

ACH Child and Family Services
Request for Applications
Texas Child Centered Care (T3C) Readiness Operation 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 for Fiscal Year 2024 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.

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

ACH expects to award 25- 35 grants of up to \$150,000 per provider, not to exceed a total distribution of \$4,650,000.

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 the 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 these qualifications.

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. Amount requested must not be greater than \$150,000.
4. Qualified applicants must not be under a placement hold, pending revocation of permit(s) or licensing suspension.
5. 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

Operations Grants are specifically targeted for organizations that are advanced in their ability to meet the requirements to apply to be credentialed to serve in the T3C service array in early 2025. These grants are not appropriate for organizations who are in the exploration stages or still in the process of determining how to move forward within T3C or are considering providing a service they don't currently provide, but rather for organizations who are advanced in their ability to meet requirements and anticipate applying to be credentialed in one or more services package(s) in early 2025.

ACH seeks to award grants across the continuum of care and service packages, particularly for organizations serving children with the highest needs.

ACH will award T3C Operation Grants up to, and not to exceed, \$150,000. All 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 obligated for grant purposes must be returned to ACH by this time.

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

Operation Grants of up to \$150,000 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

	<p>coordination, normalcy, readiness for adulthood, family finding, discharge planning, nursing, etc.)</p> <p>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.</p>
<i>Quality assurance</i>	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 seeing 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 11 or July 16.

2. Maintain and report on requirements and data as requested in the contract.
3. Participate in a pre and post grant survey.
4. Submission of financial documents validating use of funds to proposed project.
5. Participate in a virtual mini-conference for grantees in Fall 2024.
6. Maintenance of financial records/documents/invoices & receipts associated with expenditure of grant funds for a period of four years from the grant award.

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 regions/SSCC catchment areas 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 past performance:*
 - a. Describe your organization's history and mission
 - b. Describe the governance and leadership.
 - c. Whether your organization has any accreditations, membership in professional associations, and other community involvement and support.
7. *Services and programming:* Describe the residential child-care services your agency provides, including core programming and the populations you serve.
8. *Best practices:*
 - a. Describe your agency's use of evidence-based or evidence- informed practices in your program.
 - b. What are the top three outcomes your program targets? (This should go beyond outputs such as number of clients served; outcomes are the client changes you are aiming for.)
 - c. How do you track and measure whether you are reaching your intended outcomes?
9. *T3C orientation and readiness:* A description/narrative of how and why your organization is well situated to meet the requirements to apply to be credentialed to serve in the T3C service array in early 2025. By what method did you make this assessment?
10. *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.
11. *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. A budget narrative and justification should be provided for each budgeted line item. Indirect costs are allowed but may not exceed 10% of total direct project expenses.

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 all SSCCs. DFPS, The Center and other relevant stakeholders to select applicants for awards. Applications that do not include all 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

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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	

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.