

LOI Form

Organization Information

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.

Pinellas Eviction Diversion Program

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.

\$174,689.00

Annual Operating Budget*

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

\$757,808.00

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?

10/02/2023

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?

09/30/2024

Mission Statement*

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

Community Law Program exists to empower the most vulnerable in our community through the provision of free legal representation and assistance, education about legal rights and responsibilities, and community outreach.

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.

CLP's Pinellas Eviction Diversion Program ("PEDP") offers a variety of services designed to help tenants at risk of eviction or facing eviction avoid homelessness. These services include: (1) free legal assistance and representation; (2) mediation with their landlords using a virtual platform, (3) assistance expediting the process of obtaining rental assistance when available, and (4) referrals to obtain housing navigation services and other basic necessities through partnerships with the Homeless Leadership Alliance of Pinellas and JWB's FSI Program through PEMHS.

To receive help from this program, a tenant can reach out to us via phone, in-person, or by answering a series of questions online through our PEDP website portal. From there, an Intake Specialist conducts an intake interview that takes about 30 - 60 minutes. From there, our L/T Team meets daily (M-Thurs) to review all new intakes, and we triage them based on what stage they are in within the continuum of eviction (i.e., behind on rent, having received some sort of written notice from their landlord, an active eviction complaint has been filed, or beyond the point of a default judgment having been entered). Based on the stage of the tenant's case, coupled with whether they have applied for rental assistance often determines what type of services within our PEDP umbrella we can offer. Each case that we accept receives at minimum free legal assistance. This assistance can take the form of: (1) advice from an attorney; (2) help responding to an eviction complaint, or phone calls made to third parties, such as a landlord; or (3) full representation in court. If no eviction action has been filed, the case will be assessed for suitability for mediation, and the tenant's landlord will be invited to participate in mediation. We also determine if we can help the tenant access rental assistance, or if we can refer the case to our partners for housing navigation or other basic needs.

Since our initial launch in October of 2020, we have helped 1,488 Pinellas County households. Of this number, 321 of them (or 21.5%) resided within the City of Clearwater. When Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg launched the ERA Program, CLP's PEDP was instrumental in helping tenants with technological challenges apply for rental assistance as well as working with local government for the adoption of policies that streamlined the process and cutting the application timeframe in half.

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.

Although our office is not headquartered in Clearwater, we have been assisting residents of Clearwater since our inception in 1989. When we launched PEDP, we partnered with other grassroots non-profit organizations that helped us provide street outreach to tenants residing in zip codes within Pinellas County with high rates of eviction filings. Included among those zip codes were 33755 and 33756. When the local governmental ERA programs were operational, we enlisted a Rental Assistance Navigator who met Clearwater residents at the public library to help them with their ERA applications.

Today, most of the services offered by CLP's Pinellas Eviction Diversion Program can be accessed by phone. If a tenant's landlord is willing to participate in mediation, we generally try to conduct our mediation sessions over zoom, which might pose a barrier for a tenant who cannot review and sign documents on his or her phone, but we plan to rectify this potential barrier if this project is chosen for funding. In addition to rectifying this potential barrier, we also intend to provide a periodic presence within the City of Clearwater so that tenants facing eviction who live in Clearwater can speak with an attorney in-person closer to where they live.

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.

70% of tenant households who receive full representation or mediation services will avoid eviction and either remain stably housed for at least 3 months after their case is concluded or find another place to live without experiencing homelessness.

For purposes of this outcome, the term "avoid eviction" will mean that either: (1) no eviction action was filed, because the matter was resolved pre-suit; or (2) the eviction action was dismissed after filing, thereby avoiding the trauma of being forcibly removed by a sheriff.

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.

We will use court documents coupled with an examination of Clerk of Court records to determine whether a household has avoided eviction. In the situation where a resident sought help after an eviction action was filed, the filing of a Notice of Voluntary Dismissal, or a dismissal reached through written stipulation, or a court entered Order of Dismissal will demonstrate that a tenant household avoided eviction. In the situation where a tenant household receives help pre-suit, the absence of an eviction filing within Clerk of Court records in Pinellas County will demonstrate that a tenant household avoided eviction.

We will use a survey instrument to determine whether a tenant household remains stably housed for at least 3 months after their case is closed or found another place to live without experiencing homelessness. This survey instrument will be administered at the conclusion of a tenant's case and again within 90 - 120 days following the closure of a case. If a tenant does not complete the follow-up survey and/or is otherwise unresponsive after we have made three (3) attempts, we will use information collected from the initial survey, coupled with the absence of a new eviction filing in Pinellas County and/or within the County to where the tenant initially expressed an intent to relocate, we will use this information to infer whether the outcome is achieved.

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.

This grant would allow us to assign an attorney and an Intake Specialist who speaks Spanish who could hold weekly office hours to meet in-person with Clearwater residents at the Clearwater Main Library, at Greenwood Recreation Center, or elsewhere where we could arrange to utilize space.

Since evictions can proceed on a faster than normal track in Florida, more often than not depriving most tenants of the right to be heard in court unless undisputed past due rent can be deposited into the court registry, this grant would also give us direct access to rental assistance dollars that could be quickly drawn upon for use in facilitating settlements.

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.

\$63,089.00 for personnel costs (including salary & fringe) for a Staff Attorney working 0.50 FTE towards this project, an Intake Specialist working 0.25FTE towards this project, and a Paralegal/Mediation Coordinator working 0.25FTE towards this project.

\$2,100 towards pro-rate rent

\$500 for utilities (i.e., pro-rated telephone & internet charges)

\$1,000 for advertising (including social media) & outside printing costs for flyers and other printed materials regarding our project's services

\$100,000.00 to facilitate settlements on behalf of tenants (both pre-suit through participation in mediation and post-suit through making court registry deposits)

\$8,000 for indirect costs

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.

Impacts to our proposed program caused by partial funding would depend on which line items within our budget we had to reduce and to what extent as a result of the partial funding. For instance, if we received a small reduction in funding, we would more likely than not reduce the amount of direct rental assistance dollars/court registry funds we could be able to pay on behalf of each client. This reduction would likely take the form of reducing the maximum amount we could use to facilitate settlements on behalf of each tenant household. If, on the other hand, we received a large reduction in funding, we would need to narrow or likely modify our above stated outcome.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

No files were uploaded