reserves the right to use this data in statistical reports, annual reports, and other publications for general distribution.

Applicable Guidelines

All grantees are required to comply with the Department of Family Administration’s Special Project Grant Guidelines for FY14. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review them completely before applying. The Grant Guidelines are posted on the DFA website:

<http://mdcourts.gov/family/grantadmin.html> .

Application Information

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW APPLICANTS

“New Applicants” are defined as applicants who are applying for funding to support projects that were not funded in FY13. CASA programs applying for a Special Project Grant that meet the eligibility requirements on page 2 are considered to be “new applicants.”

The DFA expects to have a limited amount of funding available for new Special Project Grants in FY14. For new applicants, those who were not funded by the DFA in FY13, a one-page Letter of Intent to Apply must be submitted by **4:30pm on February 22, 2013**. The letter should be sent to the address listed at the end of this section.

This letter must not exceed one page and must include:

- the name of the project,
- the contact information for the project (name, address, AND email address),
- a brief description of the project for which funding is sought,
- a brief description of the anticipated outcomes of the project, and
- the estimated amount of funding that will be requested.

This letter will be reviewed by a committee of DFA staff to determine whether the project is consistent with the DFA’s priorities for FY14. Once the committee has reviewed the letter, the applicant will be notified by email and regular mail as to whether the DFA would like the applicant to continue with the application process.

Please Note: Applicants who are authorized to submit full applications are not guaranteed funding.

Application Forms

Renewal Grantees and New Applicants who have received DFA authorization to apply, must use the Special Project Grant application forms found on the DFA website at:

www.courts.state.md.us/family/grantadmin.html

The Special Project Grant application is contained in two separate documents; an Adobe form and an Excel budget form. All applicants are required to submit both completed application forms.

Letter(s) of Support

Applicants must show collaboration with the court in the jurisdiction where services are to be provided and must submit a letter(s) of support demonstrating that collaboration and support. When the project involves direct collaboration with the court, a support letter must be from the appropriate court(s) in the jurisdiction(s) to be served. Projects that are not directly involved with the court must provide a letter(s) of support from an individual with first-hand knowledge of the project or organization implementing the project. The letter should demonstrate how the project will enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland’s legal system.

To be considered by the review committee, support letters must be postmarked by the application deadline below. Letters can be sent directly to the DFA or submitted with the grant application

and should be addressed to the DFA's Executive Director, Connie Kratovil-Lavelle. Letters of support postmarked after March 22, 2013 may not be considered.

Submission: This application must be submitted by mail or hand-delivery. Two original copies are required.

Deadline: Two hard copies* with original signatures must be **mailed or hand-delivered** to the DFA, **postmarked by: March 22, 2013.**

If you choose to hand-deliver your application, staff will be available to receive applications until 4:30pm on March 22, 2013.

**Please do not staple or bind your application.*

Contact Information:

All Letters of Intent, Applications & Support Letters should be directed to:

Connie Kratovil-Lavelle, Executive Director
Department of Family Administration
Administrative Office of the Courts
580 Taylor Avenue, 2nd Floor, A Pod
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Technical Assistance

An informational session will be provided to anyone seeking additional information regarding the application process. Attendance at the informational session is **not mandatory** and the session is offered only as a supplement to the information included within this NOFA and the application.

Technical Assistance Meeting for SPG Grant Applicants (Live or Online)

February 13th at 1:00pm

Judicial Education Conference Center (JECC), Conference Rm. #2
2009-D Commerce Park Drive, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Please contact Jennifer White at 410-260-1739 or Jennifer.White@mdcourts.gov to notify us if you plan to attend the in-person session or to request directions. Your "RSVP" will help ensure that there are adequate hand-outs for all attendees.

Online Participation

This meeting will also be held online. No webcam or special computer software is needed to participate in this online technical meeting.

**If you would like to participate in the online technical assistance meeting, please contact Jennifer White at 410-260-1739 or Jennifer.White@mdcourts.gov by February 12th, 2013 to

register for the session. The web sign-in and conferencing information will be provided after registration. **

After the conclusion of the meeting, a recording of the web meeting will be posted on the DFA's grants page (www.courts.state.md.us/family/grantadmin.html).

For further information regarding this Notice of Funding Availability or the application process, please contact Kelly Franks, Department of Family Administration, at (410)260-1722.