**Section 44.135 Merit Based Review**

a) The Department, in consultation with the Board, will review applications using the grantee and Project eligibility requirements detailed in Section 115 and 120. Failing to get an award does not prohibit applicants from submitting future applications if funding is available.

b) Applications meeting eligibility requirements in Section 115 and 120 will be reviewed based upon, but is not limited to, the following criteria:

1) Documented need for the Project with priority given to Projects meeting the standards for priority need identified in Section 44.125;

2) Ability of the applicant to successfully complete Project objectives described in the grant application;

3) Ability of the applicant to implement and sustain operations upon completion of the Project;

4) Realistic budget and timeline for the completion of the Project, including the applicant's ability to obtain matching funds and the readiness of the Project to begin once the grant funds are awarded; and

5) Any other criteria listed in the NOFO for the grant program.

c) Applicants will be evaluated and scored as outlined in the NOFO and in accordance with this Part.

d) Grants will be awarded to eligible applicants in a priority order from available State funds.