



Special Conditions for FY24 Special Project Grants

1. Overview of the Special Project Grants (SPG) Program

Special Project Grants are awarded by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), through Juvenile & Family Services (JFS), to support programs designed to increase access to justice and enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland’s legal system. These grants include, but are not limited to programs in the following categories:

Domestic Violence	Legal Services	Alternative Dispute Resolution
Juvenile Justice	Child Welfare	Adult Guardianship

2. Eligibility

A. To be eligible to receive a Special Project Grant, an applicant must be:

1. Maryland State or local government, or
2. Non-profit organization, or
3. Institution of higher education within the state of Maryland.

B. Special Conditions for CASA Grantees applying for Special Projects Grants

1. CASA grantees are eligible to apply for Special Project Grants if the funding requested would support a project outside of the regular advocacy activities.

(Examples: Funding could be granted for: Collaborative training between CASA programs; Collaborative training with DSS, DJS, Children’s Attorneys or other stakeholders; independent living skills training for older youth, etc.; but SPG funding would not be granted to cover the space/food/staffing costs of regular pre-service trainings.)

2. Special Project funds awarded to CASA programs cannot be used as matching funds for the CASA grants.

3. Award Determination

Special Project grant applications are submitted and reviewed by subject matter type. For applicants previously funded by JFS, the grant review committee will review the grantee’s past performance in addition to the application. For some grant types, the committee may use a funding formula that factors in the applicant’s past performance and the need in the community to be served to determine the appropriate funding level. This is done to ensure equitable funding between programs that are being funded for the same work.

All JFS funding is limited by the Judiciary’s grant allocation from the General Assembly. Final award recommendations will be made by reconciling the review committee’s recommendations

with the funding available. The final funding determination will be made by the State Court Administrator after consultation with the Assistant Administrator for the Programs Division and Juvenile and Family Services.

4. Matching Funds

SPG grantees are generally not required to match the grant award. However, matching funds may be required when concerns about a program’s financial management arise. If match is required, it will be a condition of the award detailed in the grant awarding documents.

5. Funding Period

JFS awards SPG grants on the state’s fiscal year cycle. Grants awarded for Fiscal Year 2024 will support family and juvenile program needs from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. All funds must be expended within this period.

6. Accepting and Finalizing the Award

By the end of May, funded applicants will receive a “Notice of Intent to Fund” email from JFS. This email will contain instructions for accepting and finalizing the grant award including any further requirements or conditions of the award. Grantees are required to complete the requirements within two weeks, unless otherwise indicated.

All CASA grantees will be required to submit the documents listed below, including, but not limited to:

1. Completed and Signed Award and Acceptance Form
2. Completed Final Budget

Grantees who fail to provide the required documents before the start of the funding period (July 1) may have their grant award rescinded.

7. Reporting

A. Progress & Statistical Reporting

Programs are required to report on progress toward specific project goals and provide statistical information on a quarterly basis. Specific program and statistical reporting requirements, including required reporting forms, will be provided to grantees by email prior to the start of the funding period. Partial or incomplete reports will not be accepted.

B. Financial Reporting

1. Programs are required to provide signed expenditure reports and grant invoices on a quarterly basis. These documents must be submitted by the due dates outlined below, even if the grantee did not expend any funds during the quarter.
2. Specific reporting requirements, including required reporting forms, will be provided to the grantee by email early in the funding period.

C. Report Submission Requirements

All reports (financial and progress/statistical) must be submitted to DJFSGrants@mdcourts.gov by the due dates outlined below.

<u>Reporting Period</u>	<u>Report Due Date*</u>
1 st Quarter (July 1 thru Sept 30)	October 15
2 nd Quarter (Oct 1 thru Dec 31)	January 15
3 rd Quarter (Jan1 thru Mar 31)	April 15
Remaining Funds Report	June 15
4 th Quarter (April 1 thru June 30)	July 15

**When a due date falls on a weekend or holiday, reports are due the next business day.*

8. Modifications (Amendments)

A. Non-Personnel Costs

Modifications to the grant budget must be made in compliance with the terms outlined in the Judiciary's [General Grant Conditions](http://mdcourts.gov/procurement/grants.html) (http://mdcourts.gov/procurement/grants.html) and the additional terms outlined below.

Per page 4, #10 of the General Grant Conditions:

A. Budget Amendments

i. Unless otherwise directed by the Special Conditions for the grant program, grantee expenses may vary from the approved budget provided that the variance does not exceed the total amount budgeted for the category by more than 10% or \$10,000 (whichever is less) and does not include any new line items not previously included in the approved budget. Grantees are required to submit a budget amendment request for pre-approval of any expenditures that would exceed this threshold.

ii. Grantees must request pre-approval to add new budget line items regardless of the amount.

iii. Expenditures that do not comply with the adjusted or approved budget will not be authorized for payment.

When a preapproval is required for a budget modification, grantees must complete "Modification Request" tab of their financial workbook and submit the request by emailing the entire workbook to DFJSGrants@mdcourts.gov.

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9. Mid-Year Grant Award Modifications (Supplements)

JFS may make mid-year grants upon request, dependent upon availability of funds. Requests may be submitted in response to a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) or upon consultation with JFS staff.

10. Grant Monitoring

A. Programmatic

JFS staff will review submitted program/statistical reports to evaluate the grantee's progress towards meeting their stated goals and objectives and assigned performance measures. Staff will follow-up with grantees as needed to gather additional information and assess performance. Follow-up will be made by phone and in person through site visits. The site visits are designed to ensure compliance with the grant guidelines and review progress toward the project's stated goals and objectives and performance measure.

B. Financial

JFS staff will review submitted financial reports to evaluate the grantee's spending and progress toward meeting their stated goals and objectives. During one quarter per funding period, grantees will be required to submit back-up documentation of expenditures being invoiced. Notice of this financial check will be provided at the close of the quarter for which documents are being requested. Site visits will be conducted when the financial review raises a concern.

C. Audit

All grantees funded by the AOC are subject to audit by the AOC's internal auditors. These audits will occur once every three to five years.

11. Contact Information

A. Grantee Contacts

Grantees are responsible for ensuring that JFS is provided with accurate and up-to-date contact information for their program. JFS sends all grant information by email.

B. JFS Contact Information

All grant documents* and staff contact changes should be submitted to:

DJFSGrants@mdcourts.gov.

**Includes but not limited to: Reports, Award and Acceptance Documents, Modification Requests, Supplemental Requests, NDAs, Exhibit 1 updates, etc.*

Questions:

For report submission, status, or other general issues:

Pen Whewell, Grants Specialist II

Pen.Whewell@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1262

For financial reporting questions:

Antwan Brown, Grants and Financial Coordinator

Antwan.Brown@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-3452

For supplemental fund requests or allowable cost questions:

Kelly Franks, Senior Program Manager, Grants & Services

Kelly.Franks@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1722

For progress reporting forms:

Jovonne Lewis, Family & Courts Evaluations Manager
Jovonne.Lewis@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-3521

For site visits or other monitoring issues:
Karen Thomas, Grants & Services Analyst
Karen.Thomas@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1267

For status of payment or FCCIP Grants:
Sonia Holland, Grant Specialist I
Sonia.Holland@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1427