

FY 2015 Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program Frequently Asked Questions

Electronic Submission Questions

- 1. I completed all the fields in the on-line electronic application including the correct and verified zip code, however, I received an error message saying my zip code is incorrect. What advice would you give to correct the issue?**

When entering the zip code in the electronic application you must enter a nine digit zip code. If you are not aware of the last 4 numbers please enter 0000.

- 2. Will we need a DUNS number?**

Yes, you need a DUNS number and an EIN number when applying. The DUNS number must be registered and active in the System for Award Management (SAM). You can apply for a DUNS number at <http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html> (this is free) and register your DUNS number with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov>.

- 3. How often do we update our SAM registration?**

You must update the SAM registration on a yearly basis. Allow at least 72 hours for completing the SAM registration and another 72 hours for the updated SAM registration to migrate to Grants.gov. Applications without an updated SAM cannot be submitted electronically through Grants.gov.

- 4. My DUNS number appears as active in the SAM system, however, when I submit my DFC application through Grants.gov; I received an error message stating that my SAM number is not updated. What is the issue?**

The DUNS number may appear as active in the SAM system but may not be active in Grants.gov. It takes up to 72 hours from the time the DUNS number is active in the SAM before it is updated in Grants.gov.

- 5. According to the instructions in Appendix C of the DFC Request for Applications (RFA), applicants are instructed to submit the electronic application in 4 separate attachments. What would happen if fewer than or more than 4 attachments are submitted?**

If you submit more than four attachments, SAMHSA will only accept a maximum of 4 attachments; the additional attachments will not be downloaded and included in your application. If fewer than four attachments are submitted, depending on your system, the computer may time out and the application may not upload properly.

- 6. I submitted my electronic application through Grants.gov, now I am receiving an error message stating that I am not the authorized representative. What is the issue?**

Your organization currently has someone registered in Grants.gov as the authorized representative. The only individual that can submit a grant on behalf of the organization is the

authorized representative.

Questions on Statutory Eligibility Requirements

Requirement #1: 12 Sectors

1. What is the purpose of the Coalition Involvement Agreements (CIA)?

The application requires 12 CIAs (Attachment 1) to document the 12 individuals identified as sector members. The CIAs document that an individual understands what he/she represents, for the purposes of this application, a specific sector within the applicant coalition's membership.

2. My coalition has many members. How do I determine which members should be listed as the representative for each of the 12 sectors?

In completing your CIAs (Attachment 1), it is important that you provide the name of the individual that demonstrates the greatest likelihood of leveraging resources, including other members of his/her sector.

3. Is there a timeframe prior to submitting an application that the 12 required sectors have to be members of the coalition?

No, but all 12 sectors are required at the time of application and no CIA can be more than 12 months old.

4. How is "Youth" defined?

Youth is an individual 18 years of age or younger. On the CIA, list the youth's age and where he/she attends school.

5. What signatures are needed on the CIA?

Two signatures are required on each CIA. One must be that of the individual for each of the 12 required sectors and the other must be the individual who signs the documents on behalf of the applicant coalition. A staff person that is/will be paid by the DFC grant (should it be awarded) *may not* be listed as a sector representative, but may be the coalition representative. A youth sector representative may sign for themselves; however, we will also accept the signature of their parent or guardian, if clearly identified in the CIA.

Requirement #2: Six Months Existence

1. We have not been listing our attendees at each meeting by sector. What do we do?

Attachment 2 requires that meeting minutes include those in attendance and the sector that each attendee represent. Please amend the minutes to include the sector each attendee represents. If you need to, do so by hand.

2. **Can a person represent more than one sector?**

The coalition is required to have 12 distinct sector representatives. Coalition staff cannot represent a sector. All coalition members must be community volunteers and non-salaried.

Requirement #6: Entity Eligible to Receive Federal Grants

1. **Who can be a grantee/legal applicant for a DFC application?**

Grantees may be domestic, public or private non-profit entities, such as state, local, or tribal governments; public or private universities and colleges; professional associations; voluntary organizations, self-help groups; consumer and provider services-oriented constituency groups; community and faith-based organizations; and tribal organizations.

2. **Our coalition is in the process of applying for tax-exempt status with the IRS, but we do not anticipate having that completed until after the DFC application is due. However, it will be in place by the start of the grant period. How should we proceed?**

A private, non-profit organization must include evidence of its non-profit status at the time of application. Therefore, not having your 501(c)(3) at the time of application makes you ineligible to apply for the DFC grant on your own.

Requirement #7: Substantial Support from non-federal Sources

1. **Can pro-rated savings for office space, utilities, etc., be used toward the match requirement?**

Yes.

2. **Can staff salaries be considered part of in-kind match, and how is this documented?**

Yes, as long as the costs are consistent with those paid for similar work in the organization or the current market rate. Provide documentation for costs according to the sample budget in the RFA.

3. **If the budget includes a match/in-kind cost and something happens where we cannot get the item or service donated, can it be purchased and the budget amended?**

No, the applicant must find another source of non-federal match funds.

Requirement #9: Zip Code Overlap

1. **How can you find out which zip codes/communities funded DFC coalitions serve?**

A list of DFC grantees is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/drug-free-communities-support-program>. You will need to contact the listed coalitions in your area to determine all of the zip codes they serve.

- 2. How does a coalition demonstrate cooperation with another coalition that exists in the same community?**

A Letter of Mutual Cooperation between the two coalitions is required in the applying coalition's application. The letter must outline the coalition's efforts to collaborate and include two signatures: one from the applicant coalition and one from the currently funded/applying coalition.

- 3. As a new coalition seeking a grant, what is our chance to receive a grant if there is already a DFC grantee in our city?**

As long as you document that you are coordinating with the current grantee, your chances are the same as any other applicant. DFC grants are not awarded based on how many are in a state, county, city, town or any other geographic boundary. They are decided by score only.

Questions Related to Evaluation

- 1. The grant requirements state that we must address multiple drugs, but we only have to supply data on alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs. What if my coalition is addressing methamphetamine?**

The DFC National Cross-site Evaluation currently requires that all grantees collect specific data on four substances (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs) in three grade levels (6th – 12th grade) every two years. If you choose to focus your efforts on methamphetamine, you will still need to comply with the collection of the measures for the DFC Program's National Cross-site Evaluation.

- 2. Is there a particular survey you would like us to use to measure the 4 core measures?**

No. DFC does not require that you use a specific survey. However, if funded, surveys used to measure the 4 core measures must be approved by the DFC National Evaluation Team. You can email the survey to dfc_evaluators@icfi.com.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO BUDGET

- 1. Can I include training in my travel line item?**

Yes.

- 2. Does the grant cover organizational development for a newly formed coalition (i.e., training, technical assistance, leadership development, etc.)?**

Yes.

- 3. Can the budget pay stipends for coalition members?**

Incentives may be paid to coalition members up to \$20 per person. [Is this per year, during the life of the coalition, etc.?)

4. Can the cost of food be counted as matching funds?

No. You may not count as match anything prohibited for purchase with federal funds.

5. Does the DFC announcement stipulate a budget amount or percentage related to evaluation services?

Yes, you may use up to 20% of your total award amount on evaluation or evaluation services.

6. Is there an administrative cap on how much of the budget can be used for salaries for paid staff?

No, but it must be reasonable for the specific function/activity related to the approved project and within the locale in which the coalition operates.

7. Can a coalition member with special expertise be contracted for services (i.e., epidemiologist or evaluator)?

Yes. Unless the situation gives rise to at least the appearance of a conflict of interest and violates the administrative requirements regarding competition, as cited in 2 CFR 200.112/45 CFR 75.112 (Uniform Administrative Requirements).

8. If you get a negotiated indirect rate, can that be put under match?

No, unless the organization has another source of funding to pay for those costs other than federal funds.

9. If some of our coalition members are paid by their employers with federal grants (e.g., SPF-SIG, school teacher, etc.), can we still count their contribution with the coalition as in-kind match?

No, nor can you count any federal dollars that pass through another entity (such as the State Government) as match.

10. Does the indirect cost proposal need to be approved before the grant submission date, and can you explain the provisional rate?

An indirect cost rate does not have to be approved before the submission date, but if you plan to negotiate with a federal cognizant agency, as it is explained in the grant announcement, then SAMHSA may provide your organization with a provisional indirect cost rate of up to 10% the modified total direct costs (MTDC). Your organization must submit an indirect cost proposal within 90 days from the start date of the project in order to use the provisional indirect costs.

11. Do you allow institutions to take indirect costs? If so, what is the percentage?

SAMHSA allows the grantee/legal applicant organization the use of indirect costs if you have a current indirect cost rate agreement negotiated with a federal cognizant agency. Indirect costs may be charged as direct costs if the applicant does not have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.

12. How many training days are Year One applicants required to budget?

Budget for 18 total training days, spread out over the events outlined in the RFA. Required trainings include the DFC New Grantee Meeting (3 days) and the National Coalition Academy (3 weeks). To discuss estimated costs, contact the CADCA TA Manager at 800-542-2322, ext. 240.

13. Are Year Six applicants required to budget for 18 training days at the NCA and New Grantee Training?

No. Year Six applicants are only required to budget for the three-day DFC New Grantee Meeting. However, they may budget for more training days, if they choose. Year 6 applicants are allowed to attend the NCA if they have not already done so. They can also choose to send different individuals that did not attend a prior session. For more information on the NCA, contact the CADCA TA Manager at 800-542-2322, ext. 240.

14. Can we apply for less than \$125,000? Are there advantages to doing so? Why would I apply for less than \$125,000?

Yes, applicants may ask for less than the allowed \$125,000/year, but the amount written into the application budget is the maximum that can be requested in future funding years. There is absolutely *no* advantage to asking for less than the \$125,000. You are encouraged to ask for the full allowable amount, as long as you can provide the match.

15. Can law enforcement overtime be used as match when he/she performs DUI/Safety Checkpoints, Alcohol Compliance Checks, and other enforcement activities?

Yes.

16. How do you calculate the value of volunteer time to be used as match?

There are many volunteer time calculators available online. Cite which calculator you used in your application and remember that it must be reasonable for your coalition's location. Conduct market research as appropriate.

17. What organizations are eligible to apply for DFC funding?

The purpose of the DFC funding is to support community-based coalitions dedicated to advancing and implementing community-wide prevention efforts. A coalition may be a legal entity with 501(c)(3) status or partner with a legal entity to apply on their behalf.

The purpose of the DFC Support Program is to establish and strengthen collaboration to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent youth substance use. Grants awarded through the DFC Support Program are intended to support established community-based youth substance use prevention coalitions capable of effecting community-level change. A coalition is defined as a community-based formal arrangement for cooperation and collaboration among groups or sectors of a community in which each group retains its identity, but all agree to work together toward a common goal of building a safe, healthy, and drug-free community.

18. Do we need to have 501(c)(3) status?

Your coalition must be incorporated and have 501(c)(3) IRS status in order to apply for DFC funding; or, your coalition may partner with an agency that has this designation and is willing to be the recipient of the DFC funds.

19. Where can I find the allowable travel per diem rates applicable to our community?

Government per diem rates are established by the Government Services Accountability Office and can be found on their website <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

20. We plan to use volunteer hours as part of our match, but are not sure how to figure out the dollar value of their hours.

In regard to volunteer rates, there are various calculators on the web that provide volunteer rates for volunteer contributions. For example, the Independent Sector provides the value of volunteers per state at https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time. You may find other calculators that are more specific to your state, county or community. SAMHSA does not endorse any specific calculator.

Questions related to Eligibility

1. Our Coalition received 10 years of DFC funding and since that time we have seen a shift in the type of substance abuse most prevalent in our community and need to address these concerns in different ways. Does the 10 year funding limit still apply?

Yes, the 10 year funding limit still applies. A coalition may not receive more than 10 years of DFC funding. Coalitions that have received 10 years of funding are not eligible to apply for this grant.

2. Our County Government served as the legal grantee on behalf of a coalition for 10 years in the northern part of the county. Recently we were approached by a coalition serving a different community interested in applying for DFC funding. May we partner with this new coalition?

A coalition that proposes to serve a community (or any part of a community) that has already been served for 10 years by another DFC-funded coalition must demonstrate to the

satisfaction of the DFC grant review officials and upon the final determination of the DFC Administrator that it is “unique and distinct” from the coalition that previously served the same community.

3. What activities are unallowable under the DFC Support Program?

The DFC Support Program does **not** fund the following (not a fully exhaustive list):

- After-school programs
- Youth mentoring programs
- Sports programs
- Treatment services/programs/facilities
- Drug Courts
- Construction
- Landscaping/neighborhood revitalization projects

Questions related to Action Plan and Core Measures Data

1. Are we expected to address all four substances (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs) in our work plan? Do we need to have strategies for each of the core measures?

The 12-Month Coalition Plan should be comprehensive and include measurable objectives, strategies, and activities addressing at least two of the substances most commonly used/abused by youth in the communities served. Irrespective of the substances addressed in the applicant’s work plan, the DFC National Evaluation requires that each funded DFC grantee collect and report core measures data on alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drug use.

2. Does the ONDCP require that a DFC applicant use a specific survey to collect the four core measures?

No, DFC applicants are not required to use a specific survey. However, every DFC funded coalition will be required to seek prior approval of their coalition’s survey by the DFC Evaluation Team.

3. Are we required to hire an evaluator?

No, you do not have to hire an evaluator.

Questions related to Format

1. May we use “greyscale,” shading to help make the table more readable?

Yes, you may.

2. Is it permissible to use bullet points in the narrative?

You may use bullets in the narrative section, but keep in mind that you will need to fully answer each question as comprehensively as possible to obtain the highest rating. Also, there is a 25-page narrative limitation.

3. Where is the Table of Contents supposed to be attached for submission?

When submitting on Grants.gov, the guidelines request that you submit four pdfs: (1) Community Overview/Program Narrative; (2) Budget; (3) Attachments 1-7; and (4) Attachments 8-14. The Table of Contents is considered part of the Program Narrative document.

4. Please clarify if any of the Attachments are to be page numbered and included in the Table of Contents.

Yes, number all of the Attachments and list them in the Table of Contents.

General Questions

7. Are “Letters of Support” (from community organizations, Congressional members, State Legislators, etc.) a factor in the review/funding process for DFC?

No. Letters of Support are not required, nor requested to apply for DFC funding. They are not scored and do not positively or negatively affect the score of a DFC application. They are not used in any way to determine funding in the DFC Program.

8. What parts of the application do the Peer Reviewers receive for review?

Peer Reviewers receive the entire application. They are instructed to score only the 25 pages of the Narrative. They may use the Attachments as tools to help them understand the applicant coalition, but do not score the application based on those documents. Do not send coalition brochures, CDs or other printed materials as these are not sent to Peer Reviewers and do not affect the overall score of an application.

9. Are DFC coalitions required to use “evidence-based programs”?

While DFC does not require the use of “model” or “evidence-based” programs, it does require comprehensive prevention planning with an emphasis on community level change.

10. If you have been a DFC "mentee" coalition, but never received DFC funding, are you still considered a new applicant?

Yes.

11. If you applied last year and did not receive the grant, is this a blemish?

No, this will not affect the review.

12. Regarding the number of new grant awards and the funding available, do the Year 6 applicants have any inherent advantage to receive funding over Year 1 applicants?

No. By law, Year 1 and Year 6 applicants must be treated equally in the funding process.

13. If your application is not funded, can you get specific feedback in order to improve the following year?

Yes. You will receive comments including identified strengths and weaknesses from the Peer Reviewers through the SAMHSA Office of Grant Review.

14. Which title goes on page 2 of the SF-424?

Drug-Free Communities Support Program

15. Can you contract with another agency to handle payroll and financial administration?

Yes, as long as the agency/organization is not a federal agency; however, DFC grantees **are** expected to conduct the day-to-day operations of the grant program. DFC grantees are not permitted to serve as a conduit for DFC funds passing through to another agency. Therefore, the grantee may not contract a substantive portion of the day-to-day operations to another agency and/or coalition.