



## 2022 Veterans Treatment Court Strategic Planning Initiative Call for Proposals

The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (“BJA”) and the Center for Court Innovation (“the Center”) are partnering to support the enhancement and funding of veterans treatment courts through BJA’s *Adult Drug Court and Veterans Treatment Court Planning, Training, Technical Assistance, and Resource Center Initiative*. Under this grant funding, the Center provides statewide training and technical assistance to develop and enhance the veterans treatment court model and other problem-solving justice efforts.

**Project Background and Description:** In September of 2019, BJA and the Center selected—through a competitive request for proposals—five states across the U.S. to receive funding and technical assistance under the 2019 Veterans Treatment Court Strategic Planning Initiative to support statewide efforts to enhance their veterans treatment courts. The first cohort was comprised of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maine, and California. Center staff worked intensively with the first cohort to develop individualized statewide strategic plans. Each state used their strategic plan to identify and act on key priority areas. Areas of work included improved identification and screening of justice-involved veterans, training on veteran related topics, enhanced connection and engagement of veteran peer mentors, and improved definition of eligibility and target population. Due to the success of the first cohort, BJA has funded a second round of this initiative.

The primary goal of the 2022 Veterans Treatment Court Initiative is to enhance, support, and strengthen veterans treatment courts around the country. As outlined below in more detail, this program will provide financial and technical assistance to support statewide enhancements and trainings for veterans treatment courts for up to five states. This will take the form of strategic planning and passthrough funding (Category 1) or strategic planning and follow-up TA (Category 2). The goal is to encourage the strengthening of VTC adherence to best practice standards, readiness for states and local jurisdictions to apply for federal funding to support their programs, and successful replication of the VTC model and the application of VTC principles to wider populations.

Each selected applicant will participate in statewide strategic planning for their veterans treatment courts, with the goal of enhancing statewide and court-based responses to justice-involved veterans in need of treatment. The strategic planning process will include a needs assessment, an on-site visit, action planning, and a final strategic plan report. In addition, it is anticipated that an in-person all-sites visit will be held during the project.

**Eligibility:** The Center for Court Innovation will consider one application per state. The following entities are eligible to apply:

- State governments
- Federally recognized Native American tribal governments in collaboration with a statewide entity
- State agencies such as the State Administering Agency, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the State Substance Use Agency, and the State Behavioral Health Agency

- State criminal justice agencies and other state agencies involved in the provision of substance use and/or mental illness services, or related services, to criminal substance abusers
- Treatment or problem-solving court associations that administer training and technical assistance to their states
- Any other agency identified by the state administering agency or state government as competent to carry out the duties of the proposal (if you apply under this category, please submit a letter of support from your state administrative agency who oversees the veterans treatment courts in your state)
- Any combination of the above (please specify lead agency)

For purposes of this solicitation, “state” means any state or territory of the United States, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

States that received funding under the first cohort are not eligible to apply again.

**Funding:** Selected applicants will receive ongoing, intensive technical assistance from the Center for Court Innovation. Passthrough funding from BJA will not exceed \$1 million total. Applicants can apply for either Category 1 or Category 2.

- Category 1 applications are eligible for awards up to \$200,000 or more, depending on the number of applicants, and will receive strategic planning and no-cost technical assistance. There is not match requirement for this funding.
- Category 2 applications are not requesting funding but will receive statewide strategic planning and no-cost technical assistance.

The anticipated award period is June 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023.

**Deadline for Proposals:** All applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time on **April 29, 2022**. Applicants will submit all application materials through the “VTC Strategic Planning Initiative Proposal Form” (see “Proposal Requirements” below). Applicants will be notified of a selection decision by **May 20, 2022**.

#### **Pre-Application Webinar**

The Center for Court Innovation will host an informational webinar before the application deadline to review the project objectives and allow for questions and answers about the application process. Participation in the 60-minute webinar is optional. It is open to anyone interested in submitting a proposal.

The webinar is **April 8, 2022, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. PT / 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. MT / 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. CT / 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. ET.**

**To register, please visit:**

[https://Courtinnovation.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYoduCtqz4tGtD0NyzxjqB98v9T81\\_aHOKA](https://Courtinnovation.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYoduCtqz4tGtD0NyzxjqB98v9T81_aHOKA)

For questions, please email [nmagloire@nycourts.gov](mailto:nmagloire@nycourts.gov).

## **Project Overview**

This project will provide applicants with the unique opportunity to receive one-on-one technical assistance and support from the Center. Each selected applicant will participate in statewide strategic planning for their veterans treatment courts, with the goal of enhancing statewide and court-based responses to justice-involved veterans in need of treatment. The strategic planning process will include a needs assessment, an on-site visit, action planning, and a final strategic plan report. In addition, it is anticipated that an in-person all-sites visit will be held during the project.

## **Technical Assistance**

The Center for Court Innovation will provide technical assistance to the selected applicant at no cost, which will include:

- Advising the applicant agency on assembling a strategic planning committee consisting of applicant agency representatives and other key partners designated by applicant agency, including Veterans Justice Outreach specialists (VJOs), representatives of Veteran Affairs and other veterans services organizations, and veteran mentor coordinators;
- Conducting a needs assessment of the VTC assets, opportunities, and barriers in the state which may include doing individual interviews, data review and analysis, surveys, and court observation;
- Facilitating a two-day strategic planning workshop hosted by the applicant agency where Center staff will guide the strategic planning committee through a structured strategic planning process and creation of an action plan;
- Facilitating follow-up conference calls with the planning team to gather any additional information required for the strategic plan;
- Assisting the planning committee in drafting and editing a strategic plan, including creating a mission statement, assessing current strengths and challenges, and developing concrete goals, objectives, tasks, performance measures, and timelines; and
- If indicated, facilitating follow-up meetings with the strategic planning committee to finalize and review the strategic plan and action steps.
- Advising on the use, administration, and budget for passthrough grant funding for Category 1 applicants.

**Length of Technical Assistance:** Funding and related technical assistance currently ends on September 30, 2023 and extensions beyond that time will be assessed as needed and approved by BJA.

## **Expectations of Selected States and Project Commitment:**

Selected applicants must agree to the following:

1. Participation of a strategic planning stakeholder committee that consists of state level stakeholders, veterans treatment court practitioners (including prosecution and defense), the judiciary, individuals with lived experience, veterans organizations, VJOs, and the Veterans Administration. Applicants are not expected to include all listed disciplines in the planning team, but should demonstrate support for the success of the project;
2. Designation of a point person who will assist in the coordination of the project and scheduling of calls, meetings, and site visits with all participating partners and agencies;

3. Ongoing contact with the planning staff at the Center, as well as project updates and check-ins with the Center for Court Innovation;
4. Participation of project lead, fiscal point of contact, and relevant strategic planning committee members in project orientation session. *Note: this will be held virtually;*
5. Host a strategic planning site visit with the Center for Court Innovation and the strategic planning committee, over the course of 1-2 days. *Note: visits may occur virtually depending on COVID-related restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings, local court procedures, and/or BJA guidance; and*
6. Participation of a multi-disciplinary team of court staff and VTC stakeholders in a VTC all-sites meeting. *Note: funding will be available through BJA/the Center for travel expenses to in-person events or visits may occur virtually depending on COVID-related restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings, local court procedures, and/or BJA guidance.*

### **Proposal Requirements**

Interested states are encouraged to apply by providing the following information by 11:59 pm Eastern on **April 29, 2022**.

### **Proposal Form**

Applicants are required submit applications in the Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Planning Initiative Proposal Form using the below link. Questions are listed below so applicants can prepare responses before applying, but all information must be submitted through the proposal form. Open-ended questions can be answered briefly in a few sentences or a few paragraphs. The suggested length for the proposal (questions #1-10) is five to 10 pages total, double-spaced.

Link to application: Please complete the application by using this link:

[https://20180619171210\\_7yc8vr1n2clwxvm1.applytojob.com/apply/poO3RzWpeR/2022-Veterans-Treatment-Court-Strategic-Planning-Initiative](https://20180619171210_7yc8vr1n2clwxvm1.applytojob.com/apply/poO3RzWpeR/2022-Veterans-Treatment-Court-Strategic-Planning-Initiative)

**Be sure to upload your project proposal before submitting your application.** If you have questions, please contact Najah Magloire, Program Associate, at [magloiren@courttinnovation.org](mailto:magloiren@courttinnovation.org).

*Applicants may be contacted by Center for Court Innovation staff for additional information and details. Submitting this proposal form does not mean you have been selected. All applicants will be notified after a final determination is made.*

Proposals will be scored on the following:

### **Cover Sheet (5 points)**

1. Please provide the following information:
  - Which category the application is submitted under?
  - Title of the applicant agency. If you are not applying as that state agency that oversees VTCs, please indicate if you have the support of your statewide treatment court coordinator or agency. (eligible applicants are state, tribal, territorial, or local courts).
  - Point of contact information: name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email

### **Description of state's veteran population and VTC network (15 points)**

2. Briefly describe your state’s veterans population. Please provide details about the demographics of veterans in your state, if available (e.g., number of veterans, employment status, age range).
3. Please describe the landscape of veterans treatment courts in your state (i.e., number of VTCs, years active, number of participants served). If you do not have VTCs, please indicate that here.
4. Please briefly describe any current or ongoing collaborative efforts in the state to expand or improve veterans treatment courts.
  - Does your state have federal funding for VTCs?
  - Have your veterans treatment courts ever received technical assistance?
  - Have those collaborations included the VA, VJOs, or other veterans organizations?
  - Have those collaborations included culturally-specific organizations and organizations/groups serving racially and ethnically diverse and/or other historically marginalized communities?
5. Do you currently collect data on your VTCs? Briefly describe your statewide data collection measures or any data collection barriers.

**Statement of interest and goals for initiative (50 points)**

6. What do you hope to achieve by participating in the Veterans Treatment Court Strategic Planning Initiative? Please address:
  - Goals you wish to achieve by participating in this project;
  - Existing strengths or resources you hope to leverage and/or build upon; and
  - Barriers to growth and enhancement.

**The planning committee (30 points)**

7. Briefly describe the individual(s) who will lead the team and oversee the project activities and your agencies relationship to the VTCs in your state.
8. Identify some of the key partners you anticipate being a part of the broader collaborative team. These might include individuals or organizations that have critical roles in working with veterans treatment courts in your state.
9. If your VTCs are partnering with people with lived experience and organizations serving racially and ethnically diverse and/or historically marginalized communities, please tell us about those partnerships. If you cannot identify any such organizations at the time of application, please describe your goals in identifying and partnering with such organizations during the initial stages of the project.

**Only for Category 1 applicants: Commitment to accept funds (20 points\*)**

10. Category 1 funding comes with the expectation that the agency applying can accept the funds. These funds are anticipated to be approximately \$200,000 total and a budget and scope of work for the use of the funds will be developed during the project period with the assistance of the Center as a part of the technical assistance. To be considered for funding, please attach a letter of support from your agency, or a partner agency to this proposal, that showcases the intent and ability to accept the funds once granted.

*\*Review of category 1 applicants will be out of 120 points total.*

**Selection Criteria**

The Center for Court Innovation will subject all eligible, complete, and timely applications to an internal review process that is based on the criteria outlined in this solicitation. Category 1 applications will also

be peer reviewed by an external panel of peers. We anticipate selecting up to five states. Answers will be scored based on completeness of information—not necessarily on the current status of your veterans court programs. We’re looking for states that are well poised to accept technical assistance and are ready to collaborate on enhancing their VTCs. For example, a lack of current partnerships with community organizations will not receive a lower score, as long as the applicant can articulate the current state of partnership and offer some insight into existing barriers to collaboration.

**About the Center for Court Innovation:**

The Center for Court Innovation promotes new thinking about how the justice system can respond more effectively to issues like substance use, intimate partner violence, mental illness, and juvenile delinquency. The Center achieves its mission through a combination of operating programs, original research, and expert assistance. For over two decades, the organization has been intensively engaged in designing and implementing problem-solving courts, and each year, it responds to hundreds of requests for training and technical assistance and hosts hundreds more visitors at its operating programs. Its staff includes former prosecutors, defense counsel, probation officials, senior administrators of major criminal justice agencies, social workers, technology experts, researchers, victim advocates, and mediators. Under the Bureau of Justice Assistance’s Statewide Adult Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program, the Center provides training and technical assistance to statewide treatment court systems, helping state-level treatment court coordinators and other officials enhance the operation of drug courts and other treatment courts throughout their state. To learn more, visit our website at: [www.courtinnovation.org/areas-of-focus/treatment-courts](http://www.courtinnovation.org/areas-of-focus/treatment-courts).

**Questions?**

Please email us at [magloiren@courtinnovation.org](mailto:magloiren@courtinnovation.org).