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# Connecting Constituent Organizations to Behavioral Health Funding

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# Connecting Constituent Organizations to Behavioral Health Funding

This report provides information and resources to assist congressional offices with responding to constituent questions about federal funding for local organizations that provide behavioral health services. Constituent organizations supporting behavioral health (i.e., mental health and substance use) activities may include local governments or nonprofit programs that support mental health, substance use prevention, or substance use disorder treatment, including the prevention of drug overdose.

This report provides information on selected federal programs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that may be relevant to such organizations. Assistance may be provided through block and formula grants, competitive grants, and cooperative agreements. The grants in this report vary by size and scope: Some grants are specific to behavioral health, and some are more general.

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## Purpose and Scope

This report provides information and resources for Members of Congress and their staff to help local organizations in their districts navigate the federal grants landscape for behavioral health funding. Constituent organizations supporting behavioral health (i.e., mental health and substance use) activities may include local governments or nonprofit programs that support mental health, substance use prevention, or substance use disorder treatment, including the prevention of drug overdose.

This report provides information on selected federal programs and agencies that may be relevant to such organizations. The report focuses on major programs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—particularly the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA),<sup>1</sup> the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).<sup>2</sup> Relevant programs include block grants, competitive grants, and cooperative agreements. The grants in this report vary by size and scope: Some grants are specific to behavioral health, and some are more general.

Typical behavioral health services include psychotherapy and counseling, medication to treat substance use disorders, medication to prevent overdose, and other support services. Payment for behavioral health services comes through a number of funders and payers, including federal grants, state accounts, Medicaid, Medicare, private health insurance, and out-of-pocket payments from patients. Preventive services are also funded and provided in communities and schools. This report focuses on federal funding available to community entities, such as nonprofits and local governments. Individuals seeking personal assistance can visit [FindTreatment.gov](http://FindTreatment.gov).

This report is not exhaustive in scope. For example, it does not provide information on payments for individual constituents seeking treatment<sup>3</sup> or grants that support the behavioral health workforce, medical research, technical assistance centers, or public health surveillance/data collection. Although programs under the Department of Justice and the Department of Education provide funding for behavioral health programs, they are outside of the scope of this report, which focuses on HHS programs only.<sup>4</sup>

## Federal Grants Overview

Federal grants are provided in the form of block or formula grants to states or as competitive grants directly to applicants. In general, federal block and formula grant funding is awarded to states and then distributed by state agencies through subgrants or contracts to local entities that operate specific programs or offer specific services. Information on funding through formula or block grant programs is available from the state or local agencies that received the prime federal grants. Other federal grant funding is available on a competitive basis and is generally awarded

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<sup>1</sup> Further details on the SAMHSA programs mentioned in this report are available in CRS Report R46426, *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Overview of the Agency and Major Programs*.

<sup>2</sup> More information on CDC programs are available in CRS Report R47981, *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): History, Overview of Domestic Programs, and Selected Issues*.

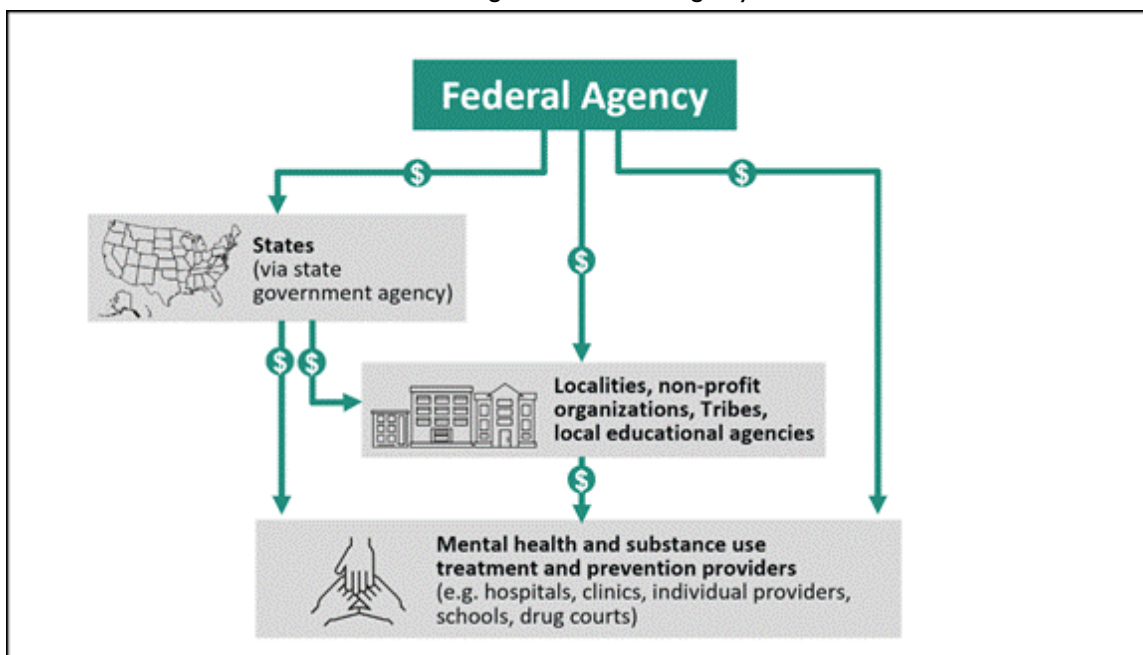
<sup>3</sup> For information on health services for constituents, see CRS Report R48191, *Connecting Constituents to Health Information and Services: Resources for Congressional Offices*.

<sup>4</sup> For information on activities related to criminal justice and education, see CRS Report R47285, *Issues in Law Enforcement Reform: Responding to Mental Health Crises*, and CRS Report R48740, *School-Based Mental Health: Introduction and Considerations for Congress*.

directly to individual applicants, which often include states, local governments, or community-based organizations.

This report identifies (by federal agency) block and formula grants that fund behavioral health services and provides guidance for identifying competitive grant opportunities that fund behavioral health services.<sup>5</sup> Organizations seeking competitive grants can monitor Grants.gov and agency websites for open grant competitions under these programs. **Figure 1** describes typical federal funding pathways from agencies to communities.

**Figure 1. Distribution of Grants to Communities**  
Course of Grant Funding from a Federal Agency to Local Entities



**Source:** Figure prepared by CRS.

Most of the grant programs listed in this report have restrictions on the use of funds for construction or purchasing of facilities, meaning capital projects to construct or remodel health care facilities is prohibited. More information on funding for health care facilities is available in CRS Report R48081, *Sources of Federal Funding for Health Care Facilities: Frequently Asked Questions*.

For additional information on the federal grant funding process and support for constituents, see these CRS products:

- CRS Report RL34035, *Grants Work in a Congressional Office*
- CRS Report RL34012, *Resources for Grantseekers*
- CRS Report RL32159, *How to Develop and Write a Grant Proposal*
- CRS In Focus IF12906, *Constituent Grants Services in a Congressional Member Office: A Brief Guide*

<sup>5</sup> Other block and formula grants not mentioned in this report could also potentially support behavioral health services if their eligible uses are broad enough.

- CRS In Focus IF12910, *Searching for Federal Grants: An Overview of Resources*
- CRS Report R48191, *Connecting Constituents to Health Information and Services: Resources for Congressional Offices*

By identifying potential funding opportunities in this report, CRS does not represent that the agency charged by statute with administering a listed grant program is currently advertising for or making new grant awards under that program. Those interested in more information about a listed grant program or its status may contact the administering agency.

## Block and Formula Grants

The following block and formula grants support behavioral health through grants to states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and certain tribes, as noted. This section has descriptions of relevant block grants, contact information for the state agencies that receive the funding, and sources for additional information.

### Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG)

MHBG is a formula grant program administered by SAMHSA that supports grantees in providing comprehensive community mental health services. The program provides funding and technical assistance to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and certain territories via a funding formula specified in statute. Targeted populations for MHBG funding include *adults with serious mental illnesses* and *children with serious emotional disturbances*.<sup>6</sup>

#### Grant seekers can contact their state agencies:

- SAMHSA, “MHBG Contacts,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/mhbg/contacts>.

#### For additional information on MHBG, see:

- SAMHSA, “Community Mental Health Services Block Grant,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/mhbg>.

### Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUBG)

SUBG<sup>7</sup> is a grant program administered by SAMHSA that supports grantees in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities that prevent and treat substance use. SUBG provides funding and technical assistance to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, certain territories, and one tribal entity via a funding formula specified in statute. SUBG provides substance use primary prevention, substance use disorder treatment, and recovery support services (and certain related activities) to at-risk individuals or persons in need of treatment.

#### Grant seekers can contact their state agencies:

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<sup>6</sup> For MHBG, SAMHSA’s definitions for *children with serious emotional disturbances* and *adults with serious mental illness* are provided in 58 *Federal Register* 29422.

<sup>7</sup> SUBG is also known as SUPTRS BG and formerly called the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SABG).

- SAMHSA, “Directory of Single State Agencies (SSA) for Substance Use Block Grants,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/subg/contacts>.

**For additional information on SUBG, see:**

- SAMHSA, “Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUBG),” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/subg>.

## State Opioid Response (SOR) Grants and Tribal Opioid Response (TOR)

The SOR Grants program is administered by SAMHSA. The SOR grant program supports states to address the overdose crisis by increasing access to treatments approved by the Food and Drug Administration for opioid use disorder (i.e., medications for opioid use disorder, or MOUD<sup>8</sup>) and for prevention, harm reduction,<sup>9</sup> treatment, and recovery support services for opioid use disorder and other substance use disorders (e.g., stimulant misuse and use disorders, including those involving cocaine and methamphetamine). SOR provides funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and certain territories via a funding formula specified in statute. Tribes may apply through the Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) Grants program, which is a competitive grant program that awards funding based on Indian Health Service (IHS) user population size.

**SOR grant seekers can contact their state agencies:**

- SAMHSA, “Directory of Single State Agencies (SSA) for Substance Use Block Grants,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/block-grants/subg/contacts>.

**For additional information on SOR, see:**

- CRS In Focus IF12116, *Opioid Block Grants*; and
- SAMHSA, “State Opioid Response Grants,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/ti-24-008>.

**For additional information on TOR, see:**

- SAMHSA, “Tribal Opioid Response Grants,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/communities/tribal-affairs/funding-opportunities/opioid-response-grants>; and
- Grants.gov, “Tribal Opioid Response,” <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/361581>.

## Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)

The PATH program, administered by SAMHSA, funds services for people with serious mental illness (including co-occurring substance use disorders) who are experiencing homelessness. PATH grants are distributed annually to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and certain territories. The funding formula is specified in statute.

**Grant seekers can contact their state agencies:**

- SAMHSA, “PATH Contacts,” <https://pathreports.samhsa.gov/path-contacts>.

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<sup>8</sup> For more information on MOUD, see CRS In Focus IF12348, *Medications for Opioid Use Disorder*.

<sup>9</sup> One example of harm reduction is the use of naloxone for emergency opioid overdose reversal. For more information, see CRS In Focus IF12490, *Naloxone for Opioid Overdose: Considerations for Congress*.

**For additional information on PATH, see:**

- SAMHSA, “Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH),” <https://www.samhsa.gov/communities/homelessness-programs-resources/grants/path>.

## Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

The SSBG program, administered by ACF, provides funding to states and territories to support social services for vulnerable children, adults, and families, including “substance abuse services” and “counseling services.”<sup>10</sup>

**Grant seekers can contact their state agencies:**

- ACF, “SSBG Grant Recipient Contact Information,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/contact-information/ssbg-grantee-contact-information>.

**For additional information on SSBG, see:**

- ACF, “About Social Services Block Grant,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/ssbg/about>; and
- CRS In Focus IF10115, *Social Services Block Grant*.

## Competitive Grants

Federal agencies administer competitive grant programs and cooperative agreements. These programs are open to specified applicants including states, local governments, community-based organizations, and other defined groups that may apply directly for funding.

This section provides guidance by agency on identifying competitive grants that support local behavioral health services, including mental health and substance use treatment and prevention activities. In the sections below, descriptions of competitive grant programs are provided from SAMHSA, HRSA, and CDC. These agencies are provided as examples specific to HHS, and this list is not intended to be comprehensive.

## SAMHSA

SAMHSA is the federal agency primarily responsible for supporting community-based mental health and substance use treatment and prevention services. In addition to block grants, SAMHSA administers competitive grants and cooperative agreements, which include grants for mental health services, substance use treatment, and substance use prevention activities.

## Where to Find Grant Opportunities

SAMHSA posts Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) on the “SAMHSA Grants Dashboard” (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-dashboard>). The Grants Dashboard also lists previously funded grants, along with details of awards, including recipients, amounts, and project descriptions. A list of upcoming grants is also available on the “NOFO Forecast Dashboard” (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-dashboard/forecasts>).

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<sup>10</sup> ACF, “SSBG Legislation Uniform Definition of Services,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/law-regulation/ssbg-legislation-uniform-definition-services>.

Grants.gov also posts all SAMHSA NOFOs, including forecasted NOFOs. To view these, filter by agency. Grants.gov also offers email notifications for saved searches (e.g., a search by keyword or by agency).

SAMHSA has an email list that provides updates on the latest grant announcements and funding opportunities. Sign up information is at the bottom of the SAMHSA “Grants” website (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants>).

## How to Apply

SAMHSA provides instructions for grant applications on the page “How to Apply for a SAMHSA Grant” (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/how-to-apply>). Additional resources about the application process are provided, including “Developing a Competitive SAMHSA Grant Application” (<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/developing-competitive-samhsa-grant-application-manual.pdf>).

## Program Examples

SAMHSA offers various grant opportunities each year under the categories of mental health and substance use prevention and treatment. Examples of opportunities recently posted or forecasted are listed in the text box below. For the most current information, visit the Grants Dashboard (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-dashboard>), the NOFO Forecast Dashboard (<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-dashboard/forecasts>), or Grants.gov.

### Selected SAMHSA Grants Available in FY2024-FY2026

#### Mental Health Grants

- 988 Programs
- Adult Suicide Prevention
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
- Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT)
- Behavioral Health and Community Safety Partnerships
- Behavioral Health Mobile Crisis Team Partnerships
- Behavioral Health Partnerships for Early Diversion of Adults and Youth
- Community Programs for Youth and Young Adults at Clinical High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P)
- Children’s Mental Health Initiative (CMHI)
- Circles of Care for American Indian/Alaska Natives
- Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) programs
- Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH)
- Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Suicide Prevention programs
- Implementing Zero Suicide in Health Systems
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMHC)
- Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT) Grants
- National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative (NCTSI) programs
- Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education)
- Safety Through Recovery, Engagement, and Evidence-Based Treatment and Support (STREETS)
- Statewide Consumer and Family Networks
- Technical Assistance Center for Mental Health Peer-Led Organizations

- Trauma-Informed Services in Schools (TISS)
  - Tribal Behavioral Health: Suicide Prevention
- Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Grants**
- Building Communities of Recovery (BCOR)
  - Comprehensive Opioid Recovery Centers (CORC)
  - Emergency Department Alternatives to Opioids
  - First Responders-Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (FR-CARA)
  - Grants to Expand Substance Use Disorder Treatment Capacity in Adult and Family Treatment Drug Courts
  - Medication-Assisted Treatment - Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction (MAT-PDOA)
  - Pregnant and Postpartum Women (PPW) programs
  - Preventing Drug Overdoses: Community Prevention and Response
  - Preventing Youth Overdose: Treatment, Recovery, Education, Awareness and Training (PYO TREAT)
  - Recovery Community Services (RCS) programs
  - Rural Emergency Services Training
  - Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Centers
  - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
  - Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grants
  - Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) programs
  - Treatment and Recovery Services for Youth, Young Adults, and Families (Youth and Family TREE)
  - Treatment, Recovery and Workforce Support
  - Tribal Behavioral Health: Substance Use Prevention
  - Tribal Opioid Response

**Source:** Grants.gov and SAMHSA, “FY 2026 NOFO Forecast Dashboard,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-dashboard/forecasts>. This list also includes “Forecasted” grants as of May 20, 2026.

## Additional Agency Resources

- SAMHSA’s Center for Financing Reform and Innovation provides reports and webinars about behavioral health funding mechanisms (<https://www.samhsa.gov/libraries/cfri>)

## HRSA

HRSA is the federal agency that supports increased access to care and services, including behavioral health care. HRSA’s mission focuses on providing health services to people who are geographically or economically isolated and to medically vulnerable groups. HRSA also supports workforce development programs, health infrastructure, and other programs.

## Where to Find Grant Opportunities

HRSA posts funding opportunities on the HRSA “Find Grant Funding” website (<https://www.hrsa.gov/grants/find-funding>). This site also shows open, closed, and awarded funding opportunities.

Grants.gov also posts all HRSA funding opportunities, including forecasted funding opportunities. To view these, filter by agency. Grants.gov also offers email notifications for saved searches (e.g., a search by keyword or by agency).

HRSA has an email list that provides updates on the latest grant announcements and funding opportunities. Sign-up information is available on the “Contact HRSA” website (<https://www.hrsa.gov/about/contact>).

## How to Apply

HRSA provides instructions for grant applications on the page “Prepare Your Application” (<https://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply-for-a-grant/prepare-your-application>). Additional resources about the application process are provided, including HRSA’s application guide (<https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/grants/application-guide.pdf>).

## Program Examples

HRSA offers various grant opportunities each year related to behavioral health. Examples of opportunities recently posted or forecasted are listed in the **text box** below. For the most current information, visit the HRSA “Find Grant Funding” website (<https://www.hrsa.gov/grants/find-funding>), or Grants.gov.

### Selected HRSA Grants Available in FY2024-FY2026

- Behavioral Health Integration (BHI) Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program (EB-TNP)
- Behavioral Health Service Expansion (BHSE)
- Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)
- Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program (PMHCA)
- Screening and Treatment for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders (MMHSUD)

**Source:** Grants.gov. This list also includes “Forecasted” grants as of May 20, 2026.

## Additional Agency Resources

- HRSA, “Opioid Crisis,” <https://www.hrsa.gov/opioids>

## CDC

CDC is the lead federal agency for disease prevention and health promotion. This includes support for state and local health agencies and local entities to support behavioral health, in particular prevention and surveillance efforts.

## Where to Find Grant Opportunities

Grants.gov posts all CDC funding opportunities, including forecasted funding opportunities. To view these, filter by agency on Grants.gov. CDC provides instructions for searching CDC grants on Grants.gov on the page “Find Funding” (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/applying/find-nofo.html>).

CDC also provides email updates about programs and grant opportunities. For more information, see “CDC News and Updates” (<https://tools.cdc.gov/campaignproxyservice/subscriptions.aspx>).

## How to Apply

CDC provides instructions for grant applications on the page “How to Apply” (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/applying/index.html>). Further resources about the application process are provided on sites such as:

- “Tips for Preparing Grant Applications” (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/applying/tips.html>) and
- “Overview of Grant Process” (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/life-cycle-overview/index.html>).

## Program Examples

CDC offers various grant opportunities each year related to behavioral health. Examples of opportunities recently posted or forecasted are listed in the **text box** below. For the most current information, visit the CDC “Find Grant Funding” website (<https://www.cdc.gov/grants/applying/find-nofo.html>) or Grants.gov.

### Selected CDC Grants Available in FY2024-FY2026

- Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) Community-based Coalition Enhancement Grants to Address Local Drug Crises
- Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Program for States
- Drug-Free Communities Support Program
- Overdose Data to Action (OD2A)
- Syringe Services Programs (SSP)

**Source:** Grants.gov. This list also includes “Forecasted” grants as of May 20, 2026.

## Additional Agency Resources

- “About Mental Health,” <https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/about/index.html> (see under “What CDC Is doing”)
- “Overdose Prevention: What CDC Is Doing,” <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/about/what-cdc-is-doing.html>

## Technical Assistance

Technical assistance includes free training and support for those working in behavioral health, including states, tribes, nonprofits, communities, and health care providers. Resources for technical assistance are below:

- SAMHSA, “Technical Assistance and Training Directory,” <https://www.samhsa.gov/technical-assistance>
- CDC, “Overdose Resource Exchange: Technical Assistance to Disproportionately Affected Communities,” <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-resources/php/files/technical-assistance.html>
- CDC, “About CDC’s Opioid Rapid Response Program,” <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/orrp/index.html>
- HRSA, “Health Center Program: Technical Assistance,” <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/technical-assistance>

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