Department of Public Safety

Minnesota Office of Justice Programs

2026 – 2028 CRISIS RESPONSE GRANTS

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview

1.1 General Information

- Grant Name: Crisis Response Grant Program
- Minnesota Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Website
- **Open for Applications: Tuesday, February 3, 2026**
- **Application Due Date: Monday, March 16, 2026, at 4:00 PM**

1.2 Program Description

The purpose of this request for proposal is to fund local law enforcement agencies and local governments to start, maintain, or expand crisis response teams in which social workers or mental health professionals serve as first responders when calls for service involve an individual in crisis. Funding may support a range of models including Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT), mobile crisis teams, co-responder models, alternative response teams (ART), and other social worker/mental health-led response approaches that improve safety, reduce unnecessary justice system involvement, and connect individuals to appropriate care.

1.3 Background Information & Resources

Across Minnesota and the nation, communities are strengthening their responses to individuals experiencing mental health and behavioral health crises by expanding partnerships between law enforcement, social workers, mental health providers, and community-based organizations. Effective crisis response systems are built on collaboration, shared responsibility, and coordinated planning across agencies. This grant program reflects the State of Minnesota's commitment to supporting local jurisdictions in developing and enhancing these collaborative, person-centered crisis response approaches.

This grant round emphasizes the importance of strategic partnerships and alignment with existing county and regional efforts, recognizing that crisis response functions best within an integrated system. Applicants are encouraged to engage with county behavioral health departments, community mental health providers, local crisis teams, and other partners to ensure strong coordination of services. Resources such as The Sequential Intercept Model and the Stepping Up Initiative provide useful frameworks for understanding how law enforcement, behavioral health systems, and community supports can work together to divert individuals with mental health needs from deeper justice system involvement. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use these tools to guide collaborative planning and program design.

To support new programs and collaborations, applicants may use a portion of the funds for planning activities, including finalizing partnerships, defining response protocols, securing MOUs, establishing logistics, and completing necessary hiring prior to full implementation. Applicants must demonstrate existing collaboration and community support through Memorandum(s) of Understanding (MOU) submitted with the application. Applicants may allocate up to 10% of their total grant award (up to $30,000 for a $300,000 grant) to planning activities, with the expectation that programs will move into implementation by the end of the second quarter of the 24-month grant period.

Resources:

A variety of national and state resources are available to assist applicants in designing evidence-based, collaborative responses. These tools reinforce that effective crisis response depends on strong, coordinated partnerships with law enforcement, behavioral health providers, county systems, and community stakeholders all playing essential roles in improving outcomes for individuals experiencing crises.

- The Sequential Intercept Model: Building Blocks for Strategic Planning
- Step Up Together: A data-driven framework that assists counties through training, resources, and support that are tailored to local needs
- A guide for local mental health advocates, mental health professionals, law enforcement and community leaders through the process of starting and sustaining their CIT programs: CIT International's Guide to Best Practices in Mental Health Crisis Response
- From SAMHSA: The National Behavioral Health Crisis Care Guidance provides a framework for transforming behavioral health crisis care systems in communities throughout the United States with the goal of saving lives by helping anyone experiencing a behavioral health crisis anytime, anywhere. It also includes a draft of a detailed implementation guide for Mobile Crisis Team services in accordance with this newly released framework.
- Connections among criminal justice agencies, behavioral health organizations, and the community: Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program
- Responding to individuals in behavioral health crisis via co-responder models: The Roles of Cities, Counties, Law Enforcement, and Providers
- Podcast: Meet the New Generation of Unarmed First Responders | The Marshall Project
- From the Bureau of Justice Assistance: Police-Mental Health Collaboration (PHMC) Toolkit
- From IACP: Responding to Persons Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis
- The Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Site Program serves as a peer-to-peer learning program for law enforcement agencies seeking to build collaborative responses to people who have mental health needs.
- Trainings from Minnesota Crisis Intervention Team
- From NAMI: Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Advocacy Toolkit
- Model programs and resources on evidence-based and best practices: Best Practices in Law Enforcement Responses to Mental Health Crises

1.4 Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

It is State of Minnesota policy to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in making competitive grant awards. See Executive Order 19.01.

The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. See OGM Policy 08-02.

1.5 Funding and Project Dates

Funding Authorization

Funds are authorized by MN Laws 2023, Chapter 52, Article 2, Section 15.

Grant Period

The grant period is anticipated to be approximately 23–24 months, beginning on or around August 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028.

Note: If selected for funding, current Crisis Response grantees with awards ending June 30, 2026, will have a start date of July 1, 2026.

Available Funding

A total of up to $7,538,726.21 is available for the 24-month grant period.

Reimbursement Grant

This is a reimbursement only grant, with no funds being advanced to the grantee at time of award.

Application Cap

The maximum amount an applicant can propose is $300,000 for the grant period. Applicants may propose less than the $300,000 cap. Award decisions will consider geographic diversity and population of area served in grant distribution based on grant applications received. Final award amounts may be lower than requested.

1.6 Eligible Applicants

Local units of government and Tribal governments are eligible to apply, including county sheriff's offices, police departments, and Tribal public safety agencies. A group of agencies may collaborate on a joint application with one unit of government serving as the fiscal agency.

1.7 Questions, Technical Assistance, and Information Session

Please submit any questions regarding this RFP by email Natty.B.Hels@state.mn.us
Answers will be posted on the Funding Opportunities page of the OJP website within 7 days of receipt.

RFP Information Sessions

OJP will offer an online information session that includes time for questions and answers. In the session staff will provide a brief background on the Crisis Response grant program, walk through the RFP and application requirements, and give an overview of the application review process. At the end of the session, staff will open it up for questions. Although not required, prospective applicants are encouraged to participate. This

session will be recorded and questions and answers from the webinar will be posted on the Funding Opportunities/Frequently Asked Questions' page on the OJP Website.

Crisis Response Grants RFP Information Session:

Wednesday, February 18, 2026. 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM. Register here.

RFP Part 2: Expectations

2.1 Grant Activity Requirements

➢ Commitment to Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Organizations funded under this grant must have a commitment to conduct activities or provide services in an accessible, welcoming, and respectful manner. Activities must be conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful way that honors and values diverse life experiences for those seeking services, and for program staff, leadership, and advisory boards. OJP asks organizations to make efforts to ensure their leadership and staff are representative of the diversity of Minnesotans and the communities served.

➢ Community and Systems Partnerships

Since interventions rarely, if ever occur within one organization or system, it is expected that the key stakeholders of your project are invited to and authentically engage with all aspects of this process. Genuine partnerships and collaborations involve clear roles and responsibilities, and partners are compensated whenever possible. Grantees should work together in partnership with relevant stakeholders, which may be systems partners, other community organizations, local public health, businesses, or other government agencies.

➢ Evidence Informed and Promising Practices

While prioritizing programs that use evidence-based practices (those that have been rigorously evaluated and demonstrated effectiveness), we also recognize the importance of supporting innovative and community driven strategies. Many effective approaches emerge from the lived experiences of communities of color, Indigenous communities, and other historically marginalized groups. These approaches, often rooted in cultural traditions and local expertise, align with practice-based evidence (PBE). PBE encompasses strategies developed over time through practice, experience, and community validation.

Projects may be research-based, drawing on published literature including both qualitative and quantitative studies, or they may be promising strategies that demonstrate strong community support, responsiveness to local needs, and alignment with emerging best practices. Projects implementing established research-based

interventions and those incorporating promising, community driven approaches that reflect practice-based evidence and lived experience will be given equal weight in the review process.

➢ Commitment to Using a Trauma-informed Approach

Activities conducted under this grant must be provided in a way that recognizes, understands, and responds to the effects of trauma experienced by survivors. A trauma-informed approach emphasizes physical, mental, and emotional health and safety, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. Services need to be flexible to respond to the impact of different types of traumas and on meeting survivors' self-defined needs toward recovery and healing. More information on using a trauma informed approach.

➢ Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is an important component of this grant program as it can help grantees understand, verify, or increase the effectiveness of the activities funded under this grant. Program evaluation can also provide data to highlight the impact of the activities funded in this grant and can show how the grantee is meeting the goals set in this application. Grantees may use funds for staff to work on evaluation or may subcontract with external evaluation partners. Evaluation may include, but is not limited to, developing an evaluation plan, developing data collection tools, collecting, and analyzing evaluation data and attending in-state evaluation training and technical assistance events.

Crisis Response Progress Report:

Grantees will be required to submit quarterly progress reports and expense reports. OJP will provide a standardized reporting template to ensure consistency across programs and to support accurate tracking of progress toward grant outcomes.

Programs funded through this grant will be expected to report on activities, accomplishments and challenges related to the overall goals of the Crisis Response Grant Program, which are to:

- Reduce the incidence of use of force, injuries, and fatalities during mental health crisis calls.
- Increase diversion of individuals experiencing mental health crises away from arrest and toward services and supports that address underlying behavioral health needs.
- Reduce law enforcement time on scene at mental health crisis calls so that officers have increased capacity to respond to other public safety needs.

RFP Part 3: Application Process and Instructions

3.1 Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted using the IGX web-based system by system by 4:00 pm March 16, 2026. Applications cannot be submitted after this time. No paper submissions will be accepted.

3.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via IGX, the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) NEW online grants management system. IGX can also be accessed via the Office of Justice Programs website.

New to IGX? Steps to Get Started:

1. Agency Administrator for organizations, click New User? Register Here! to create an account, register your organization and assign users.
2. Assigned users, log in with the Username and Password provided in the Member Assigned to Organization email.
3. Contact your Agency Administrator for assistance as needed. Visit DPS Grant Management or email questions to GrantsMgmt.Shared.DPS@state.mn.us

After the organization is registered, follow the instructions to complete an application in IGX.

3.3 Terms and Conditions, Grant Program Guidelines, OJP Grant Manual

As part of submitting this application in IGX the applicant agency agrees to the Terms and Conditions of OJP Grantees for applicants as well as the **Crisis Response Program Guidelines**. These address federal and state requirements such as worker's compensation, civil rights, affirmative action, and data privacy. By agreeing to these in IGX the applicant is confirming that they can make these commitments. **Applicants are encouraged to print and review these documents with the appropriate agency staff prior to submitting the application in IGX.** Grantees agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual, which provides basic information on policies and procedures for grant administration. These documents become part of the formal grant agreement.

3.4 Application Content

Program Documentation

A. ***Terms and Conditions:*** Review and acknowledge
B. ***Grant Program Guidelines****:* Review and acknowledge

Applicant Information

A. **Contact Information:** Enter Authorized Representation contact information, assign IGX roles to the application and determine signature option.
B. **Grant Management Experience:** Answer questions about grant management experience.

Subaward Information (if applicable)

If your grant funds staff from other agencies through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), this arrangement is **NOT** considered a subaward and you can answer "No, our organization does not plan to have subawards".

For the purposes of this section, a subaward to another entity would be to carry out a portion of the project award. It creates a relationship with the grantee and the project implementation. Characteristics of an organization having a subaward to another entity include:

- A subaward with an entity that determines program eligibility.
- A subaward with an entity whose performance is measured in relation to whether the objective of your proposal are met.
- A subaward with an entity that is responsible for the adherence to applicable program requirements specified in the proposal.
- A subaward with an entity that uses funds to carry out a program for public purpose specified in the program as opposed to providing goods or services for the benefit of the program.

Application Information

A. Project Information
This information is entered into IGX and includes the contact information for the individuals responsible for the grant as well as other basic grant information. NOTE: the funds requested amount will come from the budget form.

B. Narrative

- **Download the narrative template from the Narrative form in IGX** and make a copy of the template to complete your project's narrative.
- The maximum length of the narrative document is 10 pages, with 1" margins, single spaced, and with 11-point font size.
- Prepare your narrative by answering each item in the order they are listed in the template.
- Proposals are scored based on your responses to these questions. Do not include any additional pages or supplemental materials; these will not be provided to reviewers.
- When ready to submit, upload the narrative as an attachment in IGX.

The narrative template is composed of the following items:

1. Organizational Overview (6 points)
2. Current Grantees/ New Applicants (15 points)
3. Community Engagement & Partnerships (27 points)
4. Evaluation & Performance Measurement (12 points)
5. Budget Overview (6 points)
6. Sustainability (6 points)

Budget

A. ***Budget Detail:*** Entered directly into IGX.

All budget items must be reasonable and critical to your proposed activities. The budget should be consistent with your narrative, making it clear how each of the activities will be funded. The budget will

cover the two-year period, and all expenses must be listed and must be directly related to the grant. When estimating costs, please show your calculations by including quantities, unit costs and other details. Only include grant funded expenses in the budget descriptions.

Directions for entering the budget are available in the Application Guide. The Budget Detail Requirements will show you examples and specific requirements for each of the line items. Please note the example is from e-grants but content requirements are the same for IGX.

NOTE: If reimbursed expenses are later found to be ineligible, the grantee will be asked to repay those funds.

Budget line items include: Personnel, Payroll Taxes & Fringe, Contract Services, Travel, Training, Office Expenses, Program Expenses, Indirect Costs and Other Expenses. Not all line items need to be used.

Staffing considerations:
If grant funded staff are unable to dedicate their fulltime to grant activity they will be required to track and only be reimbursed for their grant-related hours.

B. Indirect Rate Documentation (if applicable)

Indirect costs, often referred to as overhead, are costs shared by the organization as a whole and most often are not able to be broken down within each program of the organization. Indirect costs can be requested in one of the following ways:

1. Budget expenses directly in the applicable budget categories and would not need to complete this form.
2. Using the Federally Negotiated Indirect Costs Rate
3. Using the 15% de Minimis Indirect Cost Rate

If using an indirect cost rate, download, complete and upload the associated request form. The request form will calculate the allowable indirect costs amount that will be entered into the application's budget.

C. ***Budget Summary:*** No action needed. This form will show the total budget information that was entered into the budget lines.

D. ***Application Uploads*** (if including contract/s or Memorandum of Understandings (MOU))

➢ Application Checklist

An application must include the following to be forwarded for review:

- ☐ Acceptance of Terms and Conditions
- ☐ Acceptance of Crisis Response Grant Program Guidelines
- ☐ Applicant Information
- ☐ Narrative - Addressing questions listed above must be uploaded
- ☐ Budget - Calculations must be included
- ☐ Indirect Documentation Form (if including indirect costs in budget)

RFP Part 4: Application Review Process

This is a competitive application process. A review committee will read and rate applications. The reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendations.

➢ 1st Level Review – Community Reviews

Reviewers may include community members, subject matter experts, teachers or educators, state and local government employees, crime victim advocates, youth workers and law enforcement officers. The reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendations. Community Reviewers and OJP Staff will read and rate applications using the following scoring rubrics:

Crisis Response Grants 2026-2028 - Scoresheet Community Reviewers	
(Name of Organization/Agency)	
Rating and Score Guide	**Description**
Excellent (3)	Outstanding level of quality; exceeds all aspects of the minimum requirements; No significant weaknesses.
Good (2)	Good Response, meets requirements; some weaknesses, but correctable.
Unsatisfactory (1)	Fails to meet minimum requirements; needs major revision to make it acceptable.
Missing information (0)	Missing information or didn't answer the question(s).

Organizational Overview	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 6
How well does the proposed project fit within the mission of the agency?			0
How well does the applicant describe their agency's experience with past grant management? If the applicant has no prior grant management experience, do they provide a plan to ensure successful management of this grant?			0
Organizational Overview Scoring Subtotal			0
Organizational Overview Comments:			
Strengths: *If you felt this section was strong, what specifically would you share was persuasive to you about it?*			
Weaknesses/Concerns: *If you felt this section was weak, what specifically would you share about it?*			

ONLY For CURRENT Grantees	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 15
How well does the applicant describe their current model and how they have used the OJP Crisis Response grant funds?		X2	0
How well does the applicant describe meaningful successes achieved with their current grant funding? Did they include both numerical data and anecdotes?			0
How well does the applicant reflect on potential improvements or changes they would make to their approach were they to receive new funding?			0
How well does the applicant identify relevant challenges in their agency or community and how well did they explain how the additional funding would help address them?			0
	Total:		0

ONLY For NEW Applicants	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 15
How well does the applicant describe their current model and how the grant funds will be used?		X2	0
How well does the applicant describe the evidence-based or practice-based approaches that will inform their project?			0
How well does the applicant identify gap(s) in their community's crisis response? Did they explain well how their program would fill that gap?			0
How well does the timeline table provide an overview of key activities, timeframe, estimated cost, and staff responsibilities?			0
	Total:		0

Community Engagement & Partnerships	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 27
How well does the proposal outline engagement with individuals with lived experience, community members, behavioral health professionals, law enforcement and/or other key stakeholders?		X2	0
How well does the project ensure access to resources and/or longer-term mental health support when needed?			0
How well does the proposal describe validated risk/needs/threat assessments, models, or technology to be used?			0
How well are staff training and development opportunities described?			0
How well does the applicant describe their partnerships or collaborations, including roles, responsibilities, and contributions?		X3	0
How well do these partnerships enhance the effectiveness of the program?			0
Community Engagement & Partnerships - Scoring Subtotal			0
Community Engagement & Partnerships - Comments:			
Strengths: *If you felt this section was strong, what specifically would you share was persuasive to you about it?*			
Weaknesses/Concerns: *If you felt this section was weak, what specifically would you share about it?*			

	Total Score out of 48 Points:	0

Crisis Response Grants 2026-2028 - Scoresheet OJP Staff

(Name of Organization/Agency)

Rating and Score Guide	Description
Excellent (3)	Outstanding level of quality; exceeds all aspects of the minimum requirements; No significant weaknesses.
Good (2)	Good Response, meets requirements; some weaknesses, but correctable.
Unsatisfactory (1)	Fails to meet minimum requirements; needs major revision to make it acceptable.
Missing information (0)	Missing information or didn't answer the question(s).

Evaluation & Performance Measurement	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 12
How well does the applicant describe their plan to measure the success and impact of their project?		X2	0
How well does the applicant outline specific metrics, data collection methods, and evaluation strategies to be used in the project? (If ongoing or expanding project, did the applicant provide meaningful current outcomes?)			0
How well does the applicant describe their plan to incorporate community feedback into their evaluation and program improvements?			0
Evaluation & Performance Measurement - Scoring Subtotal			0

Budget Overview	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 6
How well does the applicant summarize how the requested funding will be used?			0
How well does the budget overview description align with the program description and proposed activities?			0
Budget - Scoring Subtotal			0

Sustainability	Points Awarded (0-3)	Weight	Total Points Possible: 6
Given workforce shortages, how well does the application provide a clear recruitment, training, and retention strategy?			0
How clear and detailed is the applicant's plan for sustaining the program beyond the grant period?			0
Sustainability - Scoring Subtotal			0
Sustainability - Comments:			
Strengths: *If you felt this section was strong, what specifically would you share was persuasive to you about it?*			
Weaknesses/Concerns: *If you felt this section was weak, what specifically would you share about it?*			

	Total Score out of 24 Points:	0

➢ 2nd Level Review – OJP Staff

A final staff review will consider scores from community reviewers, past grantee performance including timeliness and completeness of past grant financial and progress reporting (if applicable), geographic locations and coordination with other federal, state, and local funding. The Commissioner will make the final funding decisions and award notification will be by email to applicants.

Become a grant reviewer!

Grant reviewers are community members who evaluate applications for a variety of competitive grants we implement throughout the year. We use reviewer scores and recommendations to help determine which proposals are awarded grants. Apply to become a grant reviewer here!

RFP Part 5: Post Award Requirements

- **Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Financial Review.** In accordance with state and federal grant management policies it is required to consider a grant applicant's risk of noncompliance with grant requirements. State policy requires states to conduct a financial review prior to a grant award made of $25,000 and higher to any organization. The necessary information for this is provided in the Organizational Financial Information form in the application.
- **Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement**

  The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic development and equality.

  To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296-2600 or go to the OEP website.
- **Grant Contract Process.** After being selected for funding, OJP staff will work with the applicant to negotiate a final budget. The formal grant contract consists of the Grant Agreement, the Terms and Conditions, the Program Guidelines, as well as the work plan and budget. The Grant Agreement will be initiated, signed by grantee and OJP, and once fully executed it is then a legally binding agreement. Grant agreements not signed within 30 days of receipt may be canceled.
- **Progress Reporting.** Grantees will be required to submit quarterly progress and expense reports with supporting reimbursement documentation.

- **Grant Payments.** This is a cost reimbursement grant. Grantees will only be paid for eligible expenses that are incurred and are consistent with the negotiated budget.
- **OJP Grant Manual.** Grantees, grantee subgrants and contracts agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual as part of the application process. The manual is a resource for how our office manages grants and covers topics such as grant administration policies, program modification policies, general accounting requirements, etc. OJP Grant Manual
- **Expiring Grant Funds.** A portion of the total grant award will expire on June 30, 2027. See the Special Conditions page of the grant contract for details.
- **Grantee Orientation.** Grantees will be expected to attend an OJP grant orientation session.

RFP Part 6: RIGHT OF CANCELLATION

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any, or all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.