

Toolkit “Q/A”

Coordinating Partners

Workforce Florida, Inc.
Enterprise Florida, Inc.
Governor’s Office of Urban Opportunity
Department of Community Affairs

Reference material:

- Creation and Authority of Toolkit Initiative, Section 12, Chapter 2000-290, Laws of Florida available at: www.leg.state.fl.us/data/statutes/digest2000/sl00290.pdf
- Application and other information available at: www.workforceflorida.com/wages/wfi/partners/toolkit.html
- Guidelines for use of TANF dollars available at: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/funds2.htm>
- Governor’s Executive Order available at: http://sun6.dms.state.fl.us/eog_new/eog/orders/2001/june/eo2001-160-06-6-01.html

These questions and answers were developed only to provide a general and broad frame of reference to assist entities in completing a toolkit application.

Q/A REGARDING PROCESS AND COMMUNITY DESIGNATIONS

What is a toolkit community?

It is a community designated by the Coordinating Partners based on criteria prescribed in Section 12, Chapter 2000-290, Laws of Florida, as eligible to submit a proposal for and receive a toolkit grant.

Since selected projects can only be selected from the 15 communities, is it really an open process?

Yes, while the law stipulates that projects must be selected from the designated 15-toolkit communities it also requires that the process be competitive.

Explain the designation of the 15 communities, selection of 9 communities for projects and the designation of three areas of critical concern.

The law directs the coordinating partners to select 15 communities eligible for competing and receiving toolkit grants. From the applications received, the coordinating partners are to select projects for funding from nine of the 15 communities. After this initial selection and award is completed, the coordinating partners may recommend to the Governor three areas of critical concern based on criteria in law.

Can a public entity apply?

Yes, a public entity can apply as long as the project is in a designated “toolkit” community.

What is a “Partner” and can the lead agency also be the fiscal agent?

A “Partner” brings resources to the table

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Yes, the lead agency can operate as the fiscal agent.

Explain the selection process regarding a "project" vs. a "community."

Projects will be evaluated and will define what communities are selected.

How do you submit a joint application when you have multiple partners?

Copy the "Partner" page of the application as many times as needed and have each Partner complete and sign for submission with the proposal.

Explain the application deadlines and available funding as it relates to projects?

There are two funding opportunities referred to as "round one" and "round two."

The first round of funds (\$25 million) are currently available until June 30, 2001 and will be used to fund awards made prior to July 1, 2001 with all deliverables due not later than December 15, 2001. (Note: of the \$25 million available, it is anticipated that only up to \$5 million will actually be committed.) The application deadline for this round is June 22, 2001.

The second round of funding (\$10 million) will be available July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002. The deadline for application submission for these funds is July 27, 2001 with anticipated awards dates in August 2001.

Funds awarded from either round cannot be carried forward past the December 15, 2001 and June 30, 2002 dates, respectively.

How will the funds be divided, have any limits or caps been assigned?

Funds will be divided or awarded based on the individual project and budget.

No, caps or limits have not been assigned.

Are these reimbursable contracts, if not, how will grantees receive funds?

No, these will not be reimbursable contracts they will be structured as "performance contracts" based on performance measures and deliverables as proposed by the grantee and accepted by the coordinating partners. Grantees will receive funding or payments for completed deliverables and successful performance, which must be both valid and verifiable as outlined by the grantee and accepted by the coordinating partners.

If project is in a "Front Porch Community" does the project have to also be in the applicable Neighborhood Action Plan?

Yes, and a letter from the appropriate person must be submitted with the proposal as verification.

If the project is in a Front Porch Community, for example, but not a Toolkit Community is it eligible? No. If the project is in Toolkit Community but not a Front Porch Community, for example, is it eligible? Yes.

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What signatures from the Grantee will be required?

The signature of an official with the entity submitting a proposal that has authority to approve and enter into such a financial agreement will be required. It is the responsibility of the entity submitting the proposal to identify and obtain approval from that agent. Documentation of that authority will be required.

Does a project have to include all of the areas designated in a multi-county community or can an individual city or county apply on their own?

Individual may apply.

Q/A ON USE OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) DOLLARS

What is the difference between TANF recipient and TANF eligible, and what is the criteria for “eligible.”

TANF recipient is a person or family receiving TANF assistance or benefits.

TANF eligible is a person or family that is not currently receiving TANF services or benefits but is eligible to receive such services or benefits. Generally, the term TANF recipient is used to identify individuals that receive TANF benefits that constitute “assistance” under federal rules. This would primarily be individuals who receive temporary cash assistance (formerly known as AFDC or “welfare” payments).

More broadly, a TANF-eligible person would include individuals who are eligible to receive “services” or short-term, non-recurrent benefits under TANF. Florida law defines a number of different groups who are eligible for TANF-funded services. As used in the Toolkit legislation, the criteria for TANF eligibility would include families that include children (or a pregnant individual). This definition of family includes a non-custodial parent that does not live with the child but does not include an adult who does not have children.

For many TANF services, the family must be “needy” which means that family must have monthly income below 200% of the federal poverty level. (For example, under \$2,942 per month for a family of four.)

For TANF services that are related to preventing or reducing the incidence of out-of-wedlock births or services related to encouraging the formation or maintenance of two-parent families, there is no income limit. As long as the family contains a child or a pregnant individual, the family would be TANF eligible regardless of monthly income.

In addition to the above, TANF-funded services are restricted to U.S. citizens or non-citizens who are in certain immigration categories such as refugees and asylees.

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Since the funding for toolkit is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars, does a project have to provide direct services to TANF recipients or those eligible to receive TANF?

The services would have to be reasonably related to accomplishing the statutory purposes of the TANF law for families who are eligible. It's difficult to provide a specific answer on the "directness" of the benefit that would cover all circumstances. For example, it would be permissible to use TANF funds to develop a community-wide campaign related to abstinence education. The purpose of the campaign would be to reach TANF-eligible individuals although the information might coincidentally reach some people who are not TANF-eligible.

On the other hand, if a project were paying service contractors for job placement and retention of individuals hired in a community-based microenterprise, it would not be permissible to pay for hiring and retaining someone who was not TANF-eligible, such as an adult without children.

Are TANF recipients already designated, how is this done?

The local workforce board can assist with identification of the TANF population; current recipients and those who are TANF eligible. In addition, the project can perform its own determination of eligibility for TANF-funded services for individuals who may not already be TANF recipients. A grant recipient should expect to provide adequate documentation that beneficiaries of the grant are either TANF recipients or TANF eligible if required to do under the terms of the contract.

Is construction a permissible cost using TANF dollars?

No.

Can TANF funds be used for mixed-use development?

No.

Can TANF dollars be used to clean up a room (i.e., minor renovations) and prepare it as a training room or service center, i.e., painting, carpet, computers, and other non-capital expenditures?

Yes.

Can TANF dollars be used to pay for major renovations, capital purchases or economic development infrastructure such as sewage, water or telecommunications systems?

No.

Can TANF dollars be used to repair sewer lines or other such infrastructure?

No.

Can TANF dollars be used to provide hookup fees for water, sewage, phone, electricity, etc for TANF recipients or those eligible for TANF benefits?

Yes.

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Can TANF funds be used to pay for business start-up costs such as the purchase of a business franchise (e.g., a Burger King franchise)?

No.

How can TANF dollars be used to stimulate small business?

Funds can be used for micro loans or training for TANF recipients or those eligible in the areas of starting and running a small business.

Can TANF dollars be used for "micro loan" programs?

Yes, but only if recipients are TANF eligible or current TANF recipients.

Can TANF dollar be used to pay for administrative costs, such as contract project manager?

Up to 10 percent of the amount awarded can be used for project administration. It is the responsibility of the grant applicant to outline in their budget the administrative cost and uses.

Can TANF dollars be used for capacity building, i.e. training?

Yes, as long as the training or services are for current TANF recipients or those eligible for TANF benefits.

What, if any, relationship is there between TANF dollars for the Toolkit and TANF dollars for local workforce boards?

They are the same type of funds and therefore the same federal and state rules apply to the use of Toolkit funds as to the use of TANF funds administered by the local workforce boards.

Can a community revitalization plan including clean-up and beautification strategies, be prepared with input from TANF recipients designed to stimulate small business development, reduce crime, stimulate redevelopment, etc., eligible for TANF funding?

The applicant would have to explain the benefit of such a plan to TANF recipients or those eligible to use TANF funds to pay TANF recipients or those eligible to prepare the plan.

Is computer software and related equipment (public education kiosks) to educate TANF recipients on how to use the County's bus system to get to jobs, childcare facilities, etc. allowable, and a program to educate employers about available transit service for their employee who are TANF recipients to access jobs?

Yes. It's possible that there may be some types of computer equipment or transportation expenditures that could fall under federal guidelines related to all federal funds. There are circulars published by the Office of Management and Budget that provide guidance on issues such as depreciation (for example OMB Circular A-87). In general, all of the items listed in the question appear to be permissible.

Can Toolkit monies be used to transport TANF recipients in already funded transportation programs or lease vehicle for transporting TANF recipients to training, jobs, childcare, or other basic service needs?

Yes. However, it should be noted that vehicles may only be leased for duration of contract and not purchased.