

# Rural Health Transformation Program Technical Assistance for Behavioral Health Promotion Community Grants - May 7, 2026

Prepared from presentation slides and speaker notes. This handout is designed as an accessible companion document for participants who may not be able to use slide decks effectively.

## 1. Agenda

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Purpose: To help applications feel confident and prepared, we will review the funding opportunity guidance, highlight key requirements and provide a space for questions.

- Background
- Eligibility
- Purpose
- Unallowable costs
- Application and Review
- Reporting
- Questions
- Resources and Reminders

Information may change based on upon updated federal guidance or upon further consideration by North Dakota Health and Human Services (ND HHS).

## 2. Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

RHTP was authorized by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Section 71401 of Public Law 119-21) providing \$50 billion to all 50 states over five years

- North Dakota Health and Human Services (ND HHS) submitted an application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- ND was awarded \$198.9M for year one (12/29/2025 – 10/30/2026)

North Dakota's application identified 4 initiatives

- Make ND healthy again
- Strengthen and stabilize rural health workforce
- Bring high-quality healthcare closer to home
- Connect technology, data and providers for a stronger ND

### 3. Funding Opportunities

- Funding opportunities will be released in phases, with individual applications announced over time.
- Each funding opportunity will have a unique purpose, eligibility and timeline.
- Future year's funds will be determined by CMS based on the state's progress on the plan submitted in the RHTP application.
- Use of funds must align with the state's RHTP application or provide justification.
- Use of funds must follow state and federal guidance.
- Awarded funds must receive proper state and federal approval.

### 4. Behavioral Health Promotion Community Grants

Page 5 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- Funding opportunity solicitation number: 210-121
- Total Funding: \$1,600,000
  - An estimated 10 awards of approximately \$160,000 are expected to be made in year one
  - Applicants may request funding at any level necessary to support their proposed project

### 5. Eligibility

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- Hospitals, clinics and home care providers
- Tribes and tribal health organizations
- Other health care providers
- Local public health units
- Political subdivisions (including law enforcement agencies such as police and sheriff departments)
- Nonprofit organizations
- Education systems (K-12 public and private schools, regional education associations, higher education institutions, Area Health Education Center, etc.)
- Community organizations (faith-based entities, libraries, youth programs and coaches, etc.)
- Childcare providers

Applicants must serve rural or tribal North Dakota residents.

## 6. Purpose and Outcomes

Page 2-4 of the NOFO

Improve rural and/or tribal health by implementing creative evidence-based behavioral health promotion proposals with a focus on promoting mental health, preventing suicide and/or preventing substance use/misuse.

Must support North Dakota's RHTP

### Expected Outcomes

- Decrease youth and adult suicide consideration and attempts
- Increase youth and adult mental health
- Decrease youth and adult substance misuse

## 7. Requirements for Eligible Projects

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- Serve rural or tribal North Dakota residents.
- Propose evidence-based strategies impacting risk and protective factors, which address an identified data-driven need.
- The following link provides a helpful example of a Risk and Protective Framework:
  - <https://www.preventionnetwork.org/resources/risk-and-protective-factors-for-mental-emotional-and-behavioral-disorders-across-the-life-cycle/>
- The following links provide examples of approaches that have worked or not worked:
  - [pttcnetwork.org/products\\_and\\_resources/what-research-shows-does-not-work-in-substance-misuse-prevention/](http://pttcnetwork.org/products_and_resources/what-research-shows-does-not-work-in-substance-misuse-prevention/)
  - [https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/px\\_tool\\_what\\_works\\_what\\_doesnt.pdf](https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/px_tool_what_works_what_doesnt.pdf)
- Consider socio-ecological model (originally developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner), a framework used to understand how individual behavior is influenced by multiple levels of social and environmental factors.
- Collaborate with existing prevention organizations and programs to maximize benefit, avoid duplication of efforts and redirect or realign resources.
- Ensure at least one individual working under this grant will complete the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST) within six months of award or provide documentation the individual has completed the training in the last five years.
- Participate in required Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) opportunities provided by the state, to include in-person trainings and on-site visits.

- Make any necessary project modifications as deemed necessary by ND HHS.

Preference will be given to applicants proposing projects that incorporate activities aligned with North Dakota's Parents Lead program ([www.parentslead.org](http://www.parentslead.org)) or with recommendations from the North Dakota Suicide Fatality Review Commission ([www.hhs.nd.gov/suicide-fatality-review-commission](http://www.hhs.nd.gov/suicide-fatality-review-commission)).

## 8. Funding Opportunity Period

- Start: once the agreement has been fully executed, following all required approvals and signatures.
- End: September 30, 2027, and all funds must be fully expended by that date.

Potential for renewing for additional years as approved by ND HHS

### Timeline

- May 29, 2026, 5 p.m. CT: Applications due
- June 1-30, 2026:
  - Review and scoring
  - Communication with applicants for adjustments if needed
  - Approvals by CMS and ND HHS leadership
  - Agreement development
- September 2026: All year one funds must be awarded
- September 30, 2027: All year one funds must be expended

## 9. Requirements to Receive Federal Funding

- Register with the Secretary of State to perform business in the state.
- If your organization has not been paid by a state entity before, you must register with vendor registry before you can be paid.
- ND HHS will require a W9 form to set up by your organization within our contract system. If your organization would like to be paid with electronic funds transfer, you need to submit the substitute IRS form W-9.
- Organizations need to register with SAMS.gov and receive a UEI number to receive these funds.

## 10. Unallowable Costs and Limits for the Behavioral Health Promotion Community Grants Funding Opportunity

- RHTP funds under this funding opportunity may not be used to purchase a new or used vehicle to fulfill objectives of the funding opportunity.

## 11. Unallowable Costs and Limits

### 10% Cap on Admin Costs Across All Funding

- Pre-award costs.
- Meeting matching requirements for any other federal funds or for local entities.
- Services, equipment or supports that are the legal responsibility of another party under federal, state or tribal law.
- Supplanting existing state, local, tribal or private funding of infrastructure or services.
- New construction, building expansion or purchasing of buildings.
- Renovations or alterations are allowed if they are clearly linked to program goals. Cannot include cosmetic upgrades or significant retrofitting of buildings.
- Renovation or alternations cannot exceed 20% of total funding in a budget period.
- Replacing payment(s) for clinical services that could be reimbursed by insurance.
- Direct health care services may be funded if not currently reimbursable, will fill a gap in care coverage, and/or may transform current care delivery model.
- Provider payments cannot exceed 15% of total funding in a budget period.

## 12. Unallowable Costs and Limits

### 10% Cap on Admin Costs Across All Funding

- No more than 5% of total funding in a budget period can support funding the replacement of an electronic health record (EHR) system if a previous HITECH certified EMR is in place as of September 1, 2025.
- Funding toward initiatives similar to the “Rural Tech Catalyst Fund Initiative” cannot exceed the lesser of 10% of total funding or \$20 million of total funding awarded in a budget period.
- Financial assistance to households for installation and monthly broadband internet costs.
- Clinician salaries/wages for facilities that subject clinicians to non-compete clauses.
- Meals and food.

## 13. Application

Pages 6-10 of NOFO

- Background Information
- Project Narrative
- Identified Need and Proposed Goals
- Strategies, Activities and Measurable Outcomes
- Action Plan
- Timelines and Milestones
- Metrics
- Key Personnel
- Budget

## 14. Application - Background

- Organization name and background
- Provide the organization name, location, additional facilities and the estimated population served.
- Project lead and contact information
- Identify the project lead who will serve as the primary point of contact to receive communications about the application. Provide first and last name, title, phone number and email.
- Project title and reason
  - State the project name and a brief description of why the organization is applying.

## 15. Application – Project Narrative

### Identified need and proposed goals

- Identify the need for the proposed project
- Discuss the challenges the proposed project aims to address. Describe the specific need or issue impacting the organization or community. Use qualitative and quantitative data to substantiate this need. Outline your overarching goal(s) and target population
- Provide a description of the proposed project, including outlining the overarching goal(s) of the proposed project, including the target population who will benefit
- The target population must include rural or tribal residents, but additional populations may be included. If the proposed project serves additional

populations or is located in an urban area, describe how rural or tribal residents will be served.

- The goal(s) should describe the broad, high-level change(s) the applicant seeks to achieve. Goal(s) must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).
- RHTP funds cannot be used to duplicate or replace existing funding (supplanting). Funds can be used to expand or enhance an existing project (see Budget section for details)
- Is this project already in progress, currently funded by another source or actively being implemented in the organization or community? If yes, identify current or similar projects and their funding sources.
- Explain how the proposed project will enhance, rather than duplicate, existing efforts, including how you plan to coordinate with partners to prevent duplication.
- If requesting funds for an expansion, describe why the expansion is needed and how the new funds will support additional efforts

## 16. Application - Project Narrative Continued

### Strategies, Activities and Measurable Outcomes

- Describe the specific strategies, services, tasks or activities the project will implement in order to achieve the proposed goal(s).
- Strategies must be evidence-based and impact risk and protective factors which address an identified data-driven need.
- Strategies must also be aligned with the socio-ecological model (originally developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner), a framework used to understand how individual behavior is influenced by multiple levels of social and environmental factors.
- If there are multiple strategies and activities, please number in order of priority.
- Each strategy, task or activity must include sufficient detail to ensure the scope is measurable and aligned with program goals.
- Identify outcome measure(s) for the proposed project. Outcome measure(s) should address some or all of those identified on page 8 of the NOFO.
- Using the identified strategies, explain how the outcomes will be sustained and address how effective practices will be integrated into ongoing operations.

## 17. Application - Project Narrative Continued

### Strategies, Activities and Measurable Outcomes

- How does your project align with elements of CMS's RHTP?
- Improve access
- Improving outcomes
- Technology use
- Partnerships
- Workforce
- Data-driven solutions
- Financial solvency strategies
- Cause identification
- For the identified elements, briefly explain the connection to the project.

## 18. Application - Action Plan

### Timeline and Milestones

- Identify key milestones and estimated completion dates for each strategy and activity
- Provide a timeline the applicant will follow to successfully implement the proposed project.
- The timeline should identify key milestones and include estimated completion dates for each key strategy or activity.

### Metrics

- For each measurable outcome, identify specific metrics that will be used to measure progress. Identify how progress will be tracked and reported to meet requirements.
- As a reminder, templates will be provided for reporting requirements. Due dates and additional information will be provided in the agreement.

### Key Personnel

- Identify key personnel, including a project lead. Describe the type of work each person will perform in carrying out the project. Include relevant credentials and experience managing funds and special projects.

- Confirm intent to ensure at least one individual working under this grant will complete the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST), training offered by the state within six months of award.
- If the applicant plans to use external sources, such as consultants, please identify them, describe their experience and outline their role in the project. These external sources must also be identified in the budget.

## 19. Application - Budget

### Template for itemized budget

- Cover
- Budget
- Lease vs. Purchase
- Appropriate justification for each cost category
- Proposals may exceed the estimated award amount

RHTP funds are governed by applicable provisions of 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 300, with guidance from the federal RHTP Notice of Funding Opportunity and CMS's Frequently Asked Questions document.

The limits and unallowable costs detailed in this section come from federal guidance and are non-negotiable.

## 20. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted through [Qualtrics](#)

- Can start, save and go back
- Submit early to avoid technical issues

Don't forget to include required attachments

- Itemized subrecipient budget template found on the [funding opportunity webpage](#).

Reminder:

- Applications due by 5 p.m. CT on May 29, 2026
- Applications not received by the submission date and time will be considered non-responsive and not reviewed

## 21. Application Review

**Dates: June 1-30, 2026**

- Review and scoring by a committee
- Communication with applicants for adjustments, if needed
- Approvals by CMS and ND HHS leadership
- Agreement development

[Scoring Tool](#) linked on page 13 of the NOFO

## 22. Reporting

Page 5 of the NOFO

### Quarterly and annual reports

- Reimbursement requests
- Impact stories
- Progress reports
- Metrics
- Use of funds

## 23. Questions

- Review of questions received
- To ask a question today:
- Submit via chat
- Funding opportunity FAQ and resources will be added to website
- We may not be able to answer all questions today

## 24. Submitted Questions

Question: Are for-profit behavioral health providers eligible to apply under the "other healthcare provider" listed on page 4 of the Solicitation Notice?

- Answer: Yes, for profit providers are eligible for subrecipient work. However, they cannot act in a purchase of service or contractor capacity to be a direct awardee.

Question: Can you share examples of supplantation, what counts and what doesn't?

- Answer: Supplanting includes using funds to replace existing state, local, tribal or private funding of infrastructure or services, such as staff salaries. Please see #45 and #48 on pages 46 and 47 of CMS's FAQs.

## 25. Resources and Reminders

- Visit the [Rural Health Transformation Program webpage](#)
- [Sign up to receive email updates](#)
- [Funding Guidance](#)
- Submit questions: [FAQ Survey](#)

## 26. Rural Health Transformation Program

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