

Opioid Settlement Fund Application Informational Webinar: FAQ

A. General Funding and Program Overview

Q: What is the source and total amount of the settlement funds?

A: The funds were awarded to Penobscot County as part of a settlement from various pharmaceutical companies. Penobscot County has currently received about \$1.4 million out of a projected \$4.5 million expected to be received over an 18-year period ending in 2038.

Q: How much funding is available for this first round of the RFP?

A: The committee is charged with putting out this RFP for \$400,000 worth of awards for this first round.

Q: What are the primary objectives of the projects receiving funding?

A: The core purpose of the grant is to fund projects that fall in line with the guidelines ([Exhibit E](#)) for appropriate uses of settlement funding. Proposals must focus on communities and individuals most profoundly impacted by opioid use disorder and/or co-occurring substance use disorders or mental health conditions.

Q: What are the available funding tiers?

A: The committee is offering tiered amounts for awards:

- Tier 1: Up to \$10,000.
- Tier 2: \$10,000 to \$25,000.
- Tier 3: Up to \$49,999. The maximum award an organization can receive is \$49,999.

Q: What is the duration of the award?

A: This is a one-year award. Activities must happen within one year from the award receipt.

B. Eligibility and Restrictions

Q: Who is eligible to apply for funding?

A: Both public and private entities, including nonprofit and for-profit organizations, are eligible. This includes faith-based and community-based organizations.

Q: Is there a preference for a certain type of organization?

A: Yes. There will be a preference for nonprofit organizations because their funding is more likely reliant upon grants versus revenue based from a business.

Q: What geographic area must be served by the planned activities?

A: Applicants must be serving people in Penobscot County. While the organization may serve people outside that geographic area, all planned grant activities can only target Penobscot County.

Q: Can organizations submit multiple applications?

A: No. Organizations cannot submit more than one application per application acceptance period. If a large organization serves multiple areas or districts within Penobscot County, they may still submit only one application.

Q: Can I reapply if my application is declined?

A: While there is no opportunity to appeal a declined decision for this round, the committee plans for subsequent rounds of funding, and you can reapply in a future application acceptance period.

Q: Can I ask for funds for an existing program?

A: Yes, but with strict limitations. Funds cannot supplant (replace) funding that is already being acquired for an existing activity. This money may be used for expanding an existing program. If a project is currently underfunded, this would be considered an appropriate use to sustain or expand services, provided it aligns with [Exhibit E](#) allowable uses.

Q: Is there value in having leadership with lived experience?

A: Yes. The committee values knowing whether applicants have someone with lived opioid use disorder experience in a position of leadership within the organization or program.

Q: Can I apply if I have already received opioid settlement funds from Penobscot County, City of Bangor, Attorney General, or Maine Recovery Council?

A: Yes. Previous receipt of opioid settlement funds is acceptable, but the application submitted to this committee must be for an expansion, or a new or different project, to avoid duplicating efforts. Applicants must disclose if they have received other opioid settlement dollars.

C. Application and Submission Logistics

Q: What is the application deadline?

A: Applications are due November 15th.

Q: Where can I find and submit the application?

A: The application is a Google Form. For offline application preparation, there are links on the Penobscot County opioid committee web page for a PDF and Word version. However, ***all applications must be submitted through the Penobscot County opioid committee web page.***

Q: Who makes the final decision on the awards?

A: The Penobscot County Opioid Settlement Fund Committee reviews and scores applications and makes recommendations to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners make the final decision on which applications receive funding.

Q: What are the anticipated notification and award receipt dates?

A: The committee anticipates making recommendations by mid-December, and the commissioners intend to make their selection announcement by the end of the calendar year (2025/early 2026). Award receipt is expected soon thereafter.

Q: What are the four key "pillars" I should choose from for my project?

A: Applicants must select only one of the OUD remediation four pillars with which their project most closely aligns: Treatment, Prevention, Recovery, or Harm Reduction.

Q: What information must be included regarding project goals?

A: Applicants should include SMARTIE goals, which are defined as Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound, Inclusive, and Equitable.

Q: What attachments are required?

A: Required attachments include:

- Governing board list.
- Project lead or key staff list.
- Budget template (a separate document to download, fill out, and re-upload).
- Letters of commitment from any partners or fiscal sponsors.
- Letter of nonprofit status (if applicable) and EIN.
- Supplemental materials. (Optional)
- A maximum of three letters of support should be submitted through the application form.

Q: What are key considerations for the project budget narrative?

A: Applicants must clearly state the requested amount. The narrative should detail where the funding is going and what it will be spent on. If the organization is using other sources of funding (e.g., matching funds), those should be included. If the budget includes a negative or surplus balance, applicants must explain the reasoning to demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

D. Review Process and Criteria

Q: How is the application scored?

A: Applications are reviewed and scored by the committee using a standard rubric with 10 criteria, each worth 5 points, for a maximum total of 50 points. An application must achieve a minimum score of 30 out of 50 possible points to be considered for funding.

Q: What factors will the committee consider beyond the score?

A: The committee will consider additional factors to achieve equitable funding across the county. They strive to select a diverse portfolio of projects that collectively address the opioid crisis from multiple angles.

- Pillar Representation: The committee aims to recommend funding equitably across the four remediation pillars (treatment, prevention, recovery, harm reduction).
- Geographic Representation: If two applications have similar scores, the committee may prioritize the one that serves a geographic area of the county that has not yet received funding.

Q: What monitoring and reporting are required after an award is granted?

A: Awardees will need to provide data on program outcomes or impacts. There will be semiannual reporting (a six-month report and a year-end report).

Q: Are new ideas encouraged even if they haven't been tried at a macro level?

A: Yes. The committee encourages people with new ideas to come forward, including small organizations or groups, and does not expect that only well-established organizations will receive funding.

E. Assistance and Contact Information

Q: Where can applicants send questions about the RFP?

Applicants should email Wendy Dana (wdana@penobscot-county.net) to ask questions or receive assistance. All questions and answers received during the application period will be added to this FAQ document to ensure equal access to information for all applicants.

Q: Where can I watch the recording of the application informational webinar?

The recording is live on the County Commissioner's YouTube page and the link will be posted on the Penobscot County opioid committee web page.