**Section 596.60 Grant Application Evaluation Process**

Projects that do not develop clinics or directly provide health care diagnostic and treatment services can apply for and be awarded up to four years of funding. Projects that develop clinics or directly provide health care diagnostic and treatment services can apply for and be awarded up to six years of funding.

a) The criteria referenced in this subsection (a) will be used to evaluate grant applications under Subpart B of this Part.

1) Priority in the selection of applicants for funding shall be given to those projects that demonstrate the greatest cost effective impact on accessibility and availability of quality primary health care services for residents of designated shortage areas or for population groups with special needs. An impact shall be demonstrated by detailing the expected number and type of recipients who were previously unserved or underserved and who will now be served by the project.

2) Additional selection criteria that will cause an application to receive priority consideration include:

A) Projects that are closest to operational status at the time of application;

B) Projects that have the broadest range of health and social service providers and other types of community organizations actively participating in the organization and on-going policy decisions;

C) Projects that have the broadest base of financial support and can become self-supporting when grant funding ends;

D) Projects that propose the greatest expenditure of grant dollars in rural areas when a consortium includes urban providers.

3) Of the applications that propose to provide diagnostic and treatment services, priority consideration will be given to those that have the following characteristics:

A) Those that are eligible for any cost-based reimbursement programs available now (Rural Health Clinic and FQHC programs) or any that develop in the future;

B) Those that plan to serve as sites for educational experiences for a variety of health and social service profession students.

b) The criteria referenced in this subsection (b) will be used to evaluate grant applications under Subpart C of this Part.

1) Priority in the selection of applicants for funding shall be given to those projects that demonstrate the greatest impact on accessibility and availability of primary health care services for residents of the service area or the greatest impact on the fiscal strength of the hospital. The impact shall be demonstrated by detailing the expected number of service area residents who were previously unserved or underserved and who will now be served by the project or by demonstrating an improvement in the financial status of the hospital.

2) Additional selection criteria that will cause an application to receive priority consideration include:

A) Projects that are closest to operational status or are already functioning at the time of application;

B) Projects that have the broadest range of health and social service providers and other types of community and business organizations actively participating in the organization and on-going policy decisions;

C) Projects that develop the highest level of financial support and can become self-supporting when grant funding ends.

3) Of the applications that propose to provide health care diagnostic and treatment services, priority consideration will be given to those that have the following characteristics:

A) Eligible for any cost-based reimbursement programs available (Rural Health Clinic and FQHC programs) or any that develop in the future;

B) Intent to serve as sites for educational experiences for students in a variety of health and social service professions.

c) The criteria referenced in subsection (c) will be used to evaluate grant applications under Subpart D.

1) Priority in the selection of applicants for funding shall be given to those projects that can demonstrate the greatest cost effective impact on accessibility and availability of primary health care services for residents of designated shortage areas or for population groups with special needs. An impact shall be demonstrated by detailing the expected number of recipients who were previously unserved or underserved and who will now be served by the project.

2) Priority consideration will be given to applications received from health centers funded through section 330 of the Public Health Service Act or from FQHC Look-Alikes.

3) Priority consideration will be given to projects that will be developed outside the existing service area of the applicant.

4) Additional selection criteria that will cause an application to receive priority consideration include:

A) Projects closest to operational status at the time of application;

B) Projects that have the broadest range of health and social service providers and other types of community organizations actively participating in the organization and on-going policy decisions; and

C) Projects that have the broadest base of financial support and can become self-supporting when grant funding ends.

5) Of the applications that describe projects that will provide primary health care diagnostic and treatment services, priority consideration will be given to those that have the following characteristics:

A) Projects that are eligible for any cost-based reimbursement program currently available (Rural Health Clinic and FQHC programs) or any programs that develop in the future; and

B) Projects that will serve as a site for educational experiences for a variety of health and social service professions students.

6) When the number of applications is sufficient to support a geographical separation of applicants, the Department shall distribute grant awards equally among all geographical areas represented by applicants. Geographical areas are defined in Section 596.20 and include:

A) Metropolitan Chicago;

B) Downstate urban; and

C) Rural.

d) Upon receipt of a grant application, the Department will conduct the following:

1) The Department will determine whether the applicant is eligible to apply per the requirements of the Act and subsection (a), (b) or (c) of this Section (as applicable). If the applicant is ineligible to apply, the Department will contact the applicant in writing with the determination.

2) If the applicant is eligible to apply, the Department will determine whether the application is complete. A review will determine if all applicable criteria have been addressed and if all required materials and documentation have been submitted. The Department will determine whether the applicant has fulfilled the requirements of Section 596.50 and subsection (a), (b) or (c) of this Section (as applicable).

A) If the application is complete, the Department will proceed with the application evaluation process referenced in this Section.

B) If the application is incomplete, the Department will notify the applicant by certified mail. An applicant has 30 calendar days from the date of receipt of the certified letter to address the issues identified by the Department and submit a revised application. If the applicant does not respond to the Department's determination within the prescribed time frame or if a revised application fails to address the issues identified by the Department, the application will be deemed null and void.

e) Once the Department determines that applications are complete, grant proposals will be forwarded to the Department's grant review committee for consideration.

f) Applicants shall be allowed to amend the application or provide additional supporting documentation during the evaluation process if requested by the Department's grant review committee.

g) Upon completion of the grant review committee's evaluation, the Department will award grants to the applicants that meet all of the applicable requirements of the Act and this Part.

(Source: Added at 35 Ill. Reg. 14147, effective August 4, 2011)