



Michigan Supreme Court

State Court Administrative Office

Child Welfare Services

Michigan Hall of Justice

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR FAMILY COURTS

Michigan Court Improvement Program COVID-19 Supplemental Funding Grant ~ Child Protective Proceedings ~

The State Court Administrative Office Child Welfare Services division (SCAO-CWS) invites circuit courts to apply for a *Court Improvement Program (CIP) COVID-19* one-time supplemental funding grant to ensure foster care cases continue towards permanency despite the pandemic that has caused delays.

Purpose

The CIP is a federally-funded program available to each State's highest court that is designed to improve the quality and depth of child protective proceedings. Congress has granted one-time supplemental CIP funding to address the unique challenges facing juvenile courts stemming from the COVID-19 public health emergency to ensure that the safety, permanency, and well-being needs of children in foster care are met in a timely manner. The federal Children's Bureau has placed a high priority on courts continuing to hold timely dispositional review and permanency planning hearings, and to support high quality legal representation for children and parents.

Projects funded by this grant can be used for one of the below purposes:

- 1. Administrative Solutions to Resolve Backlog of Child Protection Cases Due to Covid-19.** Courts will identify the cohort of foster care cases in which hearings have been delayed due to COVID-19 and develop strategies to prioritize timely disposition of those cases. Solutions may include, but are not limited to, expedited scheduling orders, referrals to child protection mediation, or a temporary increase in staffing (including the use of visiting judges to preside over hearings) to expedite case processing. Please see the following resource from the National Center for State Courts for further ideas and discussion: https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf_file/0028/57907/RRT-CFE-Child-Protection-Addressing-Backlog.pdf
- 2. Access to Technology to Increase Party Participation.** The court will provide technological supports to ensure that parties, attorneys and other stakeholders can meaningfully participate in remote court hearings, meetings, parenting time, and case activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, providing internet service or equipment to enable participation.

- 3. Compensate Attorneys to Attend Out of Court Client Meetings or Handle Ancillary Legal Matters to Expedite Safe Permanency.**
- 4. Other strategies to help avoid delays in legal proceedings, or to assist juvenile courts with needs that have resulted from COVID-19.** If a court would like to seek funding for an alternative strategy, the application must clearly demonstrate the purpose of the strategy and how it will be measured.

Requirements

- Courts must collaborate with the state or local department of health and human services to jointly plan for the collection and sharing of all relevant data and information, where necessary.
- If a grant application involves the purchase of supplies or equipment, courts must adhere to 45 CFR Part 75 which governs the use of federal funds to purchase supplies and equipment.
- Within 90 days of the conclusion of the grant period or the project end, the court will be required to submit a Use of Funds report that describes the use of the CIP COVID-19 supplemental grant funding. A court that receives grant funding for a defined strategy (1-3 above) will be provided standard data measures to collect for this report. A court that develops an alternative strategy will be required to submit information as detailed in the application.

Funding and Match Requirements

These one-time COVID-19 supplemental grants are funded by the Court Improvement Program, Federal Grant Number CFDA 93-586. There is no local match requirement. The maximum grant per court is \$30,000. All grant funding must be obligated by September 30, 2022 and liquidated by December 30, 2022.

Application Period

Applications may be submitted between October 11 – November 19, 2021 and awards will be announced by December 30, 2021. To apply for a CIP COVID-19 Supplemental Funding Grant, please go to this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2021COVIDMiniGrant>.

For questions about this funding opportunity, please contact Erin House, Court Analyst, SCAO Child Welfare Services, at HouseE@courts.mi.gov or 517-862-4856.

