

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Mental Health First Aid and Funding Announcements

Grants Information

1. Where can I apply for and find detailed information about the SAMHSA grants?
 - Please reference the following links to apply for the SAMHSA grants:
 - [Mental Health Awareness Training Grant](#)
 - [Project AWARE \(Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education\) State Education Agency Grants](#)

2. Who is eligible to apply?
 - Mental Health Awareness Training Grants – Any domestic non-profit organization is eligible to apply. In addition, any city, county or state government; school, social service agency; faith-based organization; mental health or addiction provider; college or university; hospital or health care system; police, fire or EMS department; or organization servicing veterans or their families is also eligible to apply.
 - Project Aware State Education Agency Grants – State Educational Agencies (SEAs) and Tribal Educational Agencies.

3. What are the requirements of the application and how does Mental Health First Aid meet those requirements?
 - Mental Health Awareness Training Grant applicants are required to demonstrate a number of required activities. Those most applicable to Mental Health First Aid include:
 - i. **Population of Focus** – The Adult Mental Health First Aid curriculum has developed modules to target Spanish-speaking individuals, higher education school personnel, emergency first responders, law enforcement, veterans, armed service members and their families and older adults. In addition, the Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum empowers adults who work with adolescents age 12-18.
 - ii. **Evidence-based Mental Health Awareness Training** – Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based program and is listed in SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). Published, peer-reviewed studies about the program show that people who are trained in Mental Health First Aid have an increased knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental illnesses and addictions; can identify multiple types of professional and self-help resources; and have increased confidence in and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
 - iii. **Community Resources, Supports and Materials** – All Mental Health First Aid Instructors have knowledge of local resources and provide a resource guide to each participant who takes the eight-hour course. Once trained, First Aiders become a part of a national network and have access to an online portal, receiving monthly communication from the national office tailored to First

Aiders. Organizations have also developed regular follow-up communications to keep trained First Aiders engaged.

- iv. **Referral and Tracking Process** – First Aider information and evaluation data are available to Instructors through our centralized Instructor Portal. This information will support the quarterly reporting requirements related to tracking the number of individuals trained in mental health promotion and prevention. Organizations have used a variety of methods to track referrals including paper and web-based surveys as well as periodic focus groups to support the data collection and tracking requirements of the grant.
- v. **Licensed Mental Health Provider Organization** – The National Council for Behavioral Health has nearly 3,000 community behavioral health care organizations as members all over the country. If you do not already have a relationship with a local provider, [the “Find a Provider” feature](#) on the National Council’s main website permits you to search by state to locate an experienced provider in your area. **At least one experienced and licensed mental health provider needs to be identified in the proposal.**
- vi. **Mental Health Awareness Training Plan** – Mental Health First Aid Instructors are required to train three courses per year. Depending on your organization’s capacity and the scope of your plan, you may need to train additional Instructors to teach the Mental Health First Aid course. If you are unsure of where to start, think about your training goal – how many individuals do you want to train and who is your audience?
- vii. **Collaborative Partnerships** – Partnerships are the lifeblood of the strategic growth of Mental Health First Aid nationally. Communities that have been successful in implementation have multiple partners. Many of the [case studies](#) featured on our website describe the types of partnerships that have contributed to the growth of local training programs.

4. Can we use the funding from SAMHSA to train more Instructors at our organization?
 - Absolutely! If you are new to Mental Health First Aid, you will need to use part of the funding to train Instructors and build up your Instructor base. If your organization is already training Mental Health First Aid, it’s possible you may need to train additional Instructors depending on your organization’s capacity and the scope of your plan.
5. Would SAMHSA funding cover the costs of hiring a Mental Health First Aid Coordinator to manage the administrative needs of trainings?
 - Absolutely! This will just need to be included in your submitted Detailed Budget.
6. Can we use the grant to focus on multiple populations (such as law enforcement, Spanish speaking populations or rural populations)?
 - The Mental Health Awareness Training grant announcement only stipulates that applicants must demonstrate at least one population target and must describe the extent of the problem, including service gaps and need, for the population of focus. For

further clarity on this, please attend one of SAMHSA's Technical Assistance Webinars or email SAMHSA directly at mhat_foa@samhsa.hhs.gov or FOACMHS@samhsa.hhs.gov.

7. How can I make myself competitive for this grant if I am an independent Instructor?
 - The Mental Health Awareness Training Grants are designed for non-profit organizations and the grants will only be awarded to organizations. If you are an independent Instructor, we advise that you partner with a community organization like a mental health center, a local police department, a faith-based organization, etc.
8. If I don't have a relationship with a local mental health provider, where can I find one?
 - The National Council for Behavioral Health has nearly 3,000 community behavioral health care organizations as members all over the country. If you do not already have a relationship with a local provider, [the "Find a Provider" feature](#) on the National Council website permits you to search by state to locate an experienced provider in your area.
9. How can I find out about other organizations or Instructors to partner with?
 - If you are an Instructor, you can find other organizations in your area by logging into the Instructor Portal! Just navigate to [Instructor Hub – Browse Instructor Courses](#) to search for other Instructors and organizations in your area. We can also help facilitate connections – just email us at ProjectAWARE@TheNationalCouncil.org.

Mental Health First Aid Curriculum

1. **How is Mental Health First Aid different from Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)?**
 - Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based eight-hour training for the general public that includes specialized content for law enforcement. While CIT is a five-day, 40-hour training program specifically for law enforcement, CIT and Mental Health First Aid are complimentary programs. Best practices promulgated by CIT International and the International Association of Chiefs of Police state that 25 percent of a police force should be trained in CIT and 75 percent in Mental Health First Aid. For more information, please see the [Mental Health First Aid or CIT one-pager](#).
2. Are there supplementary modules for the Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum as well as the Adult curriculum?
 - Currently, our modules are only available for the [Adult Mental Health First Aid curriculum](#). However, both the Adult and [Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum](#) is available in Spanish. In addition, the following modules are available for the Adult Mental Health First Aid curriculum:
 - i. [Higher Education](#)
 - ii. [Fire and EMS](#)
 - iii. [Law Enforcement, Corrections and Public Safety](#)
 - iv. [Military Members, Veterans and their Families](#)
 - v. [Older Adults](#)
 - vi. [Rural Communities](#)

3. Is the Opioid Response Supplement available for both the Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum?
 - [The Opioid Response Supplement](#) is currently only available for the Adult Mental Health First Aid curriculum, but will eventually be flowed into the Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum.
4. Would college students benefit more from the Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum or the Adult Mental Health First Aid curriculum?
 - This depends on the make-up of your audience. If the audience is predominately school-aged (12-18), it may be helpful to train adults in the Youth program so they have the skills to work with their school-aged youth. However, if you are working with adults 18 and older, the Adult curriculum with the Higher Education module may be most useful.
5. Do existing Instructors provide a fee for Mental Health First Aid trainings?
 - Many Instructors do not charge a fee for the Mental Health First Aid course because they've received funding to cover the costs. However, we strongly encourage all Instructors and their organizations to note the value of the course (\$170 per First Aider) and let First Aiders know that the course is free of charge due to funding. Please see our [budget template](#) for more information.

Course Materials and Evaluation

1. Can participants share manuals or does every participant need a manual?
 - A requirement for fidelity of the course is that each participant receives a manual. This allows participants to reference the information discussed in the manual after they leave the training.
2. How can Coordinators who manage multiple Instructors pull data about all the courses their Instructors have taught collectively?
 - Instructors can provide Coordinator-Level Access to a trusted individual by submitting a Coordinator-Level Access Request form. After obtaining Coordinator-Level Access, there are two ways to pull course data about multiple Instructors:
 - i. If all Instructors' courses have been conducted in the same area or city, a coordinator can use the [Find a Mental Health First Aid Course feature](#) to find all courses in a given city, then download the results to an Excel spreadsheet.
 - ii. Complete and submit the [Data Request Form](#) with your inquiry, and we'll be happy to provide you with the information you need!