



February 3, 2026

Dear Colleague:

In his recent remarks to the [Religious Liberty Commission](#), President Donald J. Trump [observed](#) that “America was founded on faith, as we know, and I've been saying it for a long time. And when faith gets weaker, our country seems to get weaker.” Reflecting his commitment, in February 2025, President Trump issued [Executive Order \(EO\) 14205](#) establishing the White House Faith Office. This office, among other things, was charged in the EO with working with federal agencies and Departments to facilitate “active participation of faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship in government-funded or government-conducted activities and programs.”

Toward this end, the [Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\)](#) and [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#), as operating divisions of the [Department of Health & Human Services](#), through this letter, seek to highlight that both agencies welcome full participation from faith-based organizations in their programs and activities.

SAMHSA manages an annual grant portfolio of more than 70 formula and discretionary grant programs typically exceeding \$7 billion. SAMHSA [grants](#) include [Block Grants](#) to states/territories; SAMHSA’s [Projects in Assistance in Transition from Homelessness](#); and numerous [discretionary grants](#) focused on such issues as supporting persons with [hepatitis](#); providing [technical assistance and training](#) to patients, families/caregivers and health professionals; supporting; and funding [state-level prevention](#) planning efforts. Faith-based organizations may participate in HHS awarding-agency funded programs or services on the same basis as any other organization as recipients and subrecipients of grant funds.

SAMHSA programs typically may be carried out through “grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with States, political subdivisions of States, Indian tribes or tribal organizations (as such terms are defined in [section 5304 of title 25](#) [Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act]), health facilities, or programs operated by or in accordance with a contract or grant with the Indian Health Service, or other public or nonprofit private entities.”¹ SAMHSA’s Web site includes resources providing information about [how to apply](#) for a grant including an application guide, key forms and video tutorials. New notices of funding and forecasted funding are posted on SAMHSA’s grants [Web site](#).

ACF manages a portfolio of more than \$68 billion in discretionary and mandatory grants, including those administered by ACF’s Children’s Bureau. These include ACF’s Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program, Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child

¹ See <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/chapter-6A/subchapter-III-A/part-B>

Abuse and Neglect (CBCAP) and Adoption Opportunities grants. Through [formula grants](#), ACF’s Children’s Bureau also [provides funding to states and tribes](#) for such purposes as child welfare, foster care, adoption assistance and child abuse prevention. In addition, ACF awards funding to states and tribes in block grant programs, such as the Community Services Block Grant program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. ACF provides resources to applicants on how to [find funding opportunities](#) and resources concerning [how to apply](#) for grant opportunities. ACF grant recipients [typically include](#) “both nonprofit and for-profit organizations as well as government, educational, and local public authorities.”

Both SAMHSA and ACF fully comply with the [HHS-level Grants Policy Statement](#) which provides information on the discretionary grant awards process and cites relevant legal terms and conditions and provisions that establish “protections for faith-based organizations to apply and receive federal funds without discrimination or interference with their mission.”² HHS has adopted Department-wide regulations that require equal treatment for faith-based organizations.³

Charitable choice provisions⁴ also apply to select SAMHSA programs including SAMHSA’s Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services (SUBG) [Block Grant](#) and [Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness \(PATH\)](#) and most discretionary grant programs that provide direct substance use treatment services. These provisions permit faith-based organizations to fairly compete for SAMHSA funding while also ensuring that intended beneficiaries under these programs receive services even if they do not share a particular religious belief.

ACF charitable choice regulations apply to the [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#) and [the Community Services Block Grant](#). The Child Care and Development Block Grants program has also adopted program-specific regulations that include protections for faith-based organizations.⁵

HHS has worked to champion and defend the rights of persons of faith including through its [Faith Center](#) which seeks to “build partnerships with faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship, which help HHS serve individuals, families, and communities in need.” Both ACF and SAMHSA similarly seek to collaborate with and fully support faith-based organizations. [HHS Priorities](#), ACF’s [Vision, Mission, Values, Priorities, & Guiding Principles](#) and SAMHSA’s [Strategic Priorities](#) highlight the importance of marriage and families, personal responsibility, religion and conscience rights and achieving long-term recovery and sobriety for which a religious or spiritual approach may be well-suited. HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. has himself [emphasized](#), for example, “the critical role of community, purpose, and spiritual connection in combating the opioid crisis.”⁶

² HHS Grants Policy Statement, October 2025, p. 115 of 131, <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/hhs-grants-policy-statement-oct-2025.pdf>

³ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/part-87>; <https://acf.gov/occ/fact-sheet/equal-treatment-regulations-faith-based-organizations>

⁴ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/42/part-54>; <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/42/part-54a>; <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/290kk>; <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/300x-65>

⁵ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/part-98>

⁶ <https://www.hhs.gov/maha/speaking-at-the-rx-and-illicit-drug-summit/index.html>

SAMHSA and ACF both look forward to working with all interested faith-based organizations to ensure they can apply for and participate in the full range of programs for which they are eligible as we together work to implement shared Administration priorities. Should you or your organization need further assistance, please feel free to contact [Odessa Crocker](#), Acting Director of SAMHSA's Office of Financial Resources or [Cody Inman](#), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management at ACF.

Sincerely,

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