TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION
209 West 14th Street, Suite 202 Price Daniel, Sr. Building, Phone: 512-936-6994,
Austin, Texas 78701, Fax: 512-463-5724
www.tidc.texas.gov

FY2018 Formula Grant Program
Request for Applications (RFA)

Formula Grant Program Overview

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission (Commission) provides financial and technical support to counties to develop and maintain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems that meet the needs of local communities and the requirements of the Constitution and state law. Formula Grants are awarded to eligible Texas counties to help counties meet constitutional and statutory requirements for indigent defense and to promote compliance with standards adopted by the Commission.

Application Due Date

Formula grant applications for Fiscal Year 2018 must be submitted on-line **by Wednesday, November 15, 2017.** The grant period is October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018.

Total FY 2018 Formula Grant Amount Budgeted: $22,320,000

Eligibility for Formula Grants

Only Texas counties may apply. Counties must meet the following requirements:

1) **Indigent Defense Expenditure Report** — All counties are statutorily required (Texas Government Code Sec. 79.036 (e)) to submit an Indigent Defense Expenditure Report each year on November 1 in the form and manner prescribed by the Commission. Counties that do not complete the Indigent Defense Expense Report on or before November 1, 2017 may have payments temporarily suspended by Commission staff until the report is submitted and reconciled by staff.

2) **Indigent Defense Plan Requirements** — The Local Administrative District Judges, the Local Statutory County Court Judges (or County Judge as applicable) and the Chairman of the Juvenile Board for each county must submit a copy of all formal and informal rules and forms that describe the procedures used in the county to provide indigent defendants with counsel in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure (Countywide Plans) to the Commission as required in Government Code §79.036. The Countywide Plans submitted must be in compliance with applicable statutes and rules and must meet the minimum requirements for each plan section as outlined in the Biennial Indigent Defense Countywide Plan Instructions. Plans must be submitted by November 1, 2017. Formula grant payments during the year may be withheld until plans are submitted or meet the minimum requirements for each plan section set by Commission.

3) **Compliance with Monitoring Reports** — A county must respond within the required time, take corrective action for findings of non-compliance, and satisfactorily address all recommendations in a Commission fiscal or policy monitoring report. Failure to comply with any of these requirements could result in the Commission imposing a remedy under TAC 173.307 or Texas Government Code §79.037.

4) **Office of Court Administration Reporting Requirements** — The applicants' county and district clerks must be in compliance with monthly reporting requirements listed below.
   a) Texas Judicial Council Monthly Court Activity Reports required by Texas Administrative Code Chapter 171 and Texas Government Code §71.035; and
   b) Appointments and Fees Monthly Reports required under Chapter 36, Texas Government Code.

Reports for September 2016 through August 2017 are due not later than September 30 2017 and must be submitted to OCA electronically unless OCA grants a temporary waiver for good cause.

How Formula Grants are Calculated

Every county is eligible to receive a grant of $5,000 plus its share of the remaining funds budgeted by the Commission for the Formula Grant Program calculated by:

- 50 percent on the County's percent of state population; and
- 50 percent on the County's percent of statewide direct indigent defense expenditures for the previous year (as defined in Title 1, Part 8, Texas Administrative Code Sec. 173.202(1)-(3)):
  - less discretionary funds provided by the Commission for expenditures defined in Title 1, Part 8, Texas Administrative Code Sec. 173.202(1)-(3)
  - less the reimbursed costs of operating a regional program
  - The baseline requirements below do not apply to counties with a 2000 Census population of less than 10,000.

The County shall not receive more in funds than what was actually spent by the county in the prior year.

Baseline — The baseline is the minimum amount counties must spend in indigent defense before they qualify for formula grants. To meet the requirements under Texas Government Code §79.037(d), the Commission has adopted as an expenditure baseline based on each county's FY01 indigent defense expenditures. Attorney fees, investigator expenses, expert witness expenses, and other litigation expenses paid by the county on behalf of indigent criminal defendants / juvenile respondents are allowable expenses. This information remains a static baseline. The baseline requirement does not apply to counties with a 2000 Census population of less than 10,000.

How to Apply for Formula Grant

Applications are submitted online at http://tidc.tamu.edu. All county judges have been assigned a unique user name and password. The application requires a commissioner's court resolution to be scanned and e-mailed or uploaded on the application page of the website. The resolution is generated by the on-line system and must be printed from the on-line application page.

If a person other than the recipient of this letter needs to obtain a user name and password for the online application system, contact the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University. PPRI manages the collection, storage and retrieval of data for the Commission. County officials may contact PPRI through e-mail, (hcaspers@ppri.tamu.edu) or phone (979) 845-6754. PPRI will not provide user names and passwords over the phone. Individuals using personal e-mail accounts may be asked to provide additional information.

Application Steps

- **a.** Go to the PPRI Commission website at https://tidc.tamu.edu.
- **b.** Sign in and enter the User ID and Password or contact PPRI (Follow on-line page instructions).
- **c.** Select "FY2018" and your county in the upper left part of the screen.
- **d.** Select "Apply for Formula Grant" from the column on the left side of the screen.
- **e.** Review the eligibility requirements. The screen will display the County's compliance status regarding indigent defense plans. Counties that have outstanding requirements will not be able to receive funds until they meet all grant program eligibility requirements. If indigent defense plans are not marked "Complete" counties should still submit the application and then contact the Commission for instructions to resolve plan compliance issues.
- **f.** Identify the individuals in the following grant positions as required in Texas Administrative Code Rule 173.301.
  - i. Authorized official - This person must be authorized to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant for the applicant county. A county judge or a designee authorized by the governing body in its resolution may serve as the authorized official
  - ii. Fiscal Officer - This person must be the county auditor or county treasurer if the county does not have a county auditor.

  Use the "**Change**" button make changes as needed to officials or contact information.
- **g.** Click the "**Submit**" button at the bottom of the screen. You should be taken to a confirmation page at that point.
- **h.** Maintain confirmation – When the system provides a confirmation page to the grant officials confirming that the application has been completed and informing them that the resolution must be adopted by the commissioner's court and then faxed to the Commission. **PLEASE PRINT THE CONFIRMATION PAGE**.
- **i.** Select the "Resolution" link in the confirmation page to create your county's resolution form.
- **j.** Print or download resolution. The system will allow the user to download a resolution as a Microsoft Word document or provide an opportunity to print the document. Please use the resolution printed from the website. The resolution must be adopted by the commissioners court.
- **k.** Please scan the resolution adopted by commissioners court and then upload it in the application page of the website **on or before the DUE DATE Wednesday, November 15, 2017.** Alternatively, you may email the resolution to Heather Caspers (hcaspers@ppri.tamu.edu) or fax it to
  888-351-3485.

Contact Edwin Colfax, Grants Administrator, ecolfax@tidc.texas.gov or 512-463-2508 for questions.

Notice of Funding

- **Statement of Grant Award —** Statements of Grant Awards will be prepared as authorized by the Commission. These may include special conditions. The e-mail with the attached Statements of Grant Award will be directed to the official designated in the resolution adopted by the commissioners' court. The County will have thirty days to notify the grant administrator of errors or cancelation after receipt of the award.

- **Special Conditions** — The Commission may determine special conditions or authorize staff to apply the conditions on criteria set by the Commission (TAC 173.201). The Commission may develop special conditions that relate to expenditures, compliance with statutory requirements or standards adopted by the Commission.

- **Denial of Grant —** Counties not completing the grant application process or those not meeting minimum eligibility requirements will be notified by mail within 30 days following the Commission award meeting.

Use of Funds

Funds must be used to improve indigent defense systems. Attorney fees, investigator expenses, expert witness expenses, and other direct litigation costs that a county spends on behalf of a criminal defendant or juvenile respondent in a criminal matter that has been determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be indigent are allowable expenses. All funds must be spent in compliance with the following: Texas Administrative Code, Title 1 Administration, Part 8 Texas Judicial Council, Chapter 173 Indigent Defense Grants; and Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards.

Payments

Funds will be distributed in four (4) equal quarterly disbursements.
Counties must have met all eligibility, spending, and grant condition requirements before receiving payments. Payments will be made quarterly for most counties. Some counties may have a special conditions related to meeting minimum spending requirements. These counties will receive funds only after a supplemental expenditure report establishes that they have spent the predetermined minimum amount stated in the special condition.

No payment shall be made from grant funds to a county until all special conditions have been met unless the special condition adopted by the Commission provides an alternative payment schedule or instructions for payment. Commission staff shall maintain documentation through electronic/paper files or correspondence to the county stating how the special condition was met.

Maintain contact information

All counties must maintain the grant and plan officials contact information on counties' web page set up at http://tidc.tamu.edu. Counties must advise the Commission of changes in the authorized official, program director, financial officer, local administrative district judge, local administrative statutory county judge, chairman of the juvenile board and constitutional county judge by updating this website contact information. This information will be used to provide notices for grant or plan submission information. The Commission staff will use e-mail whenever possible to notify counties of required reports and funding opportunities.

Impact of Multi-year Discretionary Regional or Sustainability Grants

Counties that receive discretionary grants from the Commission are encouraged to continue to apply for the Formula Grant. Such counties may use their formula grant payments to maintain the discretionary grant program.

Notification of Availability

This FY18 Formula Grant - Request for Applications (RFA) is sent to all 254 Texas Constitutional County Judges. A courtesy notice is sent to all local administrative district judges, local administrative statutory county judges, chairman of juvenile board and each county auditor (or treasurer).

Authorization to Fund, Applicable Authority and Rules

Texas Government Code Sec. 79.037. TECHNICAL SUPPORT; GRANTS.

(a) The commission shall:

(1) provide technical support to:

(A) assist counties in improving their indigent defense systems; and

(B) promote compliance by counties with the requirements of state law relating to indigent defense;

(2) to assist counties in providing indigent defense services in the county, distribute in the form of grants any funds appropriated for the purposes of this section; and

(3) monitor each county that receives a grant and enforce compliance by the county with the conditions of the grant, including enforcement by:

(A) withdrawing grant funds; or

(B) requiring reimbursement of grant funds by the county.

(b) The commission shall distribute funds as required by Subsection (a)(2) based on a county's compliance with standards adopted by the board and the county's demonstrated commitment to compliance with the requirements of state law relating to indigent defense.

(c) The board shall adopt policies to ensure that funds under Subsection (a)(2) are allocated and distributed to counties in a fair manner.

(d) A county may not reduce the amount of funds provided for indigent defense services in the county because of funds provided by the commission under this section.

Texas Administrative Code Chapter 173

Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS)