

Mission:

To protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

Questions and Answers

RFA25-001

Dr. and Mrs. Alfonse and Kathleen Cinotti Health Care Screening and Services Grant Program

DATE: August 14, 2025

TO: Applicants

FROM: Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management,
Florida Department of Health

SUBJECT: Questions and Answers: RFA25-001

Question #1.

How can we access your handouts? Will the webinar recording be posted?

Department Response:

Handouts and the webinar recording will be available on the website.

www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram.

Question #2.

Is the grant only for Autism, or are other conditions like cancer and diabetes included?

Department Response:

RFA25-001 is only for autism spectrum disorder.

Question #3.

Would services like Early Intervention be considered?

Department Response:

The grant is designed for screening and related services. Follow-up services must be reasonable and necessary to the screening program effort.

Question #4.

Would “related services” possibly include ASD evaluation if a needs assessment confirms that ASD evaluators are scarce and wait times negatively impact early intervention?



Department Response:

Diagnostic screenings are eligible if the costs are reasonable and necessary as determined by the Department.

Question #5.

Do you have to be a neurologist to apply?

Department Response:

The applying organization must be a nonprofit with a plan for clinical oversight. See question #6 below.

Question #6.

What is the qualification of the healthcare professional or clinician to be eligible to do the screening?

Department Response:

Licensed professionals (e.g., developmental pediatricians, psychologists, neurologists) must oversee screening protocols. Professionals must have current and valid licenses as required by state and federal law, and proof of licensure must be available for programmatic review during grant activities. For example, all screening personnel must have completed the appropriate practical exams for Florida licensure, whether for a specific health discipline or under a general health practitioner license that permits them to conduct such screenings (See RFA25-001 section 2.6 Programmatic Specifications - page 10)

Question #7.

If a new organization wants to apply, is that possible? What organizations are eligible for this funding?

Department Response:

Yes. New nonprofit entities can apply to implement new screening or services programs. A grant awarded under the Cinotti program may be awarded to any nonprofit entity to implement new health care screening or services programs that the entity has not previously implemented or to implement an expansion of existing screening services targeting a new population. See section 1.6 of RFA25-001 for more information on eligibility.

Question #8.

Should the screening guidelines and tools be validated for measuring outcomes?

Department Response:

Yes. The tools must be evidence based and aligned with clinical guidelines. Refer to Appendix A: Health Screenings Table for detailed guidance. This document references

evidence-based screening tests. Note that no preference for a specific test is indicated. All screening tools used should be evidence based, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with current clinical guidelines. Proposals should include a process for ensuring fidelity to standard clinical protocols.

Question #9.

What's the potential for renewal after the 9 months?

Department Response:

Renewal is possible, but no future funding dates have been announced.

Question #10.

What provider types can conduct Autism screenings?

Department Response:

The provider must be a nonprofit with screening experience. See Question #8 above. Screenings must involve licensed professionals and a clear clinical oversight process. See response to question #7.

Question #11.

Can we subcontract screenings?

Department Response:

Any current nonprofit may apply or participate as a subcontractor. The purpose is to expand access to free screenings for the general public. Subcontracting is allowable. The Department may approve or deny any subcontracts. Subcontract agreements will be restricted to no more than 25% of the total final award and subcontractors must be registered with the Division of Corporations under the Florida Department of State.

Question #12.

Can this grant be used in schools? Can the grant include wellness services?

Once starting the application, is there a "save and return" option?

Department Response:

Yes, schools can participate. While the grant is open to 501(c)(3) nonprofits, other types of tax-exempt and nonprofit organizations may apply, including educational institutions that may not carry a 501(c)(3) designation.

This grant is designed to provide no-cost screenings and related services. Services associated with a screening test typically involve the administration, interpretation, and follow-up related to the test/screening. Wellness services may be included if they are reasonably related to the screening effort.

The online application can be saved, and you can return to your application at a later time. The deadline for submission of the application is August 28, 2025.

Question #13.

Can we partner with an existing organization offering Autism screenings?

Is ADOS applicable? What section of the RFA confirms eligibility for a new nonprofit?

Department Response:

Partnerships and collaborations are encouraged. Subcontracting up to 25% of the grant amount is allowed. See response to question #11.

Awardees may select tools as long as they are validated and evidence based. Refer to Appendix A: Health Screenings Table for detailed guidance. See response to question #8.

See the eligibility section of the RFA, specifically Section 1.6 (pages 5–6). See response to question #7.

Question #14.

We're a nonprofit offering autism screening for the first time. Are we eligible?

Department Response:

Yes. Review the eligibility statement closely. See the eligibility section of RFA25-001, specifically Section 1.6 (pages 5–6). See response to question #7.

Question #15.

Is the screening tool selected at the provider's discretion? Are there any costs not eligible for funding? Are we required to submit screening data, or is it protected under HIPAA?

Department Response:

Awardees may select tools as long as they are validated and evidence based. Refer to Appendix A: Health Screenings Table for detailed guidance. See response to question #8.

All costs must be reasonable, necessary, and compliant with the grant. See section 2.3 in RFA25-001 describing the "Use of Grant Funds" for a list of allowable and unallowable expenditures. Allowable and unallowable expenditures are defined by applicable state law and are specified in the "Reference Guide for State Expenditures" found at:

<https://www.myfloridacfo.com/docs-sf/accounting-and-auditing-libraries/state-agencies/reference-guide-for-state-expenditures.pdf>. During the budget review, the Department's contract manager will determine whether proposed expenditures are permissible.

The Department does not require any individually identifiable protected health information (PHI), and no HIPAA authorization or clearance is needed. You may submit only aggregate, anonymized, or de-identified data. The Department will need the total

number of participants screened; any records demonstrating this should be retained by your team—just as you would maintain documentation for any standard program—for potential future desk audits.

Question #16.

Will there be financial consequences under this contract?

Department Response: Payment will be made upon the receipt, review, and approval of the deliverables outlined in the contract, along with submission of a properly completed invoice. If it is determined that an awardee has not met certain deliverables, financial penalties will be applied. These penalties will be described in the contract and will specifically reduce the payment for failure to provide deliverables in the time and manner specified in the contract.

Question #17.

Can you give examples of related services?

Department Response:

The Cinotti grant program is designed for screening and related services. Each organization may propose different necessary related services based on the unique needs of the population. Following a positive screening for autism, organizations may suggest referrals for additional diagnostic testing, therapy, educational support, and family support services. All related services should remain directly related to the primary screening effort.

Question #18.

How is success measured—academic publications, community impact, or both?

Department Response:

The purpose of the program is to expand access to no-cost health care screenings or services for the general public. The provider defines success in their workplan. Research is not allowed. Academic publications are not required.

Question #19.

What (if any) are the expectations for quantity of screenings conducting over the 9-month period, and is there any prioritization for specific age groups?

Department Response:

Your proposal should include a reasonable estimate of the number of screenings to be conducted over the 9-month grant period. To support this estimate, draw upon your organization's prior screening outreach efforts of similar scale, your current grant-funded budget and resources, and benchmarks from comparable programs in the field. Regarding age group prioritization, refer to Appendix A: Health Screenings Table for

detailed guidance on target age groups.

Question #20.

I'm reaching out to request clarification regarding the RFA25-001 Cinotti Health Screening and Services Grant Program for Autism. Specifically, we would like to confirm whether it is permissible under the grant guidelines for our organization to refer children who screen positive for ASD to our own internal diagnostic and/or intervention services, provided we meet all licensure and credentialing requirements.

We are committed to ensuring ethical, clinically appropriate care and would also provide families with information about external provider options to support access and choice. We want to ensure our approach aligns with the expectations of the grant program.

Thank you in advance for your guidance, and please let us know if additional documentation or explanation is needed.

Department Response:

Reference number 8 under section 4.7.4 in the RFA25-001.

Question #21.

Please clarify the following requirements around the use of licensed staff:

Under 2.6 Programmatic Specifications, item 3

Professionals must have current and valid licenses as required by state and federal law, and proof of licensure must be available for programmatic review during grant activities. For example, all screening personnel must have completed the appropriate practical exams for Florida licensure, whether for a specific health discipline or under a general health practitioner license that permits them to conduct such screenings.

Under 4.7.2 Staffing and Clinical Oversight

Explain how the program maintains appropriate clinical or medical oversight to ensure the validity, reliability, and effectiveness of autism screenings and related referrals. Due to the complexity of autism, it is essential that screening tools be administered by qualified personnel who possess the training and expertise necessary to accurately identify signs of autism and make appropriate referrals. Applicants must address the following:

1. Clinical or Medical Supervision - Describe how licensed medical professionals (e.g., developmental pediatricians, psychologists, neurologists, or other qualified clinicians) are involved in overseeing screening protocols, tool selection, and follow-up processes. Programs must demonstrate a clear clinical chain of responsibility.
2. Training Requirements for Screening Personnel - Provide a description of the qualifications and training required for all individuals administering autism screenings. At a minimum, staff must receive documented training in:
 - a. The proper administration and scoring of validated autism screening tools (e.g., M-CHAT-R/F, STAT, or others listed in Appendix A)
 - b. Recognizing early behavioral and developmental indicators of ASD
 - c. Communicating sensitively with families during and after screenings, including how to explain results and next steps
 - d. Making appropriate referrals
3. Continuing Education and Quality Assurance - Indicate how staff will maintain competencies over time. This may include continuing education, observation or supervision by licensed clinicians, and regular review of screening outcomes to ensure consistency and accuracy.

4. Referral and Diagnostic Follow-up - Clinical oversight must extend beyond initial screening to include coordination and quality control for referral processes, particularly in ensuring that families are connected to licensed diagnostic professionals for further evaluation when indicated. Programs must show that clinical oversight is not only present, but integral to all phases of the screening and referral workflow.

Is it required that the person administering screening tools have a license to practice as a psychologist, M.D., etc., OR may the person administering screening tools be unlicensed (assuming the tool(s) being used do not require a license to administer) and working under the supervision of a licensed practitioner?

Department Response:

In addition to section 2.6 and section 4.7.2, reference section 4.10.1 in RFA25-001. Screenings must be overseen by licensed professionals to ensure accuracy and reliability. Programs will be required to provide a list of relevant program personnel who will have a role in the proposed new screening work. This list should include names, job titles, relevant education, certifications, and training, a description of current job functions, and potential role and responsibilities in the proposed project

Question #22.

- 1) Will you post a recorded copy of the Pre-Application Webinar? If so, please advise the location.
- 2) May we include the cost for the **rental of office space** for a new site?
- 3) Is there a minimum number of screenings that will need to be completed in the 9-month implementation period?

Department Response:

The Pre-Application Webinar and PowerPoint from August 5, 2025, is posted on Cinotti Grant Program website: www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram

Section 2.3 in the RFA25-001 covers the use of grant funds. Administrative or indirect costs of up to 15% of total grant funds are allowed under this grant award.

Administrative costs are expenses that support the overall operation of an organization but are not directly attributable to a specific project. These can include, but are not limited to facility occupancy costs, utilities, administrative salaries, general office supplies, and insurance.

Applicants may submit a minimum number of screenings as part of their application and workplan. Awardees will negotiate with the Department in determining the final number of expected screenings prior to contract execution.

Question #23.

Could you provide clarification as to if a non-profit middle/high school may apply to conduct autism screenings for students attending the institution? Average enrollment is 80 students per year.

Your assistance is appreciated.

Department Response:

Reference section 1.6 in the RFA25-001 and the response to question #12.

Question #24.

1. The RFA states, "screenings in communities and geographic areas where a concentrated need has been identified" should be prioritized. Please provide information about the specific communities and geographic areas where a concentrated need has been identified.
2. Are there any Cinotti Grant Program training events and workshops sponsored by the Department planned during the grant period? If so, will they be conducted in person and at what location, or will they be conducted virtually? If none are planned, please share previous history for required training events and workshops.

Department Response:

Reference section 4.7.3 for more information about establishing a statement of need within the application.

There are no current training event or workshops scheduled. Previously the program has hosted a webinar for awardees to provide technical assistance regarding invoices, monitoring and the grant online portal.

Question #25.

Might the Technical Assistance Call this morning for the Dr. & Mrs. Alfonse Cinotti Grant for Autism Screening have been recorded?

Department Response:

The Pre-Application Webinar and PowerPoint from August 5, 2025 is posted on Cinotti Grant Program website: www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram

Question #26.

Hello, I received this email as the Director of MECE Preschool, however I do not think I will be available for the Webinar tomorrow. Is there information you can send me on how to apply?

Department Response:

All information regarding RFA25-001 is provided on the program website. This includes the application link. www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram.

Question #27.

I have a few questions regarding the Dr. and Mrs. Alfonse and Kathleen Cinotti Health Care Screening and Services Grant Program: Autism Screening, found [here](#).

1. Are the "required attachments for response" files, found on the above-linked page (consisting of the application cover page, workplan template, budget summary, and budget narrative) up to date and applicable to the current funding cycle of this program?
2. Just to confirm, must applications be submitted online at [this link](#)?
3. Just to confirm, should applicants who wish to attend the webinar scheduled for 10:00 a.m. ET on August 5, 2025 register for the webinar [here](#)? I ask because the link is labeled for August 5, 2024.

Department Response:

The correct attachments that are required for RFA25-001 are listed on the website www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram.

All applications for RFA25-001 must be submitted via the online grant portal found on the program website.

A pre-application webinar took place on August 5, 2025. A typo listing 2024 was corrected prior to the webinar. The Pre-Application Webinar and PowerPoint from August 5, 2025, is posted on Cinotti Grant Program website: www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram.

Question #28.

I have a question as it pertains to the provision of Autism screenings.

Under 2.6 Programmatic Specifications

3. Professionals must have current and valid licenses as required by state and federal law, and proof of licensure must be available for programmatic review during grant activities. For example, all screening personnel must have completed the appropriate practical exams for Florida licensure, whether for a specific health discipline or under a general health practitioner license that permits them to conduct such screenings.

In referencing the above, what "valid license" does your grant program require as it pertains to the professional that is providing the Autism screenings? To elaborate, I am aware that I cannot diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder, however, would the parameters of this grant approve me to utilize approved and evidenced-based screening tools for Autism so that my organization can then make the appropriate referrals?

Department Response:

In addition to section 2.6 of RFA25-001, reference section 4.7.2 regarding staffing and clinical oversight as well as number 8 under section 4.7.4 regarding the referral process.

Question #29.

Application/Guidance Questions:

1) For Budget Summary, do we fill out only the Budget - Contract Attachment tab, and for that tab, the Current Budget column only?

2) On the workplan template, is it okay for Goal #1 to be focused on developing the infrastructure (e.g. hiring staff, purchasing needed equipment, developing protocols, etc.) or does each Goal need to have a direct measurable impact on # of participants served?

Can we add additional goals and tasks to the spreadsheet, or is this spreadsheet fixed?

Is there a minimum number of goals, or tasks for each goal?

Application Upload Process Questions:

3) Guidance section 4.5 states the application must contain a table of contents with page numbers identifying the major sections of the application. Can you provide clarity on how we should handle pagination within the Table of Contents as the various section components will be uploaded individually rather than in a single running file? Do we keep the individual file upload page numbers each starting at 1 in the footer (to maintain clarity within section specific page limits), or do we need to adapt our footers to provide continuous page numbers across individual uploads for example:

- Footer Page (1-2): Table of Contents *max 2 pages*

- Footer Page (3): Project Summary *max 1 page*
- Footer Page (4-18): Project Narrative *max 15 pages*
- Footer Page (19 - end): Application Appendices A-F *excluded from page limits*

If we are restarting each application element upload at footer page number 1, should the Table of Contents only outline the internal sub-section page numbers? For example, narrative sub-section Organizational Overview (beginning on pg 1), Staffing and Clinical Oversight (beginning on pg 3), etc.

4) Guidance section 3.2.4 states that PDF files should be electronically generated and should not be scans or photographs of original documents. How does this impact submission of required Letters of Support and MOUs that are signed with physical signatures. Is this allowable to include a scanned original of a physically signed letter of support or MOU, or must these be re-authenticated with digital signatures?

Department Response:

1) For the grant application, applicants need to fill out the Current Budget column on the Budget – Contract Attachment tab only.

2) The workplan template may include infrastructure goals. The workplan template is locked. There are four possible tasks under each goal.

3) Applicants may keep the individual file upload page numbers beginning at page 1 in the footer within the specific page limits.

4) Uploaded documents may be scanned but all documents must be clearly legible.

Question #30.

I hope this email finds you well and that you are having a good week so far. I want to thank you all for this wonderful grant opportunity to expand our Autism Screening & Diagnostic Services. After reviewing the RFA and attending the webinar our team does have a few questions.

- Would these grant funds only cover the costs of autism screenings or can these funds also cover the cost of diagnostic services...diagnostics are not mentioned in the RFA. Referrals for treatment are mentioned in the RFA (see below). In the webinar it was mentioned that "Diagnostic screens are eligible if costs are reasonable & necessary." If that is the case, what is deemed reasonable & necessary? In order for an individual to get the services they need (e.g OT, PT, Speech, ABA) they will need an official diagnosis.
 - *"Applicants will direct 100 percent of the grant toward autism screening, including referrals for treatment, if appropriate, or related services" page 6*
 - *"If the grantee intends to provide follow-up including referrals for treatment, if appropriate, or related services this should be clearly expressed in the project narrative." page 13*
- Can you define "subcontractor?" We already have established contracts with members of our diagnostics team, we want to confirm they will not be identified as subcontractors.
 - *"Subcontract agreements will be restricted to no more than 25% of the total final award and subcontractors must be registered with the Division of Corporations under the Florida Department of State (www.sunbiz.org). Subcontracts must meet the eligibility guidelines of this grant and any work by the subcontractor must meet the grant requirements specified in the RFA and in the program contract. Indirect cost incurred by subcontracts count towards the 15% maximum indirect." page 7*

- If we already have staff to do screenings and diagnostics, would we still need to explain the staff recruiting process? Also do we need to include the CVs of already hired staff. If we have to include CVs does that count towards our 15-page limit for the Project Narrative?
 - *“Describe how the program will be staffed, including the use of paid staff, volunteers, and/or subcontractors. Specify the number and type of positions required, indicating which roles will be full-time and which will be part-time. For each position, outline the required qualifications, including the type of experience and training necessary. The applicant must explain the process for recruiting staff and volunteers, as well as the method for procuring consultants and subcontractors. Include CVs of any key personnel demonstrating expertise in autism.” (page 14)*

Department Response:

- 1) In RFA25-001 reference number 8 under section 4.7.4 for information about the referral process. For information about the use of grant funds reference section 2.3.
- 2) For information regarding subcontracting, reference Attachment 11 (Recipient-Subrecipient and Contractor - Vendor Determination Checklist for State-Federal Funds) and Attachment 12 (Subcontracting Request Form) on the program website www.FloridaHealth.gov/CinottiGrantProgram. In addition, reference the Reference Guide for State Expenditures (Attachment 9).
- 3) Applicants should describe the staff that will be participating in the program. Inclusion of CVs does not count toward the 15 pages of the Project narrative.

Question #31.

Application Guidance Questions:

“(11.) Recipients may not use funds to hire staff and place them at another agency.”

Could you clarify this statement please? For example, a staff member that may visit other agencies to raise awareness of autism screenings or facilitate autism screenings would be allowable under this opportunity, correct?

Department Response:

The work done under this grant must be conducted by staff members employed by the awardee or staff members employed by an approved subcontract.

Question #32.

- 1) The RFA specifies that “All screening program activity funded by this grant and described in the Budget Narrative must be new activity and not currently funded by any other program” Can you clarify what would fall within the “screening program activity”? For example, if we are currently funded to collaborate with pediatricians to screen for autism, would an approved new screening program activity be expanding this to community agencies that are nonprofit and not part of pediatric practices? If we are funded to provide screening in other states, would an approved new screening program activity be expanding this to Florida? If we are funded to provide screening in specific regions in Florida or in urban regions, would an approved new screening program activity be expanding this to small cities and rural regions? Or new regions in Florida?
- 2) The RFA states that subcontractors need to meet eligibility for the grant. What about vendors? Do they need to be a nonprofit organization?

- 3) Under 2.6 Programmatic Specifications, can you clarify what you mean by “concentrated need has been identified.” For example, does that relate to a higher population to be concentrated? Or could rural be a concentrated need because they do not have access to services that are available in urban regions.
- 4) I am having trouble with the link to register and log into Microsoft. How do we reach out for technical support from DOH as we work on registering, completing the application, and uploading it to your site?

Department Response:

- 1) **A nonprofit entity may apply for Cinotti grant program funds to implement new health care screening or service programs for autism screenings that the entity has not previously provided. Any nonprofit entity that has previously implemented a specific health care screening or services program at one or more specific location may apply for grant funds to provide the same or similar screenings or services at new locations or through a mobile health clinic or mobile unit, to expand the program’s delivery capabilities.**
- 2) **Subcontracts must adhere to the eligibility guidelines of this grant. Any work performed by the subcontractor must comply with the grant requirements specified in the RFA and The Program contract. Vendors are not required to be nonprofits. Vendors should comply with Florida statutes, rules set by the Florida Department of Management Services, and guidelines set by The Department.**
- 3) **Refer to section 4.7.3 which provides more information regarding a Statement of Need.**
- 4) **Technical question regarding the Portal may be sent to CinottiGrantPortalSupport@flhealth.gov.**

This is not a competitive solicitation subject to the notice or challenge provisions of section 120.57(3), Florida Statutes.

End of Text