# SPECIALIZED SERVICES DIVISION

# OLDER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND PROGRAM

# REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

## RFA # OIB-23-02 Addendum 1: Questions and Answers

Question 1**:** If another agency in our county received OIB funding, can another agency in the same county apply for this additional funding?

Answer 1: If the funding available for the county you serve was awarded in RFA #OIB-23-01 then there is no remaining funding available for the awarded county. The current RFA has funding available only for counties that remained unawarded from the prior RFA and are listed in RFA #OIB-23-02. Applications for counties other than those specified in RFA #OIB-23-02 will be screened out during the administrative review as non-responsive.

Question 2: We have a question regarding the RFA for Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB). We would like to support the individuals who are located in counties who do not have in person providers.

Will you accept applications that apply to provide virtual services to counties who do not have an in person provider?

We already provide many services to people who have vision loss virtually with great success towards meeting their goals. Our instructors have been specially trained to meet this important need.

Answer 2: For the competitive RFA process, DOR is seeking applications only from programs who can provide the full scope of services including in-person, virtual, and supportive services to consumers. All applications should contain in-person service(s) for consumers in the County in which they reside. Organizations seeking funding through this process should only apply to provide the full scope of services.

Question 3: Age category waived to use this for deafblind individuals of any age range needing independent living support services.

a. Many clients become blind over time and have no support in adapting to change of vision.

b. Increased need due to dual sensory impairment

Answer 3: The age restriction is established in federal regulations and cannot be waived. While DOR understands that needs exist beyond the allowable use of these funds, the funds must be used in accordance with the federal regulations. All individuals served with this funding must be 55 years of age or older. The bidder asking this question may wish to consider partnering with an organization who can provide the full scope of services required by the RFA. Working collaboratively, the applicants will potentially be better positioned to offer the full scope of services required by this RFA.

Question 4: Cover specialized assistive communication tools/technology?

Answer 4: The funding can be used, generally with prior approval, to purchase assistive technologies/devices that mitigate the impact(s) of blindness/low vision for individuals 55 and older.

Question 5: Cover support of having co-navigator 20 to 30 hours a month (including mileage)?

Answer 5: The funding is intended to provide the services specified in the RFA. Ongoing services at the level indicated in the question are generally beyond the scope of the program as the services are generally provided in training sessions to assist individuals in obtaining skills to increase independence. Many other factors, such as the amount of funding available and the target number of consumers to be served make providing the level of service identified in the question unrealistic as the dollars/consumer are not sufficient to fund that level of support.

Question 6: Cover communication accessibility pro-tactile/Deaf Interpreter for communication needs? (This is separate from co-navigator support)

Answer 6: The costs of interpreters of any kind are allowable when needed by a consumer when receiving training provided by awarded applicants.

Question 7: Inability to obtain employment due to dual sensory impairment ranging from moderate to severe blindness- how does the funds support with employment (job search, work accommodations)?

Answer 7: These funds are available to provide services to consumers seeking non-employment related goals who wish to increase independence in their home and community. The funding is not to be used for purposes where other funding is available. The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) provides services for consumers who are seeking employment. Consumers seeking employment should contact their local DOR office to open a case.

Question 8: Cover accessibility needs for housing/living situation so that they can navigate within their home?

Answer 8: The funding can be used as described in question #4 above to mitigate impacts of blindness/low vision allowing for greater independence in the home and community.

Question 9: If a file is too large to send as an attachment, can it be split up and sent in separate emails? What is your recommendation for doing this?

Answer 9: Applicants should follow the guidelines later in this addendum. If it is necessary to send more than one email due to attachment file sizes the applicant should indicate that, for example, 1/2 and 2/2 in the subject fields of the emails containing the entire grant application.

Question 10: If only the first email is recognized as received, how will the organization be notified that other emails were received?

Answer 10: Please give the Contracts team some time so that they can email applicants with a total count of the number of emails received. DOR has been unable to identify a way to send individualized responses for each email received. It is recommended that applicants submit applications early to allow any communications about the number of emails that are received as the application deadline is firm.

Question 11: In the funding is there a limit to the number of clients that we can provide for in the deaf blind community?

Answer 11: Refer to the table in the RFA that outlines the target number of consumers to be served in each county. Serving a sub-set of the target population is allowable, but the funding will be awarded only to organizations who can support the blind/visually impaired community regardless of other disabilities. Applicants must serve the target population, not only a sub-set of the target population.

Question 12: Is the age limit set at 55 or can funds be used for any age group in deaf blind community?

Answer 12: See the answer to question #3 above. There are no waivers for the age limitation on the funding.

## Important Reminders

* Prepare information ahead of time to ensure that there are no last-minute items that cannot be located or found, which may cause the application to be incomplete or submitted late.
* Follow formatting rules. Margins, font, font size, spacing, etc. as detailed in the RFA. Note that the RFA was published with different margins, spacing, and possibly other items that do not follow the submission rules. If the application narrative does not follow those specific rules, it will be disqualified and not scored.
* All requested items should be attached as separate attachments to your application email. That means the items on the checklists are each individually attached to the applicable email, either for an Organization Application or County Application.
* All items should be in accessible formats. That generally means Word or PDF files and they should be readable using a screen reader, not scanned, as evaluators need to review items to score them. This may mean an applicant needs to re-type a scanned form so that it is readable. Items such as IRS letter or Franchise Tax Board letters are not required to be accessible. Letters of support from collaborating organizations must be in an accessible format.
* Check the samples in Attachment 6 to make sure the items being submitted are what is being requested in the application package.
* A “Statement of Financial Position” is a very detailed fiscal report with additional details that may not be included in a balance sheet. Make sure the statement of financial position is the detailed version and not a balance sheet or collapsed version. If financial calculations are unable to be made the evaluators will not be able to score question #4 on the Organization Application.
* Remember the supplemental county application form that is required for each county.
* Review the benchmarks as you are constructing your application package. The benchmarks give insight into how the evaluators will be scoring applications.
* It is recommended that applicants submit application packages early, if possible, in case there are any difficulties. Remember that only PDF and Word docs should be attached. Many other file types, including ZIP files are deleted without notifying the applicant or DOR that an email was sent. Attachments should be attached separately and not zipped or combined.
* Prepare all application packages carefully. A sole application may be reviewed using the sole applicant checklist, but if optional items are not included the applications will be scored. Make sure to include everything possible as there is no way to tell if other applicants will be applying to serve the specific county(ies) that application packages are being prepared for.
* The subject line on your applications is very important. Check it to make sure your submission is properly received and identified.