

Questions and Answers:
Request for Proposals for Mental Health Support in Construction Grant
Updated and posted Friday, Oct. 31, 2025

1. *Is a company eligible to apply if not registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State?*
No, organizations MUST be registered and in good standing with the IRS and the Minnesota Secretary of State.
2. *Has this grant been previously awarded?*
No, this is a new grant. No previous contracts were awarded.
3. *Must applicants be able to support workers statewide?*
No. We'd like to clarify a previous communication regarding the Mental Health in the Construction Industry grant opportunity. An earlier announcement incorrectly stated that applicants must demonstrate a statewide impact to be eligible. This is not a requirement. Programs do not need to have a statewide focus to apply.
4. *The original RFP requirements indicated that only nonprofit entities were eligible, but that language was later revised. Can you confirm whether for-profit entities are eligible to apply?*
Both for-profit and nonprofit entities are eligible to apply for the Mental Health in the Construction Industry grant. We encourage a wide range of organizations to consider submitting proposals that support mental health initiatives within Minnesota's construction sector.
5. *Can this grant be used to offset an applicant's overall cost of employee health insurance?*
No. Grant funds may not be used to cover general employee health insurance costs. The purpose of this grant is to support the development of outreach and engagement programming, resources, and worksite strategies that promote mental health and prevent suicide specifically within Minnesota's construction industry.
6. *Could we establish a supplemental fund to assist employees with their deductible or out-of-pocket expenses specifically related to attending mental health appointments?*
No. Grant funds may not be used to cover individual medical expenses, including deductibles or out-of-pocket costs. The grant is intended to support broader mental health initiatives such as outreach, education, resource development, and worksite strategies that promote mental well-being and prevent suicide in Minnesota's construction industry.
7. *Is it allowable to use the grant to offset the cost of paid time off (PTO) for mental health days — covering both the employee's wages and a company's lost productivity from the employee's absence?*
No, the purpose of the grant is to fund outreach, engagement, and resource development efforts that promote mental health and prevent suicide in Minnesota's construction industry. It is not intended to reimburse wages, PTO, or productivity losses.

8. *Can this grant be used to pay employee wages or compensate the company for lost productivity while an employee is on FMLA, mental health-related or parental leave?*
No. Grant funds may not be used to cover employee wages, employer wage replacement, or productivity losses during FMLA leave or any other type of leave. The grant is intended to support proactive mental health initiatives—such as outreach, education, and worksite strategies—that promote mental well-being and prevent suicide in Minnesota’s construction industry.
9. *We employ skilled trades professionals such as heavy equipment operators, painters, pipefitters, machinist mechanics, and electricians. While we currently offer an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and a general health and wellness program, we are interested in developing a mental health initiative specifically targeted at our employees in the trades. Would we be eligible to apply?*
Yes, you may be eligible to apply. The grant is intended to support mental health initiatives for workers in the construction industry and related trades. Since your proposed project would focus specifically on employees in skilled trades such as heavy equipment operators, painters, pipefitters, machinist mechanics, and electricians, it aligns with the intent of the grant. Be sure to clearly describe your target population and how your proposed activities will support their mental health and well-being.
10. *If a group of organizations applies, with a single organization as the coordinator (applicant/fiscal agent), do all organizations need to meet all the basic qualifications to be an eligible applicant?*
Applicants may apply as a collaboration of organizations. The single entity who intends to be the lead applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in the RFP. Partnering or collaborating organizations will be considered subrecipients of the lead organization (applicant) and are not required to meet the eligibility requirements. Note that applicants must perform due diligence checks to verify the identity and legitimacy of any entities or individuals they plan to fund as subrecipients, which could include verifying business registration with the Secretary of State to ensure the entity is actively registered and in good standing. Applicants must follow all state and grant requirements regarding contracting and sub-awarding funds including that the applicant and any subrecipients must not contract with entities who are suspended or debarred by the state of Minnesota or the federal government.
11. *Do organizations need to be considered part of the "construction industry" that this grant is targeted at?*
No. Organizations do not need to be part of the construction industry, but they must demonstrate the capacity to deliver programming that supports mental health in Minnesota’s construction workforce.
12. *How much do you anticipate the average RFP amount to be awarded?*
We anticipate awarding between one and four grants. Each award will be a minimum of \$150,000.
13. *Can a company utilize this mental health grant if they have a corporate chaplain?*
Yes. The presence of a corporate chaplain does not affect an organization’s eligibility to apply for or utilize this mental health grant. Applications will be evaluated based on the proposed activities and how well they align with the grant’s goals.
14. *Is this grant opportunity open to small residential construction businesses, or is it primarily intended for large commercial firms? We’re a small contractor with an existing mental health support program and are interested in applying for a modest amount of funding to sustain it.*

Yes, small businesses may apply. Note that the minimum amount of funding that can be requested by any single applicant is \$150,000.

15. *Are we eligible to apply if our business is physically located outside of Minnesota?*

Yes, as long as your organization is a registered business in good standing in Minnesota. Eligibility is based on registration status and where the grant-funded activities will occur. All proposed activities must take place either within Minnesota or virtually in a way that serves Minnesota residents and aligns with the goals of the grant.

16. *Could the grant funds be used to support the production of daily mental fitness safety videos for line/field workers?*

Yes, if the videos support mental health in the construction industry and align with the grant's goals. Activities must benefit Minnesota's construction workforce and be clearly described in the application.

Questions received during informational webinar on Oct. 22.

17. *What will be measures of success? Goals?*

As stated on page 2 of the RFP, the purpose of the grant is to create outreach and engagement programming as well as develop resources and worksite strategies to promote mental health and prevent suicide in the construction industry. As stated on page 6 of the RFP, grant outcomes will include increased knowledge, awareness and stigma reduction. Measures may include quality evidence-based materials developed and published; number of organizations receiving and distributing materials; number of workers receiving materials and content; number of individuals/organizations trained in suicide prevention, risk factors, warning signs, and intervention strategies; number of website visits and social media engagement, and geographic impact. That said, we welcome proposals of other ways to measure success for each program.

18. *Will we have contact access to registered construction companies?*

While DLI will not provide contact information to construction companies directly, DLI can act as a connector between grantee organizations and construction companies with whom DLI interacts.

19. *Can minority and diverse companies be identified by the state?*

There is no single method of identifying all minority-owned or diverse companies. However, if a company wishes to be qualified as a minority-owned business for the purposes of doing business with the State of Minnesota, there is a defined process to follow through the Minnesota Department of Administration. Details are available here: <https://mn.gov/admin/business/vendor-info/oep/>. If a business wishes to be identified as a certified minority-owned business by the Minnesota Small Business Association, details for that certification are available here: <https://minnesotasba.us/minority-owned-business-certification.php>.

20. *Would travel for an out-of-state expert to come to Minnesota to conduct training be an eligible expense? Would it be limited to their travel in or to the state, or would a round-trip expense qualify?*

Travel for an out-of-state expert to come to Minnesota to conduct training could be an eligible expense. This expense should be included in the contractual cost category as it would be funding contracted training. Travel would not be limited to their travel in or to the state; a round-trip expense could qualify. Other out of state travel for grantees would typically not be allowed.

21. *How are we able to check with the IRS and Minnesota Secretary of State to determine if we are in good standing?*

To determine whether or not your organization is in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State, visit <https://www.sos.mn.gov/business-liens/business-help/how-to-search-business-filings/>. To determine whether or not your organization is in good standing with the IRS, visit <https://www.irs.gov/businesses> for for-profit entities or <https://www.irs.gov/charities-and-nonprofits> for non-profit entities.

22. *Is there a word or page count minimum for the application?*

There is no minimum or maximum word or page count for the application. Keep in mind that brevity and context are both extremely valuable.

23. *Is there specific data that supports the need for this type of work? If so, is there a comparison of metro and outstate Minnesota?*

A key data source demonstrating the need for this type of work is the Minnesota Violent Death Reporting System (MNVDRS), maintained by the Minnesota Department of Health:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/injury/data/mnvdrs.html>. The dashboard at this source does provide geographic, demographic, and occupational data. Between 2015 and 2022, the number of deaths by suicide among males working in construction was 842, the largest of any industry in Minnesota.

24. *We're a union employer and training union employees is considered paid time. Would the funds be able to be used for the training time for our union employees? i.e. we require the employees to attend a three hour QPR training session on standard time, can we use the funds to pay for the employees time.*

No, funds cannot go directly to program participants. Additional detail of eligible expenses can be found on pages 12 and 13 of the RFP; examples of ineligible expenses can be found on page 14 of the RFP.

25. *Are we able to use the grant money to cover the cost of a corporate chaplain?*

Funds can be used to pay employee wages and benefits that directly relate to program activities and reporting; funding can also be used to cover contractual costs. So long as a corporate chaplain is an employee or contractor working toward the goals of a grant-funded program, grant funds could be used to pay those wages or vendor services.

Question received Oct. 23

26. *Do nonprofits have to submit both their most recent 990 and their most recent audit in response to Exhibit D? The form contains language including the word "may", which is confusing.*

No, nonprofits do not need to submit financial documentation at time of application with Exhibit D. Financial documentation will be requested and required for all eligible grant application finalists. If a finalist, nonprofits will be required to submit both their most recent 990 and their most recent audit. The term "may" is referring to nonprofits who may be too new to have a 990 or audit on file, in which case, other documentation verifying internal control and financial capacity will be required upon request.

Questions received Oct. 29 and Oct. 30

27. *On the “Measuring success and outcome” section of the application, the chart seems to be different from the grant performance period. The performance period is reported as 2/1/26 through 12/31/2027. But the table lists SFY 2026 (Q3 and Q4), SFY 2027 (Qs 1-4) and SFY 2028 (Q1 and Q2).*

Keep in mind that we are talking about state fiscal years which begin July 1, end June 30, and are named for the year in which they end. As such, 2/1/26 through 12/31/2027 would encompass eight quarters.

SFY 2026 (Q3 and Q4) = 2/1/26 – 6/30/2026;

SFY 2027 = 7/1/2026 – 6/30/2027

SFY 2028 (Q1 and Q2) = 7/1/2027 – 12/31/2027

As such, the performance period and the table does match.

28. *Can you please advise if there is a section where a comprehensive grant narrative may be incorporated, or if it should be submitted as an attachment?*

There is no comprehensive grant narrative required for this application; instead, a more detailed Workplan can be included in the Workplan section. There is no word or character limit, but please be mindful that both brevity and context are appreciated.

29. *Our organization has engaged with a potential contracted partner to develop a program. Our organization does not have sufficient staff to pursue the goals of this program without the integrated support of a contracted partner. For the purposes of this application, would the services provided by this contractor be subject to the competitive bidding requirements outlined in the RFP?*

Review page 12 of the request for proposals.

Notwithstanding the above, the State may waive bidding process requirements when:

- a. Vendors included in response to competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or**
- b. It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.” As such, if your application includes the name of a contracted party and your workplan incorporating that party is approved, you do not need to go through the competitive bidding process. A memorandum of understanding or subcontract may be required. Keep in mind that grantees are responsible for the performance of any subgrantee or subcontracted parties.**