



Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund 2025 Solicitation

Overview:

The Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund (“Fund”) was established by the Mississippi Legislature during the 2020 legislative session (H.B. 1559). *See also* Miss. Code. Ann. § 97-3-54.11. The Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund Committee (“Committee”) seeks applications from direct victim service providers to support projects serving both minor and adult victims of labor and sex trafficking throughout Mississippi.

Program Description:

The purpose of these awards is to expand direct victim services to both adult and minor victims of sex and labor trafficking throughout the State of Mississippi. Applicants are expected to use the funding to directly support victims of all forms of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, including but not limited to direct housing, housing referrals, trauma-informed therapy using evidence-based practices, job counseling and training programs, workforce training and other available social services.

Expected awards:

The Fund is mainly funded by assessments for convictions of certain crimes and legislative appropriations. The Committee anticipates awarding \$2.5 million during this application period. The Committee anticipates making multiple awards during this application period. Awards will be made on a rolling basis with some awards potentially being made as late as April 2026.

Unallowable Costs:

Programs or services that do not directly serve victims of human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation will not be considered for funding. Priority will be given to projects that address the direct needs of human trafficking victims. Further, all requests for costs related to the administration of the awarded project will be limited to 10% of the award.

Availability of Funds:

This solicitation, and any awards made under this solicitation, are subject to the availability of the funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by the Committee.

Eligible Applicants:

Non-profit direct victim service providers having 501(c)(3) status with the IRS and registered with the Mississippi Secretary of State, including both shelter and non-shelter providers.

Application Evaluation:

Applications will be evaluated by an independent panel consisting of three (3) persons not currently serving on the Fund Committee. A board member or employee of a service provider applicant may not serve on the judging panel for that application period.

The 3-person panel shall consider the following, at a minimum, when judging applications for funding:

1. The geographic area of service;
2. The type(s) of services provided;
3. The population served;
4. Prior performance with grant funded projects;
5. Priorities outlined in the project narrative;
6. The length of time the provider has served victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation; and
7. The current trends and needs identified for human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation victims in the area served.

Review Process:

It is important to note that the 3-person panel will consider other factors in its evaluation process.

Applications submitted must meet the following minimum requirements prior to being evaluated by the 3-person panel.

1. The application must be submitted by an eligible applicant as defined above.
2. The application must request funding within the amount allowed in this solicitation.
3. The applicant must meet all applicable provider requirements.
4. The project narrative must fulfill the requirements of this solicitation.
5. The application must include all necessary required attachments.

Contact Information:

For assistance with submitting this Application, contact HumanTraffickingFund@ago.ms.gov.

All applications and required attachments should be emailed to:

HumanTraffickingFund@ago.ms.gov.

Submission Deadline:

All applicants must submit the full application, including required attachments, by **5:00 p.m. on August 28, 2025**. Any applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Provider Requirements:

Shelter Providers: Applicants that provide shelter to victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation that receive funding under this solicitation will be required to:

1. Provide shelter on a twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week basis
2. Maintain a twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week crisis line to provide counseling, emergency response or suicide watch
3. Provide temporary housing and food facilities
4. Have established procedures for twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week admission of victims of human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation who may seek admission to the shelter on a voluntary basis
5. Employ or contract with a Mississippi licensed therapist available on a twenty-four (24) hours a day basis
6. Provide victim-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally and linguistically appropriate care
7. Utilize evidence-based interventions
8. Collaborate with other nongovernmental and governmental agencies
9. Provide referrals to existing services in the community and procedures to follow up on the outcome of the referrals, including, but not limited to, referrals for medical care, legal assistance and alcohol and drug treatment
10. Provide information regarding reeducation, trauma-informed therapy, job counseling, and training programs, workforce training, housing referrals and other available social services
11. Perform background checks and maintain copies of such for each employee and volunteer on an annual basis
12. Ensure adequate safety and security for staff and clients
13. Require mandatory victim service training for staff and volunteers
14. Adhere to ethical and professional standards
15. Require employees and volunteers to maintain confidentiality of any information that would identify individuals served by the shelter in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 93-21-125
16. Maintain any required licensure and certification of staff and facility as required by the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Health, the Department of Child Protection Services or any other regulatory body of the State of Mississippi
17. Certify that the provider does not discriminate in its provision of services on the basis of race, religion, color, age, disability, marital status, national origin, or ancestry in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.12(2)
18. Have a Board of Directors and/or an advisory committee that represents the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity of the area to be served, including, if possible, at least one

(1) person who is or has been a victim of human trafficking and/or commercial sexual exploitation

19. Certify that the provider receives local funds in an amount not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the requested award, which may include in-kind contributions, in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.12(3)

Non-Shelter Providers: Applicants that DO NOT provide shelter to victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation that receive funding under this solicitation will be required to:

1. Provide victim-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally and linguistically appropriate care
2. Utilize evidence-based interventions
3. Collaborate with other nongovernmental and governmental agencies
4. Provide referrals to existing services in the community and procedure to follow up on the outcome of the referrals, including, but not limited to, referrals for medical care, legal assistance, and alcohol and drug treatment
5. Provide information regarding reeducation, trauma-informed therapy, job counseling and training programs, workforce training, housing referrals, and other available social services
6. Perform background checks and maintain copies of such for each employee and volunteer on an annual basis
7. Ensure adequate safety and security for staff and clients
8. Require mandatory victim service training for staff and volunteers
9. Adhere to ethical and professional standards
10. Require employees and volunteers to maintain confidentiality of any information that would identify individuals served by the provider in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 93-21-125
11. Maintain any required licensure and certification of staff and facility as required by the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Health, the Department of Child Protection Services or any other regulatory body of the State of Mississippi
12. Certify that the provider does not discriminate in its provision of services on the basis of race, religion, color, age, disability, marital status, national origin, or ancestry in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.12(2)
13. Have a Board of Directors and/or an advisory committee that represents the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity of the area to be served, including, if possible, at least one (1) person who is or has been a victim of human trafficking and/or commercial sexual exploitation
14. Certify that the provider receives local funds in an amount not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the requested award, which may include in-kind contributions, in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.12(3)

Proposal Narrative:

The Proposal Narrative should be submitted with the Application and should not exceed 10 pages.

The following must be included in the Proposal Narrative:

1. Describe the nature and scope of the specific human trafficking problem that the proposed program/project will address. Cite sources of any data provided.
2. Describe the proposed program/project to address the specified problem.
3. State clearly the goals and objectives of the program/project, including how the geographic area served will be impacted as a whole and the number of victims expected to be served by the program/project.
4. Describe, in detail, the proposed actions required to complete any of the program/project.
5. Describe specific services that will be provided to victims through the program/project.
6. Describe specifically how the applicant will utilize trauma-informed and evidence-based practices when serving human trafficking victims.
7. Describe how the applicant will support victim-informed decisions and autonomy while providing services to human trafficking victims through the program/project.
8. Demonstrate institutional experience and expertise to implement the proposed program/project effectively.
9. Describe any history of providing specialized services for victims of human trafficking.
10. Demonstrate sustained victim services for human trafficking victims that correlate with the requested funding.
11. Distinguish human trafficking services from other services evidenced by specialized programming, designated spaces/staff, policies, and/or publicized services.
12. Describe the specific roles and responsibilities of all staff and volunteers who will be involved in the proposed program/project.
13. Describe, in detail, the trauma-informed, victim service training provided to staff and volunteers in order to demonstrate that staff and volunteers have the appropriate training to carry out all of the duties necessary for the program/project (Please attach Curriculum Vitae, resumes, etc. These attachments do not count against the 10-page maximum for the Proposal Narrative.)
14. Identify any program/project partners, if applicable.
15. Provide a plan for collection of performance measure data including, if available, any pre-existing performance measure data.

Proposed Budget Narrative and Sustainability Plan

1. Provide a 12-month proposed budget that only contains items that are supported by the proposal narrative and clearly demonstrates the link between the specific program/project and the proposed budget items.
2. Demonstrate shared costs (i.e. cost of computers spread across different programs and different grants).
3. Describe how the applicant will continue services to human trafficking victims without additional state funding.

Application Submission Information:

The following **must** be submitted with the Application to meet the basic minimum requirements to advance to the 3-person panel review and receive consideration for funding:

1. Proposal Narrative
2. Proposed Budget Narrative and Sustainability Plan
3. Overall Agency budget and sources of income, including the required receipt of local funds in an amount not less than fifteen percent (15%). If the local contribution includes in-kind contributions, demonstrate so accordingly.
4. Most recent annual audit
5. Policy and Procedures Manual to include: a detailed description of your accounting system, handling of bank statements, disbursements, and procurement and property control policy
6. Conflict of Interest policy
7. Client confidentiality policy as required per Miss. Code Ann. § 93-21-125
8. Copy of Agency Anti-Discrimination Policy per Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.12(2)
9. Policies and Procedures demonstrating that the provider does not require victims to take certain actions (e.g. report to law enforcement or achieve sobriety) to be eligible for or to receive services
10. List of Agency's Board of Directors
11. Copy of Agency Mission Statement
12. Letters of Support – at least one (1) letter and no more than three (3)
13. 501(c)(3) documentation
14. Proof of incorporation in the state of Mississippi or recognized by the Mississippi Secretary of State as a private or public nonprofit corporation operating within the state of Mississippi
15. Completed Litigation and Audit Finding Disclosure Form (provided by AGO)
16. Copies of any and all Memoranda of Understanding with proposed partners for the program/project, if applicable.

Cost Match Requirement:

Awardees under this solicitation are required to show receipt of local funds in an amount not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the funding amount, which may include in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are defined as the value of non-cash (i.e. property or services) that benefit the assisted project or program and are contributed by non-governmental third parties, without charge, to the assisted project or program.

Post-Award Reporting Requirements:

Post-award, recipients must comply with all standards for financial and program management as described in 2 C.F.R. 200. Awardees will also be required to provide quarterly financial and programmatic reporting, and annual and final financial and programmatic reports to the Committee.

Modifications to approved funding must adhere to the spirit of the approved project and may be considered and approved by the Committee on a case-by-case basis. Budget modifications shall be approved prior to the grant recipient making changes.