

MARYLAND ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

WEB ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS – FY2014 NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Issue Date: **July 26, 2013**
Due Date: **August 30, 2013**

Grant Purpose

The Maryland Access to Justice Commission is accepting applications for one-time grants to aid Maryland civil legal services providers in improving website accessibility to better serve persons with disabilities. Grants funds may be used for the following purposes:

1. To hire a consultant to conduct a website audit, assessment or evaluation.
2. To hire a consultant or web designer to design or modify an existing website to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.
3. To purchase software, web-enabled tools or other products that enhance website accessibility including text to speech tools, creating an audio version of a website, implementing a document reader or form reader, or other solution.
4. Other services or products that enhance website accessibility or enhance the ability of persons with disabilities to use remote services.

Application Process

All entities seeking funds from the Maryland Access to Justice Commission must submit a grant application with a budget and budget justification. The number of projects selected and the amounts of the grants will depend on the funds available. Funding for projects is not guaranteed.

Grant applications will be reviewed by a grant review committee. Once the committee has approved an application for funding, an award letter defining terms and conditions, along with a copy of the grant application will be sent to the grantee.

Acceptance of a grant automatically gives any authorized representative of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission and the Administrative Office of the Courts access to and the right to examine all records, papers, books, and documents related to a Judiciary grant for the purposes of assuring compliance with policies and guidelines, program evaluation and research.

The Maryland Access to Justice Commission administers the grants. Funds, appropriated by the State of Maryland, provide financial assistance to State and local units of government, non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education within the State of Maryland to enhance the services available to litigants, to prevent unnecessary litigation, and to enhance the court's decision making process.

Name of Grant Program: Web Accessibility Grants – FY2014

Administering Department Contact Information:

Maryland Access to Justice Commission
Pamela Cardullo Ortiz, Executive Director
2001 E/F Commerce Park Drive
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-260-1258
pamela.ortiz@mdcourts.gov

Maximum Award Amount

Determined by available appropriation.

Match Requirement

There is no match requirement.

Eligible Grantees

Eligible grantees include non-profit civil legal services providers serving Maryland residents. This may include 501(c)(3) organizations as well as university law clinics.

Funding Period

Grants will be awarded during the State fiscal year. Anticipated award date will be October 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Grantees must expend all grant funds by the end of the funding period.

Distribution of Funds

Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis upon submission of a Request for Payment along with Progress and Financial reports. Templates for reporting will be provided by the Maryland Access to Justice Commission. Requests for payment can be made quarterly: Quarter 1: July thru Sept, 2013; Quarter 2: Oct thru Dec, 2013; Quarter 3: Jan thru March, 2014; Quarter 4: April thru June, 2014.

Continued grant fund disbursement shall be dependent on grantees' satisfactory progress toward deliverables, and the availability of funding.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit progress and financial reports. Templates will be provided by the funder. Failure to submit required reports and requests for payment may result in the denial of grant payments and future funding.

Grantees may also be required to develop a plan for disseminating materials developed with grant funding, and/or the outcomes and findings of their project. Such requirements will be defined in the grant award letter.

Project Evaluation

Grantees shall assure that projects include an evaluation component to assess the effectiveness of the program. By accepting a Commission grant, the grantee agrees to cooperate with Commission- and Judiciary-sponsored evaluation projects.

Modifications

Grant funds may not be used for any purpose or activities other than those stated in the approved grant application unless a written change of purpose request is submitted and approved by the administering department.

Unless otherwise defined in the award letter, changes under 10% of an approved budget category may be made to the request for modification worksheet. Changes that exceed 10% of an approved budget category must be submitted in writing prior to making the change for written approval by the administering department.

Grantees must inform the administering department within 15 days of any changes in key program personnel, program name, address or other contact information.

Personnel and Payroll Records

Grantees must follow their respective organizations' written payroll, personnel, and time and attendance procedures for each position supported by a Commission grant.

Timesheets for each grant-funded employee must provide a brief description of the daily grant activity and the hours worked.

Procurement

Grantees must follow their State, county governments' (in the case of a Circuit Court) or organizations' written procurement policies in expending grant funds. If an applicant does not have written policies, they must follow the Procurement Policy for the Judicial Branch.

Upon receipt of goods and/or services, ownership and liability shall transfer to the grantee, and the grantee shall assume responsibility for all routine equipment maintenance and/or replacement costs.

Grantees intending to use grant funds for contractual services must notify potential contractors that funds for the project originated from the Judiciary.

All procurement actions shall be subject to Judiciary and Legislative Audit review.

Subawards

Grantees must follow their State, county governments' (in the case of a Circuit Court) or organization's written grant policies in expending grant funds. If an applicant does not have written grant policies, they must follow the Policy on Grants Administration.

Travel Policies

Grantees must follow their State, county governments' (in the case of a Circuit Court) or organizations' written travel policies in expending grant funds. If an applicant does not have written policies, they must follow the State Joint Travel Regulations Judicial Branch Travel Policy.

Accounting Requirements and Audits

Grantees shall maintain full and accurate records of all financial transactions and accounts related to the grant-funded project, in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, for a minimum of three years after the grant period ends. Records shall include, but are not limited to, requests for payment and receipts for expenses incurred, and time sheets for any salaries paid for with grant funds. Grantees shall make these records available for review by authorized representatives of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission and the Maryland Judiciary.

Grantees must establish separate revenue accounts into which they will deposit grant funds and separate expenditure accounts to which they will charge grant expenditures. The Judiciary shall not reimburse grantees or authorize payment for any expenditure that does not reflect compliance with the written procurement policy.

Funds specifically budgeted and/or received for one project may not be used to support another project or program. Recipients are prohibited from commingling funds.

Approved expenditures should be reviewed for accuracy, and then checked against the organization's financial records before financial reports and request for payments are submitted for reimbursement. Accounts must be reconciled before the grant can be closed out (See Close Out).

Grantees may be subject to periodic management reviews or audits. The reviews or audits may be announced or unannounced.

Close-out

All final progress and financial reports must be satisfactorily submitted to the Maryland Access to Justice Commission within 60 days after the end of the grant period (by August 30, 2014); approval of the final request for payment will serve as confirmation that project has been successfully completed; receipt of payment by recipient confirms close out has been completed.

Fee collection (if authorized by law):

Applicants will include a section in the application which will address fees authorized by law collected as part of this grant program. Fees collected as a part of this program will be used to enhance the project. Recipients may be asked to produce financial records demonstrating how fees were used to enhance the program

Debarment

The Judiciary will not permit a grant recipient to spend State funds on an individual or firm that is suspended or debarred from entering into contracts with the State. Grantees shall check the debarment list for all prospective subrecipients (contractors and grantees). The list of debarred and suspended contractors is available on the Board of Public Works web page at: www.bpw.state.md.us

Site Visits

Grantees may be subject to site visits by Commission or Judiciary staff. The site visits will be designed to ensure compliance with the grant guidelines and evaluate the project in terms of its stated goals and objectives. Site visits may also include a fiscal review of grantee/programmatic expenditures.

Acknowledgment of Support

Grantees are required to acknowledge the support of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission and the Maryland Judiciary on published materials or products created as part of the grant-funded project. Specific use and wording must be approved by the administering department.

Application Scoring Process: Competitive.

Application must be submitted on time, and will be reviewed for accuracy and completeness; failure to adhere to these requirements may adversely affect funding. Final award determinations will be made based on the recommendations of the review committee.

Application and Instructions

Forms and instructions for submitting grant applications are in the **WEB ACCESSIBILITY GRANT – FY2014, GRANT APPLICATION**. Two original applications must be submitted by mail, postmarked on or before **August 30, 2013** and should be directed to:

Pamela Cardullo Ortiz, Executive director
Maryland Access to Justice Commission
2001E/F Commerce Park Drive
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Envelopes should be marked: **WEB ACCESSIBILITY GRANT – FY2014**