FY27 Direct Services Grants for Organizations
FAQs

Below are questions that have been posed to Senior Fund staff for which responses may assist all applicants applying for a FY27 Direct Services Grant.

Organizations in the process of applying for a FY27 Direct Services Grant who have questions about their proposal are encouraged to schedule individual consultations with Senior Fund staff. You can schedule a meeting via our scheduling app. You can also ask direct questions that would involve a brief response by contacting us at info@stlseniorfund.org or (314) 200-7436 or reach out to specific Senior Fund staff directly.

Questions for FY27 Direct Services Grants RFP

Can you request funding that supports both care management and caregiving support?

Yes, our application allows you to select both focus areas if your program or service applies to both. Maximum grant awards will still be limited to $75,000 for direct expenses per applicant organization, even if you select more than one focus area. At this time, we do not have a set budget for each focus area, instead we have a projected budget for all grants that can be awarded. Selecting the focus areas on our application helps us when we sort applications for grant reviews, but we expect that there is going to be overlap in terms of what category a program may fall under.

We have an existing case management program. Do we need to be growing or expanding the program to apply? Or would you fund programs that are remaining at the same capacity?

Requests for existing programs are accepted. We welcome applications for programs and services that have limited availability and could expand their reach with grant funding from Senior Fund or are threatened to reduce services due to changes in funding.

Can the grant award be used for rent assistance?

Proposals can include funding for direct financial assistance (for example: rent, utilities, other basic needs) that is affecting a client's health or stability. However, the program or service you are applying for should be able to provide case management, resource navigation support, or other coordinated support to help clients identify benefits and other resources that can help with meeting their basic needs beyond the emergency assistance you are providing.

Are we able to use funds to purchase birth certificates and Government IDs for housing?

Yes. Proposals can include funding for direct financial assistance (*for example:* rent deposits, utility arrears, other expenses) that is affecting a client's ability to secure stable housing. However, the program or service you are applying for should also include provision of case management, resource navigation support, or other coordinated support to help clients secure stable housing.

Questions from Previous Funding Rounds

Can organizations that currently receive funding from the Senior Fund apply?

Yes, just be aware of how your request overlaps with other support from us if you already have committed funding continuing into our next fiscal year and make sure this is represented in your budget and budget narrative if applicable.

How is eligibility determined for services supported by Senior Fund?

Based on state statute, primary eligibility for a senior services fund's support is 60 years and older and a resident in the county, or city, with the senior services fund. Eligibility can also include organizations or individuals (e.g., caregivers) who are supporting an older adult living within the locality.

For our fund, beyond required eligibility based on state statute, eligibility is determined by the organization providing the service. When applying for funding from Senior Fund you should include information on eligibility requirements for your services in your grant application. This information is considered when applications are reviewed and when determining grant award decisions.

Is there an income restriction for older adults that can be served?

We do not dictate to organizations an income guideline. Each organization decides who they intend to serve and must provide an explanation in their proposal.

We recognize that organizations typically utilize multiple funding sources to support their services. Usually, the funding source with the strictest requirements are what is followed. Sometimes our grant awards have been used to help older adults who are just out of reach of the strictest funding eligibility. Senior Fund has supported expenses for older adults who may not qualify for services because they have income above a guideline restriction determined by other funders and agencies but below a level that they can afford to pay for what they need.

If you do not already have guidelines related to what income may restrict someone from being able to afford to pay for services, we suggest agencies refer to the Elder Economic Security Standard Index: https://elderindex.org. This index estimates the annual income needed to meet basic needs. The index is a conservative estimate of need and does not include "extras" such as meals out, entertainment, gifts, in-home assistance, or unplanned expenses (e.g., home or car repairs).

While some services we support include income as an eligibility requirement, many others are available to all individuals aged 60 and older who reside within the City of St. Louis.

Is there a limit on the funds that you can spend per person?

It is based on your organization's policy for your program and the type of services you are providing as to what spending limits you set per person. We will look for an explanation in your application and budget narrative as to how you arrived at estimated spending amounts, but we do not set strict spending caps per client served.

What is Senior Fund's award rate and average grant award?

Our award rates (percent of grant applications that receive an award) vary based on grant category and funding cycle. Most years, grant applications received have requested double or triple the funding available for a specific funding round. The average award rate across several years for Direct Services grants is 50%.

Median grant awards vary based on grant type and funding year. In the past, grant awards generally ranged from $25,000 to $100,000 with a median award of $58,000 for Direct Services grants.

We require that applicants do not request more than 50% of their organization's annual budget. We prefer that applicants do not request more than 50% of the total cost for delivery of the program or service to St. Louis City residents. However, some programs or services may require higher investment due to the availability of other funding sources and have been approved for funding that covers a higher share of the program or service costs.

Is there a character limit for this application?

The online application system we use does require character limits for each question. The character limit includes spaces. We have tried to pick a generous character limit for each question. It may be helpful to consider the character limit in relation to a word and/or page count. The estimates below are based on a rough average of 6 characters

per word.
- 10,000 characters = 1,600 words or 3.5 pages single-spaced
- 7,000 characters = 1,200 words or 2.5 pages single-spaced
- 5,000 characters = 800 words or 1.5 pages single-spaced
- 3,500 characters = 575 words or 1 page single-spaced
- 1,500 characters = 250 words or .5 page single-spaced
- 500 characters = 80 words
- 250 characters = 40 words

Is the budget timeline supposed to match the calendar year?

Unless otherwise stated in the request for proposals, the timeline typically aligns with our fiscal year which is July 1 through June 30. For FY27 Grants, it is July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027.

Can we submit a draft application for you to review?

You can schedule time to meet via computer or phone with our team to discuss questions you may have regarding your application at least a week prior to the application deadline.

What is a source for confirming St. Louis City zip codes?

One reference is the zip code directory published by the Collector of Revenue's office. You can access it here: https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/collector/earnings-tax/documents/upload/Zip-Code-Booklet-Nov-2020.pdf.

You can also use this reference to check addresses for zip codes that are only partially within the City of St. Louis.