



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):

Thriving Youth Strategy

DATE OF ISSUE: June 18, 2025

DEADLINE: July 16, 2025, 4:00pm EST

INTRODUCTION

Since 1991, Family League of Baltimore (Family League) has been the designated Local Management Board for the City of Baltimore. Family League's mission statement is: *Family League works collaboratively to support data-informed, community-driven solutions that align resources to dismantle systemic barriers that limit the possibilities for children, families, and communities.*

Family League's work seeks to dismantle systemic barriers that limit the possibilities for children, families, and communities. We focus on four priority Results Areas: Cradle to Career Education, Healthy Families, Economically Secure Families, and Safe and Thriving Families.

As a careful steward of the funds awarded by the City, the State of Maryland, and federal and private entities, Family League braids its resources together to maximize the impact of each dollar invested in support of these results areas. We leverage these resources to serve Baltimore's children, youth, and families through our participation as a convener, implementation lead, or partner in numerous collaborative spaces.

DEFINITIONS

- **Barrier Removal:** the provision of resources that assist participants in navigating the conditions, policies, and/or personal and social hurdles that many must surmount in day-to-day life that might prevent or impede full participation and success in the initiative. These removals might include providing access to transportation, assistance in securing legitimizing documentation (birth certificate, identification), access to expungement services and associated fees, etc.
- **Governor's Office for Children:** an agency within the Maryland's Executive Department created to provide a coordinated, comprehensive, interagency approach to the development of a continuum of care that is family- and child-oriented and that emphasizes prevention, early intervention, and community-based services for all children and families with special attention to at-risk populations.
- **Juvenile Recidivism:** one of the most fundamental concepts in criminal justice. It refers to a youth's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime.
- **Local Management Board:** the entity established and maintained by the local jurisdiction for the purpose of overseeing and ensuring the implementation of a local interagency service delivery system for children, youth, and families in that jurisdiction.
- **Opportunity to Cure:** the period of time allotted to allow an applicant to correct any errors in its application submission that were identified during the technical review.
- **Technical Review:** the internal review process for finding errors in application/proposal submissions.

BACKGROUND

Across Baltimore, “there is growing recognition...that generations of exposure to poverty, racism, violent crime, and domestic violence have resulted in extremely high levels of traumatic stress for individuals, families, and communities across the City.”¹ This exposure to trauma is particularly significant for young people. In addition to more than 30% of Baltimore’s children living in poverty, “30% of children in Baltimore have Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scores of 2 or more; meaning that they have experienced more than two incidences of events such as domestic violence, living with someone with an alcohol/drug problem, the death of a parent, or being a victim/witness of neighborhood violence.”² Exposure to ACEs can negatively impact a young person’s development and his/her engagement in school and/or the workforce.

Many of Baltimore’s young people have faced and continue to face systemic barriers. Inequities are further manifested by the potentially traumatic cycle that is established as young people become involved with the juvenile justice system. Confinement, detainment, or incarceration exposes youth to trauma and stigma, creates forced dependency, excludes them from educational opportunity, offers few prospects for skill development, and often results in diminished psychological health.³ These young people are more likely to disengage from school and/or work.

As young people disengage, their future employment prospects are jeopardized, and they are at risk of participating in risky behaviors. In response, according to the most current data available, 18% of youth ages 16-24 in Baltimore are not engaged in the labor force and Baltimore City’s juvenile arrest rate is 175.9 per 10,000, which is higher than the arrest rate for Maryland (171.8 per 10,000).⁴ In Baltimore City, the focus is on addressing violence, investing in youth development, improving community wellbeing, promoting equitable growth, and managing the city’s resources effectively. To achieve these goals Mayor Brandon Scott developed an Action Plan comprised of five core pillars designed to promote and progress efforts around public safety, prioritizing youth, creating clean and healthy communities, and equitable neighborhood development, through responsible stewardship. Mayor Scott’s Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan went into effect in 2021 to expand local efforts by treating violence as a public health epidemic, increasing community engagement and inter-agency coordination, and increasing evaluation and accountability. While juvenile arrests rates for Baltimore City are higher than the state’s rate, efforts to prioritize youth and maintain public safety are a priority throughout the state.

¹ Baltimore City Health Department. (2017). White Paper: State of Health in Baltimore: Summary of Key Issues, Services and Policies.

² Baltimore City Health Department. (2017). White Paper: State of Health in Baltimore: Summary of Key Issues, Services and Policies.

³ De Nike, M., Shelden, R., Macallair, D., & Menart, R. (2019). Collaborating for Successful Reentry: A Practical Guide to Support Justice-Involved Young People Returning to the Community.

http://www.cjcj.org/uploads/cjcj/documents/collaborating_for_successful_reentry_juvenile_justice_practical_guide.pdf

⁴ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2024). Annie E. Casey Foundation A Profile of Youth and Young Adults in Baltimore. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/a-profile-of-youth-and-young-adults-in-baltimore>

Family League supports the Moore Administration's State Plan for Maryland mission to "Leave No One Behind" by focusing on funding and supporting efforts on Ending Child Poverty in the State of Maryland, Setting Maryland's Students Up for Success, Creating an Equitable, Robust, and Competitive Economy, Connecting Marylanders to Jobs, Creating Safer Communities.

After collaborating on interagency workgroups to operationalize recommendations associated with Mayor Scott's Prioritizing Our Youth pillars, Family League's investment in the Thriving Youth strategy responds to identified community needs through a strengths-based, trauma-informed lens.

To complement the work around diversion, there must also be a focus on recidivism. Research has found that once young people enter the juvenile justice system, there is an increased likelihood they will continue to be involved with this system, and that "in general...juvenile incarceration fails to reduce recidivism."⁵ Re-arrest is one data point the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) uses to measure recidivism; the other two are reconviction and reincarceration. In Baltimore, annually from FY20-FY22, the 12-month juvenile and/or criminal justice re-arrest rate was 53% or greater.⁶ Family League, is committed to reducing juvenile recidivism rates among the youth in the City of Baltimore by increasing opportunities for community-based programs and services for justice involved youth that work to prevent and reduce the impact of incarceration on children, families, and communities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In FY26 (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026), Family League's Thriving Youth Strategy will continue to be a key investment in the organization's focus on youth justice. The Thriving Youth Strategy will continue to serve youth who are at risk of juvenile justice involvement and/or re-engagement with the juvenile justice system. Young people, male and female, **ages 11-17** will be eligible for support through this program. The Thriving Youth Program will also support participants receiving services that focus on key components: re-entry planning and navigation for detained youth and their families through community-based programming focused on addressing the holistic needs of youth once they re-renter their communities, particularly around re-engaging with school and/or work.

The selected Thriving Youth partner will deliver programming and services, which can include nine key areas of education and workforce development; housing, health, social emotional, and financial wellness; legal matters, barrier removal, and mentorship. Thriving Youth Programs will build and maintain a continuum of cradle-to-career solutions that will develop employment opportunities for program participants. Programs may also provide place-based workforce development opportunities, wraparound support, and collaborate with other partners to

⁵ The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2015). Re-Examining Juvenile Incarceration: High cost, poor outcomes spark shift to alternatives. https://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2015/04/reexamining_juvenile_incarceration.pdf

⁶ Maryland Department of Juvenile Services. (2018). Section V: Recidivism Rates. <https://djs.maryland.gov/Documents/DRG/Recidivism.pdf>

holistically meet the needs of the program participants and their families that offer support along a continuum ranging from prevention to intervention. The Thriving Youth partner must ground their work in authentic relationships with young people and the community. Thriving Youth programming will focus on supporting youth in communities in Baltimore experiencing high levels of poverty and violence.

The Thriving Youth Program must offer appropriate programming and resources that serve youth in Baltimore and young people ages 11-17. The Program will provide enrolled Baltimore City youth ages 14-17 with opportunities within the labor force through relationships established through partnerships with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development and employers in the community that can expand opportunities available for youth who want to work and need a regular income as well as opportunities for those who have disengaged from the workforce.

The partner will provide community-based programming focused on addressing the holistic needs of youth. Programs that support young people enrolled in the Thriving Youth Program should:

- Prioritize relationship-building with youth. The following factors are key to building transformative relationships, and prior experience building such relationships should be clear in the application.
 - Program must ensure youth feel heard: Staff build their understanding of the youth based on what the youth themselves report. Staff listens without judgement.
 - Program must provide evidence of qualified staff. Resumes/ CV uploads are required.
 - Program must invest time: Staff persistently and intensively engage at the outset of the relationship and then continue to build that relationship and trust at the rate the young person is comfortable with.
 - Program must be real: Staff are open and share about themselves and their own past and history to indicate appropriate shared experiences and knowledge, so that sharing does not feel one-sided.
 - Program must challenge the youth: Staff promote and demand self-improvement practices with youth by confronting and challenging when necessary and once trust is established.
 - Program must show up in crises: When a youth is experiencing a crisis, maybe even a crisis caused by their mistake, workers show up and help them through it. Program must provide opportunities for peer interaction through grouping and cooperative learning.
- Program must have a clear plan to engage youth and re-engage youth if they pull away or have trouble connecting.

- Program must have a plan [valid scales/ tools] to assess the strengths and needs of the youth prior to applying any services.
 - Supportive environment through welcoming, conflict resolution, active learning, encouragement, and skill building.
 - Physical safety, emotional safety, and inclusive practices.
- Program must have a demonstrated history of being trauma-informed, strengths-based, culturally responsive, and use a gender and race equity lens
- Program should not overburden the young person with mandated programming
- Program must be community-based
- Program must be research informed

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Family League of Baltimore utilizes the Results-Based Accountability (RBA) framework that represents a disciplined way of thinking to improve the lives of children and their families and improve the effectiveness of programs. This grant will require the following performance measures:

How Much Did You Do?

Measure 1: # of New participants enrolled in community-based supports

Measure 2: # of Participants served

How Well Did You Do It?

Measure 1: % of Participants who create a community supports plan within 90 days of enrollment

Measure 2: % of Participants who were re-engaged in school and/or obtained employment

Measure 3: % of Participants alternatively served by restorative justice practices/ programs such as youth or teen courts, victim-offender or school-based mediation, conflict resolution, and restorative circles

Is Anyone Better Off?

Measure 1: % of Participants who complete their community supports plan by the end of services

Measure 2: % of Participants served by alternatives to formal youth justice processing

Measure 3: % of Participants who maintained or gained connection to work or school

GRANT TERMS & APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Contract Award Amount: Not to exceed \$200,000.00

Grant Period: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

To apply, interested individuals or organizations must:

- Qualify as a nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status, a for-profit corporation, or a public entity;
- Be in Good Standing with Family League if a past or current Funded Partner;
- Be in “Good Standing” with the State of Maryland (must provide a PDF copy of the certificate dated within the past 30 days). A certificate can be obtained from [here](#);
- For funding requests totaling **\$49,999 or less**, provide a copy of the organization’s Form 990 **within the past 12 months**;
- For funding requests totaling **\$50,000 or more**, provide a copy of the organization’s independently audited financial statements for its fiscal year-end **within the past 12 months**;
- Provide evidence of organizational capacity to implement a quality program as outlined in the RFA;
- Provide a stakeholder Letter of Support dated within the past 12 months, on official letterhead, and signed;
- Provide Curriculum Vitae and/or resumes of staff to be funded under this grant;
- Provide a clear, detailed, and concise operating budget equal to the total amount of requested funds and a budget narrative that explains the budget; and
- Submit all required documents with the application by the posted due date.

As Baltimore City’s appointed local management board (LMB), Family League is committed to strengthening Baltimore City-based businesses and providing equity and inclusion in its procurement process. It is the policy of the Organization that all Baltimore City-based small, minority, and/or woman-owned or -led businesses and other historically underrepresented and underutilized business enterprises will be given the maximum practicable opportunity to compete and be awarded contracts to provide goods, services, and activities administered by the Organization.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are required to submit proposals through FUNDINGtrack, Family League’s online grants management system accessible through <https://flb.fluxx.io>. Submission must be completed by the date and time specified in this RFP and in the FUNDINGtrack application. The deadlines will be strictly enforced. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application process is completed by the deadline. Hard copies, emailed copies, and late submissions will not be accepted. Furthermore, Family League reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to amend or modify any provision of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP at any time prior to the contract award. Family League shall not be bound by or liable under this RFP and/or any response thereto until a final written contract has been executed by Family League and the grantee incorporating the terms and conditions of the award.

Registration

All applicants must be registered in FUNDINGtrack. This is done by selecting the “Register” link on the portal’s home page, found here: <https://flb.fluxx.io>. Applicants will receive login credentials via email within three business days of submission of the registration form. Applicants are highly encouraged to register early.

Organization Information and Documentation

The Organizational profile enables all registered users of FUNDINGtrack to provide the key business and contact information needed from Funded Partners. All registered users should fully complete the requested information and upload the due diligence documentation required in this RFP.

Help Using the Online Application

For questions or problems, contact the Help Desk at FUNDINGtrack@FamilyLeague.zendesk.com, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE & QUESTIONS

To address common questions and concerns, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and corresponding responses will be posted on Family League's website (www.familyleague.org) on June 24, 2025.

Applicants should review that document and address additional questions to fundedpartnerships@familyleague.org no later than the close of business on June 25, 2025. The team will review these questions and post responses on Family League's website on June 30, 2025

A pre-proposal conference will be held virtually on June 26, 2025. The meeting can be accessed via Zoom:

Funded Partnerships is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: FY26 Thriving Youth RFP Pre-proposal Conferene
Time: Jun 26, 2025 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://familyleague-org.zoom.us/j/89933107807>

Meeting ID: 899 3310 7807

One tap mobile
+13017158592,,89933107807# US (Washington DC)
+19292056099,,89933107807# US (New York)

Dial by your location
• +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
- +1 267 831 0333 US (Philadelphia)
- +1 470 250 9358 US (Atlanta)
- +1 470 381 2552 US (Atlanta)
- +1 646 518 9805 US (New York)
- +1 786 635 1003 US (Miami)
- 833 548 0282 US Toll-free
- 877 853 5247 US Toll-free
- 888 788 0099 US Toll-free
- 833 548 0276 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 899 3310 7807

Find your local number: <https://familyleague-org.zoom.us/j/kuVPxTZAt>

Budget Guidelines

Please be sure that the budget:

- Does not exceed the award amount;
- Does not include in-kind contributions;
- Is consistent with the program design/plans outlined in the corresponding proposal narrative; and
- Ensures administrative costs, if applicable, do not exceed 10% of total direct costs.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Review Panel

Applications will be reviewed and rated by a panel comprised of individuals with experience, knowledge, and expertise in the field. This panel may include service professionals; community members; and parents, youth and/or family members of Baltimore City. Review panelists will serve at the invitation of Family League.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used in selecting the application to be awarded:

- Adheres to proposal requirements,
- Budget reflects maximizing of resources/stewardship,
- Stakeholder letter of support

Announcement

Funding decisions are expected to be announced by: September 5, 2025.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Data Collection

All Funded Partners will be required to submit data on every participant they serve. Funded Partners must have the capacity to collect, manage, utilize, and report participant-level and program data. The data will be entered into Family League's data system, or in such form as agreed upon by Family League.

Reporting

All Funded Partners must submit quarterly financial and programmatic reports, unless otherwise specified by Family League. These include, but are not limited to, a narrative report; data specified in each Funded Partner's Scope of Work, including outcome information; and line-item financial information.

Training and Technical Assistance

All Funded Partners must participate in staff development activities as required by Family League. Information related to training opportunities, both required and optional, will be shared with Funded Partners on a regular basis. Additionally, Family League is committed to providing technical assistance and welcomes Funded Partner feedback.

Grant Award

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee an award. Family League is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP. Family League reserves the right to withdraw an award prior to execution of a contract with a Funded Partner in Family League's sole and absolute discretion.

Contract Terms

All Funded Partners must comply with all terms and conditions applicable to contracts executed by Family League. These terms and conditions can be found on the Family League website at www.familyleague.org by submitting a proposal to this RFP, applicants attest that they have read and accept these conditions fully. A Scope of Work with details about specific requirements and measurable outcomes will be a requirement of grant recipients as an addition to the contract.

Funded Partners must submit all administrative contracting documentation upon contract issuance. These include:

- o Certificate of Good Standing with the State of Maryland dated **within the past 30 days**
- o Certificate of Insurance
- o Audited Financial Statements (awards \$50,000 or more) or Form 990 (awards up to \$49,999.00) dated **within the past 12 months**
- o Confidentiality Policy
- o Conflicts of Interest Policy

- o COVID-19 Safe Environment Acknowledgement Form
- o Criminal Background Check Policy
- o Drug & Alcohol Abuse Policy
- o Financial Policies & Procedures
- o Grievance Policy
- o Record Retention Policy
- o Subcontractor Policy

Criminal Background Checks

All Funded Partners must conduct criminal background checks for employees. These practices must comply with the terms and conditions applicable to contracts executed by Family League. All Funded Partners must have established standard operating policies and procedures for conducting, reviewing, and if necessary, responding to the results of the record checks.

Additional Funder Conditions

Any additional terms and conditions imposed by funders following the release of this RFP shall become a part of the contract between the Funded Partner and Family League.

Key Dates and Deadlines

DATE	TASK
June 18, 2025	RFA Released
June 25, 2025	Question & Answer Deadline
June 26, 2025	Pre-Proposal Conference
June 30, 2025	Q&A Posted on Website
July 16, 2025	Applications Due
July 25, 2025	Technical Review & Cure Period
July 28, 2025 – September 3, 2025	Application Review
September 5, 2025	Determination Notices