



# **Children's Trust Fund Grantee Handbook**

# Table of Contents

<b>Background Information.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Guiding Principles and Core Values .....	3
Structure.....	3
Grants.....	3
<b>Implementation.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Relationship with Local Child Welfare Agency.....	4
Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework .....	4
Community Collaboration.....	4
Sustainability .....	4
<b>Reporting .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Requirements.....	5
Quarterly Program Reports.....	5
Quarterly Expenditure Reports .....	5
Data Collection Spreadsheets.....	5
<b>Technical Assistance .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Bi-Monthly Calls .....	5
Site Visits.....	5
Changes to the Work Plan .....	6
<b>Professional Development .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Annual Grantee Meeting .....	6
Webinars .....	7
Family Support News Brief.....	7
Virtual Networking Opportunities .....	7
<b>Appendix 1: Contact Information .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Appendix 2: CTF Reporting Timetable.....</b>	<b>9</b>

# Background Information

## Guiding Principles and Core Values

The purpose of the Children's Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect in Pennsylvania.

### Guiding Principles

The Children's Trust Fund board:

- Aspires to be a catalyst to influence public policy and to change social attitudes that promote and tolerate violence against children
- Strives to improve the lives of children by initiating prevention programs that strengthen families, build communities, and empower individuals to protect and nurture their children
- Encourages collaboration among public and private agencies, replication of innovative community-based programs, strong leadership, flexibility and diversity
- Recognizes our responsibilities as stewards of a public trust, never losing sight of children's urgent need to be free from abuse and neglect
- Is passionately committed to ensuring the safety of children in Pennsylvania

### Core Values

The Children's Trust Fund Board believes that:

- Every child has the right to be safe, nurtured and protected from abuse and neglect
- Every child should be given the opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential by having access to Children's Trust Fund funded prevention programs
- Every child has the right to grow up in a supportive, stable, permanent family
- Every community should be trusted and supported to make decisions about services most appropriate for its children and families
- Social, economic, cultural and racial diversity of Pennsylvania's communities should be respected

### Structure

In December 1988, the General Assembly established the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) Act 11 P.S. §§ 2231-2238. The CTF Act provides for a 15-member Children's Trust Fund Board to administer the Children's Trust Fund, which is a fund established by this Act to provide for the granting of trust fund money to eligible programs. The trust fund is dedicated to funding community-based programs to prevent child abuse and neglect and is part of the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds.

The CTF Act provides that the Children's Trust Fund Board shall administer the fund. This 15-member board consists of three members from the Senate, appointed by the Senate President pro-tempore; three members from the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and nine public members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Deputy Secretary for the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), as designated by the Secretary of the Department of Human Services (DHS), serves as the executive director of the board. OCDEL's Bureau of Early Learning Services supports the administration of the trust fund through program, data and fiscal activities. The Center for Schools and Communities provides technical assistances and support to grantees through a contract with DHS.

A \$10 surcharge on all applications for marriage licenses and complaints for divorce fund the CTF. These surcharges are paid into a special non-lapsing fund. Interest and donations also contribute to the CTF. Donations to the CTF may also be designated via annual state tax returns.

### Grants

The Children's Trust Fund awards grants to fund community-based child abuse and neglect prevention programs in Pennsylvania. Specific emphasis for funding is placed on primary and secondary prevention programs, which focus on the prevention of abuse before it occurs for the first time. Grantees are expected to address four core areas within their work statement, which are monitored throughout the grant period. The core areas are: (1) Relationship with Local Child Welfare Agency; (2) Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework; (3) Community Collaboration; and (4) Sustainability. Each area is described in the Implementation section below.

Requests for Applications are typically released in the spring of each year and are awarded in three-year grant cycles. Current grantees may apply during their third year for the upcoming funding cycle.

Grants are awarded in the fall, and new grantees are required to attend an orientation at this time. The grant year runs from November 1 to October 31. Grant payments are made in the beginning of each quarter, subject to the availability of funds. Fourth quarter payments are split into two payments – one at the start of the quarter and one after the submission of the final report. Grantees are required to submit renewal documents for years two and three of the grant. Renewal documents include a signature form and match verification forms for each year.

## **Implementation**

### **Relationship with Local Child Welfare Agency**

Because county-based children and youth agencies are responsible for child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention, it is important that organizations providing prevention services communicate effectively with the county children and youth agency. Although Children's Trust Fund grants are meant to fund programs that prevent child abuse, there can be overlap with families served by the child welfare system. For example, a family may come to the attention of child welfare staff and express a need for additional supports, though a case may not be opened. In this situation, a CTF-funded program could provide the support the family needs to ensure that abuse does not occur. Similarly, families with open general protective services cases may participate in CTF-funded programs. Maintaining a collaborative relationship with the local child welfare agency is an important relationship that connects the grantee with other prevention and family support programs and encourages effective coordination of services with families.

### **Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework**

Grantees are required to incorporate the Strengthening Families Protective Factors (SFPF) Framework into their work with families. This strengths-based approach to family support encourages agencies to create environments where parents can build five protective factors which, when robust, keep their families strong and promote healthy child development. The five protective factors include: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children. This research-informed approach developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy has been shown to improve outcomes for families and prevent child maltreatment. Pennsylvania is one of more than 30 states to have a multi-disciplinary Strengthening Families Leadership Team that works to integrate the approach across human service, education, and health and family support systems.

Many grantees are already working with families from a strengths-based perspective and the CTF award encourages them to be even more intentional in how they approach families. Information about the framework and opportunities for additional training are available to grantees during orientation, the annual grantee meeting, bi-monthly calls, and site visits. More information about the framework and the work of the Strengthening Families Leadership Team in Pennsylvania can be found at the website listed in Appendix 1.

### **Community Collaboration**

Community collaboration is an important aspect of successful CTF-funded programs. Grantees are asked to explain how their program not only meets the existing needs of families in their community, but also how it fits into the larger community effort to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect. Collaboration can take many forms including shared planning of events, participation in community-wide coalitions, collaborative grant-seeking, or shared professional development opportunities. Collaborating with community partners breaks down agency silos and allows for a comprehensive approach to support families and keep children safe within the community.

### **Sustainability**

Grantees should consider and make plans to ensure sustainability of their program after CTF funding has expired. Sustainability plans are discussed at each year's site visit with particular emphasis on specific strategies in year three. Sustainability strategies could include seeking other funding, modifying services, or collaborative grant-seeking with community partners.

# Reporting

## Requirements

To meet the obligations of the grant agreement, grantees are required to complete program and fiscal reporting. Reporting requirements are explained during new grantee orientation and updates are communicated as needed. Reporting forms are provided to grantees during orientation. Contact information for each reporting tool can be found in Appendix 1 of this document. Submission deadlines can be found in Appendix 2.

## Quarterly Program Reports

At the close of each quarter of the grant year, grantees complete a program report, which includes information about the project's activities, progress and challenges. These reports serve as a "point-in-time" snapshot of the grantee's progress. Feedback on the reports is given and grantees may be asked to provide clarification or resubmit incomplete reports. The reports are cumulative with all four quarters within a given grant year listed on the same document.

## Quarterly Expenditure Reports

Children's Trust Fund grant payments are paid at the start of each quarter, subject to availability of funds. After the close of the quarter grantees are required to complete an expenditure report that outlines financial activity. If the expenditures do not match the budgeted amount of the reported quarter, grantees are required to include an explanation. Any unused funds and interest monies must be returned to the Department of Human Services at end of each grant year.

## Data Collection Spreadsheets

Grantees are required to collect data about the families served by the CTF-funded program. This data is reported using a spreadsheet that is submitted twice per year. The spreadsheet is cumulative with data from all three years captured on the same document. Grantees upload the spreadsheet to the DocuShare site managed by OCDEL. Instructions for accessing this site are shared during new grantee orientation.

# Technical Assistance

Technical assistance and support for CTF grantees is provided by staff from the Center for Schools and Communities (CSC). The purpose of technical assistance is to build capacity and provide information that supports best practices in delivery of services to families. Types of support may include consultation about challenges or barriers, clarification about reporting procedures, or connection of grantees with resources. Technical assistance is delivered primarily through bi-monthly calls, responses to grantee inquiries, and site visits. Forms associated with technical assistance are provided to grantees at new grantee orientation.

## Bi-Monthly Calls

Technical assistance staff conduct bi-monthly calls (six per year) with grantees to discuss program progress and challenges. These calls are scheduled at times that are convenient for program staff. Organizations can determine which staff participate in these calls, but it is suggested that the program contact person as well as direct service staff participate if possible. These calls offer opportunities to reflect, celebrate and ask questions and brainstorm solutions to challenges. Grantees may contact technical assistance staff between calls as needed.

## Site Visits

Each year, technical assistance staff travel to the grantee's location for a site visit to monitor the program's progress. Grantees are contacted in advance to schedule this two-hour visit. A form is provided to the grantee in advance with the topics that will be covered during the discussion. Following the visit a report is completed and returned to the grantee. An exit interview is completed by telephone after the close of the third grant year.

## **Changes to the Work Plan**

During implementation of the approved work plan, there may be unforeseen challenges. If challenges occur that prohibit the ability of the grantee to meet the requirements of the grant agreement they should be discussed with technical assistance staff. To ensure full implementation and/or to make modifications follow the procedures outlined below: Improvement Plans, Revisions, or Relinquish the Grant.

### **Improvement Plans**

During the course of the grant, organizations may encounter challenges in delivering the program in accordance with the plans outlined in the work statement developed by the grantee. Organizations struggling to meet numbers of families served or other requirements of the work statement may be asked to complete an Improvement Plan. With support from technical assistance staff, the grantee develops actionable steps that will ensure that grant objectives and goals are met. Progress in implementing the plan is monitored by technical assistance and OCDEL staff. Grantees that make significant changes to their work statement will submit a Revision.

### **Revisions**

If grantees need to make significant modifications to the program listed in their work statement, a program and/or budget revision may be needed. Grantees are required to provide justification and documentation for program and budget revision requests demonstrating that the purpose and activities of the original grant, as approved and funded, will continue to be served by the revision. Revision requests must be received prior to the revision taking place whenever possible and no later than 30 days before the end of the grant year for the current grant year. Unless otherwise noted, revisions in the current grant year carry forward to remaining years.

#### *Program Revisions*

Program revisions are required for major modifications such as:

- Substantial redefinition and/or increase or decrease of the population to be served through the grant
- Major change in the originally-approved design of the program which potentially alters the program's objectives
- Change in the entity responsible for administering the grant agreement
- Change in a subcontractor responsible for completion of components of the grant program
- Change in curriculum or model used that does not alter the program's objectives or deviate from a model program's requirements

Program revisions could have budget implications which necessitate a budget revision.

#### *Budget Revisions*

A budget revision is required to reallocate funds between major categories (Personnel, Operations, Fixed Assets) totaling 10 percent or more of the category total or if a line is added or removed. The total CTF award amount may be reduced, but not increased.

### **Relinquish the Grant**

Grantees who cannot meet the requirements of their grant agreement should contact technical assistance staff to discuss relinquishing their award. A letter stating this intent must be submitted indicating the desire to relinquish the remaining award.

## **Professional Development**

### **Annual Grantee Meeting**

Grantees are required to attend an annual meeting that includes professional development and networking opportunities as well as updates on CTF reporting requirements. Grantees should plan to send at least two staff from their agency. Details about these events will be communicated in advance including information about travel and registration. Funds for travel to this event are set aside in each grantee's budget.

**Webinars**

CTF grantees have access to the Pennsylvania Family Support Webinar Series that is hosted by the Center for Schools and Communities. The interactive webinars cover a wide-range of topics including child development, working with parents, and best practices in family support. Registration information is sent to grantees via email and webinars are archived for those unable to attend.

**Family Support News Brief**

CTF grantees receive the monthly news brief created by Center for Schools and Communities. The news brief includes information about best practices and upcoming events.

**Virtual Networking Opportunities**

Grantees are invited to participate in periodic networking opportunities hosted by Center for Schools and Communities. These calls or virtual meetings may be centered on a topic or may include a group of grantees implementing similar programs.

# Appendix 1: Contact Information

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## Children's Trust Fund

[www.PA-CTF.org](http://www.PA-CTF.org)

## Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework

Pennsylvania Leadership Team

[www.PA-Strengthening-Families.org](http://www.PA-Strengthening-Families.org)

Center for the Study of Social Policy

[www.CSSP.org/Reform/StrengtheningFamilies](http://www.CSSP.org/Reform/StrengtheningFamilies)

## Office of Child Development and Early Learning

333 Market Street, 6th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17126

[www.dhs.state.pa.us/dhsorganization/OfficeOfChildDevelopmentAndEarlyLearning](http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/dhsorganization/OfficeOfChildDevelopmentAndEarlyLearning)

### Program Manager

Andrew Dietz

Family Support Program Manager

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### Data

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### Fiscal

Brent Gordon

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Fax (717) 346-9330

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Deepa Saravana

Statistical Analyst

(717) 783-7215

[dsaravanav@pa.gov](mailto:dsaravanav@pa.gov)

## Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Ave, Suite 200

Camp Hill, PA 17011

Fax (717) 763-2083

[www.Center-School.org](http://www.Center-School.org)

### Technical Assistance

Rijelle Kraft

Family Support Technical Assistance Coordinator

(717) 763-1661 ext. 221

[rkraft@csc.csiu.org](mailto:rkraft@csc.csiu.org)

### Project Manager

Karen Shanoski

Partnerships Project Manager, Family Support

(717) 763-1661 ext. 139

[kshanoski@csc.csiu.org](mailto:kshanoski@csc.csiu.org)

# Appendix 2: CTF Reporting Timetable

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## Quarterly Program Reports

Submit **electronically** to Dietz, [anddietz@pa.gov](mailto:anddietz@pa.gov), and copy Rijelle Kraft, [rkraft@csc.csiu.org](mailto:rkraft@csc.csiu.org).

For questions contact Rijelle Kraft.

Quarter	Reporting Period	Due Date – 30 days After End of Quarter
1	November 1 – January 31	Last working day of February
2	February 1 – April 30	Last working day of May
3	May 1 – July 31	Last working day of August
4	August 1 – October 31	Last working day of November

## Data Spreadsheets

Submit **through the DocuShare website**.

For questions contact Deepa Saravana, [dsaravanav@pa.gov](mailto:dsaravanav@pa.gov).

Reporting Period	Due Date – 30 days After End of Quarter
November 1 – April 30	Last working day of May
May 1 - October 31	Last working day of November

## Quarterly Expenditure Reports

Submit **signed and scanned copy** to RA-PWOCDELExpeditur@pa.gov.

For questions contact Brent Gordon, [brgordon@pa.gov](mailto:brgordon@pa.gov).

Quarter	Reporting Period	Due Date – 15 days After End of Quarter
1	November 1 – January 31	February 15 or next working day
2	February 1 – April 30	May 15 or next working day
3	May 1 – July 31	August 15 or next working day
4	August 1 – October 31	November 15 or next working day