**Category 1 Program Narrative Outline**

This template was developed by the National Drug Court Resource Center (NDCRC) to assist jurisdictions with preparing their project narrative files for the FY 2023 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Veterans Treatment Court Discretionary Grant Program. Below is a synopsis of the elements that must be included in the project narrative file for **Category 1 applicants** to plan and implement new programs. Applicants applying under Categories 2 or 3 should use their respective documents.

**A) Description of the Issue**

Within this section, the applicant should explain its inability to fund the program adequately without federal assistance. For each category, the applicant must provide verified sources for the data that support the description of the issue (i.e., U.S. Census or other federal, state, and local databases).

* Describe the nature and scope of the substance use disorder and related criminal justice involvement challenges for veterans in the jurisdiction. Include data on race, ethnicity, age, gender, arrest volume (i.e., specifics of the general arrestee population, including the percentage screened for VTC and what percentage of those are admitted), and crime patterns for adult defendants.
* Explain the problems with the current court’s response to cases involving veterans with SUDs; identify how and to what extent the proposed program will address the current arrest volume; and describe how the current number of treatment slots meets the needs of anticipated referrals.
* Describe current resources and gaps to address the needs of persons to be served.
* Describe the proposed target population, including criminogenic risk level (high, medium, low), SUD treatment need, and the average jail or prison sentence that potential participants face, if any.
* Describe the jurisdiction’s commitment to creating a mechanism that prioritizes court resources and services for veterans with high criminogenic risk and treatment need, including persons with repeat criminal justice involvement and substance use disorders.
* Describe any current planning or coordination with related projects to show that the jurisdiction is preparing to plan and implement a veterans treatment court.
* Discuss how activities anticipated for the Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program will be coordinated with the proposed activities in this application

**B) Program Design and Implementation**

For this section, the applicant should address the following items and then address the specific category requirements below.

* Must include a plan that demonstrates how all individuals eligible for the veterans treatment court will have equal access to the program. This should include protocols for collecting and examining access and retention data.
* Must include a plan that demonstrates the early identification of eligible veterans for referral to veterans treatment court. The plan may include coordination with a VJO and the use of VRSS and SQUARES.
* Describe how this application will enhance access to recovery support services such as educational and/or vocational and transitional housing services or peer support, including supporting alumni networks or peer recovery activities. If delivering recovery support services, describe the agency and personnel that will administer the services and how those services are coordinated.
* Demonstrate that eligible VTC participants promptly enter the program following a determination of their eligibility. The applicant must also explain that people receive treatment services while incarcerated, if available, and will begin VTC treatment services immediately upon release.
* Describe which, if any, evidence-based principles and practices included in NADCP’s 10 best practice standards will be implemented as discussed under “Best Practice Standards.”
* Discuss the applicant’s commitment to admit and provide evidence-based interventions to participants with opioid, stimulant, and other SUD needs, including strategies for early assessment and entry into treatment to prevent overdose. Describe the strategies that will be used during this phase to assess for the risk of overdose, the need for critical access to treatment services, and how to prevent overdoses. Describe the range of treatment modalities that will be provided to address substance use, mental health, and co-occurring disorder treatment and support needs of participants, including those with a history of violence and PTSD and/or TBI as a result of their military service.
* The VTC Discretionary Grant Program allows participants to pay for treatment and restitution; however, it does not allow imposing a fee on a participant that would interfere with their rehabilitation. In the application, indicate how participants will be notified of the fee and include provisions for determining how these costs would not interfere with their rehabilitation or graduation.
* Demonstrate that the VTC for which funds are being sought will not deny any eligible client access to the program because of their use of FDA-approved medications for the treatment of a substance use disorder. Please refer to the Program Description Specific Information section’s discussion on MAT for additional information.
* If the applicant is seeking priority consideration for Priority 1(A), it should address in this section how the proposed project(s) will address issues related to racial equity and/or the removal of barriers to access and opportunity, and/or contribute to greater access to services, for communities that have been historically marginalized, underserved and adversely affected by inequality.
* Discuss how activities anticipated for the Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program will be coordinated with the proposed activities in this application, if applicable.

Category 1: Planning and Implementation Applicants

* For the planning phase, describe activities the court will take to prepare for program implementation, to include the following:
* Hire veterans treatment court staff.
* Participate in the BJA veterans treatment court foundational training.
* Assess existing community resources (resource mapping).
* For the implementation phase, describe the veterans treatment court program, to include the following:
* Referral, screening, and assessment process
* Eligibility requirements
* Structure of the drug court (pre-, post-, plea, etc.)
* Length and phases of the program
* Case management process
* Community supervision
* Availability of evidence-based treatment services
* Recovery support services delivery plan
* Judicial supervision
* Process for randomized drug testing
* Incentives and sanctions: Demonstrate an understanding that relapse is a part of the substance use disorder recovery process and is taken into consideration in the development of incentives and sanctions. Describe how the applicant will employ strategies to ensure due process and reduce the potential for unintended harm in the application of incentives and sanctions.
* Graduation requirements and expulsion criteria
* Restitution costs and all fees required for program participation, including identifying how fees will be absorbed back into the program. Include whether the program’s fees present a barrier to participation and the measures available to reduce or waive fees for indigent participants.
* Describe how the VTC will identify, assess, and prioritize participation and services for high risk/high needs persons. Identify the validated assessment tool that will be used. Provide information on why the specific assessment tool was selected and identify who will administer the tool. Describe the plan to review data and decisions related to participant referral to the program, services provided, and outcomes to ensure equity and inclusion.
* Describe the plan to provide treatment and recovery support services to address opioid, stimulant, and other substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder needs. This should include how participants’ treatment will be funded and the range of treatment modalities that will be provided. Describe the evidence base for the drug and other treatment intervention(s) to be used and how responsive they are to the needs of the target population.
* Describe how the treatment provider(s) will be selected and address how often the veterans treatment court will monitor the provider(s). Monitoring should ensure that the treatment is effective.
* If a post-adjudication VTC model is proposed, discuss how the concept of “early intervention” will be implemented.
* Discuss how the community has been engaged in the planning process and describe the community partnerships available to support the VTC program. Describe how the data collected in a community mapping of resources will be used to enhance access to relevant and needed services.
* Discuss how the VTC will make efforts to engage and support participants’ families.
* Demonstrate how the proposal conforms to the framework of the state VTC strategy, if one exists.

**C) Capabilities and Competencies**

If the applicant is seeking priority consideration under Priority 1(B), it should describe within this section how being a culturally specific organization (or funding a culturally specific subrecipient organization at a minimum of 40% of the project budget) will enhance its ability to implement the proposed project(s) and should also specify which culturally specific populations are intended or expected to be served or have their needs addressed under the proposed project(s).

* Indicate whether the current VTC team members have received training through the Justice for Vets Veterans Treatment Court Planning Initiative (VTCPI) foundational training or through another opportunity. (See <https://justiceforvets.org/resources/training/foundational-training/>). If not, describe any training received or planning completed.
* Identify each member of the VTC team and briefly describe their role and responsibilities. Key VTC team members must include a judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, treatment provider, researcher/evaluator/management information specialist, and veterans treatment court coordinator. Other partners can include a case management coordinator to support the provision of key services including treatment, recovery support, peer support, housing, and family support services.
* Describe how effective communication and coordination among the team members will be implemented throughout the program period.
* Describe the VTC program’s proposed treatment and recovery support partners and the history of these partnerships. Describe how the court will ensure these SUD treatment providers will use evidence-based treatment services, including MAT.
* Indicate whether the team includes members from the local law enforcement and probation departments. If applicable, describe the roles of these members as they relate to staffing attendance, home visits, and court appearances.
* Describe any research partners or analytical staff members who will support data collection, analysis, and research, including their roles and goals. Describe how they will support equity and inclusion in access to program services, effective targeting and implementation fidelity, and program evaluation.
* Attach an MOU signed by each key VTC team member with the responsibilities outlined for each as discussed under “Memorandum of Understanding Signed by Key Treatment Court Team Members” in the Additional Application Components section.
* Attach the job descriptions and résumés/CVs of key staff members that are consistent with the description of the applicant’s capabilities and competencies.
* Attach a letter of support from the local court outlining its commitment to the project.

**D) Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures**

The applicant must describe its current ability to collect and analyze client-level demographic, performance, and outcome data and to regularly assess program service delivery and performance. All applicants must indicate their willingness and ability to report quarterly, aggregated, client-level performance and outcome data through BJA’s Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) as well as identify the person responsible for collecting the data. Statewide applicants are expected to report on behalf of their subawardees. In addition, grantees are expected to map community resources to support their programs, conduct or support evaluation of the programs, and to be able to assess equity and inclusion in their programs.

Note: An applicant is not required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measure information is included as a notification that award recipients will be required to submit performance data as part of each award’s reporting requirements. Some measures are presented as examples, while others are the exact measures that every recipient will be expected to address.

OJP will require each award recipient to submit regular performance data that show the completed work’s results. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified in the “Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables” discussion. Applicants can visit OJP’s performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

* Describe the steps the VTC will take to develop a performance management and evaluation plan. The plan should include strategies to collect, review, and use data to improve program performance, and it should discuss how the veterans treatment court will work with an evaluator when appropriate. Describe the program’s screening tool and referral process to ensure that veterans screened and referred to the court mirror the jurisdiction’s arrestee percentages for opioids, stimulants, and other substances
* Describe who will be responsible for, and the process of, the quarterly review of the actual number of participants served with grant funds as compared to the projected number of participants to be served. The Time Task Plan should reflect when and how the jurisdiction plans to reach the target capacity and should be measured on a quarterly basis.