

## Cooperative Agreements for States and Territories to Improve Local 988 Capacity

### **Pre-application Webinar (NOFO FG-23-006)**

**Thursday, May 25, 2023, 4:00 PM-5:00 PM EST**

#### **Background:**

The purpose of this program is to improve states and territories response to 988 contacts (including calls, chats, and texts) originating in the state/territory. States and territories are expected to use resources to: (1) enhance recruitment, hiring, and training of the 988 workforce to meet at minimum 90% state or territory calls, chats, and texts demand; (2) implement additional technology and security measures to fully support 988 infrastructure and effective coordination across the crisis continuum; (3) improve 988 support and service for high-risk and underserved populations; (4) develop and implement comprehensive quality assurance plans, to include identification and review of critical incidents; and (5) develop and implement comprehensive 988 communication plans to align with SAMHSA's 988 partner toolkit.

#### **Questions and Answers:**

1. **Question:** Can you put those links in the chat please? thank you!

**Answer:** Yes.

NOFO is live: <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/fg-23-006>

Grants.gov is live: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=988>

988 page: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988-lifeline>

Vanity URL <https://samhsa.gov/988>

988 Jobs <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988/jobs>

SAMSHA Press Release: <https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/20230517/hhs-announces-additional-200-million-funding-988-suicide-crisis-lifeline>

2. **Question:** Does that mean that the amount that is listed as each state's share is an annual amount as well?  
**Answer:** The chart in Appendix M shows the maximum **annual** amount of funding for each state and territory for this cooperative agreement (page 82 of the NOFO). For the grant total funding, multiply by 3.
3. **Question:** Since many states are not currently using the Vibrant UP and consequently unable to receive texts/chats, is there any guidance on how we should write to this in the application?  
**Answer:** SAMHSA and Vibrant Emotional Health will be working together to ensure grantees are supported in establishing chat and text. You may consider writing that you will collaborate with SAMHSA and Vibrant on activating chat/text, which includes platform development, either via the Vibrant Unified Platform or a different platform.
4. **Question:** Can there be two Co-Project Directors?

**Answer:** It is permissible to have more than one project director or evaluator (splitting the LoE), but you must identify a primary PD for eRA Commons access and must justify rationale for splitting the position in your application.

5. **Question:** So the PD requirement for this grant is a single individual spending half their time working on this grant, is that correct?

**Answer:** Yes, the Level of Effort (LoE) is 0.50 FTE. It is permissible to have more than one project director or evaluator (splitting the LoE), but you must identify a primary PD for eRA Commons access and must justify rationale for splitting the position in your application.

6. **Question:** What if we have a designated substance use disorders helpline that has real time DA counselors that is mandated by our SSA?

**Answer:** This should not prevent you from satisfying the required activities from the grant; there is no conflict.

7. **Question:** Can you provide a definition for emergency rescue without law enforcement? And/or provide an example(s)?

**Answer:** In some locations, emergency rescues occur where law enforcement does not respond; some simply have emergency medical services respond with mobile crisis, or collaboration with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party for hospitalization. If this is the case for your state or territory, this should be reflected in the data.

8. **Question:** Under allowable activities, what is meant by the "11 communities served?" Work with 988 crisis centers to support integrated peer services by hiring credentialed peers with lived experience that reflect the characteristics of the 11 communities served.

**Answer:** This was a typo; 11 was a leftover page number that was not deleted. There are no specific 11 communities served for this section.

9. **Question:** For WA, we have already identified that some of these indicators will be difficult for us. How will SAMHSA be working with individual states that aren't set up just yet to collect and report on some of these indicators?

**Answer:** As this is a cooperative agreement, your GPO will work with you on how best to gather the required data.

10. **Question:** Can we include 2 co-Evaluators? Or do you only accept 1 for the .25 FTE?

**Answer:** It is permissible to have more than one project director or evaluator (splitting the LoE), but you must identify a primary PD for eRA Commons access and must justify rationale for splitting the position in your application.

11. **Question:** Will these slides be sent out or posted somewhere?

**Answer:** Yes, the slides will be posted on SAMHSA's website on the Notice of Funding Opportunity page.

- 12. Question:** The pacing of that portion of the presentation was VERY fast for note taking, I hope you will also post a recording as several slides need the verbal context to make sense  
**Answer:** The recording will be posted on SAMHSA's website on the Notice of Funding Opportunity page within a couple of weeks.
- 13. Question:** For T7 and T8, is the goal based on the data from the last year? And then we're expected to report current, quarterly data throughout the year?  
**Answer:** As these IPP Indicators refer to number of individuals who died by suicide and suicide attempts, the goal should be zero. These IPP indicators should be reported quarterly in SPARS.
- 14. Question:** And I'd like confirmation that you are saying WA state will be awarded roughly \$4.5 million annually. Did I hear that correctly? We thought it was \$4.5 million over a three-year span.  
**Answer:** The chart in Appendix M shows the maximum **annual** amount of funding for each state and territory for this cooperative agreement (page 82 of the NOFO).
- 15. Question:** Is there a minimum amount that must be distributed to 988 call centers?  
**Answer:** There is no minimum amount that must be distributed to centers.
- 16. Question:** if this is a 3-year grant, can you speak to the reason why the reports in the required activities are due 120 post award? and not spaced out a bit longer?  
**Answer:** Many of the required reports for this cooperative agreement are intended to be executed and built upon for the duration of the 3 years of the cooperative agreement; therefore, they should be developed early in the project period.
- 17. Question:** Given the requirement of a single person devoting half their time to this grant, is it acceptable to provide a job description rather than identify an existing staff for the PD role?  
**Answer:** If you have not yet identified a PD for the cooperative agreement, note this in your application, budget narrative, and include a position description. A [change in key personnel](#) post award amendment must be completed once awarded to identify the PD. Ensure your PD/PI named in your SF424 is the same as that in eRA Commons.
- 18. Question:** How should we write a description for each mobile crisis service in our state when we have a county-based system and at MINIMUM 72 mobile crisis services. Could we identify this as a challenge in our application and something we may need support with?  
**Answer:** SAMHSA is unable to provide feedback on how to write the response for a required activity. Feel free to highlight any specific challenges in structure in your submission.
- 19. Question:** If we are planning to use a portion of the award to support our call centers (similar to our existing grant) do they need to be identified/letters of commitment included in the application?  
**Answer:** If it is identified in the application, we support placing letters of commitment and/or MOUs in the application. If they are identified as a requirement then yes, these would be required.

20. **Question:** Just want to confirm, there is no CAP for indirect costs  
**Answer:** There is no CAP for indirect costs. The recipient will either utilize their approved indirect cost rate agreement, their approved cost allocation plan, or the 10% de minimus for indirect costs.
21. **Question:** On the new NOFO, the required activity of a joint report to the state 911 administrator – who is the other party to make this a joint report?  
**Answer:** The report should be jointly developed by the state or territory’s 988 administrator and 911 administrator (or equivalent).
22. **Question:** I had a question about the NOFO FG-23-006. We were reviewing the required activities and I was wondering if we (the state) or any grant recipient were required to do all 10 listed activities or if we are able to focus on a couple and use the funds for that? (i.e. communication strategy and distribute fund to local crisis call center to help with workforce)  
**Answer:** Yes, all required activities must be completed as a condition of the grant, and you must illustrate this throughout the grant cycle. That said, if you prefer to devote more funding to some required activities than others, that is permissible and should be outlined in your budget as part of your application.
23. **Question:** We were hoping to could get some additional information on required activity 9 in the FY23 Cooperative Agreement for States and Territories to Improve Local 988 Capacity Grant Application – “Develop a comprehensive quality assurance plan, including protocols for identifying and reviewing critical incidents (i.e., deaths by suicide) where the last contact was provided by a state or territory 988 Lifeline crisis center, if identified within 7 days after contact, or as defined by the state or territory. This programmatic quality assurance plan is due one year after the project award.” Could we please get some clarification on this activity and a more concrete definition of a critical incident.  
**Answer:** Primarily, critical incidents in this context will mean death by suicide. However, knowing that states and territories may have different definitions of critical incidents, it would depend on the context of what is occurring in your state. You could also consider including items such as serious suicide attempts, homicide attempts, or other major events, including mismanagement of a contact.
24. **Question:** I am wondering if we need to do a budget detail for each year of the grant or only for year 1.  
**Answer:** If you are utilizing the SAMHSA Budget Template, you will only provide the detail budget and narrative for year 1, but in the future year funding section of the budget capture the categorical totals only for years 2-3.