



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

LEADING GRANT

WATER SAFETY

RFP Designation Number: PRO 2026 – 07

Release Date: 11/10/2025

Amount Per Proposal: \$50,000

Total Grant Allocation: \$150,000

Contract Term if Awarded: 04/06/2026 – 09/30/2026

Contract Period: 04/06/2026 – 09/30/2030

LEADING GRANT

On September 25, 2025, the Children's Board of Hillsborough County (CBHC) approved the release of this competitive Leading Grant Request for Proposals (RFP), a contract awarded to an organization that primarily serves a specific region with a collaborative approach to service delivery that supports at least one strategic focus area; proposes to meet an emerging need; or serves a priority population. Leading Grants are expected to meet at least three measurable outcomes annually.

CBHC is seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations to promote water safety and education in Hillsborough County and prevent needless deaths among children. This service priority was identified during strategic planning and community engagement activities.

Rebecca Bacon, Executive Director
Robin Wright DeLaVergne, Board Chair

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ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S BOARD

CBHC FOCUS AREAS



In 1988, Hillsborough County residents agreed that improving supports and services to our county's children and families was a major priority for our community's future. Thus, the CBHC was established in 1989 as a Special Taxing District allowing a levy not to exceed 50 cents per \$1,000 of the assessed property tax.

The CBHC is committed to funding opportunities through strategic grant development principles, leveraging strategies and research with community perspectives in mind to

promote wellness, learning, professional development, and enhance service delivery systems. CBHC releases funding opportunities each year based on revenue projections, contract terms ending, and Board approval.

Our **VISION** is for Hillsborough County to be recognized as one of the top places in the nation to raise children.

We work toward this vision by *investing in partnerships and quality programs to support the success of all children and families in Hillsborough County* – that's our **MISSION**.

As we partner with community providers, we live by our **CORE VALUES** of Integrity, Excellence, Teamwork and Respect.

FUNDING PLATFORMS: Primary funding platforms support the four strategic focus areas:

- Investment Grants (more than \$1,000,000);
- Uniting Grants (between \$300,000 and \$999,999);
- Leading Grants (up to \$299,999); and
- Technical Assistance Grants (under \$10,000).

2024 COMMUNITY IMPACT

CBHC has invested more than \$49 million in one hundred and fifty-two programs to address the needs of our community. Contracted programs served 163,068 children and their families with an additional 4,008 professionals who received support services. CBHC works in partnership with funded programs to evaluate the impact of services provided to children and families. We assess the overall effectiveness of the investments within a Results-Based Accountability framework by measuring:

- *How much did we do;*
- *How well did we do it; and*
- *Is anyone better off?*

Additional information may be accessed on the website at www.childrensboard.org.

ABOUT HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Our funded programs support children and families in **Hillsborough County, Florida**.

According to the most current American Community Survey, the total population in Hillsborough County, Florida is 1,581,426, of which almost 5.6% are children under five years of age, and 21.5% are children under eighteen. In addition, 45.8% of the population is white alone (not Hispanic or Latino), 30.4% is Hispanic, and 18.6% is Black or African American alone.

SECTION ONE – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To fund multiple direct service grants that support prevention efforts to engage children, youth and their families across the county in water safety. Services must reflect best practices for service delivery, and the RFP is open in the following Children’s Board focus areas:

Children are Healthy and Safe and Family Support.

Services: The selected grantee(s) will help our community prevent drowning by providing services that contribute to a collective effort to meet the following expectations:

- Parent/Caregiver and child water education on land;
- Swimming lessons for children ages 5 to 18 (unless Medicaid eligible) with adaptations to support children with varying abilities;
- Swimming lessons and parent /caregiver education for children ages 1 to 4, with adaptations to support children with varying abilities;
- Education and distribution of water safety resources, equipment and products;
- Lifeguard and safety training/certification; and/or
- Public safety campaign messages.

Priority Populations:

- Children ages one to eighteen years of age and their parents/caregivers

Geographic Focus to address needs:

- Hillsborough County

Upon award, Grantees will be expected to:

- Follow Children’s Board special branding conditions involving media, press releases, or promotions.
- Meet with all awarded grantees and community stakeholders to leverage water safety opportunities and share resources.
- Meet the needs of family schedules residing throughout Hillsborough County.

1.1 NOT SEEKING TO FUND

- Sub-contracted services;
- Virtual Services required for service delivery.

1.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Refer to Appendix #1: Submissions are only accepted through SurveyMonkey Apply.
- Refer to Appendix #2: Governing Board Policies.
- Refer to Appendix #3: General Terms and Conditions in Appendix.
- CBHC funding or resources shall not be used to supplant funding for activities which other local, state, or federal governmental agencies are obligated by statute, administrative rule, or local ordinance to support.
- CBHC accepts no responsibility for any expense incurred by the Proposer in the preparation and presentation of such Proposal.
- Services and resources funded by the CBHC are available to all families and children who are eligible for services and resources, as determined by the funded agency's program eligibility and admission criteria.
- Any Proposer (currently or formerly funded by CBHC) deemed out of compliance with contractual obligations may be ineligible.
- There is the expectation that a Grantee will procure, pay for, and maintain Liability Insurances during the contract term per General Terms and Conditions
- There is an expectation that all Proposers are informed and comply with:
 - Americans with Disabilities Act. Refer to <https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-overview>
 - Federal, state, and local requirements for Level Two background screening. Refer to www.myflfamilies.com.

1.3 RESTRICTED COMMUNICATIONS

Communication with CBHC personnel, Community Review Team members, and/or CBHC Governing Board members regarding this Request for Proposals, from date of release through Board review or approval may result in disqualification of the proposal.

1.4 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION

If awarded, Grantees will be required to collect and submit demographic data located in Appendix (#4) for all participants and/or professionals served. Outcome data may also be required to be collected and entered based on the tools selected to measure impact. Grantee may need to use the CBHC Analytical Tracking System to enter information.

1.5 PROCESS TIMELINE – DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

DEADLINE / DUE DATE	ACTIVITY
11/18/2025 1:00pm	Information Session <i>In-Person</i> Children’s Board 1002 East Palm Ave. Tampa, FL 33605
12/02/2025 by 11:59pm	Written Proposer Questions Only send to: CBHCFundingRelease@ChildrensBoard.org Specify RFP designation number in subject line.
12/08/2025	Final Answers to Questions posted on CBHC website
12/19/2025 by 11:59pm	Proposal Submission
Week of 01/12/2026	Community Review Team Session(s)
Week of 01/19/2026	Questions for Recommended Proposer(s) - Optional
02/26/2026	Board Review for Approval of Funding Recommendation(s)
04/06/2026	If awarded: Contract Start Date

SPECIAL NOTES:

- The information session may be recorded and available on the CBHC website under Funding/Funding Opportunities.
- All information session attendees must sign in with the organization name, attendee’s name, and contact email.
- Pre-registration or attendance at the information session is not required.

1.6 APPENDIX DOCUMENTS ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY

1. Survey Monkey Apply Guide
2. Relative Governing Board Policies/Standard Conditions for Procurement
3. General Terms and Conditions
4. Required Demographic Data
5. Matrix/Workplan Instructions
6. New Program Funding Budget Instructions
7. Community Review Team Scoring Criteria/Checklist

END OF SECTION ONE

SECTION TWO – PROPOSAL CONTENT AND SUBMISSION

2. COVER SHEET AND SIGNATURE PAGE – ATTACHMENT (#1) (5 POINTS)

Required Attachment #1 is the Cover Sheet and Signature Page which has two components:

1. Answers to Cover Sheet questions about the Applicant Organization and Program are completed within SurveyMonkey Apply.
2. Download Attachment #1 to print the Signature Page from www.childrensboard.org/budgeting/revenues-and-expenditures/funding-opportunities/.
 - **Two distinct individuals** (Authorized Official and Board Chair) must date and sign the Signature Page.
 - Scan and upload the document to SurveyMonkey Apply.

SPECIAL NOTE:

- Digital signatures are acceptable.

2.1 PROPOSAL NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

The Narrative must include the following information and cannot exceed **3,000 words**.

2.1.1 ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW (10 POINTS)

- a) Organization's Mission Statement;
- b) Organization experience and expertise in water safety education with the target population proposed;
- c) Briefly describe qualifications and background of the management and finance staff and include if they are paid employees, volunteers, or contracted;
- d) Provide an example of how the organization ensures equal opportunity to employ staff, recruit volunteers, and recruit Board members based on the needs of the organization and demographic composition of Hillsborough County;
- e) Disclose any history of contract cancellation, filing of bankruptcy, lawsuits against the organization or its predecessor organization(s); and
- f) Describe organization's internal quality assurance procedures for managing grant funding in the following areas:
 - Contract compliance;
 - Meeting reporting deadlines; and
 - Fiscal accountability.

2.1.2 FINANCIAL CAPABILITY (10 POINTS)

- a) Indicate which accounting system is used by the organization;
- b) Indicate if written financial policies and procedures have been established; and
- c) Provide an example of how one is used in daily operations for managing grants.

2.1.3 STATEMENT OF NEED AND POPULATION TO BE SERVED (10 POINTS)

- a) Summarize the local need with a clear description of the population you propose to serve, including age focus; and
- b) Specify proposed program eligibility for participants to be enrolled.

2.1.4 PROPOSED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND DESIGN (20 POINTS)

- a) **From Statement of Purpose in Section 1:**
What are the main services to be proposed for which funding is needed?
- b) Specify if program is year-round or during certain months of the year;
- c) Indicate the participant's average length of time in program;
- d) Explain how the proposed program model is designed from the following:
***Evidence-Based** (name source indicating the model successfully passed the standards of rigorous scientific research and evaluation which integrate the best available practices with practitioner expertise),*
***Promising Practice** (name source with some degree of research evidence on the model for achieving the intended outcomes when implemented with fidelity but require additional research to conclude their effectiveness),*
***Evidence-Informed** (name source indicating that model practices build upon the best available information but recognize implementations within specific contexts, and/or*
***Curriculum-Based** (indicate who created or plans to develop the content and measurement tool based on a specific program model, coursework, or instruction).*
- e) How will model fidelity be sustained;
- f) Describe staff and/or volunteer training requirements for the model;
- g) Describe strategies to enroll and retain participants;
- h) Describe how you ensure staff and practices are respectful and responsive to the needs of the people you serve including multilingual instruction/communication; and
- i) Describe software or tools utilized to collect, track, and report both demographic information and measurable performance outcomes.

2.1.5 PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION (6 POINTS)

- a) Detail evidence from families that address best practices for service delivery model
- b) What new partnerships or resources will be developed for the success of the proposal?
- c) Specify existing informal partnerships, in-kind or Other Vendor Services necessary to deliver quality services and describe their role in the proposed program.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Other Vendor Services are defined in Appendix (#6).
- Do not include active web links in any narrative responses.

END OF PROPOSER NARRATIVE

2.2 ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS

2.2.1 MATRIX/WORK PLAN – ATTACHMENT (#2) - 10 POINTS

Required Attachment #2 is the Matrix/Work Plan which outlines how the Proposer will meet outcomes, refer to Appendix (#5) Matrix/Work Plan Instructions. **Complete only for Year One** and keep to one page for each outcome selected.

Objective Sentence: Name target population and the total number of participants that will be enrolled during the contract term with the main service description and location of service for each outcome.

Proposed Program Activities: Brief and specific titles of service with the duration and frequency for each.

Outcomes: Select outcomes that best align with the program model, priority population, and for which you can collect the best data. The Matrix/Work Plan is required to have **three** outcomes.

Select TWO outcomes as written below. The last (third) outcome can also come from the list or be suggested by the Proposer for CBHC consideration.

- At least 85% of a minimum of # individuals (parents/caregivers, children, youth) have increased knowledge of appropriate health and safety practices (such as: dry land water safety instruction, boating safety, swim instruction, beach safety) .
- At least 80% of a minimum of # individuals (parents/caregivers, children, youth) demonstrate appropriate health and safety practices (such as: CPR/lifeguard certification, water rescue skills, utilization of drowning prevention devices, proper use of lifejackets).

- At least 85% of a minimum of # children/youth at reduced risk of unintentional injury (such as: achieve basic swimming and water safety skills)
- At least 85% of a minimum of # parents/caregivers have increased knowledge of community resources.

Data Source: Name a proposed measurement tool for each outcome if available and/or where the data collected will be stored.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Matrix/Work Plan activity column is not for staff administrative tasks or duties.
- The Matrix/Work Plan will be finalized in partnership with the CBHC during contract development if an award is granted.

2.2.2 BUDGET – ATTACHMENT (#3) (20 POINTS)

Required Attachment #3 is the Budget in which Proposers should include necessary funds to operate the program effectively according to the service delivery model to meet outcomes.

Refer to the New Program Funding Budget Instructions, Appendix (#6) to develop the budget summary, salary detail, and budget narrative for First Year and Second Year Operating Budget.

First Year Operating Budget is the amount deemed necessary for startup and services or to fully operate the program between **April 6, 2026 and September 30, 2026**.

- First Year Operating Budget amount may not exceed **\$50,000**.

Second Year Operating Budget is the amount deemed necessary to fully operate the program between **October 1, 2026 and September 30, 2027**.

- Second Year Operating Budget amount may not exceed **\$100,000**.

Complete and submit the required budget for both First- and Second-Year funding using the Excel file posted with the release which includes **four** tabs:

- Tab (1) – New Program Funding Budget Summary,
- Tab (2) – Salary Detail,
- Tab (3) – First Year Budget Narrative, and
- Tab (4) – Second Year Budget Narrative.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- CBHC disperses funds on a cost reimbursement basis, which means that expenses must be paid prior to requesting reimbursement.
- Do not change or alter the Excel form.
- First Year budget may include one-time expenses that may not be necessary in Second Year.
- Proposers encouraged to pay fair market wage for all employees in the Salary Detail.
- Unallowable expenses included in the budget are subject to removal and the overall budget may be reduced if Proposer is recommended for funding.
- If the program charges fees for services, they must be included in the “other funding sources” line of the budget under the revenue section.

2.2.3 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – ATTACHMENT (#4) (6 POINTS)

- Complete template provided to upload a **one-page** Implementation Plan based on the **First Year Activities** which includes anticipated **start date** for services.

2.2.4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS – ATTACHMENT (#5) (3 POINTS)

Complete and upload template provided.

SPECIAL NOTE: This list will not be shared or used to solicit donations.

2.2.5 LETTERS OF SUPPORT – ATTACHMENT (#6) (NOT SCORED)

Required ONLY if using space in locations not owned or rented by Proposer.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Up to three current letters may be uploaded to include what will be provided for the proposed program.
- Letters should be on the agency’s letterhead and signed by an agency representative.

2.2.6 AUDIT, REVIEW, OR UNAUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - ATTACHMENT #7 (NOT SCORED)

Upload the agency’s most recent Audit, Review or Unaudited Annual Financial Statements defined as:

- **Audit** is required if the agency’s total expenses are greater than or equal to \$300,000.
- **Review** is allowed if the agency’s total expenses are less than \$300,000.

- **Unaudited Annual Financial Statements** allowed if the agency's total expenses are less than \$300,000, there is no current Audit or Review and the agency is not currently funded by CBHC. Unaudited Annual Financial Statements are:
 - Income Statement
 - Statement of Cash Flow
 - Statement of Changes in Equity

Audit or Review submission based on Agency Fiscal Year please refer to the table below:

Agency's Fiscal Year:	Audit / Review to be uploaded:
4/1/2024 - 3/31/2025	Year End for 2025
7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025	Year End for 2024
10/1/2024 - 9/30/2025	Year End for 2024
1/1/2025 – 12/31/2025	Year End for 2024

2.3 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS – SURVEY MONKEY APPLY

Required submissions via SurveyMonkey Apply (SMA), available at

<https://cbhcgrants.smapply.org/> .

- Cover Sheet** (Form in SMA)
- Signature Page** (Attachment #1 template provided, upload PDF file to SMA)
- Narrative** (Form in SMA)
- Matrix** (Attachment #2 template provided, upload PDF or Word file to SMA)
- Budget** (Attachment #3 template provided, upload Excel file to SMA)
- Implementation Plan** (Attachment #4 template provided, upload PDF or Word file to SMA)
- Board of Directors** (Attachment #5 template provided, upload PDF or Word file to SMA)
- Letters of Support** (Attachment #6) (No template provided; upload PDF file to SMA)
- Audit, Review, Financial Statements** (Attachment #7) (No Template, upload PDF file to SMA)

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Proposers must hit **"Submit"** in SurveyMonkey Apply for proposal to be considered.
- **Appendix (#1)** is a guide on how to use the online grant application system, contact for SurveyMonkey Apply support staff, and links to frequently asked questions.
- Templates are found on the CBHC website:
www.childrensboard.org/budgeting/revenues-and-expenditures/funding-opportunities/
- Proposals **will not** be accepted by e-mail, mail, courier, or hand delivery.

Incomplete submissions may be disqualified.