

## Maternal Health

[Watch an informational webinar](#) on the Maternal Health grant program.

[Click here](#) to access the online application for the Maternal Health grant program.

### Important Dates/Deadlines

- Application open date: **On or about Thursday, August 1, 2024**
- Application due date: **Thursday, September 12, 2024, by 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)**
- All applicants will be notified of their status: **Between December 2024 – January 2025**
- Required grantee orientation: **Between December 2024 – January 2025**

**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 funding opportunity is focused on Maternal Health.**

### Description of the 2024 Maternal Health Grant Program

**Goal:** Ensure every mother and baby will receive quality care throughout each stage of pregnancy and beyond.

### Background

The Foundation seeks to fund programs that support innovative and actionable solutions to improve maternal health outcomes, bridge health disparities, and secure equitable access to quality maternal health care services across the state of Florida. The aim is to transform Florida into a state where maternal health is safer, and under-resourced or marginalized communities are supported, embodying a commitment to the health and well-being of all mothers and babies.

In Florida, the maternal health landscape is marked by significant challenges. Notably, 19.4% of Florida's counties are classified as [maternity care deserts](#).<sup>1</sup> Rural areas of the state are particularly disadvantaged, with 100% of women residing more than 30 minutes from a birthing hospital—a stark contrast to the 10.7% in urban areas. The implications of this are profound: increased travel distances elevate the risk of maternal morbidity and adverse neonatal outcomes, including stillbirths and NICU admissions. These challenges are exacerbated by financial constraints and heightened stress, further intensified by the nationwide trend of birthing hospital closures.

Compounding these issues is the limited availability of family services in Florida, where only 3.3 family services are available per 100,000 women—compared to the national average of 5.3 per 100,000 women.<sup>1</sup> Such scarcity heightens the vulnerability of women to adverse maternal health outcomes. The [Maternal Vulnerability Index \(MVI\)](#) reveals that 22.4% of the state's counties are at high risk, with inadequate prenatal care being a particularly acute issue in regions with elevated environmental vulnerability, affecting black, indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) communities disproportionately. Additionally, Hispanic women residing in areas with high environmental vulnerability are 1.3 times more likely to receive inadequate prenatal care compared to their counterparts in regions with lower environmental vulnerability.

Women who do not have access to quality maternal health services may face higher rates of medical interventions, longer and more complicated labors, lower breastfeeding success rates, and potentially unsatisfactory childbirth experiences.<sup>2</sup> This is especially crucial in under-resourced or marginalized communities,

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where quality maternal health services help bridge health disparities and ensure accessible, culturally competent care. Additionally, women might not receive the same level of personalized care and support in navigating the challenges of perinatal and postpartum periods, which can impact both their physical and mental well-being. By providing comprehensive mental health support, women can navigate the emotional and psychological changes that come with the perinatal and postpartum periods, ultimately promoting healthier outcomes for both mother and baby. However, it's important to acknowledge that every woman's experience is unique, and these outcomes can vary based on individual circumstances and the quality of care received.

Florida Blue Foundation will provide three- and four-year grants to nonprofit organizations that have documented expertise and experience in creating more equitable maternal health outcomes. Programs should provide women equitable access to quality maternal health services and support throughout each stage of pregnancy and beyond.

### <sup>1</sup> Sources:

- Fontenot, J, Lucas, R, Stoneburner, A, Brigance, 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.
- Brigance, 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>

### <sup>2</sup> 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](http://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/honors_research_projects/720)

## 2024 Maternal Health Funding Priorities

Florida Blue Foundation aims to address various racial, ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic barriers that women face in accessing affordable, high-quality maternal health care services and support in Florida.

### **Priority 1: Improving Access to Quality Maternal Health Care Services**

Women who do not have access to quality maternal health services may face higher rates of medical interventions, longer and more complicated labors, lower breastfeeding success rates, and potentially unsatisfactory childbirth experiences. Increasing access and programming to physicians, community professionals, birth workers, lactation consultants, doulas, midwives, community health workers, and/or other social support services are pivotal in enhancing health, contributing significantly to positive experiences. It not only improves clinical outcomes but also empowers women with knowledge and support and fosters confidence, autonomy, and satisfaction in their journey through pregnancy, childbirth, and early motherhood.

### **Priority 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, and other mental health challenges that women may face. It encompasses a range of services and interventions, including counseling, support groups, education programs, screening tools, and referral programs 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.

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For both Funding Priorities, we encourage organizations to collaborate with local health care providers, health professionals, and community stakeholders to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach to supporting maternal health.

### Special Note

Applicants may apply for one or both Funding Priorities. Organizations applying for both must complete a separate application for each Funding Priority.

When completing the online application, please keep in mind that Florida Blue Foundation is looking for nonprofit charitable organizations to propose proven services that will be implemented to serve primarily underserved, underinsured, and low-income individuals in Florida.

Special consideration will be given to organizations that provide services in the following ZIP codes: 32206, 32805, 33612/33613, 33142, and 33311 plus Florida's rural counties – reference the [Florida Department of Health map of rural counties](#) attached to the grant application. **Providing services to these specific ZIP codes and Florida's rural counties is not a requirement to apply for this grant program.**

### Completing the Application

The Program Milestone Document is available to be downloaded. The completed Program Milestone Document is to be uploaded to the application as an attachment. Basic information – name of organization, program title, amount requested, etc. – will be requested within the application. Program objectives, tasks, expected outcomes/results, and other details will be captured within the Program Milestone Document. The information within the Program Milestone Document will then be the basis for all reporting for the programs selected for funding.

### Funding

- Florida Blue Foundation has approximately \$3 million for the funding of this program.
- The Foundation will fund three- and four-year grants. The total amount requested for the life of the grant should range between \$270,000 to \$400,000 (the approximate amount per year is between \$90,000 to \$100,000).

### Eligible Applicants

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

1. Are incorporated in Florida
2. Have the capacity, expertise, resources, knowledge in the field, and time needed to carry out the intent of the program
3. Have expertise in delivering educational and awareness programs on targeted topics to targeted populations described in this application
4. Have expertise in developing and managing programs, and
5. Have the capability to reach target populations described under this application.

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### What We Do Support

1. Salaries, including benefits
2. Employee training
3. Rental fees for program/meeting costs
4. Webinar or other types of media/technology
5. Program materials/equipment
6. Required travel related to this grant (e.g., attend Florida Blue Foundation's Annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards, and other potential annual program meetings, etc.)
7. Training/educational materials
8. Printing and dissemination
9. Indirect costs – an amount up to but not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount.

*(Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant project function or activity but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.)*

### What We Do Not Support

1. Organizations that discriminate in their provision of goods and services based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, or marital status
2. Organizations that do not have a 501(c)(3)
3. Research and development
4. Individuals
5. Capital campaigns
6. New start-ups
7. Profit making enterprises as applicants

### Grantee Requirements

- Please be aware that should your program be selected for funding, Florida Blue Foundation will disburse payments via ACH transactions, and you will be required to provide requested banking information.
- Successful applicants should be prepared to attend a mandatory grantee orientation that is tentatively scheduled to take place between December 2024 – January 2025. Specific date and time will be provided once confirmed.
- Successful applicants must 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 they are confirmed.
- 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: \$800 per person/per year.

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### Need Help?

Check out the **Frequently Asked Questions beginning on the next page.**

If you still have questions, you may contact us via email: [floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com](mailto:floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com); or via phone: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215. Please include your name, organization name, your contact information, and interested grant program name.

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### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: If an organization does not provide services in the following ZIP codes: 32206, 32805, 33612/33613, 33142, and 33311 and/or Florida's rural counties, would the organization still be eligible to apply?**

A: Yes, as long as the organization primarily serves underserved, underinsured, and low-income individuals in Florida. Special consideration will be given to organizations that provide services in these specific ZIP codes and/or Florida's rural counties. However, it is not a requirement to apply for this grant program.

**Q: Are current grantees eligible to apply to the same program? Or for a different program?**

A: Yes, as long as the proposal aligns with the intent of the grant. And, if applying to the same grant program, the proposal needs to be different from what is currently being funded.

**Q: What is the deadline to submit the 2024 Program application?**

A: Maternal Health: Before 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Thursday, September 12, 2024

**Q: When will applicants be notified of their status as approved or declined?**

A: Maternal Health: Between December 2024 – January 2025

**Q: Do you fund 12-month applications?**

A: No. The Maternal Health grant program will award three- and four-year (36 or 48 months) grants to nonprofit organizations.

**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 for the funding of the 2024 Maternal Health grant program.

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

A: A review committee composed of internal and 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: For budgeting purposes, can you please provide an estimate of the numbers of days and nights spent at each of the events: Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards and at a potential annual program meeting?**

A: Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards - This is a two-day event typically held in Orlando. We recommend estimating the hotel cost at \$250 per night and registration at \$150. Remember to also add in transportation cost. 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.

Other meetings - Meetings in subsequent years are not set in stone and sometimes they are scheduled in conjunction with the Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards or at another time during the year that may be scheduled at a central location. The schedule generally allows for closer organizations to be able to travel back and forth in one day.

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**Q: Can these grant funds be used to purchase a building?**

A: No, our programs are not designed to fund brick and mortar grants. Our grants are designed to provide direct delivery services to the underserved and low-income individuals and communities across Florida.

**Q: Are indirect costs allowable?**

A: Yes, up to 10% of indirect costs are allowable under these programs.

*Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant project function or activity but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.*

**Q: What if our organization does not have an audited financial statement?**

A: In lieu of an audited financial statement, the Foundation requests the organization's Statement of Financial Position or Statement of Activities.

**Q: What format do you require for the letters of agreement with collaborators/partners?**

A: We do not have a preferred format for the letters of agreement between collaborators/partners; however, they must be specific to the grant application you are submitting and dated in line with the submitted application.

**Q: Is there a limit to the number of collaborations/partnerships?**

A: There is no limit.

**Q: Is there a maximum number of objectives in the program milestone document?**

A: There is no maximum number of objectives.

**Q: For these programs, how does the Foundation define demographics?**

A: For the purposes of these programs, the Foundation defines demographics as the statistical data relating to the human population and particular groups within it (gender, age, ethnicity, income, etc.).

**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 organization can provide the required documents in the Attachments section of the application including the State of Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**Q: What is the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate? Do state agencies need to provide one?**

A: The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services requires this certification for nonprofits seeking to solicit funds in the state of Florida. It must be renewed yearly. We request that you upload the current certificate that is less than one year old. It is a required attachment so if your organization is exempt, please attach the exemption letter from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**Q: When will the grants become effective?**

A: As soon as the grant agreements are fully executed between December 2024 – January 2025, operations can begin when the organization is ready to launch the program.

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**Q: I cannot register online or my organization Tax ID number is not recognized.**

A: If you are having trouble registering or cannot find your organization, please click on “Contact Us” located in the blue box at the top of the page and provide the organization name, address, and tax ID number. Someone will get back to you.

**Q: Is there someplace where we may find a list of previously funded/successful proposals for examples of projects that suit the Foundation’s other Funding Priorities?**

A: The Foundation’s [website](#) is a great resource for additional information and there you will find a link to the most current Impact Report which highlights many grantees.

**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: Each chapter may submit an application. If the chapters plan to submit similar programs, our recommendation is to submit a statewide proposal. Large organizations that have many divisions, such as universities, colleges, hospital systems, or government agencies, may submit only one application per Funding Priority. If you have specific questions, please reach out to the Foundation.

### Need Help?

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