

Middle Rio Grande Development Council
(MRGDC)
Criminal Justice Advisory Committee
(CJAC)
Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures are established for the purpose of defining the rules and regulations that will govern the application process in all funding sources controlled by the Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Governor's Office.

1.0 COMPLIANCE WITH ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

- 1.1 ALL policies, rules and regulations set forth in this document are in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 1, Part 1, Chapter 3, and the state and federal statutes, rules and regulations adopted by reference in the Texas Administrative Code Section 3.19.
- 1.2 Section 3.1 of the Texas Administration Code ,Applicability .Subchapters A through F of this chapter apply to all applications for funding and grants submitted to the Criminal Justice Division (GD) Office of the governor. Subchapter A covers the general provisions for grant funding. Subchapter B addresses general eligibility and budget rules for grant funding .Subchapter C outlines specific eligibility and budget rules applicable to various funding sources available to GD these rules are in addition to all other general rules in this chapter. Subchapter D provides rules detailing the conditions GD may place on grants. Subchapter E sets out the rules related to administering grants. Subchapter F specifies rules regarding program monitoring and audits.
- 1.3 MRGDC Regional Planning Commissions Criminal Justice Policies and Procedures will also comply with the Texas Government Code, chapter 551-The Texas Open Meeting Act.

2.0 INITIATING THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

- 2.1 **Notification of Funding Availability:** The Criminal Justice Planner (CJ) will send notification to eligible applicants and interested parties after the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office makes such notification in the Texas Register and posts grant application forms on the CJD website.
- 2.2 **Mandatory Grant Application Workshop Attendance:** it is mandatory for all applicants seeking funding from the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office to attend a grant application workshop. Lack of attendance at this workshop will cause the application to be ineligible for funding. The application will not be submitted to the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) for consideration .If it is impossible for the applicant to attend a grant application workshop, a one-on- one –grant application training session can be scheduled at the convenience of the CJ Planner for the MRGDC. The preferred method of training would be to attend the grant application workshop.

- 2.3 **Technical Assistance Appointments:** Current or potential grantees may request a personal or telephone technical visit with the CJ Planner before applying for grant funding.
- 2.4 **Notification of Grant Application Deadlines:** At the grant application workshop or one-on-one grant application training session, potential grantees will be given a schedule of the Criminal Justice Division application deadlines. Applications in all funding sources will be submitted directly to the Criminal Justice Division electronically via email. The CJ Planner is responsible for setting and may adjust local deadlines for the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee's Scoring and Ranking meeting.

POLICY: All funding recommendations are based on funding available each year from the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office.

- 3.1 **Funding Time Limits:** There will be no maximum number of years to be funded and no decreasing funding. New application, pending eligibility will be accepted at the beginning of the grant application process in any of the funding sources.
- 3.2 **Compliance with the Texas Administrative Code:** All applicants must be familiar with and comply with the Texas Administrative Code, Section 3
- 3.3 **Violation of State or Federal Law:** The Criminal Justice Advisory Advisory Committee will notify the Criminal Justice Division of any violations of federal and/or state law by an applicant.
- 3.4 **Community planning:** MRGDC Criminal Justice Planning Office has an adopted 5 year Community plan. From the Community Plan a Strategic Vision is developed and local priorities are established. All applications must fill a need for services or address a gap in services as identified in the MRGDC Regional Planning Commission Strategic Vision. The Regional Community Plan will be reviewed at least once every five years .The strategic Vision Document will be available for applicants at the grant application workshop.
- 3.5 **Supplemental Grants:** IF funds become available for supplemental grants, applications will only be accepted from those who have submitted applications during the initial grant process.
- 3.6 **Open Meetings Act:** All applicants must comply with the Open Meetings Act (Government Code, Chapter 551) provides that meetings of governmental bodies must be open to the public (except for expressly authorized executive sessions). Both state and regional agencies applying for CJD Funding must file notices of open meetings with their perspective County/City Clerk and must have their perspective County/City stamped seal.
- 3.7 **Letters of Support/Resolution:** All applicants must have at least 2 letters of support and/or resolution with a letter of support.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:

- 4.1 **Mandatory Attendance at prioritization meeting:** All applicants must be represented at the prioritization meeting. A representative of the applicant agency must make a brief presentation of the application and be prepared to answer any questions posed by Committee members
- 4.2 **Requesting Additional information:** The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee may request additional information other than that requested in the grant application forms. If such information is requested and is not submitted to the committee, the application will not be recommended for funding.

- 4.3 **Standard Scoring Process, Criteria, and Review Instrument:** The CJAC has a grant application scoring process and uses a scoring instrument. This scoring instrument will be given to each person attending the grant application workshop or one-on-one grant application training session. (See attachment)
- 4.4 **Funding Statement:** All funding decisions are at the discretion of CJD based on recommendations of the local CJAC and approval by the Board.
- 4.5 **Documentation and Record Retention:** All meetings of the GAC will be taped and minutes will be transcribed. All records will be kept on file three years from the date of the meeting

SCORING AND RANKING PROCEDURES:

- 5.1 As stated in 2.2.4, all applications and submitted direct to the Criminal Justice Division, Office of the Governor. After the Criminal Justice Division determines the eligibility of each project, the eligible applications will be forwarded to the COGs. Eligible application received by the COG will be sent to the Justice Advisory Committee members and a scoring and ranking meeting will be set .(Applications deemed inedible due to lack of attendance at the mandatory workshop will not be forwarded to the CJAC.)
- 5.2 The presiding officer will call the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee meeting to order.
- 5.3 Agenda items and CJAC business, not concerning the scoring and ranking process, will be addressed first.
- 5.4 Presentations by applicants will be grouped by each Criminal Justice Division funding category, (i.e. Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, criminal justice, VOCA, VAWA, etc.)
- 5.5 A representative from each applicant agency must attend and give a brief presentation on their application followed by a question and answer session. Presentations and Q&A sessions have not been given a time limit in order to allow for each applicant to adequately summarize their project and GAC members to clarify or address their concerns
- 5.6 The CJAC may seek revision in a grant application, including the budget and /or scope of the project, to arrive at an acceptable application and budget
- 5.7 After each presentation has been made within a funding category, each GAC member will score the application using the appropriate application review instrument (see attachments). The scoring sheets will be collected and a staff member will make computations of the scores.
- 5.8 Members of the COG governing body, CJAC members and the criminal justice staff must abstain from reviewing ,voting , commenting on or _taking any grant application during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the second degree by affinity:
 - 5.8.1 Is employed by the applicant agency and work for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded,
 - 5.8.2 Serves on any board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded
 - 5.8.3 Owns or controls any interest in a business entity or other non-governmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activates with the applicant,
 - 5.8.4receives any funds from the applicant as a result of the grant, or

5.8.5 uses or receives a substantial amount of tangible goods, services, or funds from the applicant.

5.9 If a member must abstain from reviewing, voting, commenting, or taking any action on any grant application, the member must also abstain from reviewing, voting, commenting, or taking any action on any competing grant application within that funding source during the prioritization process.

5.10 A member who abstains from voting on an application will document the abstention by signing the appropriate scoring sheet and writing "abstained" on the sheets. These sheets will be kept on file along with the scored sheets

5.11 The rankings will be presented at the next governing board meeting of MRGDC, which approves or disapproves the ranking and submits a resolution noting their final recommendations to the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office.

5.12 Following approval by the governing board of MRGDC of the Priority Rankings, grantees will be notified within ten (10) business days, that their application was either recommended for funding or not recommended for funding to the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office. Such notification will include the statement:

"Pursuant to the provisions of the Texas Administrative Code, after the CJAC reviews and prioritizes the grant applications and the COG governing body approves the priority listing, CJD will verify applicant eligibility, the reasonableness and cost-effectiveness of the proposed project, and the availability of funding, and will render final funding decisions on these grant applications. The COG will notify grantees of any changes in the funding recommendations.

5.13 The COG shall contact each grantee, by telephone, email or fax, informing the grantee of a grant award within 2 business days after the COG receives notice that the grant is awarded to the grantee by CJD. CJD will notify grantees by regular mail that a grant is awarded or denied funding.

6.0 APPEAL PROCESS:

6.1 There is no commitment on the part of MRGDC to fund any application. Decisions related to recommending an application for funding are based on outcomes of the CJAC prioritization process. If a decision is made by the CJAC not to recommend an application or any part of an application, an applicant may choose to appeal the decision. All appeals must be handled in accordance with the following procedural guidelines.

6.1.1 Applicant Notification to CJAC: The applicant shall notify the CJAC Chair of their intent to appeal within five days from the date of notification of funding recommendations. The appeal must be in writing and be based on a verifiable error made during the prioritization process. The applicant must be able to show that the error actually caused the application (or portion) to not be recommended to Criminal Justice Division for funding.

6.1.2 Other Applicant notification: Other Applicant Notification: Within five working days following the receipt of a written appeal, the CJAC will notify all applicants under appropriate funding source that the CJAC will reconvene to hear the appeal. Other applicants within the funding source will be notified of the CJAC Meeting addressing the appeal and that their scores may be affected by the outcome of the meeting.

6.1.3 GAC Appeals Meeting: In an open meeting, the CJAC shall allow the applicant to present their appeal. With a simple majority quorum present, the CJAC will vote to either deny or sustain the appeal and change the

score. If the appeal is resolved, final funding recommendations will be made to the Board of MRGDC. The CJAC will send the results of the appeals meeting to all applicants under the appropriate funding sources.

6.1.4 **Notification to Nortex Executive Director:** If the appeal is unresolved, the applicant shall have the right to appeal the CJAC decision to the Board of Nortex Regional Planning Commission by notifying the Executive Director in writing within five days of the CJAC appeals meeting.

6.1.5 **Final Decision:** The Board of MRGDC shall allow the applicant to present their appeal and will consider documentation submitted by the GAC relating to the appeal and change the score. The decisions of the Board of MRGDC shall be final.

7.0 THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CJAC):

7.1 **Representation:** The CJAC is required to have a multi-disciplinary representation of members from the region. For the purpose of reviewing CJD grants the CJAC should include representation from the following areas: concerned citizens or parents, drug abuse prevention, education, juvenile justice, law enforcement, mental health, nonprofit organizations, prosecution/courts and victim services. No single group may constitute more than one third of the CJAC.

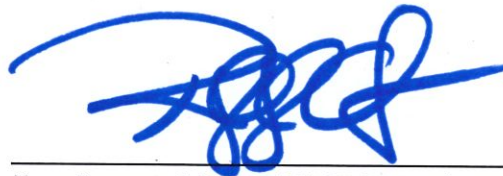
7.2 **Alternate Representative:** A member may designate an alternate representative, in writing, whose attendance will count toward a quorum and who will be allowed to vote for the member. The alternate representative may not be another committee member.

7.3 **Interim Membership:** Members appointed by a County Judge, City Mayor or as an at-large member, will be allowed to sit on the Committee and vote/score in all matters of business until the governing board of MRGDC confirms their appointment. In a situation where the recommended appointment is not approved, the members' vote/score will not be considered in all committee past actions.

ADDITIONS:

In order to comply with the MRGDC local CJD policies, the Chair of the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee may interpret the policies contained herein with input from the Executive Director and/or the CJ Planner, if necessary.

Passed and approved this 25th day of October 2017.



Hon. Ramsey E Cantu, MRGDC Board President