



Menu of Supports Frequently Asked Questions

Ohio Children's Alliance
State Fiscal Year 2025 Grant
Cycle



Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity

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The Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity empowers community agencies and treatment foster/kinship caregivers to meet the emergent needs of youth involved in Ohio's children services system. Through a financial incentive approach of \$3.2 million dollars, this opportunity will increase the availability of placement options to serve children in need of placement. Treatment foster homes, kinship caregivers, residential and group home facilities, and foster care agencies may be eligible. The Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity is administered by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) through a contract with the Ohio Children's Alliance (Alliance).

FAQ – Application and Pathways

General Questions

Question: What if I have questions not captured in this FAQ? Who can I reach out to for help?

Answer: Please visit the [Menu of Supports webpage](#) for additional resource materials.. Questions not captured in this FAQ or elsewhere should be sent to menuofsupports@ohiochildrensalliance.org.

Question: How do I access the Menu of Supports application?

Answer: The Alliance has elected to use Good Grants, a grant portal, to manage applications. The Application link, as well as information on the application process and application instructions is available on the [Menu of Supports webpage](#).

Question: Will the Alliance provide funding to help pay for costs associated with the preparation and submission of applications?

Answer: No. Applicants take full responsibility for all costs incurred in the preparation, submission, and other activities undertaken by the applicant associated with application(s).

Question: Are all applicants guaranteed funding?

Answer: No. The submitted application(s) is not a commitment for funds, nor does it obligate the Alliance to grant or lend any form of financial assistance.

Question: Can applicants submit an application outside of the Alliance grant portal?

Answer: Applications are to be submitted via the Alliance Good Grants grant portal. In the event an applicant does not have internet access, a paper application can be submitted. Please contact menuofsupports@ohiochildrensalliance.org for more information.

Question: Are these state funds or federal funds?

Answer: The Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity utilizes state funds.

Question: How much total statewide funding is available?

Answer: There is \$3.2 million dollars allocated for the Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity across all 3 Pathways.

Question: Is there an overall funding cap allocated for each Pathway?

Answer: No, there are not set funding caps for each Pathway. Funding will be available on a first come first serve basis. The Alliance and DCY will be closely monitoring the disbursement of funds in each Pathway to ensure equitable availability of funds in each Pathway. In the event any Pathway needs to be closed to ensure equitable availability of funds across the Pathways, the Alliance will post

this information on the [Menu of Supports webpage](#).

Question: When are applications available?

Answer: Applications for all Pathways are available on October 7, 2024, at 10:00 AM EST.

Question: What steps should be taken to ensure emails from the Good Grants grant portal are received?

Answer: Instructions to ensure email notifications are received are included in the Good Grants Applicant Instruction Guides on the [Menu of Supports webpage](#).

Question: How long is the application process?

Answer: Once the application is submitted, and for Pathway 2 and 3 all necessary 3rd party required responses have been received, the Alliance reviews the application and notifies applicant of rendered approval or denial determination within 5 business days.

Question: What happens if the applicant doesn't complete the required post-funding reporting requirement?

Answer: Approved applicants for all three Pathways attest in their application and sign a Subgrant Agreement affirming the requirement to submit post award information.

Pathway 1: Increased Utilization of Residential and Group Homes

Question: What is considered a "reopened" bed?

Answer: To qualify as a reopened bed, a bed must be licensed for a minimum of six (6) months and cannot have been in use for at least sixty (60) days prior to submitting an application due to the residential provider being unable to accept referrals/admissions for this bed due to staffing shortages.

Question: Can Pathway 1 funds be used for beds that are not licensed yet?

Answer: Eligible bed(s) to reopen must be licensed for a minimum of six (6) months.

Question: What source of information is being utilized to confirm that the bed has not been utilized in the last 60 days?

Answer: Several sources will be utilized, including the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) data, Residential Treatment Information System (RTIS) data and applicant self-reporting/attestation.

Question: What does good standing mean?

Answer: Good standing means that the residential facility's license is not in the revocation process, under suspension, recommended for a denial of certification, or on a temporary license.

Question: If an agency has closed beds that are on a DCY license, can they reopen them under an Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) license?

Answer: Eligible beds must have been licensed for at least six (6) months. Due to the time it could take to transfer the license for residential beds, an agency may struggle to meet this requirement if attempting to license beds with OMHAS or DCY.

Question: Can these funds be used to fill a bed through OhioRise referral/funding? Or only a Public Children Services Agency (PCSA)?

Answer: Though we understand that there is also a need to ensure that youth not in PCSA custody also have access to safe and stable settings that meet their treatment needs, Menu of Supports is specific to youth in PCSA custody.

Question: Can a residential facility apply for both Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 at the same time?

Answer: A residential facility could be eligible for Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 but would need to submit two separate applications that will be reviewed separately. Reporting requirements will also need to be met for each Pathway. Applicants must be mindful of the Pathway criteria of these applications as Pathway 1 criteria applies to beds that have not been utilized due to staffing shortages, and adequate staffing must be in place in order to accept a youth and apply for Pathway 3.

Question: Is Pathway 1 funding available to publicly owned residential centers?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is there a funding cap limit for agencies in Pathway 1?

Answer: Agencies can receive a maximum amount of \$200,000 in Pathway 1.

Question: If we receive the first payment and are unable to meet requirements for the second payment, do we have to repay the first payment, or simply not receive the second payment?

Answer: If an agency meets the eligibility requirements for the first payment but is unable to meet the requirements for the second, the agency would just not be eligible for the second payment.

Question: What information should be included in the required sustainability plan?

Answer: The sustainability plan needs to include future strategies, not what your organization is currently doing, as the assumption is those have not worked since you have beds that you have not been able to utilize due to staffing shortages. What barriers have you faced to fill these positions and strategies have you identified to overcome these barriers. Recognizing that if eligible for this funding, the funding will not last into the future, what strategies do you plan to implement to ensure that you will be able to sustain this additional bed for at least a year?

Pathway 2: Treatment Foster Parent and Approved Kinship Caregiver Supports

Question: Is there an information sheet we can supply to foster and kinship caregivers about this funding opportunity?

Answer: An informational one-pager is being created and will be added to the [Menu of Supports webpage](#) once available.

Question: Who is the applicant for Pathway 2?

Answer: Treatment foster parents and kinship caregivers are the applicants for Pathway 2 and are the recipients of the funding, if approved.

Question: Why have Adoptive Families been excluded from this funding?

Answer: The Menu of Supports Funding Opportunity is specific to youth with complex needs where PCSAs are struggling to identify and place these youth in appropriate treatment settings. These youth are rarely placed directly into an adoptive home in lieu of being placed in a treatment foster home or a residential setting due to their needs.

Question: What does good standing mean?

Answer: Good standing indicates that there is not a recommendation that the Treatment Foster Home be denied initial certification, denied re-certification, or revoked, or that the Ohio kinship assessment is not denied.

Question: What are the eligibility criteria for foster parents?

Answer: Foster parents must:

- Be licensed and in good standing as a treatment foster parent or plan to become licensed within 90 days of receiving the funding.
- Must have “Treatment Foster Home” or “Medically Fragile Foster Home” indicated on their license.
- Must accept treatment level youth within 90 days of receiving the funds or within 90 days of becoming licensed, whichever comes first, or utilize the funds to support a youth currently placed in the home.

Question: What are the eligibility criteria for kinship caregivers?

Answer: Approved Kinship Caregivers must:

- Be an Approved Kinship Caregiver or in the process of becoming Approved via an Ohio Kinship Assessment.
- And must meet one of the following:
 - Accept a youth in PCSA custody within 90 days of receiving the funding or within 90 days of being approved, whichever comes first.
 - Has been given custody of a youth and the youth has an open PCSA case.
 - Utilize the funds to support a youth currently placed in the home.

Question: If the youth is placed in a kinship home and the PCSA case is closed is the kinship provider still eligible to apply?

Answer: The youth must have an open case with an Ohio PCSA for the kinship caregiver to be eligible to apply for funds.

Question: Are treatment foster parents/kinship caregivers who reside outside the state of Ohio eligible?

Answer: No. Only treatment foster parents and kinship caregivers who reside in Ohio and meet eligibility requirements are eligible for Pathway 2. However, we reserve the right to reassess this need in the future.

Question: If a child is placed in Ohio from another state, is the provider eligible for these funds?

Answer: No, these funds are only for caregivers and providers when accepting placement of Ohio youth.

Question: If a licensed family foster home is working through requirements to become a treatment foster home, when could they be eligible to apply?

Answer: When a foster home has met requirements and is 90 days or less from being recommended as a treatment foster home or medically fragile foster home, the home can apply.

Question: Are Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP) licensed Kinship families eligible to apply?

Answer: Kinship Families with a documented Kinship Assessment in Ohio SACWIS are eligible to apply.

Question: If the approved kinship caregiver has gone through the licensing process to be a foster parent for that kinship child, are they considered a foster parent or kinship placement for purposes of Pathway 2?

Answer: This will depend on how it is documented in Ohio SACWIS.

Question: Are approved kinship caregivers who become licensed as a family foster parent eligible to apply?

Answer: Only Approved Kinship Caregivers or Treatment Foster Parents are eligible to apply.

Question: How will foster parents and approved kinship caregivers submit applications?

Answer: All applicants must create an account in Good Grants to submit applications.

Question: Who completes the required action for the applications?

Answer: The required action is completed by the worker that works for the agency that approved the home's home study or kinship assessment.

Question: Can agencies assist treatment foster parents/approved kinship caregivers who are not computer savvy in completing the application?

Answer: Agencies are welcome to assist applicants in completing the application but cannot complete/submit the application on behalf of the applicant.

Question: What happens if the Foster Care/Kinship Worker does not complete their required action in a timely manner?

Answer: Pathway 2 applications are a collaborative effort between the applicant and their Foster Care/Kinship Worker. It is highly recommended that applicants communicate with the Foster Care/Kinship Worker regarding their application, including informing them that they will receive a required action email that will need to be completed by the worker in order for the application to be reviewed.

Question: If a foster care/kinship provider has multiple youth in the home, can they include a list of services for all the youth for the onetime \$3,000 for the home or do they have to pick one youth to identify for needed services and supports?

Answer: The foster care/kinship provider can include needed services and supports for all youth placed in their home.

Question: What constitutes training that is above and beyond the scope of their normal training hours?

Answer: Trainings that are not already required and supported through a stipend as part of the licensure process.

Question: Are childcare needs an allowable service/support?

Answer: Childcare is an eligible service/support.

Question: Is transportation expense an allowable service/support?

Answer: Transportation is an eligible service/support.

Question: Is the Subgrant Agreement between foster parents and the Alliance or the foster parent and the local PCSA?

Answer: The Subgrant Agreement is between the applicant and the Alliance.

Question: Is the funding amount of \$3,000 per youth or per Treatment Foster Care/Kinship Provider?

Answer: The funding amount is \$3,000 per Treatment Foster/Kinship Caregiver home.

Question: If a child is in a treatment foster home/kinship home that receives \$3,000 and then moves to another treatment foster/kinship home, can the second home also apply for the \$3,000?

Answer: Yes, if that second home meets eligibility requirements and has not already received the \$3,000 funding opportunity for another youth.

Question: Will treatment foster caregivers or approved kinship caregivers receive a 1099 tax form at the end of the year if they receive these funds?

Answer: No. The purpose of these funds is to reimburse foster/approved kinship caregivers for expenses incurred in the care of treatment foster youth/kinship youth placed in the home.

Question: Will treatment foster parents/approved kinship caregivers need to submit proof of how the funds were spent?

Answer: Treatment Foster Parents/Approved Kinship Caregivers who receive funding are required to complete an electronic survey. The electronic survey will include a requirement for the Treatment Foster Parent/Approved Kinship Caregiver to provide responses regarding how the funds were spent. Treatment Foster Parents/Kinship Caregivers approved for funding will receive the survey 60 days from the executed Subgrant Agreement when youth are already in the home and 120 days from the executed Subgrant Agreement when youth are not yet in the home.

Question: Will there be any penalty or request to pay back funding to families who are awarded funds anticipating a youth will be placed in the next 90 days or be licensed in 90 days and they do not end up with the placement or licensed?

Answer: If the applicant does not meet all requirements they attest to, they have not met eligibility for funding and would need to pay the funds back to The Ohio Children's Alliance.

Pathway 3: Transition of Youth Residing in a PCSA or in Hospitals

Question: Who applies for Pathway 3, and who receives the funding?

Answer: The provider that accepted placement of the youth submits the application and receives the funds. The PCSA must complete their required action in order for the application to be reviewed and a funding decision rendered.

Question: What does good standing mean?

Answer: Good standing indicates the residential facility or foster care agency's license is not in the revocation process, under suspension, recommended for a denial of certification, or on a temporary license.

Question: Can a residential facility apply for both Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 at the same time?

Answer: A residential facility could be eligible for Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 but would need to submit two separate applications that will be reviewed separately. Reporting requirements will also need to be met for each Pathway. Applicants must be mindful of the Pathway criteria of these applications as Pathway 1 criteria applies to beds that have not been utilized due to staffing shortages, and adequate staffing must be in place in order to accept a youth and apply for Pathway 3.

Question: Can a foster care agency apply for Pathway 3 and a foster/kinship parent apply for Pathway 2 for the same child?

Answer: Yes, eligibility criteria must be met for both Pathways and an application for each Pathway must be submitted.

Question: Can an application be submitted for a youth who was placed prior to October 7, 2024?

Answer: Applications for Pathway 3 can be submitted for youth meeting eligibility requirements and admitted as of October 1, 2024.

Question: Is there a deadline in which applications must be submitted?

Answer: Pathway 3 applications are open until June 1, 2025, or until funding has been exhausted, whichever comes first.

Question: Does Pathway 3 include Developmental Centers and/or Intensive Care Facilities?

Answer: No. As part of the Children Services Placement Workgroup, the group has identified that additional support is needed for the Developmental Disabilities sites, but this funding opportunity does not include them.

Question: Is scattered site Independent Living an eligible placement?

Answer: Not unless the site is licensed as a Children's Residential Center or Group Home.

Question: Is a PCSA who licenses their own foster homes or owns/operates their own residential facility eligible to apply?

Answer: A PCSA who licenses their own foster homes or owns/operates their own residential facility is eligible to apply. Applications received will be subject to an additional review step to avoid any appearance of conflict.

Question: Since group homes are also Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP), how is it determined if a placement is a Residential Treatment Center or a Group Home?

Answer: Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) defines all of these congregate care sites as "residential facilities", but a facility licensed by DCY is licensed as either a Group Home (less than 10 beds) or Children's Residential Center.

Question: How literal is the eligibility requirement that a youth reside in a PCSA for greater than 24 hours? Some PCSAs have an agreement where the youth reside in an alternative setting (with supervision), instead of staying at the PCSA agency itself. The same underlying issue is present – no appropriate placement is available.

Answer: Recognizing that PCSAs may have developed alternative sleeping arrangements for youth outside of the agency itself during this emergent situation and that in the absence of the alternative living arrangements, the youth would be sleeping in the PCSA building, this could be appropriate for Pathway 3 funding. Pathway 3 funds are to be used when a PCSA has struggled to gain placement acceptance of a youth due to multiple providers voicing concerns that they cannot meet the youth's needs and denying the referral. The PCSA custodian must complete required action in the Pathway 3 application process attesting that yes, this youth is a youth that they, the PCSA, have struggled to place. Situations in which the PCSA custodian contacted one or two providers and secured a placement is not an acceptable use of Pathway 3 funds.

Question: Can Pathway 3 funds be used for youth in detention awaiting placement?

Answer: The eligible locations for Pathway 3 include youth in hospitals and youth residing in a PCSA agency or alternative sleeping arrangement to avoid the youth sleeping in the PCSA building. The intent of Pathway 3 was never to fund providers that accept youth being discharged from a detention setting. However, we reserve the right to assess this need in the future.

Question: Can Pathway 3 funds be used for youth in parent custody?

Answer: Pathway 3 funds can be used for youth in PCSA custody only.

Question: Are Foster Care agencies who are only licensed for traditional family foster care eligible to apply?

Answer: Due to the complex needs of the youth eligible for Pathway 3 requiring a treatment level of service, foster care agencies that only recommend traditional family foster homes are not eligible.

Question: Can Pathway 3 funds be used for youth in a hospital type residential setting, is ready for discharge, and the PCSA is struggling to find placement?

Answer: The youth must be in the hospital level of care, not residential level of care, to be eligible for Pathway 3.

Question: Why is the Pathway 3 application process post admission to the residential facility/foster care agency instead of incentivizing the facility before the placement occurs?

Answer: In recognizing that agencies may need additional funds to meet the high level of need of these youth, the purpose of this funding is to support the youth's transition and placement and ensure the funds are used to meet the needs of the youth that are being placed.

Question: Does the PCSA Caseworker auto default to assigned staff or can placement staff be designated to complete the PCSA required action for the application?

Answer: The applicant can enter anyone at the PCSA who needs to receive the application for the PCSA required action. The required action does not have to be completed by the caseworker. Also, if a caseworker receives the application, but the PCSA has decided they want someone else to complete this, the application can be forwarded to an authorized person within the PCSA agency.

Question: What happens if a PCSA Caseworker does not complete their required action in a timely manner?

Answer: Pathway 3 applications are a collaborative effort between the applicant and the PCSA. It is highly recommended that applicants communicate with the PCSA Caseworker regarding their application, including informing the PCSA Caseworker that they will receive a required action email that will need to be completed by them within 14 business days of placement in order for the application to be reviewed.

Question: How do private agencies claim this money and prove the youth are eligible for these funds? Does the PCSA have to designate the youth who qualify for these funds?

Answer: There is a required action step in the application process for the PCSA to answer questions and attest that the youth meets the eligibility requirement.

Question: Do PCSAs have to attest the youth meets criteria only for Pathway 3? Or also Pathway 1?

Answer: Only for Pathway 3, not Pathway 1.

Question: When completing the application, does the applicant check the box indicating the youth is residing in the PCSA if the PCSA has secured alternative sleeping arrangements for the youth?

Answer: When completing the application, the applicant and the PCSA custodian (when completing their required action) should check the box indicating the youth is residing in the PCSA in situations in which the PCSA has secured alternative emergency sleeping arrangements for the youth.

Question: Is there a funding cap limit for agencies for Pathway 3?

Answer: No.

Question: Is a provider eligible for the 2nd payment in Pathway 3 if the youth completes their residential treatment plan within 90 days and steps down to a group home?

Answer: No, a step down to another congregate care facility is not allowable for eligibility of the second payment for Pathway 3. A step down to a foster care/kinship care placement is allowable.

Question: If we receive the first payment and are unable to meet requirements for the second payment, do we have to repay the first payment or simply not receive the second payment?

Answer: If an agency meets the eligibility requirements for the first payment but is unable to meet the requirements for the second, the agency would just not be eligible for the second payment.

Question: How are youth leave days accounted for in the 90-day criteria for the second payment?

Answer: All trial home visits less than fourteen (14) days are included in the 90-day period. All other leave types (i.e. respite, detention, hospitalization) are not included in the 90-day period and must be added as additional days.

Question: Is the foster care agency required to provide any of the received funding to the treatment foster parent who accepted placement of the youth?

Answer: No, it is not required. Providing any received funding in Pathway 3 to the treatment foster parent is at the discretion of the foster care agency.