



**MENTOR Vermont: OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative - COVID-19 RFP Questions**

**Q: Does the budget vs. actual need to be for the entire agency or just the mentoring program?**

A: All budget items should be only for the mentoring program. If your organization coordinates other programs/services beyond mentoring, do not include them in the budget documents. Shared portion of expense such as percentages of staff salaries, rent, insurance, and other shared resources (for example a printer that's shared across the organization) can be included in the budget as are appropriate in proportion with the other services the agency runs.

**Q: If my fiscal year ends during the grant period do I need to submit the budget for the upcoming fiscal year as well?**

A: Yes, if your fiscal year ends between June 1 and September 30, please submit you budget vs. actuals for the current fiscal year and your budget for the upcoming fiscal year. We realize that the budget for the upcoming fiscal year might still be a draft and that is acceptable. If your fiscal year ended in March or April, please include a budget and actual for the fiscal year that just ended, along with your current budget and actual for the fiscal year you just began.

**Q: Our school year program runs from October 1 to mid-May. Matches don't meet during the summer, though they may choose to correspond via a supervised pen pal program. Is our organization still eligible for this grant? Can we apply for funding to build organizational capacity, prepare for potential virtual programming in the fall, or make program improvements?**

A: Yes, even though your program model is such that your matches aren't meeting during the grant period, your organization is still eligible for this funding opportunity. In your proposal you should explain your program model and why it is that matches don't meet during this time period. You should also address what your program is doing to maintain mentees and mentors' connection with the program during the grant period, even if matches aren't meeting. This doesn't need to be mentors and mentees connecting via pen pal or other remote means with one another if that isn't what your program typically does during this time period, it could be how your staff is connecting with each mentor and mentee individually to keep them committed to the program so they will return to mentoring again when the program starts back up in October.

You can apply for funding to build organizational capacity, prepare for whatever method/structure you believe your mentoring program will take when your program resumes in October, and make other program improvements.

**Q: Our mentoring program has historically not completed national criminal record checks and our existing mentors have not been screened at that level. Since our matches do not meet in person or virtually during this funding period, are we eligible to apply despite the fact that we have not screened current mentors with a national criminal record check?**

A: Unfortunately, based on the requirements of the OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative, all mentoring programs receiving funding through the OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative must meet the [OJJDP Special Conditions](#) and as outlined in Special Condition 15, programs must conduct national criminal record checks of their mentors.



**Q: While many of our matches in the target regions will continue over the summer, most of our matches across the organization (include about 20% of those in target regions) are not formally supported as many of our mentors are away from campus/school during the summer months. (Of course, we are looking at a new paradigm with distance mentoring this summer.) The grant seems billed to offer 3 different types of support (1- maintaining matches, 2-supporting mentoring orgs during this time, 3- positioning mentoring orgs to be ready for growth associated with the primary purpose of the OJJDP funding). I would prefer to seek support for 2 & 3, but many of the criteria and reporting metrics in the RFP focus on maintaining matches. Do we need to focus on maintaining matches or is there a path for primary funding for 2&3?**

A: Applicants can focus their proposal on positioning their organization to be ready for growth after the end of this grant period. With that the applicant may want to explore ways in which that growth may look different than it has historically given the current pandemic. Additionally, even though matches may not be meeting during this time period, applicants should clearly explain in their proposal what their program is doing to maintain connection with the mentees and mentors during the grant period even if matches aren't meeting. This doesn't necessarily need to be mentors and mentees connecting via remote means with one another if that isn't what your program typically does during this time period, it could be how your staff is connecting with each mentor and mentee individually to keep them committed to the program so they will return to mentoring again when the program starts back up in the fall. Finally, applicants will want to explain their program model and why it is that matches do not meet during this time period.

An organization receiving funding that doesn't have matches meeting during the grant period due to their program model will work with MENTOR Vermont to ensure that the reporting requirements are as applicable as possible for the organization while still providing MENTOR Vermont with the data it needs to report to the Vermont Department for Children and Families so they can then in turn have the information required for their report to OJJDP. It is possible that some aspects of the monthly reports will end up being not applicable to every grantee.

**Q: In the narrative, could we talk about budget shortfalls due to COVID?**

A: Yes, The RFP review committee will prioritize proposals that demonstrate a current need for financial assistance due to the circumstances of the pandemic.

**Q: Should we/can we talk about creating new capacity/programming for when we are able to begin again in the fall?**

A: Yes, this funding is intended to fund among other things staff time and hardware and software needed to build organizational capacity and develop organizational improvements. It is permissible that this organizational capacity building and improvements may be creating new capacity/programs for after this grant period.