

An abstract graphic consisting of several thin, black, overlapping lines that form various geometric shapes and polygons, primarily located in the upper left and center of the page.

# MARYLAND EFFICIENT GRANT APPLICATION COUNCIL

October 30<sup>th</sup> 2024

# COUNCIL REPORTING GOALS

Chapters 484 and 485 of 2020 established the MEGA Council shall study and make recommendations regarding the entire grants life cycle, including creation of Uniform Grant Application Materials, financial controls and reporting and regulations adopting the Federal Uniform Guidance

SB459 added that the Council shall study the feasibility, cost, and impacts of designating a State Grants Ombudsperson and make recommendations regarding the designation of an ombudsperson, including recommended timelines and deadlines.

# GRANT LIFE CYCLE

## 1. Pre-Award Phase

- A. Planning an Opportunity
- B. Announcing an Opportunity
- C. Searching for Opportunities
- D. Completing an Application
- E. Evaluating Applications
- F. Tracking Application Status

## 2. Award Phase

- A. Notifying the Award Recipient
- B. Grant Agreement
- C. Distribution of Funds

## 3. Post Award Phase

- A. Implementation
- B. Technical Assistance & Monitoring
- C. Financial Reporting
- D. Progress (Programmatic) Reports
- E. Audits & Evaluations
- F. Award Closeout

# WORKGROUPS

1. Customer Service
2. Budget
3. Application
4. Monitoring and Reporting
5. Ombudsperson

# CUSTOMER SERVICE

Goal	Description
<b>Centralize Grant Advertisement</b>	Recommend the creation of a single portal or website for all state grant opportunities, ensuring timely updates from all state grant-making agencies
<b>Directory of Grant Contacts</b>	Develop a directory to be published that identifies state grant contacts to provide applicants with easier access to necessary information.
<b>Transparency of Grant Payment Details, Pre-Award</b>	Outline clear information about payment and reimbursement policies, processes, and expectations prior to award notifications
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Recommend a timeline and deadlines for state agencies to implement the recommendations outlined by this workgroup.

# BUDGET

Goal	Description
<b>Allowable/ Unallowable Cost Definitions</b>	Clearly define allowable and unallowable costs, and include these definitions in the Notice of Funding Opportunity
<b>Budget Templates</b>	Evaluate the feasibility of a standardized budget template and require its inclusion in the Notice of Funding Opportunity or award package.
<b>Indirect Cost Guidance</b>	Establish statewide definitions and guidance for indirect cost and administrative overhead as outlined in SF&P § 2-208
<b>Approval of Indirect Cost</b>	Require that agencies approve indirect costs and rates at the application phase.
<b>State Grant Budgets - Uniform Guidance</b>	Assess whether state budget requirements should align with federal uniform guidance for consistency.
<b>Distribution of Funds - Uniform Guidance</b>	Review areas related to grantee payment process to determine if requirements from Federal Uniform Guidance should be adopted
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Recommend a timeline and deadlines for state agencies to implement based on the recommendations made by this workgroup.

# APPLICATION

Goal	Description
<b>Standardized Application</b>	Create a uniformed application form that highlights essential components required for all grant applications.
<b>Examples - Successful applications</b>	Provide examples of successful grant applications and other standardized resources on a centralized statewide portal, accessible to the public and potential applicants.
<b>Standardized Definitions</b>	Develop a set of standardized definitions, terms, conditions, and abbreviations related to grants as established by the Council Workgroup
<b>Notification of Award</b>	Identify the key components required for notifying recipients of state grant awards.
<b>Standardized Grant Agreement</b>	Outline essential elements and minimum terms for all grant agreements, considering the adoption of Federal Uniform Guidance.
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Recommend a timeline and deadlines for state agencies to implement the recommendations outlined by this workgroup.

# MONITORING AND REPORTING

Goal	Description
<b>Pre-Award Risk Assessment Tool</b>	Create a standardized tool for assessing risks before grant awards, helping to determine the appropriate levels of audits, monitoring, and site visits.
<b>State Grant Reporting</b>	Establish uniform standards for reporting on grantee progress and finances across the state to ensure consistency while aligning with federal uniform guidance.
<b>Grant Monitoring</b>	Develop consistent statewide standards for monitoring grants, ensuring alignment with federal Uniform Guidance.
<b>State Grant Audit Requirements</b>	Create standardized audit requirements for state grants, maintaining consistency and aligning with federal guidelines.
<b>State Grant Closeout</b>	Establish uniform closeout procedures for state grants, ensuring consistency and alignment with federal standards.
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Recommend a timeline for state agencies to implement the recommendations identified by the workgroup.



# OMBUDSPERSON

Goal	Description
<b>Feasibility Study</b>	Conduct a study to assess the feasibility, cost, and potential impacts of establishing a state Ombudsperson and provide recommendations for implementation.
<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities - Grants Ombudsperson</b>	Develop recommendations outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Ombudsperson in addressing grant-related issues and ensuring effective grant management.
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Recommend a timeline and deadlines for state agencies to implement the recommendations made by this workgroup.

# COUNCIL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reports to the General Assembly on the Council's implementation progress, including recommendations, are due annually on December 31st from calendar 2021 through 2028. The next annual report is due **December 31, 2024**.

Senate Bill 459 added that the Council must study the feasibility, cost, and impacts of designating a State Grants Ombudsperson and, by **July 1, 2025**, make recommendations to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) regarding the designation of an ombudsperson, including recommended timelines and deadlines. DBM must report to the General Assembly on the Council's recommendations by **December 31, 2025**.

The final report with full recommendations from the Council is due **July 1, 2027**.



# FUTURE MEETING DATES

Wednesday January 29th at 4:00 pm

Wednesday April 30th at 4:00 pm