



OFFICE OF OPIOID AND SUBSTANCE USE RESPONSE

Request for Applications: Opioid Settlement Funds

The City of Richmond's Office of Opioid and Substance Use Response announce the availability of Opioid Settlement funds to support evidence-based overdose prevention, treatment, and recovery programs serving Richmond residents.

A total of \$600,000 is available through this Request for Applications (RFA). Eligible organizations may submit proposals requesting up to \$600,000, and the City anticipates funding no more than ten (10) proposals. Awarded projects may be considered for renewal during the next application cycle. Applications must adhere to the Terms, Condition, and Approved Uses of Opioid Settlement Funds as enumerated in [Exhibit E of the Distributer and Janssen Settlement Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU).

Background and Purpose

Richmond, Virginia faces a severe overdose crisis driven by fentanyl-contaminated drugs, an unregulated drug supply, and complications from polysubstance use. In 2023 alone, more than [220 people](#) in Richmond died from overdose. Statewide, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) reported a [59% increase](#) in opioid overdose death rates per 100,000 people between 2019 and 2023.

Black and Indigenous communities continue to bear disproportionate impact. [Data from the Virginia Department of Health](#) (VDH) indicate that overdose deaths among Black Virginians increased by 41% during this period compared to 11% among white Virginians. This disparity reflects longstanding structural inequities in healthcare access and historical underinvestment in impacted communities, all of which are associated with higher overdose risk and negative health outcomes.

While overdose rates have begun declining in some populations since 2023, they remain significantly above pre-pandemic levels. Beyond the fatal toll, countless individuals live with substance use disorder, survive overdoses, or experience drug-related injuries. The emergence of sedatives like Xylazine and Medetomidine further complicates this crisis and demands an urgent public health response.

Since 2022, Virginia localities have received Opioid Settlement Funds from both the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority and National Opioid Settlements. These funds must be dedicated to the communities most impacted by the overdose crisis. To that end, the City of Richmond seeks community-driven projects community-driven projects that are accountable to those they serve.

Consistent with evidence-based public health practice and federal guidance, overdose prevention and response efforts are most effective when they prioritize populations experiencing the highest burden of harm while maintaining universal eligibility for services



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KEY PRIORITIES

The Richmond Opioid Taskforce has identified the following key priorities for 2026.

1. Overdose Prevention & Community-Based Services

Expand and strengthen programs that reach people outside traditional care systems. Support mobile/non-traditional treatment settings in the community. Move beyond abstinence-only approaches to embrace philosophies that meet people where they are.

2. Evidence-Based, Trauma-Informed Care Integration

Integrate meaningful trauma-informed practices and evidence-based treatments across all treatment settings including, but not limited to, Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) and Contingency Management. Ensure that these practices are accessible and culturally responsive.

3. Priority Populations & Targeted Public Health Impact

Focus services on populations experiencing disproportionately high overdose rates and documented barriers to accessing effective prevention, treatment, and recovery supports, including but not limited to Black communities, Latine/Spanish-speaking populations, pregnant and parenting individuals, and LGBTQIA+ individuals. Ensure appropriate language access, communication supports and service delivery approaches that improve engagement, retention, and outcomes for participants. All funded programs must remain open and accessible to any eligible participant while demonstrating how outreach, design, or service delivery addresses the needs of populations with elevated overdose risk.

4. System Integration & Continuum of Care

Strengthening connections across services through peer navigators, centralized referral hubs, drop-in centers/one-stop-shops, and improved cross-system coordination. Break down silos between healthcare, housing, mental health, and recovery services.

Proposals may include topics outside of these priorities; however, alignment with these identified focus areas will be a consideration in application evaluation. Up to ten (10) bonus points may be awarded to proposals that include two or more organizations submitting a joint application to support a singular proposed project.



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ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLD

Applicants must be Virginia nonstock (nonprofit) corporations or local government entities authorized to conduct business in the Commonwealth of Virginia and be in good standing with the City of Richmond.

- Applicants must be in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, and have no outstanding violations, taxes, or penalties.
- Applicants must disclose any lawsuits to which they have been a party in the past three years, as well as any lawsuits and investigations, criminal or otherwise, relating to the financial or business practices of the organization that are pending at the time of application.
- Applicants must provide all attachments listed below:
 - Cover Sheet: See attachment A
 - Submission of attached Microsoft Form
 - Proof of liability insurance
 - Federal tax-exempt certification
 - Most recent IRS Form 990 (Must be a complete 990. Form 990-N will not be accepted)
 - Project budget
 - Current year operating budget

SUBMISSION AND AWARD NOTICE

- Questions about this RFA may be directed to opioidresponse@rva.gov
- [Microsoft Form Application Questions](#) must be completed and all required attachments must be submitted by email to opioidresponse@rva.gov no later than **Friday March 20, 2026 at 5:00 PM**. Late applications will not be accepted.
- The city expects to notify successful applicants by email no later than **Friday, May 1, 2026**.



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REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Community Impact and Lived Experience (25 Points)

- Potential to and/or demonstrated history of providing support for communities most impacted by overdose
- Demonstrated integration of lived experience expertise of People Who Use Drugs (PWUD) or individuals experiencing Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)/ Substance Use Disorder (SUD) into program planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Program design identifies and addresses practical, systemic, or logistical barriers that contribute to unequal overdose risk, delayed care, or reduced treatment engagement. Alignment with Richmond Opioid Task Force Priorities listed above.

Program Design and Evidence Based Practices (25 Points)

- Clarity and feasibility of program model
- Ability to address holistic needs of program participants
- Integration of evidence based or evidence informed practices
- Utilization of both qualitative and quantitative data in program design
- Relevance to current public health landscape
- Ability to provide support for individuals often excluded from traditional models of care

Connection Across Continuum of Care (20 Points)

- **Bonus 10 Points for applications that include two or more agencies working collaboratively on a singular proposed project**
- Demonstrated relationships with other community partners to strengthen outcomes
- Participation in community coalitions or collaboratives addressing OUD/SUD
- Formal and informal referral partners
- History of collaboration with impacted communities and other community partners

Data Collection and Outside Reporting (15 Points)

- Proposal alignment with current data and community needs
- Ability to collect data around programmatic outcomes to improve and inform future development OR willingness and capacity to partner with an organization that can provide TA in this area
- History of evaluating organization's own programs and making iterative improvements

Cost-Effectiveness and Budget (15 Points)

- Clear, reasonable and well-justified budget
- Plans/ ability to continue program or project after this funding cycle ends
- Leveraging additional resources
- Sustainability planning



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Review Process Steps

- **Eligibility Screening:** All applications will be screened for completeness and eligibility requirements.
- **Technical Review and Scoring:** Eligible applications will be evaluated against the review criteria by the scoring committee of subject matter experts.
- **Final Selection:** The scoring committee and City leadership will together review the top scoring applications to identify up to 10 grantees for funding. A minimum score of 80 will be required to advance to the final selection phase.



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Attachment A

Application Cover Sheet

Organization Information:

Organization Name: _____

Federal Tax ID: _____

Project Name: _____

Project Contact Person: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Narrative
- ☐ Project budget
- ☐ Budget narrative
- ☐ Timeline
- ☐ Proof of liability insurance
- ☐ Federal tax-exempt certification
- ☐ Most recent IRS Form 990
(Must be a complete 990. Form 990N will not be accepted)
- ☐ Completion of Microsoft Form
Application Questions