# Expanding the Public Health Workforce

# Grant Opportunity

**Period of Performance:** July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2024

**Application Deadline**: June 17, 2022

**Application Submission E-mail:** aleatha.dickerson@oha.ri.gov

**Program Managers: ADRC -** Aleatha Dickerson **SHIP -** Christine Anderson

## NOTIFICATIONS TO APPLICANTS:

Potential applicants are advised to review all sections of this request carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

# INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging (“OHA”) is soliciting proposals for two (2) separate grant opportunities from qualified entities for ***Expanding the Public Health Workforce***, in accordance with the terms of each opportunity. **Applicants must agree to comply with all requirements as set forth in the opportunity for which they apply. APPLICATIONS FROM INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS WILL BE REJECTED.**

# BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

OHA is the designated State Unit on Aging for the State of Rhode Island, responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated system of community-based care for citizens sixty years of age and older. A director, appointed by the Governor, manages OHA. Division responsibilities of OHA include developing and implementing a State Plan on Aging under the Older Americans Act (OAA), serving as the state's Single Planning and Service Agency on Aging under the U.S. Administration for Community Living (“ACL”), advocating for the rights of older individuals and adults with disabilities, operating services designed to assist seniors and adults with disabilities to remain independent in the community and funding an array of community based services for these populations. OHA coordinates these efforts and activities of the State Aging Network through the allocation and monitoring of federal and state funds.

As part of its ongoing COVID-19 response efforts, the Biden-Harris Administration is investing federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to recruit, hire, and train public health workers to respond to the pandemic and prepare for future public health challenges. Specifically, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will “carry out activities related to establishing, expanding, and sustaining a public health workforce…,” ARPA § 2501(a), and funds may be used to support costs, including wages and benefits, of a range of public health professionals including but not limited to social support professionals, community health workers, communication and policy experts, and “…other positions as may be required to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19…,” ARPA § 2501(b)(1).

Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play. The aging and disability networks funded by ACL play an essential role in that work. As the nation’s visible and trusted network of programs, these organizations provide a variety of services, including those related to public health such as health and wellness education and information, counseling, case management and guidance related to health and social needs, as well as how to access those supports in every local community in the country. These networks have over 50 years of community experience and possess intimate knowledge of the public health and other resources available and the needs of people with disabilities and older adults in their direct area. To help advance these efforts, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has created the following new programs:

* **Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Aging and Disability Networks: Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Networks**– This program aims to increase the number of public health professionals within the ADRC/ No Wrong Door (NWD) System network to address the unique needs of adults ***with disabilities and older adults aged 60 and over and their caregivers*** through the support of wages and benefits for these professionals.
* **Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Aging and Disability Networks: State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)** - This program aims to increase the number of public health professionals within the SHIP network to address the unique needs of ***Medicare beneficiaries*** through the support of wages and benefits for these professionals.

OHA is soliciting proposals pursuant to each of these two (2) separate **Grant Opportunities utilizing funds to support wages, benefits and equipment and training for new Community Health Worker (CHW) positions**. **The funding is limited to supporting new positions and indirect cost is allowed.**

A CHW is defined by the American Public Health Association as the following:

*“A Community Health Worker is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the worker to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. A Community Health Worker also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.”* **Under this Grant Opportunity, the CHW must acquire certification within six (6) months of hire.**

The aggregate funding amount pursuant to each GRANT OPPORTUNITY will be made available for twenty-six (26) months: July 1, 2022 –September 30, 2024 or until funds are expended.

The funding amounts for the two (2) separate GRANT OPPORTUNITIES are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Program** | **Funding Amount** |
| Expanding the Public Health Workforce: Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Network | $91,473.31 |
| Expanding the Public Health Workforce: State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) | $105,082.00 |

Funding is subject to availability of State funds allocated by the ACL to such purposes and/or changes in allocation of funds based on budgetary measures. In addition, OHA reserves the right to terminate this grant opportunity at any time for good cause shown.

The recipients of these funds must agree prior to award to a complete set of deliverables, meet or exceed core requirements and comply with any other stated conditions associated with this initiative. OHA anticipates disbursements will begin on July 1, 2022 and will be completed by September 30, 2024.

Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this GRANT OPPORTUNITY will be rejected as being non- responsive.

All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this GRANT OPPORTUNITY, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the applicant. OHA or the State assumes no responsibility for these costs.

Proposals are irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the Director of OHA.

Proposals misdirected to other State locations, or which are otherwise not received by OHA by the submission deadline set forth herein for any cause will be determined to be late and will be rejected.

**All applications for this GRANT OPPORTUNITY are to be submitted via email by 12:00PM (Noon) on June 17, 2022 to Aleatha Dickerson,** [**aleatha.dickerson@oha.ri.gov**](mailto:aleatha.dickerson@oha.ri.gov)**.**

* It is intended that an award pursuant to each GRANT OPPORTUNITY will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered, but subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the applicant’s proposal, and the subcontractors proposed are identified in the proposal.
* Applicants are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this GRANT OPPORTUNITY will be Public Records as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
* In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the state *until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State* (401 222-3040).

**SECTION 1 – GENERAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS**

**For purposes of this Grant Opportunity:**

Funds awarded by OHA pursuant to this GRANT OPPORTUNITY are designed to support efforts and activities used exclusively for those services detailed in Section 2 – Scope of Work below in accordance with this grant opportunity, with no exceptions. **FUNDS AWARDED PURSUANT TO THIS GRANT OPPORTUNITY CANNOT BE USED TO PAY FOR WORK OR SERVICES PERFORMED PRIOR TO JULY 1, 2022.**

**SECTION 2 – SCOPE OF WORK**

Eligible applicants are permitted to submit proposals for the following services to be provided within the State of Rhode Island, targeting older adults and adults with disabilities, and their caregivers, Medicare beneficiaries, including diverse populations - minority individuals, individuals with limited English proficiency, and low-income individuals who reside in Rhode Island.

Grantee agencies that are awarded Public Health Workforce funding must present a detailed initiative that describes a plan on how they will hire and utilize Community Health workers (CHW’s) to conduct a wide range of public health services and supports for the targeted populations to access the following, but not limited to:

* Delivery of culturally affirmative and linguistically accessible information
* COVID-19 vaccines, boosters, and testing
* Transition and diversion services from high-risk congregate settings to community living
* Delivery and connections to health and wellness programs
* Activities that address social isolation and social determinants of health
* Promotion of education and outreach to ensure access to health insurance and benefits
* Other activities that support the public health and wellbeing of Medicare beneficiaries.

**A separate plan must be submitted for each of the Expanding the Public Health Workforce grant opportunities if you are applying for both:**

1.) Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Network to meet the needs of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers

2.) State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) to meet the needs of Medicare beneficiaries

Plans should describe, in-depth, how allotted funding will be utilized efficiently and effectively to assist and educate the targeted populations about COVID-19. Depending on the selected target population, the CHWs will outreach to older adults and adults with disabilities, and their caregivers, Medicare beneficiaries to provide them with knowledge about COVID-19 information, assistance, and services to empower them to live independently; avoid hospitalization or re-hospitalization; and remain in the community. The narrative should include any collaborative work or partnerships with other agencies/programs that support this initiative.

An application submitted for review must clearly describe and define which eligible activities listed under Section 2 that will be conducted for the 26-month period: July 1, 2022, through September 30, 2024. The descriptions for services to be provided should be clearly defined.

**Program Administration Requirements:**

**All activities and services funded by any grant entered pursuant to this GRANT OPPORTUNITY shall be provided free of charge.** Applications should maximize the use of grant funds for the direct provision of services to low-income older individuals within the State of Rhode Island, including low- income individuals, minority individuals, and older individuals with limited English proficiency. Note the limitations on the use of grant funds for indirect operational costs, as set forth in Section 4 below.

Grantee agencies shall comply with all OHA and federal program requirements, data collection, requirements, and reporting requirements related to the project within the require time frames, including without limitation the following:

* Attend all required meetings, webinars, teleconferences, and conferences as required by the OHA project manager.
* Maintain effective communication regarding grant activities with the OHA project manager and with other grant partners, when appropriate.
* Clearly identify all personnel from the grantee agency who will work on this project.
* Submit Annual program reports and all other required project-related reports and other work products as indicated by OHA project manager to prepare all required reports.
* Submit monthly invoices with appropriate proof of expenditure, examples include time sheets for payroll and goods, services and equipment purchased.

**SECTION 3 – CONDITIONS**

Every applicant that is awarded funding pursuant to this Grant Opportunity must enter a written grant with OHA in a form to be prescribed by OHA. The following conditions shall be incorporated into any grant that results from this Grant Opportunity (this listing is not inclusive of all requirements that will be set forth in the grant):

1. Changes. Any proposed change in the Project shall be submitted in writing to the Director of OHA for approval, which may be withheld in sole discretion of the OHA Director. Any amendment to provisions of the grant shall be valid only when it has been signed by both parties and attached to the grant.
2. Acknowledgement of Funding Sources. All publicity and printed material relating to the performance of the grant shall indicate the assistance of OHA and the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL), and the content of all publicity and printed material relating to the performance of this contract shall be approved in advance by OHA.
3. Availability of Funds. It is expressly understood that all funds obligated in any grant awarded pursuant to this Grant Opportunity are contingent upon receipt of funds by OHA. OHA reserves the right to reduce its financial obligation, postpone funding, or terminate this Grant Opportunity and/or any grant awarded pursuant to this Grant Opportunity.
4. Compliance with Auditing Requirements. The grantee will comply with all OHA auditing policies and procedures.
5. Prohibited Interest. No member, officer, trustee, or employee of OHA shall have any interest -direct or indirect- in any grant awarded pursuant to this GRANT OPPORTUNITY or the proceeds thereof.
6. Equal Employment Opportunity/Non-Discrimination. The grant shall require that the grantee shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or receipt of service because of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. The grantee shall ensure that employees are treated equally during their employment without regard to their race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. The grantee will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the grantee, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration of employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or disability.

In the event of the grantee’s non-compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity/Non- Discrimination clauses of the grant or with any of said rules, regulations or orders, the grant may be cancelled, terminated, or suspended in whole or in part and the grantee may be declared ineligible for future OHA grants.

1. Grant Termination. OHA may terminate the grant or any portion of it by serving written notice of termination on the grantee. The notice shall state whether the termination is for convenience of OHA or for default of the grantee. If the termination is for default, the notice shall state the way the grantee has failed to perform the requirements of the grant. The grantee shall account for any property in its possession paid for from funds received from OHA or property supplied to the grantee by OHA.
2. Submission of Reports. The grantee must submit all reports required by OHA within the specified time frames.
3. Indemnification. The grantee shall indemnify and hold harmless OHA and the State of Rhode Island from and against all loss, costs, liability, damage, and expense whether direct, consequential, or incidental for personal injury and for property damage and expense arising out of or resulting in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from work or operations under the grant but not limited to the acts, errors, omissions and negligence of the grantee’s employees, agents, contractors, and subcontractors.
4. Compliance with All Laws, Codes, Rules and Regulations. The grantee shall be responsible for complying with all local, state, and federal laws, codes, rules, and regulations that apply to the Project.

**SECTION 4: PROPOSAL**

**NOTE: A separate application must be submitted for each of the Expanding the Public Health Workforce grant opportunities if you choose to apply for both:**

1.) Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Network to meet the needs of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers

2.) State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) to meet the needs of Medicare beneficiaries

**Narrative and Format:** The proposal should include specifically each of the following required elements:

1. **Technical Narrative:**

Describe the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with and for similar projects, and all information described earlier in this solicitation **(the narrative is limited to five (5) pages)**, excludes any appendices and, as appropriate, resumes of key staff that will provide services covered by this request). The Narrative should describe the applicant’s understanding of the State’s requirement and a work plan for accomplishing the results proposed, including the following:

* 1. **Organizational Description:**

Describe the organizational history, services, and programs provided by the agency. Include here the agency’s ability to work with the target populations identified in this GRANT OPPORTUNITY. Describe the qualifications, functions, and responsibilities of staff members who will be involved with the program. Including, but not limited to, the following:

* + 1. Articles of Organization of the Applicant; List of Board of Directors, By-Laws (or other appropriate ownership agreement, such as a partnership agreement, if applicable); and
    2. Demonstration of Board (or partnership) endorsement, if applicable, supporting the organization’s commitment to undertake the proposed project.
  1. **Project Plan:**

Present a clear outline of the plan of work. Outline the overall goals of the project; the specific objectives; activities and services planned to meet the goals and objectives. Include an organizational plan that will ensure proper and efficient administration of the project, including the proposed location(s) and start-up date. The Project Plan should detail services to be provided throughout the duration of the project.

Plans should describe how allotted funding will be utilized efficiently and effectively to assist and educate the targeted populations about COVID-19. Depending on the selected target population, the CHWs will outreach to older adults and adults with disabilities, and their caregivers, Medicare beneficiaries to provide them with knowledge about COVID-19 information, assistance, and services to empower them to live independently; avoid hospitalization or re-hospitalization; and remain in the community. The narrative should include any collaborative work or partnerships with other agencies/programs that support this initiative.

Include a brief **Evaluation Plan** as to how the project will measure compliance with the required objective.

1. **Budget and Financial Capacity:**
2. The completion of an OHA Excel budget form **(Appendix A) for the period July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2024**.
3. A budget narrative **(not to exceed three (3) pages)** which explains, in reasonable detail, the budget for the proposed project. The budget narrative should also disclose all other sources of funding in the budget narrative. Including, but not limited to, the following:
4. Current year operating budget including revenue sources and expenses.
5. If applicable, copy of 501(c)(3) tax exempt IRS Letter, or that of the fiscal sponsor; and
6. If applicable, documentation of the applicant’s federally approved indirect cost rate.

The funding for each specific program in this grant opportunity is listed on Page 3 for the period from July 1, 2022, through September 30, 2024.

**Matching Share:** No cost-share or match is required.

**Direct/Indirect Costs:** In developing proposals, applicants should maximize the use of grant funds for the direct provisions of services. In addition, if the applicant has no current federally approved indirect cost rate, then an indirect costs rate of up to 10% will be permitted (the indirect cost rate is calculated by dividing the indirect costs of the project by its direct costs).

**Supporting Documentation:**

1. A signed and completed Tax I.D. W-9 Form (to be provided by applicant).
2. Copies of all documents filed with the Rhode Island Secretary of State to establish the applicant’s existence; in lieu of this, it will be sufficient that the applicant currently is included in the Rhode Island Secretary of State’s corporate database of **Active** business entities.
3. A copy of the most recently filed IRS Form 990 to the extent that the applicant is required to file such forms; if the applicant is not required to file an IRS Form 990, the applicant must certify in writing as to same.
4. An annual financial statement for the most recently completed year.
5. The names and titles of all the organization’s current directors, officers, trustees, and key employees.
6. Written certification from the applicant that it currently is legally authorized to conduct business in Rhode Island.

**SECTION 5: EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Committee comprised of staff from state agencies. The proposal must receive a minimum of 70 (70%) out of 100 technical points to be considered responsive. Any proposals scoring less than 70 points will be dropped from further consideration. Proposals will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Possible Points** |
| **Organizational Capacity/Staffing Levels** | 40 |
| **Project Plan Quality** | 40 |
| **Budget Proposal** | 20 |
| **Total Possible Points** | 100 |

**Points will be assigned based on the applicant’s clear demonstration of its abilities to complete the work, apply appropriate methods to complete the work, create innovative solutions, and quality of past performance on similar projects.**

Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the technical review committee to clarify statements made in their proposal.

Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by the Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation.

Minority Business Enterprise:

Rhode Island General Laws Chapter 37-14.1 provides that minority business enterprises are to have an opportunity to participate in the performance of certain contracts funded in whole or in part by State funds. Please include in your proposal, if applicable (a) information setting forth the applicant’s status as a Minority Business Enterprise, as certified by the Rhode Island Department of Administration (an “MBE”) and/or (b) a subcontracting plan which addresses the State’s goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBEs in State procurements. Questions concerning this should be addressed to the MBE Compliance Office at 401-574-8253, and a list of certified MBEs may be found at [www.mbe.ri.gov](http://www.mbe.ri.gov/)

**Application Checklist – REVIEW CAREFULLY**

Please ensure that the following documents are submitted to OHA via email **by 12:00PM (Noon) on June 17, 2022, to Aleatha Dickerson,** [**aleatha.dickerson@oha.ri.gov**](mailto:aleatha.dickerson@oha.ri.gov)

Application:

* Cover Sheet
* Executive Summary-Demonstration of Need
* Program Narrative-Work Plan
* Budget narrative and Excel Budget Form -Appendix A

Tax I.D. W-9 Form

Other required documentation:

1. Copies of all documents filed with the Rhode Island Secretary of State to establish the applicant’s existence; in lieu of this, it will be sufficient that the applicant currently is included in the Rhode Island Secretary of State’s corporate database of **Active** business entities.
2. A copy of the most recently filed IRS Form 990 to the extent that the applicant is required to file such forms; if the applicant is not required to file an IRS Form 990, the applicant must certify in writing as to same.
3. An annual financial statement for the most recently completed year.
4. The names and titles of all the organization’s current directors, officers, trustees, and key employees.
5. Written certification from the applicant that it currently is legally authorized to conduct business in Rhode Island.

MBE information and/or plan, if applicable

**Attachments:**

**Appendix A** – Complete and submit project budget in OHA Excel Budget Form (Exhibit B)