

SER-005-001

Strathcona County
Municipal Policy Handbook

Social Services Grants

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667/96; 660/2001; 675/2002; 836/2003
793/2004; 48/2009; 664/2012

Lead Role: Chief Commissioner

Replaces: 60-65-001

Last Review Date: October 23, 2012

Next Review Date: 10/2015

Administrative Responsibility: Family and Community Services

Policy Statement

Strathcona County provides financial support to non-profit organizations that are meeting the social service needs of our residents and demonstrate the use of collaboration and principles of sustainable practice.

Guidelines

- A. Responsibility for ongoing financing of the services provided by an applicant will rest with the applicant and not Strathcona County. Funds granted are intended to supplement other funding sources. Operating funds are granted on an annual basis. Partnership funding will be ongoing subject to review every 3 years.

The County reserves the right to change funding in accordance with grant funds available. In the event of disbandment of an applicant organization, the County assumes no obligation to continue the services or further the objectives of that organization.

- B. The grants program shall consist of the following categories:
1. Operating grants
 2. Partnership grants

Definitions

Department means Strathcona County Family and Community Services Department.

Committee means an administrative committee established by the Director of Family and Community Services. In selecting committee members, the Director will draw from community based organizations and/or interested members of the public who are not applying for grants under this Policy.

Social Services means programs that support the well-being of residents of Strathcona County and strengthen personal or community life.

Sustainable practice means use of planning tools including the development of a strategic plan, annual operational plans and fund raising plan along with financial administration practices which include budget, cash flow and financial accounting.

Operating grants means financial assistance that supports a portion of the annual operating expenses in a one year period.

Partnership grants/funding means financial assistance to eligible non-profit organizations that address significant priority issues not provided by other community organizations that are not funded by other levels of governments more than \$25,000 annually, on an ongoing basis.

Partnership funding is considered ongoing pending an evaluation to be conducted every three years. Financial accounting is required annually.

Procedures

A. Advertising

Grants available to residents of Strathcona County will be advertised in the following manner:

1. A general advertisement shall be placed in the appropriate print media to inform all public of available grants as well as notification on the County's main website and the FCS pages.
2. Notifications will be sent via email or letter to community organizations that have presented their needs to Council and/or the Department in the past five years.
3. On an ongoing basis the Department will inform and advise the public as to the availability of the grant program.
4. A brochure outlining the grant program shall be produced and made accessible to the public.

B. Department Responsibilities

The Department, through the Director and Program Managers, will be responsible to perform the following duties in regard to the grants program:

1. Annually establish a list of community priorities for consideration in grants review based on community socio-demographic data, established and emerging social trends, changes to community social indicators and in consultation with community organizations.
2. Provide information and grant application forms upon request.
3. Advise applicants as to the proper completion of the application.
4. Advise applicants in advance of the expected timeframe for processing grant and approval.
5. Assist applicants with information and supports as necessary to meet grant application requirements.
6. Receive completed applications and review them with the Committee for recommendation to County Council.
7. Acknowledge all letters or correspondence received which request direct financial assistance or information about financial assistance, and include a detailed reply giving direction to the organizations making the request, in a timely manner.

C. Signatures

1. The necessary signatures of all parties involved will be obtained before grants will be processed.

D. Eligibility

1. All applicants should be a registered non-profit society registered in Alberta providing a social service in Strathcona County.
2. The need for the service must be clearly identified, based on best practice or research information and there must be demonstration of collaboration with community social sector organizations

3. Applicants must show evidence of sustainable practice, including long range planning, annual operational planning, financial planning and management accountability.
4. Administration and programming must be based and delivered primarily in Strathcona County.
5. All applicants must demonstrate and justify the need for assistance to carry out their proposed program or project.
6. There must be an active Board of Directors. Voting members of the Board must not currently hold paid staff positions in the organization.
7. Applicants are not eligible where they receive on-going operational funding from Strathcona County, with the exception of Partnership Grants.
 - (i) Operational funding shall be defined as "direct financial assistance" received through the municipal annual budget processes and shall not include groups receiving indirect support. Indirect support shall be defined as staff consultations, reduced rates for services/facilities or other as specified in existing County policies.
8. The activities of the applicant shall not substantially duplicate the activities of other Strathcona County community organizations.

Additional Eligibility Requirement for Partnership Grants:

1. Applicants must have actively delivered social services programming in the County for a minimum of 2 consecutive years prior to submitting an application.
2. Applicants must have received 2 previous Strathcona County social service operating grants prior to the application.
3. Services should demonstrate at least one of the four outcomes as outlined in the Social Framework, (Strathcona County 2016): affordability; safety; access to programs and services; and connectedness and inclusion.
4. Applicants are not eligible if they are funded by other levels of government on an ongoing basis, in an amount greater than \$25,000 annually.
5. Funding will not be given to offset reduced funding from senior levels of government, particularly when these are for services and programs that are the mandate of these governments.

E. Evaluation and Approval

1. Upon receiving all grant applications, the Department shall prepare and forward to the Committee, an accompanying summary showing all requests, amounts required, intended purpose.
2. The Committee shall forward their recommendations to Family and Community Services for submission to County Council.
3. County Council shall receive the recommendations and make decisions regarding funding to be allocated.
4. Following the decision by Council, all groups will be advised in writing by Family and Community Services of successful/unsuccessful applications in a timely manner.

F. Incomplete Programs

1. In the event that an approved project cannot be undertaken or completed, all unexpended grant monies received by the applicant must be immediately returned to Strathcona County.
2. In the event that an approved project is delayed a progress report must be submitted by December 1 of that year, accounting for funds spent and outlining the revised project plan.

G. Deadlines

1. The annual deadline for regular applications shall be set by the Committee.

H. Late Submissions

1. Late submissions will not be accepted.

I. Number of Requests

1. Only one request per year per organization will be considered.
2. The grant request may not exceed 25% of the total grant funding available in any given year, with the exception of Partnership Grants.

J. Accountability

1. Applicants are required to submit a detailed budget in support of funds requested.
2. Groups receiving a grant must provide a financial statement, an assessment of revenues received and expenditures made by March 15 of the following year.
3. Groups receiving an operating grant must submit an evaluation of the funded program by March 15 of the following year.
4. Groups receiving a partnership grant must submit an annual requirement as indicated in 2 and 3. Every 3rd year they must submit evaluation requirements to be provided to partnership grant recipients by FCS.
5. No organization will be considered for further funding without submission of either the evaluation or financial statement.

K. Consultation

1. The Committee may request consultation with representatives of the applicant for the purpose of further evaluation.

L. Additional Projects

1. If after grant applications/allocation, there is a minimum of \$10,000 still available for grant funding, Strathcona County Council upon request by the Strathcona Community Social Services Advisory Committee, may open the grants application process for a second time in the year. Successful applicants would receive the dollars with the understanding that the project(s) would be completed by calendar year end.