

Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) Community-based Coalition Enhancement to Address Local Drug Crises Grants (CARA Local Drug Crises Grants)
Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Webinar
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**NOTE: This FAQ pertains to the following NOFO:
CDC-RFA-CE-26-0110**

Eligibility/Application

If a coalition received a CARA grant previously or are a current grantee, are they eligible to apply again?

Yes, you can apply again as long as you meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the NOFO.

Are coalitions who haven't received DFC funding eligible for the CARA grant?

No. One of the eligibility requirements is that you must be a current or former DFC recipient to apply for CARA.

Would a school district serving as the fiscal agent of a coalition need to have an MOU with the coalition to apply?

Yes, there should be an MOU between the school district and the coalition.

If an organization serves as the fiscal agent for two coalitions in adjacent areas, can the organization apply on behalf of both coalitions?

No, a fiscal agent can only be in receipt of one CARA grant at a time.

Can a statewide coalition apply for the CARA grant?

Yes, but please note that the intent of CARA and DFC is to fund community-based coalitions, and you are required to describe the unique needs of the community as well as the coalition itself. It would be hard to fit that at the state level. For example, choosing a community that is too large may be problematic, because multiple neighborhoods may have distinct problems or conditions that need to be addressed differently to effect change. For that reason, state-wide coalitions may not be successful in the application process.

Do current DFC recipients need to submit an overlap justification form if they also receive a CARA grant?

CARA is an enhancement grant to work supported by DFC, so coalitions are not required to submit an overlap justification form related to their work as a DFC coalition.

Are federally recognized Tribes eligible to apply as the applicant or only as a fiscal agent?

Federally recognized Tribes are eligible to apply as fiscal agents and/or coalitions.

Is there match component to the CARA grant? If so, what is the match?

No, there is no match requirement for this grant.

Do the eligibility requirement statements, specifically rate statements, need to have a signature? If so, who should sign: the fiscal agent or coalition?

Please review the attachments. They will indicate if you need to sign and who needs to provide their signature.

Is it required to establish and develop a youth coalition?

While we have seen benefits of having a separate youth coalition to ensure youth engagement, it is not a requirement. However, part of your application will be reviewed to determine how your coalition plans to recruit and retain youth participation.

Do coalitions combine all attachments into one attachment under "other attachments", or do we upload them all separately?

Per the NOFO, put all your attachments into a single Other Attachments form. If you have any difficulty uploading this document on grants.gov, please let us know at CARA_NOFO@CDC.gov.

Is there a file size limit? I am worried my attachments file will be too big.

We are not aware of any file size limits but if there is an issue, please email CARA_NOFO@CDC.gov.

Geographic Boundaries

Can coalitions expand their geographic boundaries from the boundaries originally set under DFC?

Yes, coalitions can expand their geographic boundaries, but they should carefully consider the size and population of the area so they will have the ability to effect change. For example, choosing a community that is too large may be problematic, because multiple

neighborhoods may have distinct problems or conditions that need to be addressed differently to effect change.

Does the CARA coalition’s work have to include the same community served when it was a DFC coalition? In addition, can a CARA coalition expand its geographic boundaries to include the full community served by their fiscal agent?

You must provide the rationale you use for selecting the community you serve and explain how the identified local drug crisis or emerging drug use issue manifests within the selected community, including any resource gaps or unmet needs. If your fiscal agent serves a larger community than the coalition, the coalition can expand its geographic boundaries to include the fiscal agent’s boundaries, especially if this area has been impacted by opioid, methamphetamine use, and/or prescription drug misuse.

Allowable Use of Funds

Can coalitions use CARA funds to provide naloxone training? We understand you cannot purchase naloxone with funding, but would we be able to provide naloxone training as an activity to address the problem?

Yes, coalitions can use CARA funds for naloxone training, but they cannot purchase naloxone itself. Please see page 28 of the NOFO for the full list of unallowable costs.

What is the maximum amount a coalition can spend on evaluation services?

Per page 29 of the NOFO, grantees can use no more than 10% of the total federal grant for data collection and evaluation services.

What is the maximum amount a coalition can spend on staff salaries?

The federal limit is \$200,000 which far exceeds the CARA grant award total.

Can coalitions pay youth a stipend for their time or travel?

Per page 29 of the NOFO, stipends and tuition are unallowable costs. However, if part of your action plan includes approved travel for training and education, then that would be considered an allowable cost.

Sectors

At what age is someone considered a youth?

In general, the age of youth should be under the age of 18.

Substance Abuse Rates Data

Do coalitions have to provide rates for both opioids and methamphetamines or can it just be one of those substances?

You can provide either the opioid rate or the methamphetamine rate. You do not need to provide both to be eligible.

Which databases should coalitions use to determine if opioid, methamphetamine and/or prescription drug misuse in their area is higher than average?

The links to both databases are included in the “Statement of Rates” attachment. You can also find them here:

- [Monitoring the Future Survey \(MTF\)](#)
- [National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#)

Is it necessary to use either National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) or Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF) or can we use other datasets?

We recommend using these national data sets to compare your local rates with national rates.

How do coalitions know which rates from the NSDUH document linked to in the “Statement of Local Rates of Opioid and/or Methamphetamine Use” to use for their comparison?

If you are having difficulty finding a particular rate, please email CARA_NOFO@CDC.gov and we can help you find that rate.

Budget and Receipt of Grant Funds

How do coalitions receive grant funds? Do they drawdown or ask for reimbursement?

The Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program and Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) grants operate primarily on an advance funding method but require accrual-basis reporting for financial tracking. Recipients should first incur allowable costs and then request reimbursement through the payment system. While funds are accessed via drawdown, CDC policy and federal cash management rules require that drawdowns be limited to immediate cash needs. As a best practice, recipients should not draw down funds more than **three days** in advance of

disbursement to maintain no more than three days of cash on hand. Additional guidance is available on the CDC [grants](#) and [payment information](#) webpages.

Can we use the excel file we use for DFC grant continuation template for the budget narrative?

Applicants are not required to use the DFC grant continuation template for the budget narrative. However, it can be used if an applicant prefers using the template.

If you do not have a NICRA (Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement), can the organization use a *de minimus* rate of 15% of direct costs?

Yes. If you don't have an approved direct cost rate negotiation, you can use the *de minimus* rate.

Other

Will we have access to these slides and/or the recording after the meeting?

The FY26 CARA NOFO webinar recording, slides, and FAQs are posted on the following website: <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/php/drug-free-communities/cara-funding.html>

It seems like most of the examples in the Seven Strategies for Community Change are focused on reducing tobacco and alcohol use. For example, some of the strategies include compliance checks on tobacco and alcohol retailers. However, this grant is focused on opioid and methamphetamine use. How can coalitions translate those strategies to other types of substance misuse and abuse?

While it is correct that there are certain examples related to compliance checks with tobacco and alcohol, some of those strategies can be applicable for opioids and methamphetamines. For example, Kratom, or 7-OH, is becoming more widely available at some of the same retailers selling tobacco and alcohol so coalitions can use the same strategies used to address tobacco and alcohol misuse to address Kratom or 7-OH use.

Can we contract with an outside evaluator?

Yes, but coalitions are not required to hire an evaluator. ONDCP and CDC work with the National Cross-Site Evaluation Team to help coalitions meet the core measure requirements.

Since the CARA grant is only \$75k, can someone working on this grant also work on other grants and be compensated by both grants?

Yes, so long as cumulative time worked doesn't exceed 100% across federal funding sources.

Does all work conducted by coalitions need be in compliance with executive orders, including work funded by other organizations?

The legal applicant organization and the coalition must be in compliance with executive orders.

The below is included in the NOFO, but is not an exhaustive list:

- [Protecting the American People Against Invasion](#) (Jan. 20, 2025)
- [Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing](#) (Jan. 20, 2025)
- [Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government](#) (Jan. 20, 2025)
- [Enforcing the Hyde Amendment](#) (Jan. 24, 2025)
- [Ending Crime and Disorder on America's Streets](#) (July 24, 2025)

Additional Executive Orders, including any issued during the period of performance, may apply. Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, applicable court orders, and public policies governing financial assistance awards.