

Maternal Health

Florida Blue Foundation's programs are focused on improving health by impacting food security, advancing mental well-being, growing healthy communities, and addressing health disparities. **This grant funding opportunity is focused on Maternal Health.**

As you prepare your online grant application, please carefully review the following four key sections to ensure you meet all the necessary requirements for a successful submission: 1) Dates and Deadlines, 2) Important Application Information, 3) Grant Funding Focuses, and 4) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

DATES AND DEADLINES

- Application Open: **Monday, August 17, 2026**
- Application Deadline: **Monday, October 5, 2026, 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)**
- Notification of Application Status: **February 2027**
- Required Cohort and Grantee Orientations: **February - March 2027**
- Grant Effective Start Date: **March 1, 2027**

IMPORTANT APPLICATION INFORMATION

Pre-Application Resources

- **Informational Webinar:** All applicants are required to [watch our informational webinar](#) on the Maternal Health grant program prior to completing their application. Watching the webinar will help prepare you for a strong and competitive application.
- **Online Application Link:** [Click here](#) to access the online application for the Maternal Health grant program. Use Google Chrome to access the application in our grants management system.

Application Guidelines

- **Grant Funding:** Florida Blue Foundation is funding approximately \$3 million for this grant program, offering four-year grants. The total funding request for the grant period should fall within the range of \$300,000 to \$400,000, with an approximate annual allocation of \$75,000 to \$100,000.
- **Application Deadline:** The deadline is Monday, October 5, 2026, by 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). We recommend submitting your online application 7 - 14 business days prior to the deadline to avoid potential technical issues. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

If your organization is new to our grants management system, please register at least two weeks in advance, as registration requires verification and approval. This will ensure you have enough time to complete the registration process and submit your application by the deadline. If you have trouble registering, please refer to the FAQs – Grant Management System.

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- **Selection of Funding Focuses:** Organizations may apply to one or both Funding Focuses and must complete a separate application for each Funding Focus. Please note that current foundation grantees and large organizations with more than one affiliate/chapter and multiple divisions, should review the FAQs – Eligibility section of this document for specific guidance.

Application Requirements

- **Attachments:** All completed attachments must be uploaded in PDF format (.pdf). Please ensure that all attachments are converted to PDFs before uploading them to the online application system.
- **Program Milestone Document:** The Program Milestone document is available for download on the online application link and must be completed and uploaded as an attachment. This document will capture detailed information for each year of the proposed program, including objectives, tasks, and expected outcomes.

There is no limit on the amount of information that can be provided. If selected as a grantee, this document will serve as the basis for all reporting requirements for funded programs and will be used to evaluate progress and outcomes throughout the grant period.

- **Budget Matrix and Narrative Template:** The Budget template is available for download on the online application link and must be completed and uploaded as an attachment. Please note that up to 10% of the total grant amount may be claimed for indirect costs, which are expenses necessary for the general operation of the organization and not directly related to a specific grant project. The Budget Narrative should include a brief explanation for each Florida Blue Foundation grant expense, by year, for all years of the proposed program.

When developing your budget, please include funds for each year of the grant to cover potential annual program meetings and attendance at Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards. Estimated cost per meeting: \$900 per person/per year.

- Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards: A two-day event typically held in Florida during the spring season. We recommend estimating the hotel cost at \$250 per night, registration at \$200, and transportation costs. There is no limit to the number of attendees from your organization. It is recommended that, at a minimum, the person who is managing the day-to-day operation of the program attend. Dates and locations will be provided once confirmed.
 - Other meetings: Meetings in subsequent years are sometimes scheduled in conjunction with the Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards or at another time during the year scheduled at a central location. The schedule generally allows for closer organizations to be able to travel back and forth in one day.
- **IRS Tax Form 990:** Applicants will be required to upload their organizations most recently filed IRS Tax Form(s) 990 or 990-EZ. Your organization must have reported annual revenue exceeding \$400,000 for each of the last two years on this filing. Please note, organizations filing Form 990-N (e-Postcard) are not eligible to apply for this grant program.

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- **Audited Financial Statement:** Applicants will be required to upload their organization's most recent audited financial statement, which should not be older than two years. If it is not available, we will accept your organization's internal financial statements, including a Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) and a Statement of Activities (Income Statement), for the most recent two years.
- **Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate:** Applicants will be required to upload their Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate, issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. This certificate should be less than one year old, as it must be renewed annually. It is required for nonprofits soliciting funds in Florida.

If your organization is exempt, please upload a copy of the exemption letter issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Please note that some state agencies and organizations may be exempt from this requirement. If an organization is not based in Florida, please refer to FAQs – Eligibility.

- **Additional Documentations:** Applicants will be instructed to upload their organization's current documentation, including: Program Organizational Chart, Letters of Agreement for Collaborations/Partnerships (if applicable), and a list of Board of Directors. Please refer to the online application for detailed instructions and guidelines.

Measuring Goals and Data Reporting

The Florida Blue Foundation is committed to measuring improvements in health outcomes for mothers and babies across Florida. To track program outcomes, grantees must select assessment tool(s) that are validated, reliable, and appropriate for the clients served to measure maternal and infant health. Grantees are required to administer assessment at least twice annually throughout the 4-year grant duration.

Grantees will set improvement goals and grantee-selected target percentages for mothers and infants served, measured using one or more of the following key goals:

- Improved health outcomes for infants
- Improved health outcomes for perinatal and postpartum mothers receiving access to care and/or support services
- Improved maternal mental health services

In addition, grantees will contribute towards Florida Blue Foundation's collective cohort goals of 70% in Year One, increasing to 90% by Year Four (where feasible):

- Infants born to pregnant mothers will show a healthy birthweight weighing above 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds) at birth
- Infants born to pregnant mothers will have a gestational age of at least 37 weeks

These metrics enable the Foundation to monitor progress and understand grantee contributions to maternal and infant health outcomes.

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During the life of the grant, grantees are required to submit the measurements stated above including the following reports through the Florida Blue Foundation portal:

- Monthly: Unduplicated count of mothers and infants born to those mothers served, if feasible.
- Semi-annually: Brief six-month reports documenting program indicators, expenses, and client demographics.

Special Considerations

To further support our mission, Florida Blue Foundation demonstrates a strong commitment to serving specific vulnerable communities and leveraging innovative technologies. While not required, applicants that meet the following criteria will be given special consideration in the evaluation process:

- 1) Organizations that provide services in the following ZIP codes: 32206, 32805, 33612/33613, 33142, and 33311, and/or Florida's rural counties. [Click here to reference Florida Department of Health map of rural counties.](#)
- 2) Organizations that incorporate innovative AI-powered solutions into their program. If your organization plans to leverage AI to improve access to maternal health services, enhance service delivery efficiency, and personalize interventions, please describe your approach. Highlight any innovative AI-powered tools, such as chatbots or predictive analytics, which will enhance your program.

Please note, this information should be detailed in the Special Consideration section of your online grant application.

Grantee Details

The following details outline the key requirements and expectations for selected grantees:

- **Grants Effective Date:** Grant agreements will be effective as of March 1, 2027, with operations expected to begin in April 2027.
- **Grantee Orientation:** Attend two mandatory virtual orientations, a Cohort Group Orientation, and an Individual Grantee Orientation, scheduled between February – March 2027. Specific dates and times will be provided once confirmed.
- **Annual Foundation Event:** Attend the Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards each year for the life of the grant. Dates and locations will be provided once confirmed.
- **ACH Payments:** Florida Blue Foundation will disburse payments via ACH transactions, and you will be required to provide requested banking information.

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Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organizations, public agencies, universities, colleges, training centers, community centers, schools, health care-related facilities, faith-based institutions, youth-serving organizations, and others that:

1. Are incorporated or located in the state of Florida and serve Floridians
2. Have the capacity, expertise, resources, knowledge in the field, and track record of success to carry out the intent of the program
3. Have expertise in working with the targeted populations served
4. Have expertise in developing programs and materials, and
5. Have been in operation for at least three years since receiving an IRS 501(c)(3) designation

What We Support	What We Do Not Support
- Salaries, including benefits - Employee training - Rental fees for program/meeting costs - Webinar or other types of media/technology - Program materials/equipment - Required travel related to this grant - Training/educational materials - Printing and dissemination - Indirect costs – <i>an amount up to but not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount (Indirect costs are expenses necessary for the general operation of the organization and not directly related to a specific grant program).</i>	- Do not have a 501(c)(3) public charity designation 501(c)(3) private foundation 509(a)(3) Type I, Type II, and Type III supporting organization - Standalone research and development - Individuals - Capital campaigns - New start-ups - Profit making enterprises - Buildings (brick and mortar)

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MATERNAL HEALTH GRANT FUNDING FOCUSES

Florida Blue Foundation aims to address various barriers that women face in accessing affordable, high-quality maternal health care services and support in Florida. **Our goal is to ensure that every mother and infant receives quality care throughout each stage of pregnancy and beyond.**

To achieve this goal, we are focusing on two key areas:

Focus 1: Improving Maternal Health Outcomes for Chronic Conditions

Chronic conditions, such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity, remain major contributors of maternal morbidity and mortality. These conditions increase the risk of severe pregnancy-related complications, including emergency Cesarean delivery, preeclampsia, postpartum hemorrhage, ICU admission, and other severe maternal morbidity events. Limited access to timely, high-quality maternal health services can contribute to delayed risk identification, fragmented care, higher rates of medical intervention, and less satisfactory childbirth and postpartum experiences. Increasing access to quality care, care coordination and evidence-informed programming is crucial in improving health outcomes for women with chronic conditions from pregnancy through the first year postpartum.

Focus 2: Perinatal and Postpartum Maternal Mental Health Support

Perinatal and postpartum maternal mental health support is critical for the well-being of women during and after pregnancy. This specialized care focuses on addressing issues such as perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, toxic stress, postpartum depression, trauma-related symptoms, and other mental health challenges that women may experience. It encompasses a range of services and interventions, including counseling, support groups, education programs, screening tools, and referral programs, all tailored to address the unique mental health needs of perinatal and postpartum women. These services aim to prevent and manage conditions, ensuring that women at risk receive the access and support they need for optimal health outcomes.

Background

The Foundation aims to fund innovative and actionable solutions that improve maternal health outcomes, bridge health disparities, and ensure access to quality maternal health care services across Florida. The ultimate goal is to transform Florida into a state where maternal health is safer, and under-resourced communities are supported, prioritizing the health and well-being of all mothers and infants.

Florida's maternal health landscape is marked by significant challenges. Notably, 19.4% of the state's counties are classified as [maternity care deserts](#).¹ Rural areas are particularly vulnerable, with 100% of women living more than 30 minutes from a birthing hospital, compared to 10.7% in urban areas.¹ This disparity has profound implications, including increased travel distances that elevate the risk of maternal morbidity and adverse neonatal outcomes, such as stillbirths and NICU admissions. Financial constraints and heightened stress exacerbate these challenges, which are further intensified by the nationwide trend of birthing hospital closures.

Chronic conditions, particularly hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity, significantly increase the risk of severe pregnancy-related complications and are major drivers of maternal morbidity and mortality in Florida.³ Between 2018 and 2021, 12% of pregnancy-related deaths in Florida were attributed to cardiovascular causes, aligning

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with national data showing cardiovascular disease as the leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States.³ The prevalence of chronic hypertension during pregnancy has increased sharply, with nearly 40% of affected women going untreated, and with severe obesity more than a threefold increase in maternal mortality risk.³ Despite these risks, care for chronic conditions during and after pregnancy remains fragmented, with approximately 40-50% of maternal deaths occurring during the postpartum period, and an estimated 40% of postpartum individuals in Florida not receiving recommended follow-up care.³

Maternal mental health is a critical aspect of overall maternal health, and it is essential to acknowledge the significant impact that mental health can have on a woman's physical health and well-being during pregnancy and throughout the first year postpartum. Women may experience a range of mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, trauma-related symptoms, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can be exacerbated by the physical and emotional demands of pregnancy and childbirth.⁴ Comprehensive mental health support can help women navigate these challenges, promoting healthier outcomes for both mother and infant. This support can include counseling, therapy, and peer support groups, as well as education and resources on mental health and wellness.

Women without access to quality maternal health and mental health services may face higher rates of medical interventions, longer and more complicated labors, lower breastfeeding success rates, and potentially unsatisfactory childbirth experiences.² This is especially crucial in vulnerable communities where quality maternal health services help bridge health disparities and ensure accessible care. However, it is essential to acknowledge that every woman's experience is unique, and outcomes can vary based on individual circumstances and the quality of care received.

Florida Blue Foundation will provide four-year grants to nonprofit organizations with documented expertise and experience in improving maternal and infant health outcomes. Programs should provide women access to quality maternal health services and support throughout each stage of pregnancy and beyond.

¹ Sources:

- Fontenot, J, Lucas, R, Stoneburner, A, Brigrance, C, Hubbard, K, Jones, E, Mishkin, K. *Where You Live Matters: Maternity Care Deserts and the Crisis of Access and Equity in Florida*. March of Dimes. 2023.
- Brigrance, C., Lucas R., Jones, E., Davis, A., Oinuma, M., Mishkin, K. and Henderson, Z. (2022). *Nowhere to Go: Maternity Care Deserts Across the U.S. (Report No. 3)*. March of Dimes. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/research/maternity-care-deserts-report.aspx>
- March of Dimes Maternity Care Deserts Dashboard (Powered by Deloitte HealthPrism Data & Insights) <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/life-sciences-and-health-care/articles/march-of-dimes-maternity-care-deserts-dashboard.html>

² Sources:

- Sobczak A, Taylor L, Solomon S, Ho J, Kemper S, Phillips B, Jacobson K, Castellano C, Ring A, Castellano B, Jacobs RJ. *The Effect of Doulas on Maternal and Birth Outcomes: A Scoping Review*. Cureus. 2023 May 24;15(5): e39451. doi: 10.7759/cureus.39451. PMID: 37378162; PMCID: PMC10292163.
- Vedam S, Stoll K, MacDorman M, Declercq E, Cramer R, Cheyney M, Fisher T, Butt E, Yang YT, Powell Kennedy H. *Mapping integration of midwives across the United States: Impact on access, equity, and outcomes*. PLoS One. 2018 Feb 21;13(2): e0192523. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0192523. PMID: 29466389; PMCID: PMC5821332.
- Leiter, Jillian; Naegeli, Jennifer; and Walkley, Lilyana, "The Effect of Lactation Consultation on the Duration of Breastfeeding in New Mothers: A Systematic Review" (2018). Honors Research Projects. 720. http://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/honors_research_projects/720

³ Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Pregnancy-related deaths: Data and statistics*. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/pregnancy-related-deaths.html>
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2022). *Obesity in pregnancy*. <https://www.acog.org>
- Florida Department of Health. (2023). *Maternal Mortality Review Committee Annual Report*. <https://www.floridahealth.gov>
- Jenny Lundborg, E., Hesselman, S., & Stephansson, O. (2024). *Prevalence of maternal chronic conditions during pregnancy: A Sweden cohort study*. BJOG, 131(4).
- Health.com. (2023). *High blood pressure during pregnancy is on the rise*.
- University of South Florida College of Public Health. (2022). *Maternal mortality in Florida: Understanding and addressing contributing factors*.
- University of South Florida PACC Toolkit. (2024). *Postpartum Access & Continuity of Care (PACC) Toolkit*. Tampa, FL: FPQC.

⁴ Sources:

- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2023). *Screening and Diagnosis of Mental Health Conditions During Pregnancy and Postpartum: ACOG Clinical Practice Guideline No. 4*. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 141(5), 1262-1288. <https://doi.org/10.1097/AOG.0000000000005200>

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Measuring Goals and Data Reporting

Q: What is the purpose of measuring maternal and infant health?

A: The Florida Blue Foundation is committed to understanding and improving health outcomes for mothers and babies across Florida. By measuring progress, we're able to track what's working, identify where support is needed most, and recognize the meaningful contributions grantees are making to maternal and infant health.

Q: How do grantees measure maternal and infant health?

A: Grantees must select assessment tool(s) that are validated, reliable, and appropriate for the clients served to measure maternal and infant health. Grantees are required to administer assessment at least twice annually throughout the 4-year grant duration.

Q: What goals should grantees measure in their selected assessment tool(s)?

A: Grantees will set improvement goals and grantee-selected target percentages for mothers and infants served, measured using one or more of the following key goals: improved health outcomes for infants, improved health outcomes for perinatal and postpartum mothers receiving access to care/support services, and/or improved maternal mental health services.

In addition, grantees will contribute towards the Florida Blue Foundation's collective cohort goals of 70% in Year One, increasing to 90% by Year Four (where feasible). These cohort goals focus on two critical outcomes: infants born to pregnant mothers will show a healthy birthweight weighing above 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds) at birth, and/or infants born to pregnant mothers will have a gestational age of at least 37 weeks.

Q: What are some of the data reporting expectations?

A: During the life of the grant, grantees are required to submit the measurements stated above through the Florida Blue Foundation portal. On a monthly basis, grantees will report an unduplicated count of mothers and infants born to those mothers served, if feasible. On a semi-annual basis, grantees will submit brief six-month reports documenting program indicators, expenses, and client demographics.

Grants Management System & AI Tools

Q: I'm having trouble registering or my organization Tax ID number is not recognized in your grants management system.

A: Click on "Contact Us" located in the blue box at the top of the page. You can also email: floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com; or call: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215. Please include your name, organization name, organization Tax ID, contact information, and interested grant program name. A team member will get back to you.

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Q: Are applicants permitted to use AI tools (i.e. ChatGPT) to help develop our grant application?

A: Yes, applicants may use AI tools to support their grant application and are fully responsible for all submitted content. However, any Florida Blue Foundation templates provided for applicants to complete cannot be altered by AI – it must be kept exactly as designed.

We encourage applicants to fact-check all information, data, and citations before submission, since AI tools can make mistakes. Before entering any sensitive organizational information into an AI platform, review your privacy policies to ensure you're comfortable with how that data may be used. Finally, have your leadership and program staff review and validate all AI-generated content to confirm it accurately reflects your organization's mission, strategy, and proposed program. The human touch is just as important as the technology.

Eligibility

Q: What are the IRS tax form and annual revenue requirements for organizations to be eligible to apply for this grant program?

A: Applicants will be required to upload their organizations most recently filed IRS Tax Form(s) 990 or 990-EZ. Your organization must have reported annual revenue exceeding \$400,000 for each of the last two years on this filing. Please note, organizations filing Form 990-N (e-Postcard) are not eligible to apply for this grant program.

Q: Are current grantees eligible to apply to the same grant program? Or different grant program?

A: We encourage current Foundation grantees with multi-year grants to wait until your current grant agreement and funding have officially ended before reapplying to the same program. Your current grant must end before the new 2027 Maternal Health grant cohort starts on March 1, 2027.

Please note that our Funding Focuses may change from year to year. You can explore other funding opportunities that are different from your current funded program with the Foundation. We recommend considering opportunities that best align with your organization's goals and objectives. For more information, please visit:
www.floridablue.com/foundation.

Q: Our organization has more than one affiliate or chapter across the state utilizing the same Tax ID number. Are we able to apply from multiple affiliates/chapters?

A: Yes, each affiliate or chapter may submit its own application, as long as the programs are distinct. However, if multiple affiliates or chapters are planning to submit similar or overlapping programs, we encourage you to submit one statewide application that combines these efforts for greater impact. Please note that only one application per Funding Focus is allowed.

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Q: We are a large parent organization with subsidiaries, multiple divisions, or systems with different Tax ID numbers—such as universities, colleges, hospital systems, or government agencies. May we submit multiple applications with different Tax ID numbers?

A: We recommend that large organizations and their subsidiaries, divisions, or systems work together to select one Tax ID number and submit one application per Funding Focus to maintain fairness in our competitive process and ensure alignment across your organization.

If your subsidiaries or divisions operate as truly independent entities with distinct missions and programs, you may apply separately; however, please note that only one application per Funding Focus is allowed per Tax ID.

Q: If an organization is not based in Florida but provides direct services in markets across the country including Florida, would the organization still be eligible to apply?

A: Yes, as long as the requested funds will be directed to the Florida program and the organization can provide the required documents in the Attachments section of the online grant application including the [Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate](#) from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Decision-Making Process

Q: Can I request an individual meeting with a Florida Blue Foundation program officer to discuss my grant proposal?

A: To maintain the integrity and fairness of our competitive application process, the Foundation does not engage in individual meetings or discussions to assess the validity of proposals prior to submission. Our process is designed to ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity to submit their proposals, and that we can review and evaluate them based on the same criteria. If your team believes that your program aligns with one of our Funding Focuses and guidelines, we encourage you to submit a proposal through our application process.

Q: What is the decision-making process of selecting applications for funding?

A: A review committee composed of internal and/or external individuals who are knowledgeable and/or experts in this funding area make recommendations to the Foundation. The Foundation's Board of Directors has the final approval for all recommended applications.

Q: Will I receive feedback if my grant application is declined?

A: We appreciate the time and effort invested in each application, and the interest in receiving feedback on areas to improve and strengthen. Due to the high volume of applications submitted annually, we are unable to provide individualized feedback to all applicants. We strive to ensure fairness and consistency in our review process for all applicants. A declined application is not a reflection on the merit or potential impact of your proposal.

Our multi-year grant programs are highly competitive, and we can only fund a limited number of proposals across the state. We encourage you to explore our other funding opportunities, which can be found on our website at www.floridablue.com/foundation. There, you can review our funding priorities and apply to the opportunity that best aligns with your organization's goals and objectives.

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Q: Where can I find previously funded and successful examples of projects that suit the Foundation's other Funding Priorities?

A: The Foundation's website is a great resource for additional information that highlights some grantees. For more information, please visit: www.floridablue.com/foundation.

Q: How many proposals do you expect to receive? How many will you fund?

A: We do not have an estimate of how many proposals we will receive. Florida Blue Foundation has approximately \$3 million to fund the statewide Maternal Health grant program.

Need Help? If you still have questions, you may contact us via email: floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com; or via phone: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215. Please include your name, organization name, organization Tax ID, contact information, and interested grant program name.