



Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division Funding Announcement: ***Specialty Courts Program, FY2021***

Purpose

The purpose of this announcement is to solicit applications for specialty court programs as defined in Chapters 121 through 129 of the Texas Government Code.

Available Funding

State funds are authorized under the Texas General Appropriations Act, Article I, Rider 12 for Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Eligible Organizations

Applications may be submitted by county governments affiliated with a specialty court authorized under Chapters 121 through 129 of the Texas Government Code.

Counties seeking to establish a new specialty court program are eligible to apply but must meet registration requirements, as defined in 121.002 Texas Government Code, within 30 days of award. Existing specialty court programs that do not currently receive CJD funding are also eligible to apply but must annotate in their application how the additional funds will expand the program beyond its current capacity. Priority for applications received from new applicants may be given to courts operating in jurisdictions without a currently operational court or based on demonstrated need.

All adult drug court programs should be able to demonstrate substantial implementation of Vol. I & II of the Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards as adopted by the Texas Judicial Council (TJC).

Application Process

Applicants must access the PSO's eGrants grant management website at <https://eGrants.gov.texas.gov> to register and apply for funding. For more instructions and information, see *Developing a Good Project Narrative Guide*, available [here](#).

Note: Special application procedures apply to this program. See the [Special Application Procedures Addendum](#) for more information.

Key Dates

| Action | Date |
|---|---------------------------|
| Funding Announcement Release | 12/13/2019 |
| Online System Opening Date | 12/13/2019 |
| Final Date to Submit and Certify an Application | 02/27/2020 at 5:00 PM CST |
| Earliest Project Start Date | 09/01/2020 |

Project Period

Projects selected for funding must begin on or after 09/01/2020 and expire on or before 08/31/2021.

Funding Levels

Minimum: \$10,000

Maximum: Current grantees may not exceed most recent year's award amount.

Match Requirement: There is no match requirement under this program.

Standards

Grantees must comply with standards applicable to this fund source cited in the State Uniform Grant Management Standards ([UGMS](#)), [Federal Uniform Grant Guidance](#), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Eligible Activities

Funding may be used to support the following types of specialty court programs:

1. Adult Drug Court;
2. Family Drug Court;
3. Veterans Treatment Court;
4. Mental Health Court;
5. Juvenile Specialty Court;
6. Commercially Sexually Exploited Persons Court; and
7. Public Safety Employees Treatment Court.

Program-Specific Requirements

Risk Assessment Tools

Grantees are required to perform the full, felony-level TRAS (Texas Risk Assessment Score) assessment on each participant enrolled during the project period. Sub-section scores must be recorded and reported in the annual progress reports. Grantees must also include the TRAS scores for all adult participants (including those in pre-adjudication court programs) in their regular reports to the Criminal Justice Assistance Division (CJAD) of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, as directed by CJAD.

The TRAS is not applicable to family reunification courts, courts dealing with adults without pending criminal charges, and juvenile courts. Juvenile courts are required to perform the PACT risk assessment as mandated by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

Registration Requirements

The court program must meet all requirements in the Texas Government Code, Section 121.002, which include:

1. Written notice of the program;
2. Any resolution or other official declaration under which the program was established; and
3. A copy of the applicable community justice plan that incorporates duties related to supervision that will be required under the program.

For more information on how to register please contact the Office of Court Administration..

Judge Requirements

The presiding judge of a drug court must be an active judge holding elective office, an associate judge, a magistrate, or a retired judge available as a sitting judge.

Participation in Training and Technical Assistance Program

Grantees are required to participate in activities under the Specialty Courts Resource Center (SCRC) operated by Sam Houston State University and funded by CJD. Information about services and resources provided by SCRC can be accessed at <http://txspecialtycourts.org/>.

Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards

The Texas Judicial Council unanimously approved the National Association of Drug Court professionals (NADCP) Adult Drug Court Best Practices Standards (Volumes I & II) as the best practices for adult drug court programs. All adult drug court programs must have substantially implemented best practice standards.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Entities receiving funds from CJD must be located in a county that has an average of 90% or above on both adult and juvenile dispositions entered into the computerized criminal history database maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) as directed in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 66. The disposition completeness percentage is defined as the percentage of arrest charges a county reports to DPS for which a disposition has been subsequently reported and entered into the computerized criminal history system.
2. Beginning January 1, 2020, counties applying for grant awards from the Office of the Governor must commit that the county will report at least 90 percent of convictions within seven business days to the Criminal Justice Information System at the Department of Public Safety. By January 1, 2021, such reporting must take place within five business days.
3. Eligible applicants operating a law enforcement agency must be current on reporting Part I violent crime data to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) for inclusion in the annual Uniform Crime Report (UCR). To be considered eligible for funding, applicants must have submitted a full twelve months of accurate data to DPS for the most recent calendar year.
4. The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has established a goal set by the Texas Legislature for all local law enforcement agencies to implement and report crime statistics data by using the requirements of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) will collect required crime statistics solely through the NIBRS starting January 1, 2021. Due to the upcoming federal deadline, grantees are advised that

eligibility for future grant funding may be tied to compliance with NIBRS. Financial grant assistance for transitioning to NIBRS may be available for your jurisdiction from the Public Safety Office.

5. Local units of government, including cities, counties and other general purpose political subdivisions, as appropriate, and institutions of higher education that operate a law enforcement agency, must comply with all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") to: (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in Agency's custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS. Additionally, counties and municipalities may NOT have in effect, purport to have in effect, or make themselves subject to or bound by, any law, rule, policy, or practice (written or unwritten) that would: (1) require or authorize the public disclosure of federal law enforcement information in order to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection fugitives from justice or aliens illegally in the United States; or (2) impede federal officers from exercising authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), § 1226(c), § 1231(a), § 1357(a), § 1366(1), or § 1366(3). Lastly, eligible applicants must comply with all provisions, policies, and penalties found in Chapter 752, Subchapter C of the Texas Government Code.

Each local unit of government, and institution of higher education that operates a law enforcement agency, must download, complete and then upload into eGrants the [CEO/Law Enforcement Certifications and Assurances Form](#) certifying compliance with federal and state immigration enforcement requirements. This Form is required for each application submitted to OOG and is active until August 31, 2021 or the end of the grant period, whichever is later.

6. Eligible applicants must have a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number assigned to its agency (to request a DUNS number, go to <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>).
7. Eligible applicants must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) database located at <https://sam.gov/>.

Failure to comply with program eligibility requirements may cause funds to be withheld and/or suspension or termination of grant funds.

Prohibitions

Grant funds may not be used to support the unallowable costs listed in the [Guide to Grants](#) or any of the following unallowable costs:

1. Construction, renovation, or remodeling;
2. Medical services;
3. Law enforcement equipment that is standard department issue;
4. Transportation, lodging, per diem or any related costs for participants, when grant funds are used to develop and conduct training;
5. Legal assistance;
6. Judges; and
7. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state or local law or regulation.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and prioritized by the Specialty Courts Advisory Council (SCAC). The SCAC will assess and score each application and then report its findings to the PSO. The PSO will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, reasonableness, availability of funding, cost-effectiveness, state priorities and strategies, and/or other relevant factors. For adult drug courts (including alcohol/DWI courts), adherence to the *Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards* will be an important factor in decisions. In addition, projects that serve primarily low-risk participants, will not be considered for funding.

Contact Information

For more information, contact the eGrants help desk at eGrants@gov.texas.gov or (512) 463-1919.

Project Narrative

Within eGrants, applicants will complete several narrative fields. Below are special instructions related to required information that must be included in your Specialty Court Program Narrative. These instructions are not contained on eGrants, so applicants must review the instructions below. Failure to provide the information requested may result in an application being deemed ineligible for funding.

Applicants must describe how their court program is meeting/fulfilling the applicable Essential Characteristics as defined in Chp 122-126, and 129 of the Texas Government Code.

Family Drug Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of substance abuse treatment services in the processing of civil cases in the child welfare system with the goal of family reunification.
- the use of a comprehensive case management approach involving Department of Family and Protective Services caseworkers, court-appointed case managers, and court-appointed special advocates to rehabilitate a parent who has had a child removed from the parent's care by the department because of suspected child abuse or neglect and who is suspected of substance abuse.
- A progressive treatment approach with specific requirements that a parent must meet to advance to the next phase of the program.
- Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants.

Capacity & Capabilities: In addition to the Essential Characteristics listed below, applicants must provide all members and their respective roles on the court team.

- Comprehensive substance abuse needs assessment and referral to an appropriate substance abuse treatment agency.
- Monitoring of abstinence through periodic alcohol or other drug testing.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations.

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible parents who volunteer to participate in the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.

Drug Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of alcohol and other drug treatment services in the processing of cases in the judicial system.

- The use of a nonadversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and to protect the due process rights of program participants.
- A coordinated strategy to govern program responses to participants' compliance.
- Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants.

Capacity & Capabilities:

- Access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services.
- Monitoring of abstinence through weekly alcohol and other drug testing.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations.

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.

Veterans Treatment Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of services in the processing of cases in the judicial system.
- The use of a nonadversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and to protect the due process rights of program participants.
- A coordinated strategy to govern program responses to participants' compliance.
- Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants.

Capacity & Capabilities:

- Access to a continuum of alcohol, controlled substance, mental health, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services.
- Careful monitoring of treatment and services provided to program participants.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations, including the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program.

- Inclusion of a participant's family members who agree to be involved in the treatment and services provided to the participant under the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.

Mental Health Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of mental illness treatment services and mental retardation services in the processing of cases in the judicial system.
- The use of a nonadversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and to protect the due process rights of program participants.
- Diversion of potentially mentally ill or mentally retarded defendants to needed services as an alternative to subjecting those defendants to the criminal justice system.
- Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants.

Capacity & Capabilities:

- Access to mental illness treatment services.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations, including local mental health authorities (LMHA).

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.

Commercially Sexually Exploited Persons Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of services in the processing of cases in the judicial system.
- The use of a nonadversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety, to reduce the demand for the commercial sex trade and trafficking of persons by educating offenders, and to protect the due process rights of program participants.
- A coordinated strategy to govern program responses to participant compliance.

Capacity & Capabilities:

- Access to information, counseling, and services relating to sex addiction, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health, and substance abuse.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations.

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.

Public Safety Employees Treatment Courts

Project Approach & Activities:

- The integration of services in the processing of cases in the judicial system.
- The use of a nonadversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and to protect the due process rights of program participants.
- A coordinated strategy to govern program responses to participants' compliance.
- Ongoing judicial interaction with program participants.

Capacity & Capabilities:

- access to a continuum of alcohol, controlled substance, mental health, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services
- Careful monitoring of treatment and services provided to program participants.
- Development of partnerships with public agencies and community organizations.

Performance Management:

- Monitoring and evaluation of program goals and effectiveness.

Target Group:

- Early identification and prompt placement of eligible participants in the program.
- Inclusion of a participant's family members who agree to be involved in the treatment and services provided to the participant under the program.

Evidence-Based practices:

- Continuing interdisciplinary education to promote effective program planning, implementation, and operations.