

Guidance for Mobile Application Use in the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program

Updated September 2017

Introduction

The Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP) is a federally funded program administrated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Section 416 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act authorizes FEMA to fund mental health assistance and training activities in areas that have been presidentially declared a disaster. The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), works with FEMA through an interagency agreement to provide technical assistance, consultation, grant administration, program oversight, and training for state mental health authorities, U.S. territories, and designated tribal authorities.

The mission of the CCP is to assist individuals and communities in recovering from the effects of natural and human-caused disasters through the provision of community-based outreach and psycho-educational services. The CCP supports short-term interventions that involve assisting disaster survivors in understanding their current situation and reactions, mitigating stress, and developing coping strategies; providing survivors with emotional support; and encouraging linkages with other individuals and agencies that help survivors in their recovery process.

The information presented in this guidance document should be used in conjunction with the following:

- CCP guidance
- Immediate Services Program (ISP) and Regular Services Program (RSP) applications and application supplemental instructions
- 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §206.171
- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards from the Office of Management and Budget: Subparts A–F Appendix III (Supercircular) (2 CFR Chapter I and Chapter II, Part 200, Subparts A–D)

Mobile Application Overview

The mobile application for CCP data collection is designed to enhance and streamline the process of data entry and reduce the lag time between data collection and its availability to CCP staff and federal partners. The mobile application reduces work time and effort for crisis counselors by providing a more accessible and reliable option for data collection when using the Individual/Family Encounter Log form, Group Encounter form, Weekly Tally log, and Adult or Child/Youth Assessment and Referral Tools. Programs opting to use the mobile application have access to real-time feedback on their program's progress and accomplishments. The data collected using the mobile application and the paper-based format should be used to identify trends and community need, which can assist in planning the direction of outreach activities.

The mobile application is intended for use by crisis counselors and outreach workers in post-disaster CCP grant sites with access being restricted to those individuals with authorized accounts in the CCP Online Data Collection and Evaluation System (ODCES). The mobile application can work with all mobile devices. The device must have access to the Internet, either through Wi-Fi or cellular data, in order to

download the application. The device must also be able to access the Internet on a regular basis to enable data upload through the mobile application to the ODCES.

Use of the mobile app during an encounter will require crisis counselors to explain what data are being collected and for what reason. Users can explain to the survivors that the data are anonymous—no names, addresses, or personally identifiable information are collected. Showing the data collection app to the survivor can also be useful. To maintain engagement with a survivor, one person should work to complete the form while the other engages with the encounter participant. Completed forms should be uploaded once the counselor who completed the form has access to an Internet connection—either immediately or by the end of the day.

Determining Whether To Use the Mobile Application in Your CCP

States, U.S. territories, and federally recognized tribes should consider many factors when determining whether their CCP should use the mobile application. These factors can potentially impact program staffing plans as well as other areas of the ISP and RSP application budget.

Technology Needs

The mobile application requires access to the ODCES for data entry and reporting. It also requires program-provided mobile devices or coverage of service for personal devices in the field. Devices must have access to Wi-Fi or a cellular service plan. It should be noted that some state, territory, tribal, or provider information technology (IT) security policies may not allow users to download and install applications on program-funded devices. Grant applicants should familiarize themselves with these policies to determine whether to provide reimbursement for personal devices or supply devices to program staff. Programs using the paper-based format require access to the ODCES on a desktop computer or laptop for data entry and reporting; however, they do not require mobile devices for data collection purposes.

Staffing Needs

Use of the mobile application affects the staffing plan. Programs using the mobile application are required to provide the following:

- IT support at the provider and/or state/territory/tribal level to address any technology issues that arise in using the mobile application. This support can be provided in kind or via grant funding. Support may be needed in all phases of the program (for example, staff may need assistance in downloading the mobile application, logging in for the first time, uploading forms via the mobile application, or posting resources on the state/territory/tribe resource page within the application).
- A data/evaluation specialist at the state/territory/tribal level to help providers understand the data, enter limited numbers of Assessment and Referral Tool paper forms, provide training and support, and assist with reporting. In small programs, a data/evaluation specialist may not be needed if existing team leaders or program staff have the ability to enter limited numbers of Assessment and Referral Tool forms.

Programs opting for paper-based forms typically require data entry assistant staff at the state/territory/tribe or provider level. Large programs may require both a data entry assistant and a data/evaluation specialist. The paper-based format does not require any additional IT support personnel.

User Access and Management

The mobile application allows state-, territory-, and tribal-level staff to manage user access to the mobile application and the ODCES. In order to gain access to the system, all program staff are required to have an email address (personal or provided by the program) and maintain a secure password. The paper-based format requires that the SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) manage user access and establish accounts for only those people designated by the state, territory, or tribe as responsible for data or program reporting.

Timeliness of Reports

One of the benefits of using the mobile application is real-time data feedback for staff at all levels. Programs using paper forms may experience a delay in data feedback in the online system due to the time it takes a data entry assistant to enter data manually from the completed forms.

Data Entry Responsibility

Use of the mobile application allows crisis counselors to enter form data and upload their forms into the online system. In programs using paper forms, a data entry assistant at either the provider or state/territory/tribal level will be responsible for data entry in the online system. Programs using a combination of formats will be required to employ a data/evaluation specialist or a data entry assistant to enter data from the paper forms.

Data Quality Assurance Responsibility

Program data should be a key component in guiding program planning. Therefore, the accuracy of the data is essential. In both systems, all team members are responsible for collecting accurate data, and team leaders will review and approve all forms regardless of the format.

Training Requirements

The following trainings are required for the mobile application format.

- [CCP Online Data Forms Training for Crisis Counselors: Mobile Data Collection App Training](#)
- Online database training for state/territory/tribe and provider staff who will be responsible for review and approval of forms
- Review of the [CCP mobile app training video](#)

The following trainings are required for programs using paper forms.

- [CCP Online Data Forms Training for Crisis Counselors: Basic Forms Training](#)
- [CCP Online Data Forms Training for Crisis Counselors: Assessment and Referral Tool training](#)
- Online database training for data entry assistant and/or data/evaluation specialist

Forms/Tools Format

Both systems will require the same forms and tools; however, programs using the mobile application will have the option to use electronic versions of the first five forms/tools listed below.

- Individual/Family Crisis Counseling Services Encounter Log
- Group Encounter Log
- Weekly Tally Sheet
- Adult Assessment and Referral Tool
- Child/Youth Assessment and Referral Tool
- Participant Feedback Survey (electronic or paper)
- Service Provider Feedback Survey (electronic)

Budget Considerations

Programs opting to use the mobile application will need to consider the additional supplies and support needed when completing the ISP and RSP applications. Funding for mobile devices with data plans or Internet access will be required, as well as IT support for team members using the mobile application. The following are line items that will affect the CCP budget and should be requested as part of the ISP or RSP application.

- IT support specialist at the state/territory/tribal and/or provider level depending on the size and structure of the program. This will typically be provided in kind.
- Data and reporting staff. The number of positions and type of data staff (data entry assistant or data/evaluation specialist) should relate to the size of the program.
- Mobile devices or coverage of personal devices that can access the Internet (smartphones or tablets). Programs typically request one device for each pair of crisis counselors with the expectation that the pair will share the device.
- Wi-Fi access or cellular data plans.

Appendix A: Key Differences Between Mobile and Paper Implementation

Subject	Paper	Mobile
Technology Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires access to the CCP ODCES for data entry and reporting. Does not require mobile devices for data collection. <i>These devices may still be necessary as a programmatic concern.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires access to the CCP ODCES for data entry and reporting. Requires program-provided mobile devices or coverage of service for personal devices in the field. Devices must have access to Wi-Fi or a cellular service plan.
Staffing Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires data entry assistant staff at the state/territory/tribe or provider level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires IT support at either the provider and/or state/territory/tribal level to address technology concerns. May require a data/evaluation specialist depending on program size in order to coordinate the use of the mobile application, provide ongoing training and support to provider staff, input limited numbers of paper forms, and analyze data trends and reports for the state.
User Access and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state, territory, or tribe and SAMHSA DTAC lead user access and management processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-, territory-, or tribal-level staff manage user access to mobile application and online database. All program staff are required to have an email address (personal or provided by the program) and maintain a secure password.
Timeliness of Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is potential for delay in data feedback in the online system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is real-time data feedback for staff in the mobile application and online system.
Data Entry Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A data specialist at either the provider or state/territory/tribal level is responsible for data entry in the online system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis counselors are responsible for entering form data and uploading their forms in the online system.

Subject	Paper	Mobile
Data Quality Assurance Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All team members are responsible for accuracy of data. • Team leaders review and approve paper forms. The data specialist confirms entered data in the online system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All team members are responsible for accurate data. • Team leaders are responsible for reviewing and approving forms in the online system.
Training Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCP Online Data Forms Training for Crisis Counselors: Paper-Based Data Collection • Required online database training for data specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCP Online Data Forms Training for Crisis Counselors: Mobile Application Data Collection • Required online database training for state/territory/tribal and provider staff
Forms/Tools Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual/Family Crisis Counseling Services Encounter Log (paper) • Group Encounter Log (paper) • Weekly Tally Sheet (paper) • Adult Assessment and Referral Tool (paper) • Child/Youth Assessment and Referral Tool (paper) • Participant Feedback Survey (electronic or paper) • Service Provider Feedback Survey (electronic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and Family Encounter Log (mobile) • Group Encounter Log (mobile) • Weekly Tally (mobile) • Adult Assessment and Referral Tool (mobile) • Child/Youth Assessment and Referral Tool (mobile) • Participant Feedback Survey (electronic¹ or paper) • Service Provider Feedback Survey (electronic)
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper forms and reproduction costs • Data entry assistant to manually enter data collection forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devices with ability to access the internet • Wi-Fi or cellular data plans • Data/evaluation specialist to provide ongoing analysis, reporting, and mobile application support • IT support for mobile devices and application installation (typically provided in-kind)

¹ Electronic submission refers to the completion of a form via a unique web link provided by SAMHSA DTAC.

Appendix B: Sample Job Descriptions for Positions That Will Use the Mobile Application

Team Leader

- Leads a team of crisis counselors in the field.
- Is usually an experienced disaster behavioral health worker or behavioral health professional who supervises paraprofessional or less experienced crisis counselors.
- May help to assess people who require traditional mental health or substance use treatment.
- May be one of several team leads on staff with a provider, depending on the size and scope of the disaster.
- Trains, debriefs, and provides supervision for the crisis counselors.
- Uses data to conduct ongoing needs assessment.
- Coordinates data collection activities and reviews data form submissions for accuracy.
- If the program is using the mobile application, the team leader reviews and accepts or rejects forms submitted through the mobile application.
- May use the mobile application to complete data forms.
- Provides coordination and oversight of the crisis counselors' plans of service.
- May perform crisis counseling as needed.

Crisis Counselor

- Works with individuals, families, and groups to provide outreach, emotional support, individual and group crisis counseling, public education, and referrals when needed.
- Is synonymous with term "outreach worker."
- Represents program in the community and networks with other agencies and partners to ensure needs of survivors are met.
- Provides presentations to community groups on disaster reactions, coping skills, stress management, and the CCP.
- May use the mobile application to complete data forms.

Data Entry Assistant

- Implements and oversees the CCP data collection activities and is the point of contact for entering data into the CCP web-based system.
- Supports program manager, data/evaluation specialist, and team leaders.

Data/Evaluation Specialist

- Implements and oversees the CCP data collection activities and is the point of contact for entering data into the CCP web-based system.
- Collects and analyzes data, collects Participant Feedback Surveys and Service Provider Feedback Surveys, reports data to FEMA and SAMHSA's CMHS, and provides data analysis and feedback to state and provider leadership staff to improve program services.
- Trains CCP staff on data collection forms. Works closely with program manager to ensure accuracy of completed forms.
- Supports program manager and team leaders.

IT Support Specialist

- Works at the state/territory/tribe and/or provider level, depending on the size and structure of the program.
- Assists CCP staff in all aspects of use of the mobile application.
 - Helps download the application to mobile devices.
 - Assists the team in uploading forms.
 - Works with the team when logging into the mobile application for the first time.
 - Provides IT support and troubleshooting throughout the entire CCP.