

ACH Child and Family Services

Request for Applications

Texas Child Centered Care (T3C) Readiness Building Grants

FY 2024 funding

ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) seeks proposals for funding to support organizational readiness associated with the transition to delivery of services under the Department of Family and Protective Services' (DFPS) Texas Child Centered Care (T3C) system model.

DFPS describes T3C as follows:

Texas Child-Centered Care, or T3C, represents a complete transformation of the foster care system. It is the result of a multi-year effort directed by the Texas Legislature, supported by DFPS in collaboration with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and guided by countless residential childcare providers and other child welfare stakeholders. T3C replaces the Service Level System, with a universal child assessment tool and placement process, twenty-four clearly defined Service Packages and three Add-On Services, new fully funded rate methodology, and new opportunities to claim federal funds for foster care services. DFPS anticipates beginning to transition children and services to T3C in January 2025 with full transition of the system completed by September 2027.¹

ACH is tasked with disbursing funds appropriated during the 88th Texas Legislative Session to support providers in their transition to T3C. DFPS anticipates that **residential child-care providers will incur new costs related to the following tasks as they transition to and implement the T3C model:**

- Changes to policies and procedures consistent with selected primary models and targeted service package(s) the provider will be delivering.
- New targeted and upfront training for intake, case managers, directors, foster parents (if applicable), direct delivery staff (if applicable), etc. on primary models/service packages and CANS 3.0 assessment tool and process.
- IT changes to support operating under the new service array.
- Data collection, tracking, and reporting changes.
- Changes to cost collection to populate a more robust cost report.

ACH invites applications to address provider needs related to the transition to the T3C model in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Applications (RFA). Persons or organizations receiving funds must be residential child-care providers licensed in the state of Texas and currently contracting with either DFPS and/or a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC). Please see minimum requirements below.

ACH expects to award 40-50 grants of up to \$20,000 per provider, not to exceed a total distribution of \$1,000,000.

¹ https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Texas_Child_Centered_Care/default.asp#what_is_t3c

Background

The shift to T3C will require substantial changes to provider operations in Texas. Through Community Based Care (CBC), the SSCCs have historically worked closely with providers to build much needed capacity for Texas' children. Given both the opportunities and challenges in moving to T3C, the SSCCs proposed to DFPS that the SSCCs administer the FY24 grants in both SSCC catchments and legacy areas to support provider transition to T3C. For ease of administration, the SSCCs agreed for funding to be awarded to one SSCC. ACH Child and Family Services-Our Community Our Kids (ACH-OCOK) has agreed to be the lead SSCC for the project and has entered into a contract with the state to administer the FY 2024 funds. All SSCCs will provide support to the implementation and grant award process.

ACH is partnering with The Texas Center for Child and Family Studies (The Center) at the Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services (TACFS) to administer the grants.

Since 1915, ACH Child and Family Services has provided hope for children and families in need across Tarrant County. The agency is organized as a not-for-profit corporation in accordance with IRS regulation 501(c) (3) and is based in Fort Worth, Texas. Through Community Based Care, the Our Community Our Kids division of ACH serves as the SSCC for the Metroplex West area. Please visit [our website](#) for more information.

The Center is a 501(c)3 and a supporting organization of TACFS. The Center strives to support and initiate the development of high-quality child welfare services to ensure appropriate care for all Texas children. The mission is to provide education, research, and training to strengthen the capacity of organizations and systems of care to deliver high quality support services to children and families in Texas. Please visit [their website](#) for more information.

Minimum Qualifications for Applicants

Organizations applying must meet the qualifications noted below.

1. Eligible applicants for funding must be a licensed 24-Hour Residential Child-Care operation with an active contract with DFPS and/or at least one SSCC.
2. Application aligns with the objectives stated below.
3. Qualified applicants must not be under a placement hold, pending revocation of permit(s) or licensing suspension.
4. Organizations must attest that the RFA awards will not be spent on any items other than those in the proposed project described in the grant application.

Applicants for these grants are not required to be currently contracted with ACH.

Project Objectives/Funding Opportunity

Readiness Building Grants are targeted for organizations to address organizational needs toward meeting the requirements to apply to be credentialed to serve in the T3C service array.

ACH will award T3C Readiness Building grants up to \$20,000. Any grant funds must be obligated by grantee by December 1, 2024. If funds are not obligated, then they are considered unspent. Any funding that is not liquidated for grant purposes must be returned to ACH by this time.

ACH has an additional T3C grant opportunity for T3C Operations grants posted [here](#). Organizations may apply for both the T3C Operations grant and the T3C Readiness Building grants. However, if awarded a T3C Operations grant, organizations will not be considered for a T3C Readiness Building grant. For FY 2024, providers will only be awarded a grant under one opportunity.

Providers can apply for up to two Readiness Building Grants; however, they must designate a priority application. Second applications will be considered only after all primary or priority provider applications have been evaluated and only should there be funding remaining to support additional grants. Provider organizations that function under multiple license/permit types may only apply for a single Operations Grant and/or up to two Building Grants.

Please note: there is an additional \$6M in funds appropriated for FY 2025 T3C transition grants.

Readiness Building Grants support development of skills needed by providers in the T3C environment or in obtaining technical assistance and consultation to assist strategic planning and exploration of tools to meet T3C requirements. Building grants would fund providers needing developmental work for readiness, to participate in trainings and/or to obtain technical assistance and consultation in readiness activities for T3C. Organizations may want technical assistance or consultation regarding how to begin to transition their programs to meet T3C requirements including areas such as: Continuous Quality Improvement, data collection, enhancing programming, developing aftercare programs, supplementing current programming to meet kinship care requirements, programming for pregnant and parenting teens or serving youth 14 and older, or training for foster parents and staff associated with the new service packages.

Readiness Building Grants of up to \$20,000 must apply to activities within the following objectives:

- Changes to policies and procedures consistent with selected primary models and targeted service package(s) the provider will be delivering.
- New targeted and upfront training for intake, case managers, directors, foster parents (if applicable), direct delivery staff (if applicable), etc. on primary models/service packages and CANS 3.0 assessment tool and process.
- IT changes to support operating under the new service array.
- Data collection, tracking, and reporting changes.
- Changes to cost collection to populate a more robust cost report.

Examples of qualifying activities associated with the above objectives and that may be funded include, but are not limited to the descriptions in the following table:

Policies and procedures consistent with selected primary models and targeted service package(s) the provider will be delivering.	
<i>Clinical models for GROs and CPAs</i>	Development and implementation of well-defined models for treating mental and behavioral health and/or an enhancement of their clinical model.

<i>Enhanced programming/treatment models</i>	Expanding program options and policies and procedures to align with T3C requirements. (e.g., 24-hour intake, respite and specialized respite, 24/7 crisis response, aftercare services, complex cross-system coordination, normalcy, readiness for adulthood, family finding, discharge planning, nursing, etc.) DFPS has a definition of treatment models that aligns closely with what Youth for Tomorrow (YFT) calls “program models.” Organizations may need support in developing a robust treatment model, policies, training, or support in implementing an existing treatment model.
<i>Quality assurance</i>	Development of systems, policies and procedures to evaluate and improve quality, demonstrate fidelity, predict results.
<i>Staffing</i>	Certain service packages have specific specialized staffing requirements that may warrant the hiring of new staff and associated policies and procedures. Grant funds could be used for salary. Providers would need to have a plan for sustainability until certification.
New targeted and upfront training for intake, case managers, directors, foster parents (if applicable), direct delivery staff (if applicable), etc. on new primary models/service packages and CANS 3.0 assessment tool and process.	
<i>Facility readiness</i>	Assessing ability of facilities to support delivery of service packages and supporting facilities improvements. (e.g., supervision/line of sight, anti-ligature features, security, durability, etc.)
<i>Training development</i>	Development of training on model/service packages and CANS 3.0 assessment tool and processes to support organizational transition.
Information Technology (IT) systems to support operating under the new service array.	
<i>Quality assurance</i>	IT system changes needed to evaluate and improve quality, demonstrate fidelity, predict results.
<i>Billing</i>	IT Systems needed to support billing and operating in new service array.
Data collection system to track and report changes.	
<i>Implementation, development, or refinement of new data systems</i>	Assessing current system against T3C requirements and implementing needed changes.
System to complete cost collection to populate a more robust cost report.	
<i>Changes to cost reporting</i>	T3C anticipates changes to cost reporting. Details have not been made available, but requirements in T3C Blueprint may provide some key takeaways. HHSC also intends to have a mechanism (to be defined) to track foster home costs; this will be a new requirement that will need to be implemented by CPAs.

Expectations of Grantees

To ensure the success of the proposed project, adherence to expectations outlined below will be required for grant awardees (organizations will be asked to agree to expectations on the RFA application):

1. Participate in a virtual one-hour T3C grant orientation meeting on July 9 or July 18.
2. Maintain and report on use of funds and data as requested in the contract.
3. Participate in a pre and post grant survey.
4. Maintenance of financial records/documents/invoices & receipts associated with expenditure of grant funds for a period of four years from the grant award.
5. Participate in random sample audit, if selected.
6. Adhere to the grant agreement.

Components of the Application

Proposals must be submitted using the **online application form**. The online application form can be found at <https://tacfs.org/t3c-ready/t3c-ready-grants/> and will require the following information:

1. *Name of the organization and contact information.*
2. *DFPS (DFPS) regions/SSCC catchment area(s) your organization serves.*
3. *Description/documentation of minimum qualifications:* Describe qualifications as outlined in the section above.
4. *T3C service package(s) and add-on service package(s) your organization intends to deliver.*
5. *Project description:* Describe specifically how the proposed funds will be used. Be as specific as possible. The description must include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Summary project description.
 - b. Project activities (how you will use the funds in detail).
 - c. Intended goals (how the proposed activities will advance readiness).
 - d. A clear narrative that explains all components of the project as they related to the outlined objectives of the funding.
6. *Background, governance, and accreditation:*
 - a. Do you have a volunteer board of directors?
 - b. Does your board meet at least quarterly?
 - c. Are you accredited by COA, CARF, or JCAHO?
 - d. How long has your organization been in operation?
7. *Services and programming:* Describe the residential child-care services your agency provides, including core programming and the populations you serve.
8. *Feasibility and financial position:* Organizations must complete the budget requests and financial outlook sections of the application.
 - a. Enter the gross revenues and total expenditures for your most recently ended fiscal year.
 - b. Upload a copy of audited, reviewed or compiled financial statements for the most recently ended fiscal year. If not available, please upload your most recently filed Form 990 for non-profits or Form 1120 for for-profits.
9. *Cost proposal:* Organizations must specify the amount of direct funding requested by line-item categories. Please use this [cost proposal document](#) to complete the budget. All items in the cost proposal should be reflected in the project description. Indirect costs are not supported in this grant opportunity.

Application Evaluation

ACH will coordinate with The Center for the application evaluations and will use a systematic scoring process by a panel of reviewers to include persons from SSCCs, DFPS, The Center and other relevant external partners to select applicants for awards. Applications that do not include all the required forms and sections, or that do not meet the minimum qualifications, will not be scored. The reviewers will score the applications using a standardized rubric based on the project plan components and application items noted above.

Timeline

Timeline	
RFA Release Date	May 8, 2024
Applicant Questions Due (No Later than 5 PM Central Time)	May 17, 2024
Applications Due (no later than 5 PM Central Time)	May 24, 2024
Tentative Award Announcements	June 17, 2024
Anticipated Contract Start Date	July 1, 2024
Anticipated Contract End Date	December 31, 2024

RFA Submission and Contact

Please access the online application form at <https://tacfs.org/t3c-ready/t3c-ready-grants/>. Applications are due by 5 pm Central Time on May 24, 2024.

Direct any questions to info@t3cready.org

We will not respond to questions received after 5 PM Central Time on May 17, 2024.