**Category 2 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 2 applicants** to enhance existing programs. Applicants applying under Categories 1 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).

* The applicant is encouraged to include in its proposal how they will use funding to incorporate the evidence-based program principles included in the Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Courts and to specify which standard(s) will be addressed and how the standard(s) will be implemented.
* Describe the immediate issues that the VTC grant will address.
* Describe current resources and gaps to address the needs of persons to be served. Describe the current operation of the veterans treatment court, addressing:

Referral, screening, and assessment process

* + Eligibility requirements
  + Target population
  + Current capacity
  + Length and phases of the program
  + Case management process
  + Community supervision
  + Recovery support services delivery plan, including vocational and/or educational, transitional housing, and peer recovery services
  + Family support services
  + Strategies to prevent and respond to risk for overdose
  + Judicial supervision
  + Process for randomized drug testing
  + Incentives and sanctions
  + Graduation requirements and expulsion criteria (include which treatment court members are present when it is decided and communicated that a participant is terminated from the program)
  + Restitution costs and all fees required for program participation
* Describe the mechanism that prioritizes court resources and services for veterans with high criminogenic risk and treatment needs, including persons with repeat criminal justice involvement and SUDs.
* Indicate whether the VTC team to be funded has received training on the VTC model.
* Describe current efforts and planning that document the jurisdiction is ready to implement and/or enhance its veterans treatment court.
* Identify the treatment service(s) and/or practice(s) available for participants, including access to medication-assisted treatment (medication plus counseling), and how those services are currently monitored or will be monitored for quality and effectiveness. Confirm that access to all types of MAT will be provided.
* Discuss the evidence that shows the drug and other treatment service(s) and/or practice(s) are evidence-based and effective with the target population. If the evidence is limited or nonexistent for the target population, provide other information to support the intervention selection.
* Provide local data and any evaluation findings that demonstrate the program’s impact with regard to participant recidivism and functional outcomes.
* 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 2: Enhancement Applicants

* Describe the proposed enhancement and its specific objectives, including how they tie to the VTC program’s purpose.
* Identify the validated assessment tool to be used and provide information on why it was selected. BJA has partnered with American University to develop and administer training and technical assistance for specialized screening, assessment, and case planning tools for veterans treatment courts. For additional information please see Veterans Treatment Court Enhancement Initiative | School of Public Affairs | American University, Washington, DC.
* Describe the plan to review data and decisions related to referring participants to the program, services provided, and outcomes to ensure equity and inclusion.
* Identify the enhancement options for which funds are being requested and explain how each will be accomplished. In the explanation address the following:
* Describe the detailed and randomized drug testing process and how it will occur throughout all components or phases of the program. Describe the mechanism which the court will use to ensure coverage and coordination of drug testing among all available agencies associated with the participants.
* Describe the proposed frequency of judicial status hearings the program. Describe how the program will ensure procedures are consistent in the status hearings.
* Describe the process the court will use to ensure procedural fairness throughout all court and program operations.
* Describe any strategies to enhance the VTC’s capacity to assess and reduce the risk of overdoses and overdose fatalities, including use of naloxone and access to FDA-approved MAT.
* Describe the plan to provide treatment and recovery support services to reduce opioid, stimulant, and other substance use disorders.
* Describe the evidence base for the treatment and recovery intervention(s) to be used and how it is responsive to the needs of the target population. Describe the range of treatment modalities that will be provided to address participants’ substance use disorder, cooccurring mental health, and cognitive behavioral needs.
* Provide a community reintegration or continued care strategy detailing services to assist program graduates as they reintegrate into the community. The applicant should emphasize client access to drug-free or transitional housing. If applicable, the applicant is encouraged to consider and describe how its state’s planned Medicaid expansion, as allowed under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, will increase future program capacity or sustainability.
* Discuss how the court will make efforts to engage and support participants’ families.
* If trauma-informed care is proposed, discuss how the model will be implemented.
* 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).

* Identify each VTC team member who will have a significant role in implementing the enhancement and describe their role, responsibilities, and qualifications to ensure the proposed enhancement program’s success. Key VTC team members must include a judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, treatment provider, researcher/evaluator/management information specialist, community supervision representative, and veterans treatment court coordinator. Other partners can include a case management coordinator to support provision of key services including treatment, recovery support, peer support, housing, and family support services.
* Identify personnel other than the team members who are critical to the enhancement program’s successful implementation and discuss their roles, responsibilities, and qualifications. Discuss the organizational capabilities or competencies that will directly impact the ability to successfully implement the proposed enhancement.
* Describe the VTC program’s proposed treatment and recovery support partners, the history of the partnerships, and how the court will ensure that these SUD treatment providers use evidence-based treatment services and monitor the quality and effectiveness of service delivery.
* Describe any research partners or analytical staff 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.
* Describe how effective communication and coordination among the team members will be implemented throughout the program period.
* 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.”
* Attach the job descriptions and résumés/CVs of key staff members that are consistent with the description of the applicant’s capabilities and competencies.

**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.

* Provide a plan detailing how the performance of court operations will be evaluated and managed. Describe the program’s screening tool and referral process to ensure participants screened and referred to veterans treatment 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.
* Describe how operation and enhancement efforts will be maintained after federal assistance ends and how current collaborations and evaluations will be used to leverage ongoing resources.
* Provide a client community reintegration or continued care strategy detailing the step-down provisions for reintegration services to assist program graduates as they reintegrate into the community. The applicant should emphasize client access to drug-free or transitional housing.
* If applicable, the applicant is encouraged to consider and describe how its state’s planned Medicaid expansion, as allowed under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, will increase future program capacity or sustainability.
* BJA encourages the applicant to ensure sustainability by coordinating with local, state, and other federal resources. Such resources, including BJA’s Justice Assistance Grant Program, have purpose areas to support court services and substance use disorder treatment.