



Illinois Public Awareness Campaigns on Substance Use and Supports (PACSS) Scope of Services and Deliverables

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About this document

This document is a portion of the Illinois Public Awareness Campaigns on Substance Use and Supports (PACSS) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

A. Description of Funding Opportunity

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) sets forth application requirements for the planning, development, and implementation of Illinois Public Awareness Campaigns on Substance Use and Supports (PACSS), which will provide education on substance use, including but not limited to cannabis, as well as on availability of support services for individuals at risk for or misusing substances. All application materials are available on the Overview page at the [Illinois Regional Care Coordination Agency website](#).

A.1. Authorizing Statutes or Regulations

Awardees are required to adhere to the requirements outlined in the following:

- Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), [30 ILCS 708](#)
- Illinois Administrative Code, Government Contracts, [Title 44, Part 7000](#)



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- Grantmaking, Procurement, and Property Management, and federal regulations under Grants and Agreements, [2 CFR 200](#)
- Requirements and policies outlined in the [Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery \(IDHS/SUPR\) Contractual Policy Manual](#)
- Public Act 101-0027, referred to as the [Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act](#)

A.2. Background

Effective January 1, 2020, Public Act 101-0027 Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (“the Act”) provides that the purchase, possession, and use of cannabis as stipulated in the Act are lawful and shall not be a criminal or civil offense under State law, the law of any political subdivision of this State or be a basis for seizure or forfeiture of assets under State law for persons 21 years of age or older. Illinois was the first state to legislate retail cannabis sales, and the Act includes several equity-driven provisions to mitigate the impact of the war on drugs. The Act also provides for labeling and advertising restrictions and the separation of cultivation and dispensing activities, to reduce potential harms to specific populations such as youth and pregnant people. Provisions within the Act may help reduce the number of individuals jailed for petty marijuana offenses, which may disrupt the prison pipeline for Black and Brown communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs and mass incarceration.

One of the equity-driven provisions to mitigate the impact of the war on drugs is a call for “scientifically and medically accurate public education campaigns educating youth and adults about the health and safety risks of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drug use (including prescription drugs), and cannabis, including use by pregnant women.” PACSS is intended to fulfill this public education requirement.

About IDHS/SUPR

The mission of IDHS/SUPR is to provide a recovery-oriented system of care along the continuum of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support where individuals with substance use disorder (SUD), those in recovery, and those at risk are valued and treated with dignity and where stigma, accompanying attitudes, discrimination, and other barriers to recovery are eliminated. IDHS/SUPR is working to counteract systemic racism and inequity and to prioritize and maximize diversity throughout its service provision process. This work addresses existing institutionalized inequities, aims to create transformation, and operationalizes equity and racial and social justice. It also focuses on creating a culture of inclusivity for all, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or ability.

A.3. Need

The primary goal of the public awareness campaigns is to prevent, reduce, and delay the initial use of substances for youth. More than 1.8 million youth (over age 12) and adults in Illinois have a substance use disorder.¹ Experimentation is common during adolescence and emerging adulthood, and individuals who initiate substance

¹<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2021-2022-nsduh-state-specific-tables>



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use at a young age (less than 17 years) are more likely to develop problematic substance use behaviors and psychosocial problems, reinforcing the need for early education and prevention.²

This, coupled with the legal availability of alcohol, vaping, and cannabis at age 21, underscores the need for interventions to prevent and reduce substance use among this population, with particular attention to

- 1) Non-Hispanic Black youth and emerging adults, due to the high overdose fatality rate in this racial group.
- 2) Youth who may be at risk due to other factors, such as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), mental health symptoms or conditions, familial history of substance use disorder (SUD), and neurodivergence (e.g., attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, etc.).

Additionally, the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act calls for public education regarding substance use by pregnant people. There are significant correlations between 1) substance use and unintended pregnancies, 2) substance use and intimate partner violence, and 3) intimate partner violence and unintended pregnancies, so an effective public education campaign must acknowledge the intersections of these issues and provide information on relevant resources and harm reduction strategies (e.g., birth control, the Illinois Domestic Violence hotline).

Moreover, 80 percent of those classified as needing substance use treatment in Illinois do not receive it. According to national findings of the 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than half of the people surveyed cited “not knowing how or where to get treatment” as a reason for not receiving treatment and one third cited “did not think treatment would help them.”³ Awareness of treatment, treatment options, and support are critical.

A.4 Funding Source

The funding source for this NOFO is Public Act 101-0027, the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act. Implementation funding of \$3,000,000 is anticipated in the State Fiscal Year 2025, subject to appropriation. If grantee(s) awarded are successful in meeting their annual deliverables, the grant(s) may be renewed annually for up to two additional years.

In April 2023, IDHS/SUPR awarded [Advocates for Human Potential](#), Inc. (AHP) a grant to manage the Regional Care Coordination Agency (RCCA). The RCCA administers subawards with organizations providing prevention, intervention, treatment, and harm reduction services for people with SUDs in accordance with state-approved strategies.

RCCA is now accepting applications to fund PACCS campaigns. Applications will only be accepted through the online application available at the [Illinois Regional Care Coordination Agency website](#).

²<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5225546/#:~:text=More%20than%2081.2%25%20drug%20users,as%2015%20years%20%5B2%5D>

³ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt42731/2022-nsduh-nnr.pdf>



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A.5. Scope of Services

PACSS subrecipients will develop and implement public education campaigns that align with Public Act 101-0027 Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act requirements. Special attention should be paid to individuals who are at highest risk of substance use and communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs.

By increasing awareness and understanding of impacts and resources, the public education campaign(s) should aim to:

- Prevent or delay initial substance use;
- Reduce, prevent, or delay misuse of substances;
- Minimize stigma associated with SUD, treatment, and recovery; and/or
- Reduce harms associated with substance use and misuse, including overdose.

All campaigns will provide:

- Education on harms associated with alcohol, tobacco, illegal drug use (including prescription drugs), and cannabis; root causes of their misuse through a trauma-informed lens; strategies for avoidance or responsible use; and social media influences on substance use and access.
- Information on accessing support services (e.g., Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances) and harm reduction strategies for individuals with potential or existing substance use problems, their friends/family members, and substance use or other social service providers.

In developing the campaign, subrecipients are expected to:

- Consider that marginalized communities have historically had a disproportionate number of liquor stores and advertisements for substances, and subsequently identify areas that are disproportionately impacted by substance use through a combination of public health data and input from community stakeholders for the strategic placement of public awareness campaign materials to reach communities at highest risk of substance use.
- Promote equity by actively involving populations of focus (“nothing about us without us”), fairly compensating them for their time. Their input should be used to develop effective and population-specific campaigns, determine how to strategically place campaign materials, and adjust campaign messaging for quality improvement.
- Collaborate with relevant organizations to inform on outreach to and engagement of specific populations.
- Promote evidence-informed and scientifically/medically accurate messaging on preventing and reducing substance use.
- Use engaging content formats, such as interactive quizzes, video testimonials, and live Q&A sessions.
- Incorporate anti-stigma messaging regarding SUD into campaign materials.
- Disseminate campaign materials in locations where focus audiences are likely to encounter messaging (e.g., social media, youth-serving organizations, eating establishments, music venues, beauty and barber shops prior to proms and graduations).



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All applicants must fulfill Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 6. Applicants may request funding for the following:

- both Task 4 and Task 5; the subrecipient should address all populations listed in Task 5
- only Task 4
- only Task 5; applicants may choose to focus on one or more of the specified populations

Task 1. Fulfill Award Administration Requirements

The subrecipient must fulfill obligations outlined in Section G. of the NOFO, Award Administration Information, including

- (a) Completion of an organizational needs assessment provided by the RCCA,
- (b) development of an implementation and sustainability plan specific to completing the milestones of this project,
- (c) Development of an organizational equity and racial justice plan,
- (d) Performance reporting (monthly)
- (e) Fiscal reporting (monthly), and
- (f) Participating in technical assistance (TA).

Task 2. Identify a Campaign Coordinator

The subrecipient must

- (a) identify a staff person to coordinate the campaign(s).

This person will serve as the liaison between RCCA, substance use prevention providers, and other key stakeholders, and be the primary point of contact for information regarding project implementation and outcomes.

Task 3. Conduct Needs Assessment and Design Campaign

The subrecipient must conduct a needs assessment based on public health data and solicit input from stakeholders in communities disproportionately impacted by substance use to inform a campaign plan. The campaign plan should strongly emphasize equitable and trauma-informed practices, and detail the audience of focus, messaging concepts and strategies, and campaign evaluation and quality improvement approach.

The subrecipient must

- (a) Submit a report on the needs assessment findings, and
- (b) Submit a campaign plan based upon the needs assessment, that meets the requirements of the relevant task(s).

Task 4. Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Statewide Initiative

Subrecipient(s) proposing to develop and implement a comprehensive statewide initiative for the general public must:

- (a) Develop and maintain a public-facing website,
- (b) Develop and produce campaign materials,
- (c) Strategically disseminate campaign materials, and



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- (d) Communicate and collaborate with substance use prevention providers, particularly during high visibility events (e.g., National Prevention Month), to maximize impact of campaign.

Task 5. Develop and Implement Population-focused Statewide Campaigns

Subrecipient(s) proposing to develop statewide population-focused campaigns must focus on at least one of the following:

- 5.1. Youth in, or aging out of, the child welfare system.
- 5.2. Emerging adults (18-25), with campaign materials to be developed and disseminated in conjunction with schools, colleges, and universities.
- 5.3. Adults 21+ who can legally use cannabis and live in communities that are disproportionately impacted by substance use.
- 5.4. Birthing people, with campaign materials to (1) include information on the intersection of unintended pregnancies, substance use, and intimate partner violence, and (2) be developed and disseminated in conjunction with maternal and child health organizations that use medically accurate and person-centered interventions to support birthing people before and after giving birth, as well as community-based organizations for victims of intimate partner violence.

For each population of focus, subrecipients must:

- (a) Collaborate with organizations serving that specific population to inform development and dissemination plan.
- (b) Develop and produce campaign materials.
- (c) Strategically distribute campaign materials.

Task 6: Evaluate Campaign(s)

The subrecipient must evaluate campaign strategies in accordance with current evidence-based/evidence-informed practices and standards and seek to update campaigns in response to emerging substance use issues, as well as feedback from populations of focus, IDHS/SUPR, cannabis project evaluators, and others as prescribed by RCCA.

The subrecipient should use the [Strategic Prevention Framework](#) as the process for ongoing assessment, capacity building, planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities, embedded with cultural humility and sustainability.

The subrecipient must:

- (a) Produce quarterly reports on program activities. The report is due 30 days after the end of each quarter.
- (b) Produce an annual summary report on the effectiveness, outcomes, and differences in impact of each campaign. This report is due 30 days after the end of the fiscal year.



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A.6. Deliverables and Performance Measures

The following table details (a) the deliverables required according to the scope of services and (b) associated performance measures, standards, and potential metrics (subject to change) to be collected by task. Time periods refer to the days from the beginning of the period of performance. Standards for activities refer to percentages of those described in project plan.

Deliverables	Performance Measures	Standards	Metrics
T1 Award administration requirements	(a) Complete organizational needs assessment survey	100%	Needs assessment survey completed (30 days after distribution)
	(b) Complete implementation and sustainability plan	100%	Implementation and sustainability plan created (45 days) Sustainability plan update (submitted with final monthly reports)
	(c) Implement equity and racial justice plan	100%	Organizational assessment completed (90 days) Plan drafted (120 days) Plan finalized (160 days)
	(d) Report performance information	100%	Activities and services metrics reported (10th of each month, 10th following each quarter unless otherwise prescribed)
	(e) Report fiscal information	100%	Fiscal performance reported (10th of each month)
	(f) Participate in TTA	75%	# Monthly cohort meetings (initiated within 15 days) # TTA sessions attended (quarterly or as prescribed)
T2 Identify a Campaign Coordinator	(a) Hire or identify dedicated staff	100%	# FTE hired/assigned (30 days)
T3 Conduct Needs Assessment and Design Campaign	(a) Conduct needs assessment	100%	Needs assessment draft report (60 days)
	(b) Develop campaign plan	100%	Campaign plan draft submitted (60 days) Campaign plan finalized (90 days)



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Deliverables	Performance Measures	Standards	Metrics
T4 Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Statewide Initiative	(a) Develop and maintain a public-facing website.	100%	Website published in accordance with campaign plan
		85%	Website updated in accordance with campaign plan
	(b) Develop and produce campaign materials.	85%	# materials produced, by type
	(c) Disseminate campaign materials	85%	# of locations disseminated, by location
	(d) Maximize impact through engagement with organizations	85%	# of organizations engaged
T5 Develop and Implement	(a) Collaborate with organizations serving that specific population	85%	# of organizations engaged
	(b) Develop and produce campaign materials.	85%	# materials produced, by type
	(c) Disseminate campaign materials	85%	# of locations disseminated, by location
T6 Evaluate Campaign(s)	(a) Produce quarterly reports on program activities	100%	Report completed (30 days after end of quarter)
	(b) Produce annual program evaluation reports	100%	Report completed (30 days after end of year)