

# LOI Form

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## *Organization Information*

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**A Word version you can use to draft your request is available for download.**

**The rubric that will be used to score your LOI is available for download.**

### **Project Name\***

Please give your proposal a short, descriptive title. This is how your request will appear throughout the PCF grant portal.

CASA Clearwater Offices & Programs

### **Amount Requested\***

**The minimum grant request for this process is \$50,000.**

**The maximum grant request for this process is \$325,000.**

If you request the full \$325,000, your organization should be able to demonstrate a *significant* impact to be made from these funds.

Please be sure that your grant request is proportional to your annual operating budget. If you have any questions about how much funding to request, please contact Jocelyn Howard at [jhoward@pinellascf.org](mailto:jhoward@pinellascf.org).

\$300,000.00

### **Annual Operating Budget\***

Please provide the amount of your annual operating budget, (expenditures only) for your entire organization.

\$8,543,890.00

### **Grant Start Date\***

PCF expects to issue a contract to approved organizations in September 2023. If awarded with a contract issuance date of September 1, 2023, when would your organization begin to spend funds?

10/01/2023

### **Grant End Date\***

PCF expects the grant period to be between 12 and 24 months for this process. Given this range, when would your organization expect to finish expending funds if awarded?

09/30/2023

## Mission Statement\*

Please write your organization's mission statement below. This should be no longer than one or two sentences.

### OUR MISSION

Challenging the societal acceptance of all forms of domestic violence, CASA Stands Up To Silence through advocacy, prevention, intervention and support services.

### OUR VISION

A society free from domestic violence.

## Is your organization headquartered in Clearwater?

*Why PCF asks this: Given that the City of Clearwater is the funding source for this grant program, PCF may prioritize organizations headquartered in Clearwater or those that have a strong presence in the City.*

No

## Programming Background\*

Please describe the program that this grant would support.

### Example

Peer Counseling Services Inc. offers after-school support groups for middle schoolers and high schoolers. Below, Peer Counseling Services Inc. would describe what its programming is, how its programming works, and who is served.

*Why PCF asks this: PCF wants to learn about what your organization does and how it carries out its mission.*

CASA Pinellas is one of Florida's 41 certified domestic violence centers, providing safety and sanctuary to survivors of domestic violence and their children since 1977. Most of CASA's services historically occurred in southern Pinellas County, but with the organization's recent growth, between 17% to 31% of CASA's Pinellas survivors (depending on service) report a Clearwater address. Unfortunately, population dense Pinellas County ranks 5th out of 67 Florida counties for highest occurrence of domestic violence.

Clearwater survivors can access CASA's services, but the time-consuming geography of the County makes access incredibly complicated. As such, it is CASA's intent to bring comprehensive services to survivors residing in Clearwater and North County through a multi-phased plan, that will provide easier access while making it easier for them to maintain their jobs, quality of life, and as much stability as possible for their children.

CASA has been successful in sustainably adding and improving services for survivors. In October 2022, CASA launched an Affiliated Family Justice Center (FJC) in St. Petersburg, the only such center in Florida. The FJC operates under the premise that access to services are convenient and trauma-informed for safety and success of survivors of domestic violence and their children. CASA recently received the Purple Ribbon Award for Best New Service Launch in the nation for the FJC.

The goal of CASA's programs is to reduce the incidence of domestic violence by providing families with adequate resources for safety and a realistic safety plan. Our continuum of free services are cutting edge, creative and expansive, and includes a large emergency shelter boasting on-site kennel for pets as well as shelter for male survivors, nationally Affiliated Family Justice Center, outreach support groups, onsite childcare and offsite childcare for court hearings, 24-hour crisis hotline, rapid rehousing, transitional and permanent supportive housing, substance abuse and mental health advocacy, child protection advocacy,

justice advocacy, legal aid for injunction for protection, and education for youth and professionals. No discrimination is made with regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, sex, marital status, disability, immigration status, education, employment status, residency, legal history, or socioeconomic status. CASA does not have any religious affiliation.

## History in Clearwater\*

Please describe how long you've been providing services in the City of Clearwater, and the nature of such services.

*Why PCF asks this: Given that the City of Clearwater is the funding source for this grant program, PCF may prioritize organizations headquartered in Clearwater or those that have a strong presence in the City.*

CASA has been providing services to Clearwater residents since its beginning, with that number continuously growing. During 2022, 18% of the total persons served reported to come from Clearwater. During the first quarter of 2023, numbers increased: 24% total served; 31% at the emergency shelter; 26% at the Family Justice Center; and, 24% in the housing programs. This request seeks to make it more convenient and safer for Clearwater survivors to access the services they need.

The increase in services to Clearwater residents lies in the growth of CASA's services over the last five years. CASA's physical presence has historically been in southern Pinellas County; however, CASA successfully operates a wide variety of county-wide services for survivors of domestic violence, including multiple HUD-funded housing programs specific to survivors throughout Pinellas County and safely rehouses hundreds of residents. CASA also runs an Injunction For Protection program funded by the Attorney General's office with 6 Florida Bar attorneys and 2 paralegals, representing survivors at no charge. Other CASA County-wide programs include a Batterer Accountability program, justice advocacy, and partnering with Child Protection Investigations.

CASA's new Family Justice Center, while located in St Petersburg, serves survivors county-wide, boasting advocates and community partners who are on-site to administer trauma-informed collaborative resources for victims and children, to increase safety, increase healing, heighten prosecution, and improve lifelong health determinants for survivors of domestic abuse, human trafficking, and similar types of victimization. Co-located partners include law enforcement, legal services, medical and mental health services, youth services, and PCSD. This best practice model receives dozens of walk-in survivors weekly, many from Clearwater.

CASA has been awarded HUD money to provide transitional housing and rapid rehousing specifically in north County. It is CASA's intent that in addition to services already provided to Clearwater residents, a physical presence in Clearwater will allow us to better serve more Clearwater and north County residents safely and with improved outcomes for their lives.

## Outcomes\*

Define one to two outcomes already being measured by your organization in relation to the programming this grant would support. This is not the outcome of this specific funding, but of the programming itself. **Outcomes are not the number of people you will serve, but how they or their situation will change.**

"Outcomes - are specific, measurable statements that let you know when you have reached your goals. Outcome statements describe specific changes in your knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors you expect to occur as a result of your actions. Good outcome statements are specific, measurable, and realistic."

(W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide)

**Example**

80% of youth involved in peer counseling will show increased emotional intelligence after six months of participation.

*Why PCF asks this: PCF considers measurable outcomes to be a cornerstone of effective social service programming. Tracking outcomes allows both an organization and its supporters to know how effective its programming is and helps an organization improve its programming over time.*

95% of survivors served will develop a safety plan to help protect them from violence in their homes and community.

Clearwater residents served by CASA will increase by at least 20% in the first year of operations and continue to grow as CASA's physical presence grows.

Exemplary performance is supported by CASA's recent 2023 award of the national Purple Ribbon/ Domestic Shelters recognition of Outstanding New Service Launch.

**Measurements\***

Explain what measurement tools you will use to evaluate the stated outcome(s) above. That is, how will your organization know it is achieving or not achieving the outcome(s) stated above? Stronger requests will use a validated tool or method of data collection.

**Example**

Peer Counseling Services administers the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test before counseling begins, and in six-month intervals thereafter.

*Why PCF asks this: PCF would like to know how the outcome(s) you've specified are measured, and if you used a validated tool that has been proven in usage outside your organization. If you've developed your own tool, please describe how it was made.*

CASA has the capability to generate a variety of reports from our in-house database. Outcomes defined for this request will be measured by electronic client tracking logs, completed exit assessment forms, and detailed case notes. Outcomes for the housing program are defined by HUD, and include household income tracking and successful transition to permanent housing.

Gross household income and demographic information are provided by residents on a voluntary basis. (Names are kept confidential as mandated by Florida Statute.90.5036.)

CASA's tracking system, Osnium, is required for use by the state Office of Domestic Violence Program (ODV) under the state Department of Children and Families (DCF), that has produced reports for other agreements in line with contract requirements. These reports include the same datapoints, but present the information collectively. Staff are carefully trained on the system, which is also a requirement of our state certifying agency.

There is an Osnium expert on staff at CASA, and technical assistance available through ODV/ DCF. CASA employs a quality assurance professional full-time. This position is responsible for our reporting to all funders, and this includes a lot of different types of reports with a lot of different data points. Various funders require monthly, quarterly, and/ or annual reporting. Some datapoints are demographics, some are types of services, some are income, some are bed nights, etc. The Compliance Analyst double checks the data, and if she finds a discrepancy, she contacts the advocate for consultation about what service was offered, how the data was input, etc. Any entry can be checked for timeliness and completeness.

## Grant Impact\*

How would this grant help your organization and its clients achieve the outcomes stated above? That is, what would you be able to do with this funding that you otherwise could not?

*Why PCF asks this: The intention of this grant is to fund organizations providing support for individuals and families in Clearwater with emergency housing and social services needs. How that support happens, and how this grant could help, differs from organization to organization. PCF would like to know specifically how this grant would help your organization and the clients you serve.*

Clearwater and north County survivors have been underserved compared to survivors living in south Pinellas. CASA established a diverse and comprehensive array of services unlike any other domestic violence center in the state, and CASA desires that Clearwater and north County residents have equal safe and easy access to those services.

This grant would expedite service availability at a Clearwater location for survivors and their children. This request will not complete the CASA presence in Clearwater, but will accelerate the project. CASA has purchased property in Clearwater (contract signed and in due-diligence period), but the property is not ready for existing staff members to provide supports on-site. Office space needs to be created to locate staff on the property.

The existing structures on the property include an already refurbished apartment and a house that will house three families. An existing storage area on the ground floor can be reconfigured as office space. Once this area is converted into office space, a housing advocate, as well as a north County IFP attorney, will be onsite to assist transitional housing residents.

We hope that the City of Clearwater will fund the capital improvements needed for CASA to locate staff on premises as soon as possible. As part of this LOI, CASA also requests funding an additional advocate for one year in this office who will assist survivors to navigate and access other CASA services (. Future federal funding for this position is imminent; however, there is a long-lead time for this application.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the existing HUD contract and upon approval by the City of Clearwater, CASA has partnered with PERC (People Empowering and Restoring Communities) to fund, build, and situate 6 to 8 tiny homes on the property (zoned for high-density housing) for transitional housing. Other funding will be sought to supplement this portion of the project.

This work will not be conducted in a vacuum and CASA will seek input of the community to ensure programs and services reflect the need in the community. That being said, based on the success of the Family Justice Center in south Pinellas and the rest of the U.S. (the model is a Dept. of Justice Best Practice Recommendation), CASA anticipates we will soon begin plans to build a second Family Justice Center in Clearwater.

## Preliminary Budget Narrative\*

Please write a brief breakdown of line items showing how your requested funds would be used. You may add context to the expenses if needed (for example, if salaries are requested, state how that position supports the programming described in your proposal). A more detailed, formal budget will be required if your request is moved forward in the funding process.

Small equipment purchases are permitted under this grant provided they are directly tied to service delivery. You may include those purchases in this narrative.

If your organization will be requesting indirect costs, please include this in your narrative. Note that the indirect cost rate for this grant is capped at 5% of the grant.

*Why PCF asks this: PCF would like to gain a general understanding of the proposed programming costs for this grant.*

There are many parts to establishing this presence in Clearwater, and there are other funders as well. Clearwater ARPA is being asked to fund a specially trained domestic violence advocate for survivors at this location, estimated at \$71,500, which includes salary (\$22/ hour), fringe benefits, local mileage, office equipment (laptop, printer, cell phone) and office supplies. This position can be sustained after the first year when requesting annual funding from the U.S. Department of Justice/ VOCA during their application period in February.

The Clearwater ARPA request will also provide renovations to the existing garage/ storage area so that it can be converted into a multi-person office for the Clearwater ARPA-funded advocate, existing housing advocate, existing IFP attorney, and drop-in space for other advocates/ community partners who are providing services to the survivors. This portion of the project will include installing a new front door, adding windows, adding bath and kitchen, installing flooring, adding drywall and ceiling, adding electrical outlets, improve lighting, and assorted plumbing (estimated at about \$73,315).

Additionally, the Clearwater ARPA request would assist to develop the property for multi-family housing including utility access for electricity, water, sewer, wifi, and privacy fencing with gates (estimated at \$285,206).

Other funders include an existing HUD contract which will provide more staff members, furniture for survivor households, and other operating expenses. The total HUD contract is \$562,221. Juvenile Welfare Board is being asked to fund installation of surveillance and alarm systems (estimated at about \$72,000). Another private funder (Allegretti Foundation for about \$20,000) is being asked to provide renovation to the existing apartments on the site to make them more safe and better suited to survivors of domestic violence and their children.

## Reduction in Funding\*

Due to limited funding, your request amount may not be fully awarded if it is moved forward in the grant process. How would reduced/partial funding impact your proposed program?

*Why PCF asks this: The review committee that ultimately recommends proposals for funding may consider partial funding. PCF would like to know upfront what impact this would have on your proposal.*

Reduction in funding or denial of the request would postpone the project in Clearwater, cause inconvenience for Clearwater survivors, and create unsafe conditions in Clearwater survivor households.

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

*No files were uploaded*