



Office of Children and Family Services

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

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Shelia Poole
Acting Commissioner

Local Commissioners Memorandum

Transmittal:	15-OCFS-LCM-10
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Strategic Planning and Policy Development
Date:	July 31, 2015
Subject:	Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) Program \$1,000,000 Set-Aside Funding Instructions (FFY 2014-15/SFY 2015-16)
Contact Person(s):	See page 6
Attachments:	Attachment A: Application for Community Optional Preventive Services Attachment B: Community Optional Preventive Services Program Report

I. Purpose

The purpose of this New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to advise local departments of social services (LDSSs) of the availability of \$1,000,000 in Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) funding, which has been set aside from the total COPS appropriation of \$12,124,750 available for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015-16. The \$1,000,000 COPS set-aside funding is designated as a separate funding source from the larger COPS program, and has different requirements for LDSS applications for funding, program reporting and financial claiming.

II. Background

COPS are a subset of the broader category of "preventive services." COPS are intended to help families where placement is not imminent, but where youth and/or families live in particular communities or have other conditions or circumstances that put them at an elevated risk of foster care. In 1988, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to select and fund COPS programs. About 20 programs were funded from that RFP, and a subsequent RFP was issued in New York City in 2000. The Child Welfare Services finance provisions were implemented in 2002, and provided for 65 percent state reimbursement for all preventive services. The funding mechanism allowed for the expansion of COPS. In order for a COPS proposal to be approved, LDSSs were required to submit a plan to OCFS that described the program, specified the target

population in need, and demonstrated that the population was at an elevated risk of foster care, but not at imminent risk of out-of-home placement.

In 2008, LDSSs were surveyed regarding their COPS programs and this information was published in January 2009 in the “Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS): Findings from OCFS’s COPS Survey.” As part of this survey, LDSSs were specifically asked to report on performance targets and achievement of these targets. LDSSs were also required to report to OCFS performance targets or outcomes of their COPS programs in 2009 and 2010.

In 07-OCFS-LCM-12, “outcome” is defined as “the anticipated change in, or maintenance of, conditions or behaviors of a targeted population as a result of the provision of services.” Performance targets provide evidence whether the program accomplished its outcomes. It is important that performance targets and outcomes established are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. For more information regarding how to develop outcomes, you may wish to visit the OCFS website at: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/eff_practices/.

COPS are aimed at supporting community services that work with youth and families before a serious problem develops, with the long-term goal of reducing the need for foster care. Current COPS programs provide a wide range of services to avert placement, including (but not limited to) home visiting programs, mental health services, respite, day treatment programs, after-school and summer programs, Persons in Need of Supervision/Juvenile Delinquent (PINS/JD) diversion, family engagement, mediation services, relative/kinship assistance, mentoring programs, alternatives for youth, parenting education, transitional support, and youth court.

III. Program Implications

For SFY 2015-16, \$12,124,750 in COPS funding was made available, of which \$1,000,000 was set aside to be used to provide funding to an eligible program(s) with evaluation results that demonstrate program effectiveness and a private monetary funding structure. Any program costs supported through a district's share of the \$11,124,750 COPS allocation cannot be used to access funding from the \$1,000,000 set-aside. This \$1,000,000 in funding is for COPS services provided from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015. Eligible COPS expenditures must be made by October 31, 2015, and claimed by March 31, 2016.

An LDSS must file separate claims to specifically identify costs for COPS services delivered through either the COPS set-aside appropriation, or the larger COPS Program. In order to receive reimbursement for a COPS program, an LDSS must demonstrate that the program had been approved by OCFS on or before October 1, 2008. In addition, the expenses claimed cannot exceed the costs for the programs that were in effect October 1, 2008. An LDSS may contract to restart a program that had ceased to provide COPS, but was both approved by OCFS and in operation as of October 1, 2008; however, this may only be done at the same level of funding received as of October 1, 2008. Furthermore, an LDSS cannot receive state reimbursement for any COPS services provided during a time when it did not have a contract in place, and the LDSS cannot contract retroactively for the services. For example, if an LDSS terminated a contract on December 31, 2014, and did not enter into a new contract until April 15, 2015, it could claim for the services provided from October 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 and for the services provided

from April 15, 2015 through September 30, 2015, but not for any services provided from January 1, 2015 through April 14, 2015. That is, no claims are permissible for the time period for which a contract did not exist.

LDSSs may receive dollar-for-dollar, i.e., 50 percent, state reimbursement based on the private funds they receive for the costs of eligible services provided through September 30, 2015, up to the amount of the \$1,000,000 COPS funding set-aside. Donated funds must equal at least 25 percent of the total program cost, with a required minimum of at least \$15,000 for the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. The dollar-for-dollar state reimbursement share cannot exceed the eligible cost of the project. If there are insufficient funds in the capped appropriation to reimburse LDSSs dollar-for-dollar for eligible COPS expenditures claimed, LDSSs will receive their proportionate share of the \$1,000,000 set-aside based on the total of the LDSS's actual and eligible COPS expenditures claimed. The LDSS's actual expenditure total is then compared to the statewide total of all LDSSs' eligible expenditures claimed. OCFS may reallocate any unspent funds from an LDSS to other LDSSs that have claims in excess of their allocation. Any donated funds must be received from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015. For claims to be approved for payment, LDSSs must demonstrate the receipt of donated funds by July 20, 2015.

The following narrative provides an example of LDSS reimbursement for a COPS set-aside program. If a district has \$15,000 donated funds and \$60,000 eligible COPS expenditure, the state share match is \$15,000 and the local share is \$45,000. This includes the \$15,000 donated funds and the \$30,000 regular local share. A second example: if a district has a \$200,000 eligible COPS expenditure, the donated funds requirement would be \$50,000; the state share match would be \$50,000 and the local share would be \$150,000, which includes the \$50,000 donated funds and the \$100,000 regular local share.

Application Instructions

LDSSs that are applying for this separate \$1,000,000 of COPS funding may do so by submitting Attachment A, *Application for Community Optional Preventive Services \$1,000,000 Set-Aside Funding for FFY 2014-15/SFY 2015-16*, and the following documentation demonstrating that they meet the eligibility criteria:

1. Program Evaluation

LDSSs or programs must demonstrate quality of services provided and program effectiveness.

 - Demonstrate how the program is a “best practice” or “evidence-based” program, and include:
 - Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Data;
 - Amount of funds used for program evaluation;
2. Demonstrate private monetary support

LDSSs must demonstrate private monetary support received from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Documentation of private monetary support must be submitted to OCFS no later than August 20, 2015. The following are examples of acceptable documentation of private monetary support:

 - Letter from agency/organization providing monetary support;

- Cancelled check from agency/organization providing monetary support; or
- Financial records showing receipt of private funds.

Donated funds must be equal to at least 25 percent of the total program cost, with a minimum of at least \$15,000.

3. Program Budget

A detailed program budget must be provided.

4. Program Design

Submit a program outline explaining the design, components, services to be provided, and population intended to be served that is being funded.

In order to be eligible, the COPS services must have been provided during the time period of October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015, and reimbursement must be claimed by March 31, 2016.

Each LDSS that will be applying for this separate \$1,000,000 COPS funding needs to complete Attachment A, *Application for Community Optional Preventive Services \$1,000,000 Set-Aside Funding*, with the supporting documentation listed above and submit it by August 20, 2015 to:

Renee Bradley
 NYS Office of Children and Family Services
 Strategic Planning and Policy Development
 52 Washington Street, Room 322 N
 Rensselaer, NY 12144

Or email a copy to Renee.Bradley@ocfs.ny.gov

After August 20, 2015, OCFS will review the timely applications for this funding with supporting documentation. OCFS will make a determination for each LDSS that has applied for this funding. LDSSs will be notified if their COPS programs have met the eligibility criteria and the amount of their allocation.

All LDSSs that have submitted by August 20, 2015 an Attachment A, *Application for Community Optional Preventive Services \$1,000,000 Set-Aside Funding*, with complete documentation, and that meet the criteria for this separate COPS funding of \$1,000,000, will receive a proportionate share of the funds.

COPS Program Report Form

COPS programs that are funded out of this separate \$1,000,000 allocation will need to provide OCFS with a report of their progress toward meeting stated program outcomes. For each COPS program that receives this funding, LDSSs will need to complete an Attachment B, *Community Optional Preventive Services Set-Aside Program Report*, and submit the reports to OCFS by October 15, 2015. This template asks LDSSs to provide demographic information and to report on current performance targets or outcomes which have been required for all preventive service programs (see 07-OCFS-LCM-12).

For the purpose of this requirement, “performance” means quantifiable and verifiable interim changes in, or maintenance of, the conditions or behaviors of the target population resulting from the provision of services that indicate progress towards an outcome. “Outcome” means the anticipated change in, or maintenance of, conditions or behaviors of a targeted population as a result of the provision of services.

Please complete an Attachment B, *Community Optional Preventive Services Set-Aside Program Report*, for each COPS program that receives an allocation from the \$1,000,000 separate funding, and submit the form by October 15, 2015, to:

Renee Bradley
NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Strategic Planning and Policy Development
52 Washington Street, Room 322 N
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Or email a copy to Renee.Bradley@ocfs.ny.gov

IV. Claiming Instructions

An LDSS will use the following set of instructions to claim reimbursement for eligible COPS set-aside services from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015. Expenditures must be made by October 31, 2015, and claims must be submitted no later than March 31, 2016.

If OCFS determines there are insufficient COPS set-aside funds available to reimburse LDSSs for eligible COPS expenditures claimed, OCFS may reallocate LDSS unspent funding to other LDSSs that have claims in excess of their allocation.

The expenditures for the COPS 2014-2015 set-aside should be claimed through the RF17 claim package for special project claiming. These costs should be identified as F17 functional costs and reported on the Schedule D, *DSS Administrative Expenses Allocation and Distribution by Function and Program (LDSS-2347)*, in the F17 column in the RF2A claim package. The individual project costs should also be reported under the project label COPS 2014 2015 Set-Aside on the LDSS-4975A, *RF17 Worksheet, Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs*.

Program costs should be reported as object of expense 37 - Special Project Program Expense on the LDSS-923B Summary-Program (page 2), *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs*. Total project costs and shares should be reported on the LDSS-4975, *Monthly Statement of Special Project Claims Federal and State Aid (RF17)*.

Please note that by signing the RF17 Claim Package certification statement, the administrative official and fiscal officer also attest that their district has met the required level of donated funds and that these amounts are included in the total costs reported on the RF17 Claim Package.

Instructions for reporting expenditures on the Schedules D and RF17 Claim Package are found in Chapters 7 & 18 of the Fiscal Reference Manual (FRM) Volume 3. The FRMs are available online at: <http://otda.state.nyenet/bfdm/finance/>.

OCFS may reallocate any unspent funds from an LDSS to other LDSSs that have claims in excess of their allocations.

V. Contact Information

Any questions concerning this release should be directed to the appropriate OCFS Regional Office, Division of Child Welfare and Community Services:

Buffalo Regional Office - Dana Whitcomb (716) 847-3145
Dana.Whitcomb@ocfs.ny.gov

Rochester Regional Office - Karen Buck (585) 238-8201
Karen.Buck@ocfs.ny.gov

Syracuse Regional Office - Sara Simon (315) 423-1200
Sara.Simon@ocfs.ny.gov

Albany Regional Office - Kerri Barber (518) 486-7078
Kerri.Barber@ocfs.ny.gov

Spring Valley Regional Office - Yolanda Désarmé (845) 708-2499
Yolanda.Desarme@ocfs.ny.gov

New York City Regional Office - Raymond Toomer (212) 383-1788
Raymond.Toomer@ocfs.ny.gov

Native American Services - Heather LaForme (716) 847-3123
Heather.LaForme@ocfs.ny.gov

Questions pertaining to claiming only should be directed to the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Financial Services:

Regions I - V: David Shulman (518) 474-7549
David.Shulman@otda.ny.gov

Region VI: Michael Simon (212) 961-8250
Michael.Simon@otda.ny.gov

Thomas R. Brooks

Issued By:

Name: Thomas R. Brooks

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Strategic Planning and Policy Development

Laura M. Velez

Name: Laura M. Velez

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Child Welfare and Community Services

Attachment A

Application for Community Optional Preventive Services

\$1,000,000 Set-Aside Funding

COPS Program Information

COPS
Program
Name: _____

Name of
Agency
Providing
COPS
Services: _____

District: _____

Target Group
or Community
Served: _____

Primary
Services: _____

Eligibility Documentation

LDSSs that are applying for this separate \$1,000,000 of COPS additional funding may do so by submitting this application with documentation that they meet the eligibility criteria:

1. Evaluation results showing program effectiveness

LDSSs or programs must demonstrate quality of services provided and program effectiveness.

- Demonstrate how program is a “best practice” or “evidence-based program;”
- Must include Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Data;
- Must document amount of funds used for program evaluation.

2. Demonstrate private monetary support

LDSSs must demonstrate private monetary support received from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Donated funds must equal at least 25 percent of the total program cost, but not less than \$15,000.

The following are examples of acceptable documentation of private monetary support:

- Letter of agency/organization providing monetary support;
 - Cancelled check from agency/organization providing monetary support;
- or

- Financial records showing receipt of private funds.

Total Cost of Program: _____

Total Private Donations: _____ (equal to 25 percent of program cost or \$15K minimum)

Total Funding Requested: _____

3. Program Budget

A detailed program budget must be provided.

In order to be eligible, the COPS services must have been provided during the time period of October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015. Expenditures must be made by October 31, 2015, and claims must be submitted no later than March 31, 2016.

4. Program Design

Submit a program outline explaining the design, components, services to be provided, and population served that is being funded.

Please complete and submit this application with your supporting documentation by **August 20, 2015** to:

Renee Bradley
NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Strategic Planning and Policy Development
52 Washington Street, Room 322 N
Rensselaer, NY 12144
Or email a copy to Renee.Bradley@ocfs.ny.gov

Attachment B

Community Optional Preventive Services (Set-Aside) Program Report

COPS Program Information

COPS Program Name: _____

Name of Agency Providing COPS Services: _____

District: _____

Target Group or Community Served: _____

Primary Services: _____

Date Completed: _____

Number Served During Review Period: _____

Review Period: 10/1/2014 to 9/30/2015

Instructions - Performance Targets or Outcomes

COPS funding is aimed at supporting community services that work with youth and families before a serious problem develops with the long-term goal of reducing the risk of foster care and offering a less costly alternative to placement.

In this section, describe the program’s performance targets or outcome areas, currently required of the LDSS in accordance with 07-OCFS-LCM-12, and give evidence of the COPS program’s achievement(s) for the review period, in actual data format when possible.

Outcomes are the desired benefits or anticipated changes for the target population after their involvement with the program. **Performance targets** are the quantifiable and verifiable improvements in the condition or behavior of the target population resulting from the provision of services that indicate progress related to an outcome that the program intends to achieve by the end of the contract period.

This template gives space to describe three top performance targets or outcomes, but it is not necessary to complete all three sections. If more space is needed, please use the same format on a separate sheet.

1st Outcome, Performance Target, and Strategy

Description of Outcome:

Evidence of Achievement in Performance Target:

Strategy or Strategies Used:

2nd Outcome, Performance Target, and Strategy

Description of Outcome:

Evidence of Achievement in Performance Target:

Strategy or Strategies Used:

3rd Outcome, Performance Target, and Strategy

Description of Outcome:

Evidence of Achievement in Performance Target:

Strategy or Strategies Used:

Please complete and submit this form by **October 15, 2015** to:

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Strategic Planning and Policy Development
52 Washington Street, Room 322 N
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Or email a copy to Renee.Bradley@ocfs.ny.gov