

Budget Detail Request - Fiscal Year 2016-17

Your request will not be officially submitted unless all questions and applicable sub parts are answered.

1. Title of Project: Citizen Review Panel Program (aka Foster Care Review Board)
2. Date of Submission: 01/14/2016
3. House Member Sponsor(s): Jose Diaz

4. DETAILS OF AMOUNT REQUESTED:

- a. Has funding been provided in a previous state budget for this activity? Yes
If answer to 4a is ?NO? skip 4b and 4c and proceed to 4d
- b. What is the most recent fiscal year the project was funded? 2015-16
- c. Were the funds provided in the most recent fiscal year subsequently vetoed? No
- d. Complete the following Project Request Worksheet to develop your request (Note that Column E will be the total of Recurring funds requested and Column F will be the total Nonrecurring funds requested, the sum of which is the Total of the Funds you are requesting in Column G):

FY:	Input Prior Year Appropriation for this project for FY 2015-16 (If appropriated in FY 2015-16 enter the appropriated amount, even if vetoed.)			Develop New Funds Request for FY 2016-17 (If no new Recurring or Nonrecurring funding is requested, enter zeros.)			
	Column: A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Funds Description:	Prior Year Recurring Funds	Prior Year Nonrecurring Funds	Total Funds Appropriated (Recurring plus Nonrecurring: Column A + Column B)	Recurring Base Budget (Will equal non-vetoed amounts provided in Column A)	INCREASED or NEW Recurring Requested	TOTAL Nonrecurring Requested (Nonrecurring is one time funding & must be re-requested every year)	Total Funds Requested Over Base Funding (Recurring plus Nonrecurring: Column E + Column F)
Input Amounts:	642,160	0	642,160	642,160	0	0	0

- e. New Nonrecurring Funding Requested for FY 16-17 will be used for:
 Operating Expenses Fixed Capital Construction Other one-time costs
- f. New Recurring Funding Requested for FY 16-17 will be used for:
 Operating Expenses Fixed Capital Construction Other one-time costs

5. Requester:

- a. Name: Candice Maze
- b. Organization: Foster Care Review, Inc. (d/b/a Florida Foster Care Review)
- c. Email: cmaze@fostercarereview.org
- d. Phone #: (305)573-6665 Ext. 110

6. Organization or Name of Entity Receiving Funds:

- a. Name: Foster Care Review, Inc. (d/b/a Florida Foster Care Review)
- b. County (County where funds are to be expended) Miami-Dade
- c. Service Area (Counties being served by the service(s) provided with funding) Miami-Dade

7. Write a project description that will serve as a stand-alone summary of the project for legislative review. The description should summarize the entire project's intended purpose, the purpose of the funds requested (if request is a sub-part of the entire project), and most importantly the detail on how the funds requested will be spent - for example how much will be spent on positions and associated salaries, specifics on capital costs, and detail of operational expenses. The summary must list what local, regional or statewide interests or areas are served. It should also document the need for the funds, the community support and expected results when applicable. Be sure to include the type and amount of services as well as the number of the specific target population that will be served (such as number of home health visits to X, # of elderly, # of school aged children to receive mentoring, # of violent crime victims to receive once a week counseling etc.)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Foster Care Review, Inc. (d/b/a Florida Foster Care Review - FFCR) is a non-profit organization that has operated the Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Program in Miami-Dade County for more than 25 years. The CRP program partners staff with volunteers who conduct thorough case review hearings of children and young adults in Miami's foster care system. The program was developed in 1989 by the United Way and a group of citizens concerned about the safety, well-being and permanency of the 6,000 abused and neglected children then under the jurisdiction of Miami's dependency court. The judiciary was unable to thoroughly review each child's case and the Citizen Review Panel provided a sorely needed, cost-effective safety net. Over the years, as the population in foster care has decreased, the complexity of children's needs, policy changes and the implementation of community based care continues to underscore the need for comprehensive, independent, citizen-led case review hearings.

Authorized by Florida Statutes 39.701 and 39.702, the CRP program is comprised of a 15-member professional and administrative team that recruits, trains and supervises 70 community volunteers who conduct review hearings of children and youth referred by Miami-Dade dependency court judges. Each month, program staff organize 12-14 volunteer panels that each review 6-8 children. Staff also collect critical information before, during and after the review hearings and capture this in the CRP's custom-designed database. The panels' hearings fulfill the statutory requirement that children, youth, and young adults in foster care have a judicial review at least every six months. At the conclusion of each child's review hearing, the panel submits to the court a comprehensive, individualized report that includes a set of recommended orders and findings. These become binding court orders that directly impact the safety, well-being and permanency of individual children and youth in foster care. FFCR leadership and the CRP staff work with the judiciary, child welfare system stakeholders and community partners to ensure the full utilization of this service as well as effective follow up on orders issued through the CRP. CRP volunteers must complete

25 hours of pre-service training and observe a day of CRP review hearings prior to serving on a panel. Volunteers are expected to serve on a panel at least one full day per month and to engage in a minimum of 10 hours of in-service learning annually.

PROGRAM OUTPUTS & EXPECTED RESULTS

In FY 2014-15, In partnership with program staff, CRP volunteers conducted 804 case reviews for 573 children, youth and young adults in Miami-Dade's dependency court system. This resulted in the issuance of 4,183 judicial orders addressing the varied and complex needs of foster children. These orders span the gamut of children's needs and may include follow up on medical recommendations, tutoring to address educational challenges or more directed efforts to identify an adoptive family for a child and his siblings. The panels have uncovered unsafe conditions in foster homes, lack of service provision to parents seeking reunification and the failure to provide prescribed medication. Panels also think proactively about children's needs and recommend services to ensure that youth in foster care are learning the skills necessary to become independent, productive members of our community. Compliance with orders issued through the CRP are assessed at subsequent review hearings and parties are held accountable. Last fiscal year, Florida Foster Care Review's Citizen Review Panel volunteers contributed 3,693 volunteer hours valued at more than \$273,000.

As part of the Citizen Review Panel process, staff operate a comprehensive, custom-designed database to track individual and aggregate data related to the children reviewed. The database also serves as a quality assurance tool during and after each child's review hearing, ensuring that all critical questions were asked by the panel and answered by the participants and that all of the panel's recommendations and findings are supported by documentation and/or testimony. In addition to providing the court with a complete overview of each child reviewed, FFCR uses this data to highlight systemic problems and advocate for programs and services that are more responsive to the needs of children and youth in foster care. Key program performance measures include:

- ? Number of children reviewed (includes young adults 18-21 in Extended Foster Care at the time of the review)
- ? Number of child reviews conducted (Please note: some children may be reviewed more than once per fiscal year)
- ? Number of recommended orders issued
- ? Number of reviews prepared
- ? Number of continuing/active volunteers
- ? Total number of volunteer hours contributed
- ? Overall compliance rate with orders previously issued by the CRP based on a subsequent review of these orders during the fiscal year in question
- ? Reasonable efforts made by the Agency to preserve or reunify the family (if applicable)
- ? Reasonable efforts made by the Agency to achieve permanency
- ? Physical health issues addressed for children reviewed by the CRP based on the percentage of recommended orders in this category (medical, dental, vision) that are complied with by the case management agency
- ? Determination of safety and appropriateness of living environment of children reviewed by the CRP based on the percentage of recommended orders in this category that are complied with by the case management agency
- ? Educational needs addressed for children reviewed by the CRP based on the percentage of recommended orders in this category that are complied with by the case management agency
- ? Length of time in care for those children reviewed by the CRP who achieved permanency (reunification, permanency guardianship or adoption)

- ? Permanency outcomes (reunification, permanency guardianship or adoption) for children reviewed by the CRP who achieved permanency
- ? Young adults who opted into Extended Foster Care during the fiscal year at least once (NOTE: ?Qualifying? young adults may enter and exit Extended Foster Care multiple times between ages 18-21).

By aggregating child-level data, the CRP Program also evaluates systemic issues that are globally affecting safety, well-being and permanency outcomes for children and youth in Miami's child welfare system. To accomplish this, system data is collected about:

- ? Barriers to permanency (including legal and service delivery issues)
- ? Length of time in care for children who do not reach permanency
- ? Procedural and due process issues such as case resets, failure to notice parties (by clerk's office) and lack of party participation
- ? Demographics (age, race, ethnicity, gender) of children reviewed
- ? Placement type (Ex: foster home, relative, parent, non-relative, group home, etc.) at the time of the review

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR REQUESTED FUNDS & INTERESTS SERVED

It is well-established that foster youth are more likely to later be unemployed or receive a poverty-level income, have inadequate or no health insurance, experience post-traumatic stress and serious untreated health conditions, and be victims of crime or become engaged in criminal activity. More than 50% of foster youth drop out of high school; only 1.8% attain a college degree. More than 50% of former foster youth are unemployed for an extended period of time once they leave care. If they are able to secure employment, the average earnings of former foster youth are a little over half those of the general population of the same age. Foster youth are also more likely to experience teenage and/or unplanned pregnancy, which further diminishes their educational and wage-earning prospects.

The longer children remain in foster care, the greater the likelihood that they will face poor outcomes. Twelve to 22% of youth who ?age out? are immediately homeless. According to a 2012 study in Florida, an incredible 28% of 1,821 young adults (18 to 22 years old) who aged out of the system reported experiencing homelessness.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of children and youth in foster care and promoting permanency ? the goals of the Citizen Review Panel Program ? minimizes the potential poor outcomes associated with children and youth who have been in foster care and will not only improve the likelihood that he or she will grow up to be a productive, functional member of society ? a benefit to the state and all of its citizens, it also reduces the financial burden on limited state resources. Creating stability and permanent families for abused and neglected children reduces the need for services/strain on state resources by reducing their chances of aging out of the system at 18 without any permanent family or connections, which increases the probability of homelessness, criminality, unemployment ? and the associated individual and state costs of these issues. Preventing children from languishing in foster care, and that they and their family receive the resources they need, can also break the cycle of abuse. If this is accomplished, future generations will not require foster care/state intervention, reducing the enormous burden placed on the state's financial and human resources. The CRP also has the capacity to improve the overall effectiveness of the child welfare system by holding all involved accountable for their role in promoting safety, permanency and well-being.

USE OF REQUESTED FUNDS

As in past years, the majority of the funds appropriated for FY 2016-17 will be expended on personnel and related fringe. Funds will also be expended on overhead expenses in accordance with Florida policies governing allowable expenditures. More specifically, requested funds will be expended in accordance with the detail below:

Expense	FY 2016-2017		
Organization Budget	FY 2016-2017		
Citizen Review Panel Program Budget	FY 2016-2017		
Requested Legislative Appropriation			
Personnel	\$786,814	\$656,240	\$394,153
Benefits	\$107,291	\$146,228	\$53,645
Other Payroll/Payroll Admin.	\$6,763	\$3,133	\$3,382
Accounting/Auditing Services	\$75,000	\$66,750	\$41,250
Other Professional Fees	\$134,000	\$39,100	\$22,140
Rent/Storage	\$90,340	\$83,113	\$49,687
Office Expenses	\$41,777	\$35,928	\$23,468
Marketing/Meetings	\$21,000	\$2,775	\$0
Travel & Conferences	\$16,600	\$2,490	\$1,150
Insurance	\$12,573	\$10,902	\$6,587
IT Hosting, Services, Equip.	\$43,304	\$40,289	\$23,667
Utilities	\$34,800	\$28,560	\$20,133
Licenses & Fees	\$4,183	\$0	\$0
Volunteer Expenses	\$11,360	\$11,360	\$2,898
Other Expenses	\$40,000	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,425,805	\$1,126,868	\$642,160

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Citizen Review Panel Program enjoys significant community support. Although the volunteer commitment is significant, the CRP Program has been extremely successful in attracting high-quality volunteers, more than half of whom volunteer for five years or more. A number of our volunteers also contribute financially to Florida Foster Care Review, further demonstrating their support and belief in the work of the CRP. The program also has incredible support from our community's judiciary, led by The Honorable Bertila Soto, Chief Judge of the 11th Judicial Circuit. Organizational and program leadership maintain regular communication with our dependency bench to ensure an effective collaboration and consistent case referral, as well as with the Department of Children and Families local administration, Children's Legal Services and the lead Community Based Care Agency/full case management agencies.

8. Provide the total cost of the project for FY 2016-17 from all sources of funding:

Federal: 0

State: 400,000 (Excluding the requested Total Amount in #4d, Column G)

Local: 25,200

Other: 59,508

9. Is this a multi-year project requiring funding from the state for more than one year?

Yes