



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

246 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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John R. Kasich/Governor

Richard Hodges/Director of Health

Date: April 27, 2015

To: Interested Parties

From: Theresa Seagraves, MPA *TS*
Interim Chief, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

Subject: Notice of Availability of Funds - State Fiscal Year 2016
July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016 Choose Life Fund

The Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health announces the availability of funding through the Choose Life fund. The Choose Life fund provides eligible organizations with funding for the provision of services to pregnant women within the state of Ohio planning to place their children for adoption. Created in the State Treasury pursuant to Section 3701.65 of the Ohio Revised Code (Revised Code), the Choose Life fund consists of contributions paid to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles by applicants who voluntarily elect to obtain Choose Life license plates pursuant to section 4503.81 of the Revised Code and any money returned to the fund and investment earnings. To participate, an organization must meet the definition of an "eligible organization."

To obtain a grant application packet:

1. Go to the ODH website at www.odh.ohio.gov
2. From the home page under A-Z index click on F and got to "Funding Opportunities"
3. From this page click on "Choose Life Funds"
4. Select Notice of Availability of Funds to read about the program
5. Next select application to apply for funding
6. Make sure all counties that you serve are listed in the application

I. APPLICATION SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE

PURPOSE:

In 2005, the 125th Ohio General Assembly adopted language creating the Choose Life fund. The program administers subsidy agreements to organizations around Ohio that assist women who plan to place their children for adoption. The first round of subsidy agreements was put into place in July of 2006.

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS:

The targets for the Choose Life funds are women who are considering placing their children for adoption. Part of the funding may be used for advertising and to direct women to the organizations. Funds can be used for pregnant women who are considering adoption and are in need of services such as counseling, clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities and transportation. The following criteria are crucial to a successful application:

- Is a private, nonprofit organization;
- Is committed to counseling pregnant women about the option of adoption;
- Provides services within the state of Ohio to pregnant women who are planning to place their children for adoption, including counseling and meeting the material needs of the women;
- Does not charge pregnant women for any services received;
- Is not involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion-related procedures, or pro-abortion advertising;
- Does not discriminate in its provision of any service on the basis of race, religion, color, marital status, national origin, handicap, gender or age; and
- Is aware of and compliant with all relevant ethics provisions including Sections 102.13, 103.04, 121.60, 151.69, 121.23, 2921.42, and 3517.B of the Ohio Revised Code.

Applicants may also apply for Choose Life funds that may be available for contiguous counties. The applicant must ensure that the organization provides services to pregnant women residing in contiguous counties. The applicant understands that this organization will only be considered for distribution of Choose Life funds from counties if there are no distributions of funds to an eligible organization located within the counties.

II. NUMBER OF GRANT AND FUNDS

- Applicants may apply for funding allocated for their county of location or from contiguous counties if no eligible organization within the county applies for funding. Choose Life funds collected by May 1, 2015 will be eligible for distribution.
- The director shall distribute the funds based on the county in which the organization applying for funding is located and in proportion to the number of Choose Life fund license plates issued during the preceding year to vehicles registered in each county. The director shall distribute funds allocated for a county to one or more eligible organizations located in contiguous counties if no eligible organization located within the county applies for funding. To be eligible for funds in a contiguous county, the organization must demonstrate that it provides services for pregnant women residing in the contiguous county. Within each county, eligible organizations shall share equally in the funds available for distribution.
- Organizations that wish to obtain funding from the Choose Life fund shall apply by June 1 for annual distribution of the funds using a form prescribed by the director. The form shall inform the organization of the conditions for receiving and using the funds.
- If the organization received Choose Life funds during the previous year, the organization shall submit with the application an audited financial statement verifying its compliance with this rule regarding the use of funds distributed to the organization during the previous year. If the organization does not traditionally have an audited financial statement and to have one would create a hardship, the organization may submit replacement documentation chosen by the Director of Health.
- All unspent funds in excess of 10 percent must be returned to the Ohio Department of Health by June 1, 2015.
- All unspent funds less than 10 percent of our award amount can be carried over into the next state fiscal year for use as Choose Life funds. These funds are still subject to the Choose Life Fund rules and need to be included in any financial reporting for the following year. Your organization may also return these funds for redistribution the following year.

III. UNALLOWABLE COSTS

- None of the funds can be used for administrative expenses, legal expenses, or capital expenditures.
- Use not more than sixty percent of the funds received for the material needs of pregnant women planning to place their children for adoption or for infants awaiting placement with adoptive parents, including clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities and transportation;
- Use not more than forty percent of the funds received for counseling, training, or advertising;
- Counseling and training funds cannot be spent for adoptive families. Counseling services are mainly for birth families;
- Cannot be involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion related procedures or pro-abortion advertising; and
- Return to the Ohio Department of Health no later than June 1, 2015 any unused money that exceeds ten percent of the money received during the previous year; and

Applicants may apply for funding allocated for their county of location or from contiguous counties if no eligible organization within the county applies for funding. Choose Life funds collected by May 1, 2015 will be eligible for distribution. Applicants can obtain forms by going to the link: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/about/chooselife.aspx>. Interested applicants shall complete the application in accordance with the instructions and submit no later than June 1, 2015 to:

Ohio Department of Health
Choose Life Fund
246 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Questions regarding the application process can be directed to Dyane Goran Turner at (614) 644-6560.