

School-Based Health Centers – Improving Health Care Access for Children and Adolescents in Washington

Frequently Asked Questions

Interested applicants can submit questions to mary.simock@doh.wa.gov by Friday each week. We will add information on your question topic to this FAQ by the following Monday. Check back regularly for updates.

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Staffing and Services

Is the SBHC required to provide reproductive health/family planning services and immunizations?

SBHCs should provide comprehensive medical care, which includes reproductive health, family planning, and immunization services. However, SBHC services are determined by your community’s need, so you are not required to provide services that are not wanted or needed in your community. We recommend doing community engagement and/or a community needs assessment to inform your SBHC services decisions. You should also be prepared to provide a referral to a provider in the community for any services not available at the SBHC.

Is medical presence required, or can it just be mental health?

The SBHC must provide comprehensive and integrated medical and behavioral health care services. See the minimum requirements for SBHC services and staffing in [Table 1 of the RFA](#) (page 4) for more details.

Will we need to have a medical provider physically in a school-based clinic? Or can we have a physical school-based clinic with a nurse and testing supplies, and a medical provider accessible via telehealth? Could the SBHC be a health room with a school nurse, protocols overseen by a medical director, and a medical provider available via telehealth or part time only? What are the requirements for a medical provider to be physically on site?

The definition of a school-based health center (SBHC) for the purposes of this RFA follows [RCW 43.70.825](#), which defines an SBHC as a “student-focused health center located in or adjacent to a school that provides integrated medical, behavioral health, and other health care services such as dental care.” The intent of the SBHC grant program is to support a SBHC model of care where students can access integrated health care services at school, and the care team is embedded with and coordinating with the school community to provide a whole-child approach to care.

In this model, SBHC medical providers will primarily be providing care on site at a school. There are some scenarios, however, when a medical provider may be accessible by telehealth, but the medical provider must always be connected to a SBHC. Examples could include extending SBHC services via telehealth to other schools in a school district, connecting students with care on days the SBHC medical provider is not present at the school, connecting students at the SBHC with other providers in the community when needed, or reaching students at home when they are sick or when school is virtual.

You can find examples of [SBHC staffing models](#) on the [Washington School-Based Health Alliance website](#). If you are applying for a planning grant, you can use your time and funding to work out a staffing model plan, based on your community assessment findings, to determine the best fit to meet the needs for your SBHC.

Use of Grant Funds

What WA State procurement laws would we have to follow regarding construction and general purchasing thresholds?

You should follow any procurement rules/policies set by your organization or agency. As long as the activity benefits the SBHC, you are welcome and able to use the grant funds for any of the activities listed in [Table 1 of the RFA \(page 3\)](#).

Can we use the grant funds to purchase telehealth equipment?

Yes, start-up and operational/expansion/improvement grant recipients may use the grant funds for telehealth equipment, as long as the telehealth services are an addition or extension of a school-based health center’s services. Planning grant funds cannot be used to purchase telehealth equipment.

Can we use the grant funds to implement mobile clinics to reach additional schools?

Yes, start-up and operational/expansion/improvement grant recipients may use the grant funds to implement mobile clinics, as long as the mobile clinics are an addition or extension of a school-based health center's services. Planning grant funds can be used by existing SBHCs to plan for mobile clinics.

Is funding focused on specific programmatic areas?

Funding is available for SBHC capacity building for planning, starting, and operational/improvement/expansion projects.

Are school-based telehealth projects eligible?

Yes, telehealth-focused projects are eligible, as long as they're an addition or extension of a school-based health center's services.

Budget

How should we document our indirect rate?

In the budget workbook, you can enter your organization's indirect rate as a percentage, and the spreadsheet will automatically calculate the total indirect amount. The budget workbook is a summary of all expenses and funding sources for your project, so this might not be the same as the indirect rate charged to the grant funds. You can then use the budget narrative to show how much of the indirect will be charged to the grant.

If staff time and benefits will be in-kind and not charged to the grant, do we need to include them in the budget workbook and narrative?

Yes, please include the staff time and benefits for any positions that will be working on the grant activities. This will help us understand how your budget aligns with your project workplan and proposal.

The budget workbook will show your overall budget for the proposed project, summarizing all expenses and funding sources. You should include the staff time/benefits in the workbook, but you do not need to indicate that they are in-kind or match contributions. Use the budget narrative to show us which parts of your project will be funded by the grant and which part will be funded by match or in-kind contributions.

In the budget narrative for the planning grant under the Position Description section, since we do not have any positions outlined yet for the SBHC, can we instead describe the positions that will facilitate the planning grant?

Yes, it is appropriate for planning grant applicants to include descriptions of the positions that will do the work of the planning grant.

Can we allocate funds for something (like a consultant or training opportunities) if we don't have a specific company/person/opportunity in mind yet?

Yes, you can allocate funds to a category and determine the specifics later. However, keep in mind that your budget is a scored component of the application, so it may impact your overall score.

My organization doesn't have a federally approved indirect rate, and our indirect rate is more than 10%. Can we negotiate the indirect rate?

The indirect rate must not be more than the federally approved indirect rate for your organization, or more than 10% of the total grant award. We will also accept indirect rates already approved by the Washington State Department of Health. Please include documentation in your application. You can attach any documentation with your budget workbook or narrative.

Where on the budget spreadsheet do we indicate match? Do we list line items but not include cost in the total column?

The budget workbook should show your overall budget for the proposed project and summarize all expenses and funding sources. You do not need to show the in-kind or match contributions in the budget workbook. Use the **budget narrative** to show us which parts of your project will be funded by grant funds and which part will be funded by match or in-kind contributions.

Do you have sample planning budgets?

No, we do not have sample budgets available. The budget is specific for your organization and project. We recommend starting with your project proposal, then going through the project workplan (template is available in the [application](#)), making revisions for your needs and adding your project-specific activities. Then use the budget workbook (template also available in the [application](#)) to calculate what you need to accomplish those activities (staffing, supplies, equipment, etc.).

Can in-kind contributions count toward the recommended match (for start-up and operational/expansion/improvement grants)? How should in-kind contributions be documented in the Excel budget workbook?

Yes, in-kind contributions are acceptable funding sources to count toward the match.

The budget workbook should show your overall budget for the proposed project and summarize all expenses and funding sources. You do not need to show the in-kind or match contributions in the budget workbook. Use the **budget narrative** to show us which parts of your project will be funded by grant funds and which part will be funded by match or in-kind contributions.

What are the matching funds requirements for planning grants?

Planning grants are not required to have match funds.

Demonstrated Support

What is DOH's process for scheduling interviews with those who contributed letters of support? Will the applicant and/or school partner be notified?

All applicants will be notified of their award status by the end of day on Monday, May 16. If your application is selected for an award, then DOH will contact the organizations that provided letters of support for your application to schedule a short interview. We will ask them about your organization's history of working with the intended community for the SBHC and for an additional reference. Interviews will take place in late May as part of the contract development process.

For a planning grant, should a school district get letters of support from community organizations, or health care providers, or both?

A planning grant application from a school district should include at least two letters of support from organizations/groups representing the community or population the SBHC is intended to serve (this should align with the communities/populations you identify as historically underserved in your community). You should also include a letter signed by your school district administration, school nurse, and the administration of the school building where you are proposing to start an SBHC to show us that these key roles are aware and supportive of your proposed project. There are template letters of support from community organizations and schools available in the [application](#).

You do not need to include letters of support from a health care provider, but you are welcome to include them.

Do you have sample letters of support from community organizations?

Yes, there is a template letter of support for community organizations available in the application. You can open the [application link](#), select your grant type, scroll down in the application to the Demonstrated Support section, and download the template file.

Are letters of support sufficient to show support between the school/school district and sponsoring health care agency?

Letters of support from the school/school district are sufficient. We recommend having a more formal agreement in place (like a Memorandum of Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, Tribal Resolution, or lease agreement, etc.) between the school/school district and sponsoring health care agency to prevent barriers to SBHC operations.

In the application, you can attach any existing agreements in the Demonstrated Support section as an additional letter of support.

Is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the school/school district and sponsoring health care agency required (for start-up and operational/expansion/improvement grants)?

We require documentation of an agreement between the school/school district and sponsoring health care agency, but it does not need to be an MOU specifically. An MOU is just a common example.

Who should the letters of support be from?

We are requesting applicants include a letter or statement of support from the school, school district administration, and school nurse where the school-based health center will be located as well as letters/statements of support from at least two organizations or representative groups serving or from the community the SBHC will serve.

Project Activities

Do planning grants need to identify a location for the SBHC? Wouldn't this be achieved through the required activities such as community needs assessment and community engagement?

Planning grant applicants should demonstrate readiness to complete the required activities in the grant timeframe by identifying and having support from a potential school for the SBHC. We will consider applications that do not have a school partner yet, but it will impact your organization's overall score.

The community needs assessment and engagement activities will help you create your plan for an SBHC, which would include details on the facility space, clinic hours, services, and staffing.

The planning grant workplan mentions participating in training. Can DOH describe the training?

Training recommendations will be customized to meet the awardee's needs and interests. Examples could include participating in a School-Based Health Centers 101 training/technical assistance with the Washington School-Based Health Alliance (WA SBHA), webinars from the [School-Based Health Alliance](#) and/or [WA SBHA](#), and/or trainings for health care providers on adolescent health services.

Do we need to edit the tasks/activities in the sample workplan?

You should edit the sample workplan to adjust the required activities to meet your needs, and you should also add any activities specific to how you will complete your proposed project.

What are the required activities for operational, expansion, and/or improvement grant awards?

There was a typo in the description of the template workplan for the operational/expansion/improvement grants that mentioned required activities for start-up grants instead of operational/expansion/improvement grants. The template workplan was updated on March 17, and we recommend replacing your downloaded file if you downloaded it before this date.

Applicants can edit the template workplans to fit your needs. The suggested and required activities are outlined in the [RFA](#) in the description for each grant type (pages 6 through 10).

Eligibility and Grant Types

If our organization applies for the planning grant, is it a requirement that we have a business proposal or ability to start a school-based clinic at the end of the grant period? What if we encounter obstacles, community resistance, or staffing shortages and don't end up starting a clinic?

Planning grant recipients will use the funds to work toward creating a plan to implement an SBHC. We hope that planning grant recipients will be successful and able to move to the start-up phase the following year, but we recognize that obstacles can come up. There are no penalties for not being able to implement or move forward with your plan.

Who can apply for a start-up grant?

Start-up grant applications must come from the sponsoring health care agency.

What types of organizations are eligible?

Planning grants are open to community non-profit organizations, schools/school districts, and/or a health care organization. However, applications for start-up and operations/improvements grants should come from the sponsoring healthcare agency. This information can be found in the [RFA](#) on pages 6 through 10.

Multiple Schools, School Districts, and/or School-Based Health Centers

Can an entity like an Educational Service District have their own SBHC?

It depends. For the purposes of this RFA, the definition of a school-based health center (SBHC) follows [RCW 43.70.825](#), which defines an SBHC as a “student-focused health center located in or adjacent to a school that provides integrated medical, behavioral health, and other health care services such as dental care.” The proposed SBHC must meet the minimum requirements for SBHC services and staffing listed in [Table 1 of the RFA](#) (pages 3 to 4) once operational. This includes:

- The SBHC must be **in** or **adjacent to** a school
- The SBHC must provide **comprehensive** and **integrated** medical and behavioral health care services, or referrals to appropriate providers in the community

My project proposal would support two schools within a school district. Do I need letters of support from each one?

We want to see that your project has buy-in from the school nurse, school building administration, and school district administration of each school served by the SBHC. You are welcome to do this through one letter signed by all parties or by separate letters.

Is there any prohibition against submitting a collaborative application between five school districts for a planning grant?

You can submit a project proposal involving multiple schools and/or school districts. Our only requirement is that the proposed SBHC will meet the minimum requirements for SBHC services and staffing listed in [Table 1 of the RFA](#) (pages 3 to 4) once operational. Your proposed budget will be scored and should align with the duties and project workload.

Is it possible to propose a project which supports multiple schools/districts?

Yes, as long as the SBHC(s) meet the minimum requirements for SBHC services and staffing listed in [Table 1 of the RFA](#) (pages 3 to 4).

My organization manages three SBHCs. We're interested in an expansion grant and want to use the funds to support each of the three SBHCs. Each SBHC site has specific and individual needs, but the total expansion budget for all three sites would be \$150,000. Do we need three separate grant proposals (one for each site), or do we submit one proposal with details on all three sites?

You can submit your proposal separately or all together. Since your total proposed budget is within the amount of one grant, we recommend submitting just one proposal with details on each of the sites to save you time and effort on the application as well as your contract if your proposal is accepted.

If a health care organization is currently running an SBHC and is interested in starting another SBHC within the same district, which grant type should they apply for?

It depends on your project proposal and readiness. We recommend applying for a planning grant if you need to develop new plans and gather community interest/support for the SBHC. If you already have plans and support, you could apply for a start-up grant to implement the new SBHC. An operational/expansion/improvement grant is intended primarily for projects within the existing SBHC, but it could fit if your proposed project at the new school site is not a full SBHC, but a smaller extension of services based out of the existing SBHC (like telehealth or mobile clinics).

[General RFA Questions](#)

Will the due date be extended?

If we do not receive enough applications after April 15 at 11:59 PM PST, then we may extend the due date. We will send out notifications of changes to the due date using the same channels used to release the RFA.

I have questions or would like to request changes to the Terms and Conditions (Appendix A of the RFA, pages 21-28). How should I proceed?

Most of the terms and conditions are negotiable. You can make and keep a list of your questions and change requests. If your application is selected, please send us your list and we will work with you to address them.

Is the DOH SBHC grant the same thing as the [King County Best Starts for Kids](#) RFA?

No, these are separate funding opportunities with separate applications.

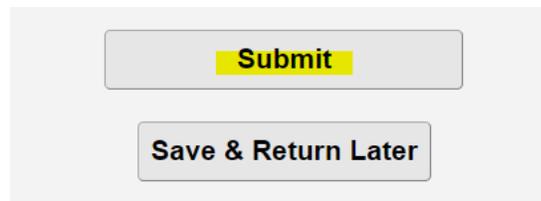
How can we edit our application after we submit it?

Please review your application and make sure you are ready to submit your application, with all short answer questions complete and all attachments uploaded, before hitting the 'submit' button.

If you submitted your application and need to make edits, please email us (mary.simock@doh.wa.gov) with your changes, and we will make the edits for you.

How do we make sure our application is submitted?

Please be sure to press the **Submit** button at the bottom of the application. This tells us you have finished completing the application and will not be making additional changes.



The email address field on the application is requesting a phone number format. What do I do?

Thanks for your patience! We fixed the formatting on the email address question field on March 24, and you should be able to add your email now. Please let us know if you still have difficulty.

Is the April 15, 2022, due date firm?

Yes, applications are due by 11:59 PM Pacific Standard Time on April 15, 2022. If we do not receive enough applications, we may choose to extend the due date. We will send out notifications of changes to the deadline using the same channels used to release the RFA.

Will there be funding opportunities in the future?

We hope to offer funding opportunities again next year, but it will depend on the availability of state funding. We will share more information about funding opportunities after the first year as soon as we can.

What is the definition of a school-based health center (SBHC)?

[The legislation](#) defines an SBHC as “a collaboration between the community, the school, and a sponsoring [health care] agency that operates the school-based health center, which is a student-focused health center located in or adjacent to a school that provides integrated medical, behavioral health, and other health care services such as dental care.”

Will there be ongoing funding?

Grant awards will be for a 12-month period to start. Funding after one year is not guaranteed and will be dependent on meeting grant deliverables and availability of state funding.

Is there a limit on the number of proposals an organization can submit?

Organizations can submit multiple proposals, but the proposals must be for different SBHC sites. We will only review one application per SBHC site.