

## Summary

The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as "Board") is seeking applications from qualified non-governmental, non-profit agencies with current 501(c)(3) tax exempt status and with a physical business location in Alachua County (hereinafter, referred to as "Applicant") for the Request for Application (hereinafter, referred to as "RFA") Community Agency Partnership Program (hereinafter, referred to as "CAPP").

The Community Agency Partnership Program (CAPP) is designed to leverage the expertise, resources, and services provided by our local non-profit 501c3 organizations to benefit Alachua County citizens living in poverty. The focus of CAPP is on assuring that the most basic physical needs of residents living at or below 150% of the federal poverty level are addressed. All funds provided through CAPP must be used to directly benefit those living in poverty either through the provision of services or goods. Applicants must demonstrate through evidence-based practice that the proposed program, service or goods reduces the symptoms of poverty for Alachua County residents.

The anticipated, total amount of funding available for allocation by the Board of County Commissioners for FY25-27 is projected to be approximately \$1.6 million.

## Background

**Location:** Alachua County is located in North Central Florida. The County government seat is situated in Gainesville. Gainesville is located 70 miles southwest of Jacksonville, 129 miles southeast of Tallahassee, 140 miles northeast of Tampa - St. Petersburg and 109 miles northwest of Orlando. Alachua County has a population of over 250,000 and a regional airport. The County itself consists of a total area of 969 square miles.

**Form of Government:** Alachua County is governed by a Board of five (5) elected County Commissioners and operates under the established County Manager Charter form of government. In addition to the five County Commissioners, there are five elected Constitutional Officers: Supervisor of Elections, Sheriff, Clerk of the Court, Tax Collector, and the Property Appraiser. The Alachua County Attorney also reports to the Board.

## Timeline

## Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via OpenGov with all requested RFA information.. Each applicant is responsible for full and complete compliance with all laws, rules and regulations which may be applicable.

The applicant is completely responsible for preparing and submitting the CAPP application according to grant instructions.

If you are applying for funding for more than one program, you must complete a separate application online for each program. Agencies are limited to one application per funding category.

The cost for the agency's preparation of the application is entirely the obligation of the applicant and shall not be chargeable in any manner to Alachua County.

## General Program Guidelines

1. Alachua County Residency:
  - a. Funding is to be used for residents of Alachua County. Individuals or families residing elsewhere cannot be brought into the county for the purpose of participating in a CAPP-funded program. The applicant must document how this requirement will be tracked.
2. Poverty Alleviation & Amount Available
  - a. All programs must serve to alleviate the symptoms of poverty for eligible Alachua County residents. Because the CAPP Program is intended to be a poverty reduction initiative, CAPP-funded services must therefore be targeted to Alachua County residents at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, based on the applicant's household size. Adherence to this income eligibility criteria must be adequately documented.
3. Funding Categories
  - a. All programs must fit into one of the BoCC's approved funding categories. The current funding categories approved for grant awards by the Board of County Commissioners are (1) Safe, Affordable Housing, (2) Quality Child Care and Education, (3) Adequate Food, and (4) Quality Healthcare.
4. Prohibited Programs
  - a. This funding is not for economic development, economic opportunity, recreational, arts, cultural, historical, environmental or transitional housing programs. Such proposals will be deemed non-responsive and ineligible for funding.
5. Reimbursement Grant
  - a. This is a reimbursement grant. The agency must first expend its own funds and request reimbursement from the County. Allowable expenses will be reimbursed dating back to October 1, 2024. Initial invoices for the funding period may be submitted on November 15, 2024 provided that all contract documents are executed.
6. Budget
  - a. Approved expenses will be directly reimbursed via a monthly invoice. Each applicant must submit a budget (template is available to download) detailing the costs to be reimbursed. Each budget item must be an allowable cost under the funding restrictions.
7. Additional Information

- a. Agencies must have been operational, providing program service(s) in the CAPP funding category for which they are applying for at least one full year prior to the date of their application.
- b. To receive CAPP funding for housing proposals, homeless services providers must be a member of the North Central Florida Alliance for the Homeless and Hungry and actively participating in Continuum of Care meetings. Transitional Housing programs will not be eligible for funding consideration. All projects must be consistent with current US Housing and Urban Development and local area Continuum of Care priorities. Agencies awarded CAPP funds for homeless housing must also participate in all training sessions associated with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and must post and maintain client data in this system. Domestic Violence Agencies are exempt from this requirement.

8. Funding Intent

- a. It is the intent of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners that CAPP funds be used ONLY for the benefit of program participants. Applicants must clearly demonstrate and adequately document how the program, service or goods directly provide for the participant basic need and reduce the participant symptoms of poverty.
- b. CAPP funding is not intended for “the cost of doing business” expenses.
- c. Funds are not to be used to maintain, enhance or enrich the agency; they are to be used to enrich the program participants only. Funding requests deemed solely or primarily as maintaining, enhancing or enriching the agency will not be approved.
- d. The program should have its essential operating elements and equipment already in place, as these are not funded by CAPP.
- e. Funding is only available for agencies that are providing services, programs, or goods directly to participants.

9. Funding Restrictions

- a. **Religious or Sectarian engagement:** In accordance with Article 1, Section 3, Florida Constitution, and other applicable law, funding provided under CAPP may not be used in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution. The program shall not promote the religion of the provider, be significantly sectarian in nature, involve religious indoctrination, require participation in religious ritual, or encourage the preference of one religion over another.
- b. **Capital expenditures:** Items costing \$1,000 or more are not allowed.
- c. **Improvements to buildings and/or land:** Are not allowed.
- d. **Building/grounds maintenance and janitorial service:** General building and grounds maintenance, including pest control and lawn service, is not allowed.
- e. **Rent or mortgage payments:** CAPP does not pay for agency office space. Rent and mortgage payments may be authorized only if the location is where direct services are provided to program participants.
- f. **Utilities:** Authorized only if used by program participants.
- g. **Vehicles:** The purchase of vehicles is not allowed.
- h. **Vehicle maintenance and gasoline:** Operating expenses for vehicles and gasoline is allowed if the vehicle has been specified in the application as essential and directly related to the operation of the program for which you are seeking CAPP

funding. Vehicle maintenance is not an allowable expense, unless the vehicle is exclusively used for a CAPP program or service and the vehicle is not available for other uses.

- i. **Vehicle Rental:** Rental of a vehicle and/or use of ride service is allowed for transporting program participant(s) to a program-related event(s), such as renting a van to transport multiple participants to a particular program-related venue. Insurance and 'accessory' coverage on rental vehicles are not billable. Tipping for ride service is not billable.
- j. **General Transportation:** Vehicle-related expenses are not allowed for the transportation of non- program participants.
- k. **Fundraising:** Expenses for fundraising are not allowed.
- l. **Storage facilities:** No expense for storage facilities is permitted unless essential to operation of the agency's program and is explained in the application. No portion of storage space used for maintaining office equipment, materials and/or supplies, etc. may be paid for with CAPP funds.
- m. **Insurance:** Insurance premiums (except for employee health benefits) are not allowed
- n. **Membership Fees or Dues:** No membership fees or dues can be charged to CAPP.
- o. **Staff/Volunteer Gifts/Awards/Recognition:** Gifts, awards or other expenses related to employee or volunteer celebration, recruitment, recognition events or activities are not allowed.
- p. **Grant-Related Expenses:** No portion of CAPP funding may be used for preparation of the application for this grant, including materials and preparation time. Staff members whose salaries are funded or partially funded by CAPP may not be paid with CAPP funds for any time spent on preparation of application for CAPP funding.
- q. **Communications:** General office internet for employees is not an allowable expenditure; however, if the internet access is solely for program participants, then this would be allowed. Office phone expenses are not allowed. Cell phones for on-call or in- field program staff are allowed.
- r. **Marketing:** Not allowed.
- s. **Office Equipment/Furniture:** Maintenance, purchase or rental of office equipment is considered an agency operating expense or "the cost of doing business" and is not allowed. Purchase or rental of office furniture is not an allowable expense.
- t. **Computers/Computer Labs/Upgrades:** CAPP funds may be able to be used for computer-related expenses that are for the sole use of participants or expenses related to virtual participation. The agency must receive prior approval from CAPP staff.
- u. **Salaries/Benefits:** Salaries/benefits for staff not assigned to directly deliver program services are not allowed.
- v. **Start-Up Costs:** It is expected that the agency will provide on its own the basics needed to begin the program.
- w. **Payments to Other County Entities:** CAPP funds cannot be used for payment to Alachua County departments/entities. Example: CAPP funds cannot be used to obtain a County building permit.

- x. **Pass through Payments:** The agency is expected to provide the program, service, or goods directly to participants; pass-through funding and subcontracting of the program or service is not allowed.

## RFA Selection Procedures

The Applicants selected to provide the services described herein will be selected from the qualified responses to this RFA. The selection process will be as follows:

1. RFA Grant Application:
  1. All the applications will be reviewed by a County appointed RFA Evaluation Committee considering all the criteria and the overall application. Funding recommendations will be presented to the BoCC for consideration and final approval of the funding award amount.
2. RFA Evaluation Committee:
  1. The RFA Evaluation Committee will review the qualifications of the organization and application. The Committee will evaluate applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria identified below. The RFA Evaluation Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the BOCC and is responsible for evaluating and scoring applications and making final funding recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.
  2. The Board of County Commissioners decides the final awards. Funding decisions will be considered and approved at a publicly noticed Board meeting held in the County Administration Building Auditorium, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 12 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville.
3. Negotiation of Contract
  1. The County will negotiate contracts with approved Grantees for the provision of services requested in this Request for Applications.

## Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the procedures described in this Request for Applications.

1. Background
  - a. Each fiscal year the Alachua Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) allocates funds for use in making competitive grant awards to various 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.
2. Application Screening
  - a. All applications submitted will be subject to screening to ensure that they meet mandatory qualifications and are thereby eligible for evaluation and scoring by the RFA Evaluation Committee. Screening involves checking to determine if an agency is eligible to apply on the basis of their compliance with the following criteria:
    - i. having current and complete 501(c)(3) status
    - ii. maintaining a physical business address in Alachua County

- iii. demonstrating that that services to be provided fit one of the established CAPP funding categories
- iv. demonstrating that the proposal provides for the most basic physical needs of participants and reduces symptoms of poverty
- v. having at least one (1) year of experience providing program services in the CAPP funding category for which they are applying prior to submitting the application
- vi. providing programs, services or goods directly to participants
- vii. understanding and demonstrating that recipients of the agency's program services must be an Alachua County resident and be economically disadvantaged (i.e., be at or below 150% of the current Federal Poverty Level guidelines)
- viii. All agencies must provide CURRENT financial documents as required
- b. Proposals failing to meet these screening criteria shall be deemed non-responsive and removed from the application process.

### 3. Scoring Process

- a. The members of the RFA Evaluation Committee evaluate and score all proposals not removed from the process during the screening phase. A maximum total score of 200 points is possible, based on an agency's responses on its application. Once the final score is calculated, any proposal scoring at or below 139.9 is not eligible for funding. Proposals scoring 140 and above are assigned a maximum percentage funding recommendation, based on the score received. Regardless of an agency's designated award amount, however, the RFA Evaluation Committee is not obligated to recommend a program for funding at any level and there are no guarantees a program will be recommended for funding.
- b. All responsive proposals will be ranked from highest scoring to lowest scoring, and funding will be awarded according to the score and percentage calculated below.
- c. In the event that the total CAPP funding requests of successful applicants exceed the County's available funding allocation, the RFA Evaluation Committee will apply a ratio to determine the amount each applicant qualifies for as based on its score in order to distribute available funds. (Scores are not rounded-up.) This ratio will be determined by dividing the total funding allocation by the total amount of applicants' qualifying funding as determined by their respective scores and applying this ratio to each agency's qualifying funding award, in order to make an adjusted award amount that remains within the CAPP Program allocation. See Scores/Ranges section below.

If total points awarded is within the score range below:	Recommended % of agency's funding request
180-200	100%
160-179.9	75%
140-159.9	50%
139.9 and below	No funding recommended

## Evaluation criteria

Application submissions will be evaluated and scored by RFA Evaluation Committee members on the basis of the criteria below, with points awarded within a designated scoring range for each criteria. RFA Evaluation Committee members may offer their unique perspectives and practical insights based on areas of professional or personal expertise; education, training and/or knowledge; and community involvement.

- 1) **Program/Service Delivery Effectiveness:** (scoring range: 0 –40 pts.): The degree to which the application furnishes a clear and concise description of the proposed program or service, the proposal is reasonable given evidence of need, requested budget and other resources, is consistent with approved funding categories, the proposal budget is reasonable and is in alignment with the description of need.
  - a) Has the applicant demonstrated how the service or program addresses a basic physical need for Alachua County residents living at or below 150% FPL?
  - b) Does the program or service clearly fit one of the funding categories?
  - c) Is the program or service deliverable within the applicant’s capabilities and budget?
  - d) Does the agency have a history of delivering this program or service successfully?
  - e) Is the agency providing the program or service directly to the target population?
  - f) Is this program or service filling a clearly identified gap for the target population? Does the proposal duplicate an existing County program or service?
- 2) **Participant Impact:** (scoring range: 0 – 40 pts.): The degree to which the proposed program, service or provision of goods clearly describes and addresses a basic physical need of residents living in poverty AND demonstrates using evidence based practices that it alleviates the symptoms of poverty for participants
  - a) Are services or programs activities quantified and clearly described?
  - b) Has the agency defined how the requested amount of program funding will directly impact participants?
  - c) Are all of the proposed services or programs directly related to and responsive to the needs of the target population?
  - d) Are the program implementation and performance outcome measures appropriate to determine the impact of the program?
  - e) Are specific strategies for obtaining and maintaining client engagement clearly described?
- 3) **Program Budget:** (scoring range: 0 – 40 pts.): The degree to which the program budget focuses on provision of direct services that provide for participant(s) basic needs, demonstrably alleviates symptoms of poverty for participants, is reasonable, and is in alignment with the description of program services.
  - a) Are all of the budget items directly related to program expenses, and do those expenses directly benefit participants?
  - b) How well does the applicant describe how oversight of funds will be ensured?
  - c) If the agency utilizes internal accounting for payables, is there adequate oversight of payments (ie, multiple signatories on checking accounts, multiple approval levels for payments)
  - d) Does the budget demonstrate good stewardship of taxpayer funds? Does the program duplicate an existing program or service funded by taxpayers?

- 4) **Agency stability and capability:** (scoring range: 0 – 40 pts.): The degree to which the agency appears to be well-functioning and financially and internally stable. Is there an active Board of Directors or Executive Committee? Are the staff necessary for program implementation in place? Do they have the correct experience, certification and/or education.
- a) Does the BOD meet on a regular schedule? When was the last board meeting?
  - b) Does the agency receive an outside audit on a regular basis? Were there audit findings? Is accounting internal or external?
  - c) If the program or service requires special staff training or certification, is this documented?
  - d) Has the agency provided evidence of adequate, stable staffing levels for the program or service?
  - e) How long has the agency been successfully providing the proposed program or service?
  - f) What percentage of the program/service's funding will be provided by CAPP? What percentage of the agency's overall funding does Alachua County provide? Has the agency demonstrated sufficient funding streams to operate in the event CAPP funding is not awarded or is awarded at a reduced percentage?
- 5) **Performance Measures and deliverables:** (0-40 pts)
- a) Are the performance measures and deliverables proposed by the agency sufficient to track progress and success of the program or service?
  - b) To what extent does the applicant detail existing data collection infrastructure, systems and processes to support the program or service?
  - c) To what extent does the applicant describe its plan for program performance evaluation and continual quality improvement?

## Application Questions

1. Is your agency a 501c3
2. Do you have a physical business address in Alachua County
3. Which category does your program, service or goods best fit
4. Does your agency have at least one full year of experience providing services in the funding category prior to the date of application? Please describe
5. Will your program, service or goods be provided exclusively to Alachua County residents at or below 150% FPL
6. Describe the program, service or goods that your agency is requesting funding for. Include specifics regarding how your proposal will reduce the symptoms of poverty for the target residents using evidence-based rationale.
  - a. Include the frequency or duration of any CAPP funded activities
  - b. Include the number of anticipated participants and demographics
  - c. Include if the agency uses volunteers to provide the program or service; detail the role of volunteers in the program
  - d. Include information to address evaluation criteria sections 1, 2 and 4
  - e. Include a staffing plan, describing key personnel and their role (if applicable)
  - f. Are all providers adequately trained and credentialed (if applicable)
7. Describe the relationship between your program or service's activities and intended outcomes.
  - a. Include your agency's goals and objectives for the program or service
  - b. Include how your participants will be impacted by your program or service



- c. Include how you will track and quantify the success of your program or service
  - d. Include information to address evaluation criteria section 5
- 8. How will CAPP funds be used in your program or service?
  - a. Itemize how funds are to be used. How will the agency account for all CAPP funds
  - b. Describe additional funding that will be necessary to run the program. Does the agency have this funding in place?
  - c. What is the percentage of total program funding being requested from CAPP
  - d. Does your agency utilize internal accounting staff for payables and receivables? Are controls in place to account for funds?
  - e. How are expenditures verified
  - f. Include information to address evaluation criteria section 5

**Required Uploads**

- CAPP Budget
- Current operating budget
- Most recent audit
- Financial procedures
- Operational procedures (personnel)
- Board of Directors roster and meeting schedule
- 501c3 determination letter