Date: August 23, 2018

To: All County Human/Social Services Directors and Child Placement Agencies

From: Minna Castillo Cohen, M. Ed., Director, Office of Children, Youth and Families

Title: SFY19 Recruitment & Retention Local Innovation Fund, formerly known as Recruitment and Retention Grants

Regarding: funds for county and child placement agency recruitment and retention efforts

Key Words: grants, foster parents, recruitment, retention, diligent recruitment

Number: IM-OCYF-2018-0013

Information Memorandum

The purpose of this memorandum from the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Children, Youth and Families is to inform county departments of human/social services and licensed child placement agencies of the SFY19 Recruitment & Retention Local Innovation Fund (Local Innovation Fund), which provides short-term funding for efforts and/or activities to recruit new foster and adoptive parents or support the retention of foster families. This is a cost-reimbursement opportunity, not a grant program.

The Recruitment and Retention Grant program has been renamed the Recruitment and Retention Local Innovation Fund. There will not be another announcement or funding opportunity for the Recruitment and Retention Grants.

Any county department of human/social services or licensed child placement agency (CPA) in Colorado is eligible to receive funding through the Local Innovation Fund. Online applications must be received by 5 p.m. on October 9, 2018. Funds will be awarded by Friday, October 19, 2018. The maximum award amount is $4,000. Awards will be determined based on the guidelines and requirements listed below.

Applicants are highly encouraged to align their Local Innovation Fund application with the organization’s diligent recruitment plans. Ideas for the use of funds include, but are not limited to:

- Staff training on recruitment and customer service for the purposes of retention
- Marketing and communication tools, such as website improvements, brochures and videos
- Advertising (out-of-home advertising as well as digital advertising)
- Recruitment and/or retention events
- Activities that target unique audiences and communities identified as a recruitment need in the county or CPA’s diligent recruitment plan
- Child-specific recruitment strategies
- Child care or respite
- Coaching, support groups and mentoring programs for foster parents
- Parents’ night out events
- Family activities
- Education or ongoing training
- Home studies
Applicants may apply to use funding for efforts that they have completed in the past with funding from a Recruitment & Retention Grant, the previous name for this program; however, applicants should explain how they are strengthening this ongoing effort.

Guidelines and Requirements:

- Informational materials and giveaways printed through the Local Innovation Fund must include the Colorado Department of Human Services logo. The appearance of the CDHS logo must be approved before items are printed. Contact Mary Gerlach (mary.gerlach@state.co.us or 303-866-4396) for approval of logo use and questions about branding.

- Funds may not be used to fund May Foster Care events or November National Adoption Month events or activities.

- All efforts or activities supported through the Local Innovation Fund must be completed by April 30, 2019.

- Counties and CPAs may include several different activities and efforts in their Local Innovation Fund application.

- Based on stakeholder feedback, and in lieu of participant evaluations and a summary evaluation, Local Innovation Fund recipients will be required to submit a one-to-two-page article explaining: who the organization reached and why this audience was selected, the impact of the effort and lessons learned. This content will be shared with child welfare professionals via CO4Kids.org and related platforms to encourage idea sharing and to disseminate best practices. The deadline to submit this article is May 15, 2019. Read a sample article here: co4kids.org/LGBTQFBLiveRecap

- Recipients will also be asked to answer via survey: how many families/potential families did you reach and what community did you target? Recipients will also need to report on a SMART goal, which they will set for themselves. A link to this survey can be found at co4kids.org/SFY19LocalInnovationFund

- SFY19 Local Innovation Fund recipients that did not complete all of the paperwork requirements for the SFY18 Recruitment and Retention Grant will be required to submit a progress update via email by February 1, 2019. Counties and CPAs required to provide this update will be notified of this requirement in their award letter.

- Local Innovation Fund applicants are encouraged, but not required, to collaborate with other organizations and/or businesses.

- Funded activities may be adjusted based on actual funds awarded. All adjustments must be requested and approved by CDHS in writing.

- Photographs of the funded event or activity are highly encouraged.

- **Failure to submit an article, invoices and/or enter expenditures into CFMS by the associated deadlines may impact future funding.** If the Fund recipient has an issue meeting a deadline, CDHS must be contacted prior to the deadline to discuss alternative arrangements.

Local Innovation Fund recipients must first incur the costs associated with the award. Counties can submit expenses for reimbursement using the County Financial Management System (CFMS). CPAs must submit an invoice to CDHS to be reimbursed.
Apply Today
To apply to use SFY19 Recruitment & Retention Local Innovation Funds, complete the electronic grant application and submit a signature page online on the CO4Kids.org child welfare blog at Co4kids.org/SFY19LocalInnovationFund

Recruitment and Retention Local Innovation Fund Webinar
A webinar to discuss the Recruitment and Retention Local Innovation Fund program and to answer questions is scheduled for Friday, September 7 at 10 am. Participation is encouraged, but not required.

Use this link to register for the webinar: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5031328217946579459

Deadlines:
- Application Deadline: October 9, 2018
- Completion of effort/activity: April 30, 2019
- Expenditures entered into CFMS (counties only): May 6, 2019
- Submit invoice for expenditures to CDHS (CPAs only): May 6, 2019
  - NOTE: Multiple invoices can be submitted throughout the duration of the funding period. Please allow 30 days to receive payment.
- Submit Article: May 15, 2019

This communication has been sent to all county human service directors and child placement agencies. Please forward pertinent information on to staff members as you deem necessary.

Questions: Mary Gerlach
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Memo Website: https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/cdhs-memo-series/home