

October 29, 2026

COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FY2028

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Dear Community Provider,

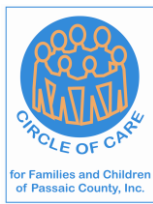
Circle of Care for Families and Children of Passaic County (COC) provides care management services to children and youth experiencing emotional, behavioral, developmental, intellectual, and substance use needs, and to their families. As part of our contract with the New Jersey Children's System of Care (CSOC), COC has access to funds designated for one time use by community organizations to promote and develop new, additional, and/or unique resources addressing an unmet or under-served need in Passaic County.

This letter serves as a **“Request for Proposals” (RFP)** to support the development, enhancement and/or expansion of the availability of community-based resources for Passaic County youth experiencing emotional, behavioral, developmental, intellectual and/or substance use needs and their families.

A maximum total of \$ 67,697.00 (less can be applied for) is available to fund one or more projects. This funding is available for the period of July 1st, 2027 – June 30, 2028.

Proposals submitted must either be a one-time initiative that can have a sustained impact or serve as seed money to initiate a new resource. Applicants must commit to working in partnership with Circle of Care for Families and Children of Passaic County (COC), other system partners, and community-based resources. They must embody the values of the NJ Children's System of Care.

Funding is not intended to purchase services for specific individuals or families, but rather, to support new or existing activities or services in the community.



Please feel free to contact me at 973-987-7685 if you have any questions. Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paulina Dutton, LAC,
Community Relations & Resource Development Director
Circle of Care for Families and Children of Passaic County

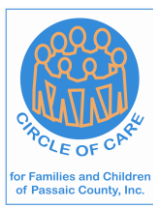
cc: Jose L. Posos, LPC, M.Ed., Executive Director COC

Distribution:

Passaic County Human Service Advisory Council
Passaic Community Provider List
Passaic Youth Service Commission
Passaic CIACC Member List
Circle of Care LinkedIn
Paterson Alliance (Vibrant Paterson) Member List

Post:

Circle of Care Website
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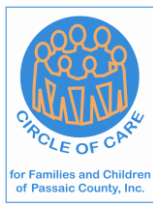
BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Circle of Care has reviewed recent county and statewide data and needs assessments that have documented areas of need for Passaic County. Projects submitted should address at least one of the following identified areas of need in their proposals (see last page for references):

- **Early Childhood Development and Family Connection (Ages 0–5):** Programs that promote healthy social-emotional development, early socialization, positive caregiver-child relationships, and developmental growth. Programs may include inclusive playgroups, sensory-friendly activities, parent-child enrichment, and caregiver education. Programs should be inclusive of young children with emerging developmental, behavioral, or sensory needs, as appropriate to the proposed activities.
- **Inclusive Recreation, Youth Wellness, and Social Development:** Programs that expand access to recreational, social, and enrichment opportunities that promote emotional well-being, positive relationships, resilience, and community engagement. Activities may include sports, arts, mentoring, social groups, and social-emotional skill development. Programs should provide meaningful opportunities for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to participate alongside their peers, with appropriate adaptations and supports.
- **Life Skills and Transition to Adulthood:** Programs that prepare adolescents and transition-age youth for greater independence and meaningful participation in adult life. Activities may include independent living skills, financial literacy, employment readiness, vocational exploration, self-advocacy, decision-making, and community engagement. Programs serving youth with I/DD should demonstrate how activities and supports will be adapted to their developmental and functional needs.
- **Parent and Caregiver Wellness and Family Strengthening:** Programs that support the emotional well-being, resilience, and connection of parents and caregivers of children and youth with behavioral, emotional, or developmental needs. Programs may include caregiver support groups, peer-to-peer networks, parenting education, family engagement activities, and opportunities that strengthen family relationships and reduce social isolation.

Accessibility and Inclusion

All proposed programs must demonstrate linguistic accessibility and cultural responsiveness appropriate to the populations they intend to serve. Applicants should describe how families who primarily speak languages other than English, including Spanish, Arabic,



Bengali, and other languages represented in Passaic County, will be able to access program information, registration, communication, and meaningful participation.

Where applicable and appropriate, programs should also demonstrate how they will accommodate children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) through reasonable adaptations, accessible activities, and individualized supports that promote meaningful participation.

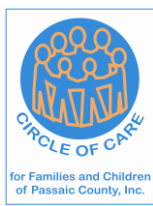
Applicants are also encouraged to address barriers related to transportation, cost, scheduling, geographic access, and awareness of available opportunities.

Only programs that take place in Passaic County will be considered.

This funding solicitation reflects identified needs of children, youth, and families in Passaic County, including those served by Passaic County's Children's System of Care, and aligns with the New Jersey Children's System of Care Community Resource Development (CRD) funding guidelines.

Collaborative applications that maximize the impact of these funds are encouraged, as well as projects that include family participation. The overall goal of this RFP is twofold: to develop and/or increase the availability of accessible community-based resources in Passaic County and to improve positive outcomes for children, youth, and their families.

All awards are contingent on the sufficiency and availability of CSOC funding. Final decisions regarding grant awards will be at the discretion of CSOC.



PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Only complete proposals that are submitted on time, following the indicated format and with all the attachments will be considered. All applications will be reviewed and scored via a panel consisting of COC Community Relations & Resource Development Director, member(s) of COC Board of Trustees, representatives from COC leadership and staff, and various members of the Passaic County Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (CIACC), including parents.

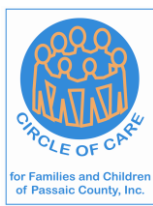
All proposals shall be submitted via the JotForm below (including attachments), and include the following information and will be evaluated based on the "Rating Scale" included with this announcement.

- **Agency's W9 Form**
- Provide **resume/CV(s) for all personnel who will be directly delivering program services**, highlighting relevant qualifications, experience and expertise in working with the target population.
- [Completed Proposal Application](#)
- **Budget Template (see attached sample)**

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. A Needs Statement: (9 points)

- A clearly defined and outlined explanation/rationale/justification for the proposed activity, that draws a direct connection to any of the areas of need identified in this RFP.
- Statement should display an understanding of the needs of youth and families in our community that are being targeted by the proposed service/program.
- Knowledge and understanding of the New Jersey Children's System of Care
- General and specific knowledge of cultural competencies necessary to be successful in Passaic County.



2. Description of Agency and History of Service to Youth and Families: (9 points)

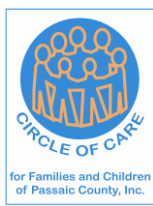
- Provide a **brief** overview of the organization, including mission statement, length of existence, current programs, incorporation and tax status.
- Organizational capability to initiate and sustain current and proposed program. Describe your organization's relevant experience, staff qualifications, and organizational resources that demonstrate its capacity to effectively address the identified need and successfully implement the proposed program.
- Describe your organization's history of serving or engaging children, youth and families in Passaic County.

3. Description of Service(s) to be funded: (15 points)

- Eligibility criteria for targeted population is clearly defined, outlining who and how many youth/families will receive the service, and the frequency and length of service.
- Clearly outlined project activities and services to be offered during the funding period and beyond, that show a clear path to how these will address the unmet needs that project has identified and seeks to target.
- Proposal outlines the expected number of youth and/or families to be served by project.
- Proposal should clearly state how the program/service will be announced to the community and how referrals will be accepted.
- Agreement to provide equitable access of the services/supports to all youth and families with the identified needs, and the assurance that the access process will be free from any form of discrimination. The referral process should ensure equitable access to services or supports for the youth and families that are eligible to receive them.
- Hours of operation, staffing needs, and location(s) of program(s) being offered.
- The effective period or term of the service or activity.

4. Anticipated Outcomes: (9 points)

- Clearly defined anticipated outcomes, which should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-framed, and should demonstrate the impact and benefit of the service



to youth and families. Outcomes should clearly show the impact that the proposed program seeks to attain.

5. Evaluation Methods: (6 points)

Program Evaluation:

- Description of how the organization will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed program and measure progress towards the anticipated outcomes identified in section 4.
- Specific tools or methods that will be used to collect and assess the participant outcomes, such as pre and post assessments, surveys, or other relevant measures.

Quality Assurance

Documentation of quality assurance monitoring plan. This should include what monitoring process will be used to ensure consistent high-quality service provision,

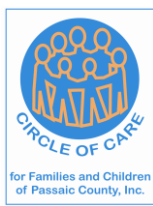
- Awardee(s) must agree to submit 3 comprehensive reports, documenting a quality assurance effort, program performance reports and expenditure reports that include detailed submission of all documents that substantiate funding use (receipts, time logs, invoices, mileage, etc.)

6. Sustainability Plan: (6 points)

All projects must demonstrate sustainability after initial funding. Demonstrate that the service is sustainable after the end of the effective term and provide a plan outlining relevant strategies, that include leveraging existing community capacity. Agency history and proven fund-raising ability and donation procurement are acceptable proof of sustainability when combined with a current plan. Strong affiliations with larger well- established community resources can be provided as a source of sustainability strategies.

7. Budget: (12 points)

- Exact amount of funds requested and detailed budget for the expenditure of these funds.
- Costs should be reasonable, provide adequate justification of costs SPECIFIC ONLY to this proposal.
- The funding requested must be used towards direct services for youth and families. Funding is not intended to purchase services or items for specific individuals or families, but rather, to support new or existing activities or services. All purchased items must be equitably accessible to all participants and relevant to program content.
- General and Administrative (G&A) costs are allowable but must be reasonable and outlined in detail within the budget and may not exceed 10% of total direct program costs.



All expenses must comply with the funding restrictions and exclusionary criteria outlined below.

Proposals that do not meet budget requirements will be subject to eligibility review before scoring.

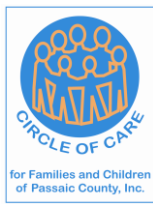
(Budget Template provided and sample for reference)

Eligibility Requirements

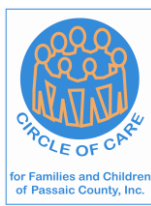
- Completion of CARI (Child Abuse Record Information) checks for all staff working directly with youth is required for agencies whose proposals are recommended for award. Detailed guidance is provided in Appendix A
- Applicants must be in good standing with all State and Federal agencies in which they have an existing grant or contractual relationship.
- Applicants must agree to serve all eligible Children's System of Care youth (no eject-no reject) in Passaic County.
- Applicants must embody the values of Circle of Care and the New Jersey Children's System of Care.
- Applicants must commit to working in partnership with Circle of Care, other system partners, and community-based services.
- Applicants must have the capacity to operate the proposed program July 1, 2027 to June 30th, 2028.

Exclusionary Criteria

- Previous Passaic county CRD Funds recipients who are seeking funding for the same project(s) previously funded through this initiative within the last 3 fiscal years.
- CRD funds are not intended to purchase items for specific individuals or families. All purchased items must be equitably accessible to all participants and relevant to the program content. (i.e. gift cards, personal bills, electronics, etc.)
- CRD funds cannot be used for capital expenditures, including the acquisition or maintenance of fixed assets such as land, buildings, vehicles, and equipment not directly related to the provision of the service.
- Families cannot incur any cost or fees when receiving CRD funded service
- Initiation of services cannot be dependent on procurement of unsecured funding and/or partnerships that are not yet established.
- Funds cannot be used to pay for services currently being funded by DCF or other sources.
- Administrative costs are allowable – but must be reasonable and outlined in detail within the budget.
- Operations of the program cannot be directly funded by the work and contributions of participating youth and families it serves – without appropriate compensation for hours worked.



- Services provided directly through CRD funds cannot also be billed through Medicaid or other established funding sources such as private insurance – causing payment duplication
- Restricted Enrollment or Participation: Programs that require participants to already be enrolled in or affiliated with a separate, closed group, institution, school, or pre-existing program, where otherwise eligible youth cannot independently access or enroll in the proposed activities, are not eligible for funding.
Afterschool programs, recreational activities, and other structured programs are eligible, provided they offer an accessible enrollment opportunity to otherwise eligible participants and do not require membership in an unrelated, restricted program.



APPENDIX A: CARI CHECKS FOR RECOMMENDED AWARDEES

CARI Instructions and Certification Form

Why CARI Checks Are Required

All agencies funded by DCF must complete Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) checks for any staff who will have direct contact with youth under 18, as required by New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10f). This ensures the safety of children participating in programs.

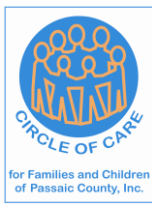
Important: CARI checks are not required at the time of submitting a proposal.

They must be completed only after your proposal is recommended for award to CSOC. By submitting a proposal, all applicants attest that they will work with the Circle of Care (COC) to complete the CARI requirement in a timely manner if recommended for funding.

If your agency already conducts CARI checks as part of normal operations or under a separate law, you do not need to submit new applications. You must, however, provide the CARI Certification Form included at the end of this guidance, confirming that all staff working directly with youth have cleared the requirement.

Steps to Complete CARI Checks (After Recommendation for Award)

1. **Register Your Agency with the State of NJ**
 - Obtain an **Employee Identification Number (EIN)** (\$75 fee) and a **tax ID number** at <https://business.nj.gov/>.
2. **Create a Vendor Record**
 - Visit <https://www.njstart.gov/bso/> to create a record and receive a **Vendor Identification Number** (\$150 fee).
3. **Register with the CARI System**
 - Visit <https://www.njportal.com/dcf/cari> to create a **facility account**.
 - Identify an **account administrator** responsible for managing submissions and results.
 - Provide your **Vendor ID** (starts with “V” followed by 8 digits).
 - Create a **My New Jersey username** to log in.
4. **Invite Staff to Complete CARI Forms**
 - The administrator invites staff to complete their online CARI applications via email.
 - Staff can complete the application on a computer or smartphone.
 - The email link **expires after 2 weeks**.
5. **Review CARI Results**
 - CARI notifies the administrator if staff are cleared or need to be removed from direct contact with youth.



- Agencies must verify in writing that any staff who did not pass are no longer working directly with youth.

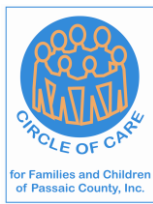
6. Submit the CARI Certification Form

- After all staff are cleared, submit the **CARI Certification Form** to the CMO with your proposal recommendation.
- This form confirms your agency meets the CARI requirements.

Timing and next steps:

- CARI checks are generally completed within **one week**.
- Once staff are cleared, send the **CARI CERTIFICATION FORM (see attached)**, to the Community Relations and Resource Development Director (Paulina Dutton: pdutton@cocucmo.org)
- If staff do not meet CARI requirements, and this affects your ability to proceed, notify the CRD Director listed above **immediately** to discuss next steps.
- Recommended awardees will require to sign the DCF CARI Attestation Form, certifying that any additional staff hired during the award period will also complete CARI checks before working in funded program(s) and any staff found ineligible will not be allowed to work in the grant-funded programming. (see attached for reference)

Please note Circle of Care WILL NOT receive individual CARI results, only confirmation that staff are cleared.



RFP Timeline

Bidders Virtual Conference Calls:

The meeting(s) will be held virtually. This is an informational meeting where all questions regarding the RFP process will be addressed. **Attendance to (at least) ONE of the Bidders session is MANDATORY.** Bidders may use these meetings as technical assistance during the RFP writing process. Interested parties may use the links below to register:

- **November 13, 2026 – 12pm** [Teams Link](#)
- **December 11, 2026 – 3pm** [Teams Link](#)

- January 11, 2027: Submission deadline

Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.
Application should be submitted via the following link:

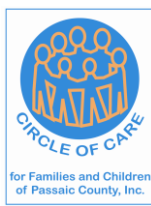
[Passaic CRD Funds Application Link](#)

(if you have challenges with submission, please reach out to pdutton@cocucmo.org BEFORE the submission deadline)

- **January 30, 2027:** Recommended awardees will be notified by COC to complete CARI Checks
- **February 8, 2027:** CARI CERTIFICATION FORM & DCF CARI Attestation Form Due to COC
- **February 12, 2027:** COC Submission of CRD Funding Recommendation(s) including CARI attestation/forms to CSOC
- **May 14, 2027:** Pending notice from CSOC, COC will notify awardees of CSOC acceptance of recommendations.
- **July 1, 2027:** Pending CSOC release of CRD Funds to CMO, awardee(s) will begin implantation of funded project(s).

Post award

- **Within 30 days of program implementation:** Launch report due to COC.
- **January 7, 2028:** Interim report due to COC.
- **July 5, 2028:** Final report due to COC.



References

- Advocates for Children of New Jersey. (2026). *Paterson Kids Count 2026: A city profile of child well-being*. <https://acnj.org/paterson-kids-count-2026/>
- Circle of Care for Families and Children of Passaic County. (2026). *FY2028 Community Resource Development Funds needs survey* [Unpublished internal survey].
- Community Empowerment Research Group, William Paterson University. (2024). *2024 Passaic County housing and food insecurity needs assessment*. Passaic County Department of Human Services. <https://www.passaiccountynj.org/home/showpublisheddocument/9419/638835944365570000>
- Community Health Needs Assessment Report Passaic County (2021) https://www.njhealthmatters.org/content/sites/njhc/2021_CHNAs/Passaic_County_CHNA_2021_Final_Report.pdf
- DCF | Children's InterAgency Coordinating Council Dashboard. (n.d.). www.nj.gov. Retrieved October 20, 2026, from <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/childdata/interagency/index.html>
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- Professional Research Consultants, Inc. (2025). *2025 community health needs assessment: Southern Passaic County, New Jersey*. Prepared for St. Joseph's University Medical Center. <https://stjosephshealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-PRC-CHNA-Report-St.-Josephs-University-Medical-Center.pdf>