



# The State Bar of California

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## **OPEN SESSION**

## **AGENDA ITEM**

**AUGUST 2021**

## **LSTFC HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUNDS COMMITTEE IV.A**

**DATE:** August 31, 2021

**TO:** Members, Homelessness Prevention Funds Committee

**FROM:** Chris McConkey, Senior Program Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Selection Criteria and Other Parameters for the 2022-2024 Homelessness Prevention Competitive Grants

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Recognizing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing instability in California, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 164 (AB 164) on July 16, 2021. AB 164 amends that part of the state budget that allocates \$40 million in federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for homelessness prevention (HP) grants to qualified legal services projects (QLPSs) and support centers. This \$40 million is the first installment of an expected \$80 million in funding over three years.

On August 13, 2021, the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (commission) approved a timeline for making 2022-2024 HP competitive awards. So that the competitive grant period can start by January 1, 2022, the commission delegated authority to the committee to approve the scoring rubric and request for proposals (RFP). It also delegated authority to staff to score competitive applications in consultation with the committee.

This memo describes the statutory parameters for the 2022-2024 HP competitive grants. Additionally, it presents an RFP (Attachment A) and scoring rubric for the committee's consideration at its meeting on August 31, 2021.

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## BACKGROUND

AB 164 uses language that is nearly identical to that for the 2019/2020-2021 and 2021-2023 HP grants. Like its predecessors, it funds competitive awards to provide a spectrum of homelessness prevention legal aid and support center services. Two changes, however, from previous HP funding statutes are that AB 164 specifies that “services to prevent foreclosure for homeowners” and “legal help for persons displaced because of domestic violence” are permissible uses of funds.<sup>1</sup>

AB 164 allocates \$40 million in federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for HP grants. This \$40 million is the first installment of an expected \$80 million in funding from the 2021, 2022, and 2023 state budget acts. The State Bar has received confirmation that the future installment(s) totaling \$40 million will arrive over the next two years.

In light of guidance from the Legislature, the commission has voted to confer three-year grants using the entire \$80 million.<sup>2</sup> This decision increases the ability of programs to design and staff long-term projects and of the State Bar to administer funds efficiently. After deductions of up to 2.5 percent (\$2 million) for administrative costs, 75 percent of the three-year total (at least \$58,500,000) will go to eligible QLSP and support center applicants via formula. The remaining 25 percent (at least \$19,500,000) will fund competitive grants.

HP competitive award decisions are final and without appeal. Any competitive funds that remain after the commission confers awards will supplement the 2021-2024 HP formula grants. For these remaining funds, the same formula is used for distribution among programs with the exception of the previous funding floor of \$50,000.<sup>3</sup>

## DISCUSSION

### Grant Timeline

On August 13, 2021, the commission approved the following timeline for making 2022-2024 HP competitive grants:

Date(s)	Activity
August 31, 2021	Committee approves RFP and scoring rubric
September 1, 2021	Staff releases RFP
October 1, 2021	RFP applications due
October 4-8, 2021	Committee calibrates to the rubric (3-5 applications)
October 11-22, 2021	Staff scores applications

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<sup>1</sup> For the complete list of permissible activities, see the section on “Statutory Parameters.” (p. 3, *infra.*).

<sup>2</sup> On August 13, 2021, the commission passed the following resolution: “RESOLVED, that the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission will administer the 2021 Homelessness Prevention (HP) formula and 2022 HP competitive awards as three-year grants with an expected total appropriation of \$80 million combined.”

<sup>3</sup> Item 0250-162-8506 of Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 2021.

October 25-29, 2021	Committee finalizes award recommendations
November 17, 2021	Commission approves awards
January 1, 2022	Grant period begins

To implement this timeline, the commission delegated authority to the committee to approve the RFP and scoring rubric. Additionally, the commission delegated authority to staff to score applications in consultation with the committee.<sup>4</sup> Both delegations of authority facilitate a grant start date of January 1, 2022.

### **Statutory Parameters**

To be eligible for a 2022-2024 HP competitive award, applicants must be a current QLSP or support center under California Business and Professions Code section 6213. HP competitive grants are to support:

[E]viction defense, other tenant defense assistance in landlord-tenant rental disputes, or services to prevent foreclosure for homeowners, including pre-eviction and eviction legal services, counseling, advice and consultation, mediation, training, renter education, and representation, and legal services to improve habitability, increasing affordable housing, ensuring receipt of eligible income or benefits to improve housing stability, legal help for persons displaced because of domestic violence, and homelessness prevention.

Item 0250-162-8506 of Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 2021.

As with previous HP competitive awards, these grants may not support legislative advocacy. Staff notes that the language for the earlier 2021-2023 HP awards conferred preference to “qualified legal aid agencies that serve rural or underserved communities which [*sic*] serve clients regardless of immigration or citizenship status.”<sup>5</sup> AB 164, however, confers preference only for serving “rural or underserved communities.”<sup>6</sup>

AB 164 prohibits HP competitive grants from supplanting existing resources. To that end, it requires that programs receiving both a 2021-2024 HP formula and 2022-2024 HP competitive

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<sup>4</sup> On August 13, 2021, the commission passed the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission approves the December 1, 2021, timeline for 2021 Homelessness Prevention (HP) formula grants and January 1, 2022, timeline for 2022 HP competitive grants, as presented in the HP Funds Committee’s August 13, 2021, memo; and it is

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FURTHER RESOLVED, that the commission delegates authority to the committee to approve the request for proposals, including scoring rubric, for the 2022 HP competitive grants and to staff to score applications in consultation with the committee.

<sup>5</sup> California Government Code section 12531(e)(1).

<sup>6</sup> Item 0250-162-8506 of Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 2021.

grant demonstrate that the two awards will fund separate work. That is, each grant must enable the program to serve clients whom it otherwise would be unable to help.<sup>7</sup>

### Selection Criteria

Staff recommends the rubric and guidance below to assist with evaluating applications. The rubric would be a tool to guide discussion of proposals. A comparatively high score, therefore, would not guarantee funding. The committee and commission may still exercise discretion to recommend/make awards that best accomplish the statewide goals of AB 164.

Category	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Addressed
<b>Project impact and strategies:</b> The applicant proposes a project that significantly and directly addresses or will address a compelling need for the particular homelessness prevention intervention(s).				
<b>Number of check marks</b>	<b>X30 points</b>	<b>X20 points</b>	<b>X10 points</b>	<b>X0 points</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Organizational capacity:</b> The applicant demonstrates that it has the qualifications, experience, and resources that it needs to meet the proposal objectives.				
<b>Number of check marks</b>	<b>X20 points</b>	<b>X15 points</b>	<b>X10 points</b>	<b>X0 points</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Focus on rural populations:</b> The applicant articulates a focus on addressing homelessness in rural communities.				
<b>Focus on underserved populations:</b> The applicant articulates a focus on addressing homelessness in particularly underserved communities.				
<b>Project evaluation:</b> The applicant details an evaluation strategy to acquire data that it can use to refine the project's strategies to increase its effectiveness in addressing homelessness.				
<b>Number of check marks</b>	<b>X15 points</b>	<b>X10 points</b>	<b>X5 points</b>	<b>X0 points</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Special consideration:</b> Applicant				

<sup>7</sup> The budget act's language states, "The grant process shall ensure that any qualified legal service project or support center that received [formula] funding pursuant to subdivision (a) may only receive [competitive] funding pursuant to this subdivision if that qualified legal service project or support center demonstrates that funds received under this subdivision will be not be used to supplant existing resources..." *Id.*

articulates a focus on litigation strategies to address individual or systemic homelessness.				
	0-5 points			
<b>Total</b>				

The following explanations accompany the rubric's core criteria:

- Project impact and strategies:** Applicants should explain how the project's strategies and goals—activities, partnerships, outputs, outcomes, etc.—will directly and significantly ameliorate homelessness. They should explain why they selected the particular intervention(s) over others. The justification for the proposed services should refer to the circumstances and needs of particular populations that the project seeks to serve.
- Organizational capacity:** Applicants should demonstrate their ability and capacity to implement and manage the proposed activities. Strong administration includes adequate staffing, leadership, and oversight of project monitoring, outreach, and resource development. An applicant's history of meeting the goals and complying with the requirements of other grants is relevant to this criterion.
- Focus on rural populations:** Applicants should describe any focus on rural communities. The California Commission on Access to Justice recommends defining "rural" as areas that meet the medical service study area (MSSA) standard for "rural" or "frontier." The California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development identifies MSSAs using sub-county clusters of census tracts.<sup>8</sup> The California Commission on Access to Justice argues that MSSA categories of rural and frontier—as opposed to urban—are better suited than counties to classify rural areas.<sup>9</sup> Rural MSSAs have 50,000 or fewer residents and population densities below 250 people per square mile. "Frontier" MSSAs have population densities of fewer than 11 people per square mile.
- Focus on underserved populations:** Applicants should describe any focus on particularly underserved clients. A project that focuses on such communities should explain how the latter face even higher barriers to accessing civil justice than does the low-income community generally.
- Project evaluation:** Applicants should describe an evaluation strategy—frequency, diversity of approaches to collecting information, etc.—and resources that are likely to yield data in time for course corrections and refinements during the grant period.

<sup>8</sup> For more information, please visit <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=a20100c4bf374bd081bb49b82cbaaac3>.

<sup>9</sup> The California Commission on Access to Justice, "Improving Civil Justice in Rural California" (2010) available at <https://www.calatj.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2010-Improving-Civil-Justice-in-Rural-CA.pdf>.

The rubric removes two categories that the committee used when scoring 2021-2023 HP proposals. The above rubric reallocates the points that were available for:

- (Worth 0-10 points) “Proposed services serve clients regardless of immigration or citizenship status.”
- (Worth 0-5 points) “Potential sustainability/continuation of proposed services after the completion of the grant period.”

As noted above, the authorizing statute for 2021-2023 HP awards conferred preference to “qualified legal aid agencies that...serve clients regardless of immigration or citizenship status.” AB 164, however, confers preference only for serving “rural or underserved communities.” Removing this criterion is consistent with this change in the law. Furthermore, committee members previously observed that this criterion might disadvantage some federally-funded programs that are the sole legal aid providers in their rural areas—thereby disadvantaging the people who live in those rural communities.

Staff also proposes to remove the “potential sustainability/continuation of proposed services” criterion. Committee members observed that conferring points for describing a sustainability plan seemed inadvertently to disadvantage—and perhaps discourage—projects that could, during the grant period, meet the needs that they sought to address. Put another way, this criterion seemed to advantage long-term projects that would require other funding over projects that could succeed in three or fewer years.

The rubric also replaces a previous reference to innovation with “special consideration” points for proposing to focus on litigation strategies. This change reflects a state and federal preference to fund services whose success in addressing homelessness has a strong basis in evidence/experience.<sup>10</sup> An emphasis on innovation might run counter to this preference.

While the rubric refers to HP projects, it bears structural similarities to the rubrics for other competitive awards—e.g. the partnership and provisionally licensed lawyers grants. These rubrics adopt the categories of “exceeds expectations”, “meets expectations”, and “below expectations” for core criteria. They also permit special consideration points for preferential characteristics such as a focus on litigation. Staff recommends adopting a rubric for the 2022-2024 HP competitive grants that is consistent with those for other competitive awards. This will increase predictability for applicants, consistency in scoring, and efficiency in grantmaking.

Staff also recommends that the committee use its best efforts to distribute grants statewide. This would entail a geographic comparison of the highest scoring proposals. To the extent that particular regions might be under-represented among top-scoring applications, the committee could exercise discretion still to recommend awards to those areas. In doing so, the committee might observe that a strong—although slightly lower scoring—proposal would provide high

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<sup>10</sup> The Department of Finance communicated this preference for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds when directing agencies to identify and report on outputs and outcomes for evidence-based interventions.

quality and badly needed services to communities that HP funding would otherwise fail to reach.

Likewise, staff recommends that the committee strive for a diversity of HP interventions in the spirit of AB 164. This too would entail a services-based analysis of the top scoring proposals. To the extent that particular services, such as foreclosure prevention, might be under-represented, the committee could exercise discretion still to fund that work. The discretion to spread funding statewide and to fund a diversity of interventions invites a comparative, post-scoring analysis.

### **Application Components**

Staff proposes that the competitive HP grant application include the components below.

- 1. Form A: Project Profile**

The project profile would collect high-level information about the project's geographic focus, community partnerships, budget request, and current funding (if any), as well as a project abstract. Since these grants derive from federal funds, applicants without a free Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number would need to request and provide one.

- 2. Form B: Project Description**

The project description would collect detailed information about the project's need, clients, partnerships, goals, activities, deliverables, and strategies for outreach, accessibility, and evaluation. It would also ask for detailed narratives about the applicant's qualifications and resources to perform the work effectively.

- 3. Form C: Project Budget**

The budget would collect information on how the program proposes to allocate HP funds to the project for three years. Applicants would need to identify staff by their role (e.g. "Managing attorney" or "Housing attorney") and estimate the amount of time that these roles would spend on the project. The project staff, budget, and description should be consistent with one another.

Staff proposes a project budget cap of \$1.5 million, which is \$500,000 per year for three years. Staff proposes this ceiling since it approximates the largest award that the commission has made for a three-year HP project. With at least \$19.5 million available over three years, a project cap of \$1.5 million would allow for at least 13 awards.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Demonstrating effective use of these funds is critical to supporting future funds. Grantees must, therefore, report quantitative and qualitative data describing the clients they served and activities they performed. This data includes outcomes (main and economic benefits) tied to individual characteristics that demonstrate the impact/value of these grants.

Staff proposes that the HP competitive grants use the similar reporting requirements as those for previous HP formula and competitive awards. This will achieve consistency for programs and administrative efficiency. Reporting requirements would include:

**1. Expenditure Reports**

Since 2022-2024 HP RFP grants are supported by federal dollars, organizations would have to submit regular spending reports that compare expenditures to the approved budget. Grantees would have to report budget variances of 10 percent or more to the State Bar as soon as possible.

**2. Services/Case Reports**

Grantees would also have to submit regular client-level data on at least the following:

- A. Main benefits for all cases according to the codes and definitions in the *California Legal Aid Reporting Handbook*.
- B. Geographic and demographic data, tied to outcomes, for all clients.
- C. Economic benefits for cases that resulted in an award for or savings to the client.
- D. Highest levels of service for all cases where there was an attorney-client relationship and aggregated data about all other services (e.g. trainings) during the grant.

**3. A Final Evaluation Report**

In addition to the regular activity/services reports, organizations would have to submit a final evaluation about the following outputs and outcomes, among others:

- A. Service population: How did this project impact the people it served? What changed for them, or what negative outcomes were prevented?
- B. Community impact: Describe whether and how this project has changed the community it serves.
- C. Evaluation/Assessment: Describe the processes used to assess the effectiveness of this project and any lessons learned regarding the project itself or the community it serves.
- D. Reports: Upload any report completed regarding the evaluation or assessment of this project or demonstrating the effect of services rendered (e.g., client satisfaction survey results, pre and post test results, number of cases in which stipulations were reached, number of trials, outcome of trials, etc.).
- E. Other impacts: Will this project have any immediate or long-term impacts that are not already captured in main benefits reporting?
- F. Continuation of the project: Describe any plans to continue the project after the grant period.
- G. Publications: Describe any future publication or distribution plans for materials



resulting from grant activities; provide the URL for online resources related to this project (web sites, resource libraries, etc.).

H. Impact work and materials:

- Overview of impact litigation cases: For any grant-funded impact cases your organization litigated as part of this project during the grant period, whether open or closed, report the case name, number of individuals estimated to be impacted, date filed, venue, and any partners or co-counsel also participating.
- Overview of public policy advocacy activities: Describe any grant-funded public policy advocacy activities, such as regulatory advocacy, your organization engaged in during the grant period. Remember that the legislature prohibited using these funds for legislative advocacy.
- Training and support activities: Describe any grant-funded training or other support activities not identified above. For support centers, use this space to provide quantitative and qualitative data about trainings, convenings, research, and other support for QLSPs.

**Required Assurances**

Staff proposes that the HP competitive grants use the same assurances as those for the 2021-2024 HP formula awards. Each applicant would have to acknowledge that:

1. It agrees that it will use funds it receives from the 2022-2024 HP Grant only for purposes stated in its application.
2. It will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, marital or domestic partnership status, medical condition, or sexual orientation.
3. It will comply with quality control procedures adopted by the State Bar of California (State Bar).
4. It will permit reasonable site visits and will present additional information deemed reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the terms of the grant.
5. It will comply with fiscal management and control procedures adopted by the State Bar.
6. It agrees to consult with the State Bar concerning media coverage of any project funded by this HP grant.
7. It understands that any proposal submitted for an HP Grant, and all documents submitted pursuant to issuance of HP funding, are public documents, and may be disclosed to any person.

8. It assures that, to the extent this grant is being sought for an existing project, the funds will be used for services in addition to those already funded by other funds and will not supplant current funding committed to that project.
9. It agrees it will file regular (e.g. quarterly) program and financial reports, as may be required by the State Bar, and cooperate with other data collection requests by the State Bar for this grant project.
10. The State Bar is permitted, in its sole discretion, to adjust Applicant's award at any time to reflect the actual amount of funding available for HP RFP grants. Consequently, grantees shall not be guaranteed any specific dollar amount in grant funds, or any grant funds at all, if funds received are insufficient or unavailable to the State Bar.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Should the committee concur with staff's proposal, passage of the following resolution is recommended:

**RESOLVED**, that the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission Homelessness Prevention Funds Committee, acting on behalf of the commission under its delegated authority, approves the priorities, rubric, and distribution plan for 2022–2024 HP competitive grants as described herein.

## **ATTACHMENT(S) LIST**

- A. 2022–2024 HP Competitive Grant Request for Proposals



## The State Bar of California

### 2022 –2024 Homelessness Prevention Competitive Grant Request for Proposals

#### Background

Recognizing the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing instability in California, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 164 (AB 164) on July 16, 2021. AB 164, amending the Budget Act of 2021, allocates \$40 million in federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for homelessness prevention (HP) grants to qualified legal services projects (QLSPs) and support centers. This \$40 million is the first installment of an expected \$80 million in funding over three years.

The State Bar has received confirmation that the future installment(s) totaling \$40 million will be appropriated over the next two years. If this amount decreases or increases, the State Bar will notify grantees as soon as possible. In light of guidance from the state Senate, and in consultation with the Judicial Council of California, the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (commission) has voted to confer three-year grants using the entire \$80 million. This increases the ability of programs to design and staff long-term projects.

After deductions for administrative costs, 75 percent of the three-year total will go to eligible QLSP and support center applicants via a modified funding formula. The remaining 25 percent will fund competitive grants. AB 164 provides that neither HP formula nor HP competitive grants may supplant existing resources and both must support:

[E]viction defense, other tenant defense assistance in landlord-tenant rental disputes, or services to prevent foreclosure for homeowners, including pre-eviction and eviction legal services, counseling, advice and consultation, mediation, training, renter education, and representation, and legal services to improve habitability, increasing affordable housing, ensuring receipt of eligible income or benefits to improve housing stability, legal help for persons displaced because of domestic violence, and homelessness prevention.

#### Eligibility

HP competitive grant applications are due on SmartSimple by **Friday, October 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)**. To be eligible for a 2022-2024 HP competitive award, applicants must be a QLSP or support center under California Business and Professions Code [section 6213](#).

## Competitive Grant Parameters

1. HP competitive awards may fund only the activities that AB 164 enumerates, above. These grants may not support legislative advocacy. Applicants that serve rural or underserved communities shall receive preference.
2. There is no minimum amount of funding that programs may request. The maximum that a program may request is \$500,000 per year (\$1,500,000 for three years).
3. Applicants must explain how they will avoid supplanting existing funds including any HP formula award. Grantees must use their award to serve clients whom they otherwise would be unable to reach.
4. While there are no income-eligibility requirements for this grant, programs must screen for and track indigency under Business and Professions Code [section 6213\(d\)](#). This is to report nonqualifying expenditures on the annual IOLTA and Equal Access Fund application. If an applicant aims to serve non-indigent individuals, it should describe how the homelessness prevention needs of the population(s) are currently unmet.

## Award Information

The commission will distribute at least \$19,500,000 in competitive funds. It plans to vote on final awards on November 17, 2021. The competitive grant period will start on January 1, 2022.

The commission seeks to fund high-impact projects that, within the scope of AB 164's list of authorized activities, address acute homelessness risks and harms. The commission also seeks to fund a diversity of homelessness prevention legal services throughout the state.

Applicants may propose creative partnerships with IOLTA and non-IOLTA providers. To that end, programs may seek to subgrant a portion of their award to one or more partner organizations. Such a collaboration could enable a well-rounded suite of homelessness prevention expertise and services that the applicant alone might be unable to achieve.

## Selection Criteria

Award decisions are final and without appeal. The funding level of awards will depend on the number and quality of applications as well as proposed budgets. A successful response to the RFP will expressly and persuasively:

- Identify how the proposed project aligns with the permissible uses in AB 164 and would meet the compelling needs of the population(s) it targets.
- Articulate the outputs (e.g. number of cases closed) and outcomes (e.g. increase in knowledge of tenant's/homeowners' rights) of services. Applicants should identify goals that are tied to the specific partnerships, activities, and deliverables they seek to achieve with this grant.

- Explain how grant funds will avoid supplanting existing resources, including any HP formula funding. That is, applicants should show how the award would enable services that the applicants otherwise would be unable to deliver.
- (If applicable) Highlight how clients in rural and/or particularly underserved communities will be the focus of the project. This could include populations whom the HP formula grant projects might have difficulty reaching.
- Describe the applicant's qualifications and staffing ability to perform the proposed work.

The commission and HP Funds Committee will use their best efforts to distribute grants statewide and to fund a diversity of HP interventions. Additionally, the committee has adopted the following rubric to guide its deliberations:

Category	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Addressed
<b>Project impact and strategies:</b> The applicant proposes a project that significantly and directly addresses or will address a compelling need for the particular homelessness prevention intervention(s).				
<b>Number of check marks</b>	<b>X30 points</b>	<b>X20 points</b>	<b>X10 points</b>	<b>X0 points</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Organizational capacity:</b> The applicant demonstrates that it has the qualifications, experience, and resources that it needs to meet the proposal objectives.				
<b>Number of check marks</b>	<b>X20 points</b>	<b>X15 points</b>	<b>X10 points</b>	<b>X0 points</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Focus on rural populations:</b> The applicant articulates a focus on addressing homelessness in rural communities.				
<b>Focus on underserved populations:</b> The applicant articulates a focus on addressing homelessness in particularly underserved communities.				
<b>Project evaluation:</b> The applicant details an evaluation strategy to acquire data that it can use to refine the project's strategies to increase its effectiveness in addressing homelessness.				

Number of check marks	X15 points	X10 points	X5 points	X0 points
<b>Subtotal</b>				
<b>Special consideration:</b> Applicant articulates a focus on litigation strategies to address individual or systemic homelessness.				
	<b>0-5 points</b>			
<b>Total</b>				

**Note:** The rubric is a tool to guide committee and commission discussion of projects. A comparatively high score, therefore, does not guarantee funding. The committee and commission may still exercise discretion to recommend/make awards that best accomplish the statewide goals of AB 164.

The following explanations accompany the rubric's core criteria:

- Project impact and strategies:** Applicants should explain how the project's strategies and goals—activities, partnerships, outputs, outcomes, etc.—will directly and significantly ameliorate homelessness. They should explain why they selected the particular intervention(s) over others. The justification for the proposed services should refer to the circumstances and needs of particular populations that the project seeks to serve.
- Organizational capacity:** Applicants should demonstrate their ability and capacity to implement and manage the proposed activities. Strong administration includes adequate staffing, leadership, and oversight of project monitoring, outreach, and resource development. An applicant's history of meeting the goals and complying with the requirements of other grants is relevant to this criterion.
- Focus on rural populations:** Applicants should describe any focus on rural communities. The California Commission on Access to Justice recommends defining "rural" as areas that meet the medical service study area (MSSA) standard for "rural" or "frontier." The California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development identifies MSSAs using sub-county clusters of census tracts.<sup>1</sup> The California Commission on Access to Justice argues that MSSA categories of rural and frontier—as opposed to urban—are better suited than counties to classify rural areas.<sup>2</sup> Rural MSSAs have 50,000 or fewer residents and population densities below 250 people per square mile. "Frontier" MSSAs have population densities of fewer than 11 people per square mile.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, please visit <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=a20100c4bf374bd081bb49b82cbaaac3>.

<sup>2</sup> The California Commission on Access to Justice, "Improving Civil Justice in Rural California" (2010) available at <https://www.calatj.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2010-Improving-Civil-Justice-in-Rural-CA.pdf>.

- **Focus on underserved populations:** Applicants should describe any focus on particularly underserved clients. A project that focuses on such communities should explain how the latter face even higher barriers to accessing civil justice than does the low-income community generally.
- **Project evaluation:** Applicants should describe an evaluation strategy—frequency, diversity of approaches to collecting information, etc.—and resources that are likely to yield data in time for course corrections and refinements during the grant period.

#### HP Competitive Grantmaking Timeline:

Date	Activity
August 31, 2021	HP Funds Committee approves RFP and scoring rubric
September 1, 2021	Release RFP application
October 1, 2021	RFP applications due
October 4-8, 2021	HP Funds Committee calibrates scoring
October 25-29, 2021	Committee finalizes award recommendations
November 17, 2021	Commission votes on awards
January 1, 2022	Grant period begins

#### RFP Application

A complete HP competitive grant application will include the components below. Please see the application instructions for detailed guidance.

##### 1. Form A: Project Profile

The project profile collects high-level information about the project’s geographic focus, community partnerships, budget request, and current funding (if any), as well as a project abstract.

Additionally, a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number is necessary since these grants are made possible by federal funds. To learn more about DUNS numbers, please visit [grants.gov](https://grants.gov), [here](#). To request a free DUNS number—for organizations that do not have one already—please visit Dun & Bradstreet’s website, [here](#).

##### 2. Form B: Project Description

The project description collects detailed information about the project’s need, clients, partnerships, goals, activities, deliverables, and strategies for outreach, accessibility, and evaluation. It also asks for detailed narratives about the applicant’s qualifications and resources to perform the work effectively.

##### 3. Form C: Project Budget

The project budget collects information on how the program proposes to allocate HP

funds to the project for three years. Applicants will need to identify staff by their role (e.g. “Managing attorney” or “Housing attorney”) and estimate the amount of time that these roles would spend on the project. The project staff, budget, and description should be consistent with one another.

**4. Form D: Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative will collect information about each line of the budget, noting whether the grant will directly pay for specific items or be allocated on a percentage or other basis.

**5. Form E: Project Assurances**

Programs will have to acknowledge that the:

1. Applicant agrees that it will use funds it receives from the 2022-2024 Homelessness Prevention (HP) Grant only for purposes stated in its application.
2. Applicant will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, marital or domestic partnership status, medical condition, or sexual orientation.
3. Applicant will comply with quality control procedures adopted by the State Bar of California (State Bar).
4. Applicant will permit reasonable site visits and will present additional information deemed reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the terms of the grant.
5. Applicant will comply with fiscal management and control procedures adopted by the State Bar.
6. Applicant agrees to consult with the State Bar concerning media coverage of any project funded by this HP grant.
7. Applicant understands that any proposal submitted for an HP Grant, and all documents submitted pursuant to issuance of HP funding, are public documents, and may be disclosed to any person.
8. Applicant assures that, to the extent this grant is being sought for an existing project, the funds will be used for services in addition to those already funded by other funds and will not supplant current funding committed to that project.
9. Applicant agrees it will file regular (e.g. quarterly) program and financial reports, as may be required by the State Bar, and cooperate with other data collection requests by the State Bar for this grant project.



10. The State Bar is permitted, in its sole discretion, to adjust Applicant's award at any time to reflect the actual amount of funding available for HP competitive grants. Consequently, grantees shall not be guaranteed any specific dollar amount in grant funds, or any grant funds at all, if funds received are insufficient or unavailable to the State Bar.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Demonstrating effective use of these funds is critical to supporting future funds. Grantees must, therefore, report quantitative and qualitative data describing the clients they served and activities they performed. This data includes outcomes (main and economic benefits) tied to individual characteristics that demonstrate the impact/value of these grants.

Reporting requirements will include:

1. **Expenditure Reports**

Since 2022-2024 HP competitive grants are supported by federal dollars, organizations will have to submit quarterly spending reports that compare expenditures to the approved budget. Grantees must report budget variances of 10 percent or more to the State Bar as soon as possible.

2. **Services/Case Reports**

Grantees will also have to submit quarterly client-level data on at least the following:

- A. Main benefits for all cases according to the codes and definitions in the *California Legal Aid Reporting Handbook*.
- B. Geographic and demographic data, tied to outcomes, for all clients.
- C. Economic benefits for cases that resulted in an award for or savings to the client.
- D. Highest levels of service for all cases where there was an attorney-client relationship and aggregated data about all other services (e.g. trainings).

3. **Final Evaluation Report**

In addition to the regular activity/services reports, organizations will have to submit a final evaluation about the following outputs and outcomes, among others:

- A. Service population: How did this project impact the people it served? What changed for them, or what negative outcomes were prevented?
- B. Community impact: Describe whether and how this project has changed the community it serves.

- C. Evaluation/Assessment: Describe the processes used to assess the effectiveness of this project and any lessons learned regarding the project itself or the community it serves.
- D. Reports: Upload any report completed regarding the evaluation or assessment of this project or demonstrating the effect of services rendered (e.g., client satisfaction survey results, pre and post test results, number of cases in which stipulations were reached, number of trials, outcome of trials, etc.).
- E. Other impacts: Will this project have any immediate or long-term impacts that are not already captured in main benefits reporting?
- F. Continuation of the project: Describe any plans to continue the project after the grant period.
- G. Publications: Describe any future publication or distribution plans for materials resulting from grant activities; provide the URL for online resources related to this project (web sites, resource libraries, etc.).
- H. Impact work and materials:
  - Overview of impact litigation cases: For any grant-funded impact cases your organization litigated as part of this project during the grant period, whether open or closed, report the case name, number of individuals estimated to be impacted, date filed, venue, and any partners or co-counsel also participating.
  - Overview of public policy advocacy activities: Describe any grant-funded public policy advocacy activities, such as regulatory advocacy, your organization engaged in during the grant period. Remember that the legislature prohibited using these funds for legislative advocacy.
  - Training and support activities: Describe any grant-funded training or other support activities not identified above. For support centers, use this space to provide quantitative and qualitative data about trainings, convenings, research, and other support for QLSPs.

### **For Technical Support**

If you have any questions, please contact:

Christopher McConkey, Senior Program Analyst, at (213) 765-1505 or [Christopher.McConkey@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:Christopher.McConkey@calbar.ca.gov).