

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

ANN MARIE T. SULLIVAN, M.D.
Commissioner

MOIRA TASHJIAN, MPA
Executive Deputy Commissioner

March 20, 2024

Dear Community Provider:

The New York State Office of Mental Health is making funds available for projects that promote mental health stigma reduction across the state. These funds are from revenues received through the voluntary tax check-off program. This program, approved by the legislature in 2016, continues to allow taxpayers, on their New York State tax filing, to contribute to the fund in support of work which promotes the reduction of stigma towards persons with mental illness.

OMH has approximately \$100,000.00 available for these awards. Projects need to be completed between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. The maximum award to any one agency will be \$20,000.00. OMH intends to select at least one project from each of the agency's five geographic regions in New York State.

Agencies chosen for funding must have at least one year of experience serving persons with mental illness and be recognized for work specifically serving underserved, under-represented and/or minority populations in the state. To be considered, projects must address one or more of the elements below:

- 1. Educational:** Distributing knowledge and resources, providing information about the causes and symptoms of mental illness, dispelling myths and misconceptions around mental health conditions. This can include materials necessary for face-to-face seminars aimed at clarifying inaccurate depictions of mental illness. Settings may also include educational institutions, such as schools.
- 2. Contact-based:** Includes input from and methods of direct and indirect contact with individuals who have mental health diagnoses sharing recovery stories. This helps normalize mental health conditions and reduce negative attitudes and beliefs around mental health challenges and diagnoses.
- 3. Underserved Populations:** Activities that provide innovative, culturally relevant approaches to reducing mental health stigma in underserved populations and communities.
- 4. Housing:** Activities intended to combat stigma and discrimination in housing which prevent people with mental illness from obtaining and maintaining safe and affordable housing. Targeted audiences may include landlords, homeowners, management companies serving landlords and owners, building superintendents and billing/rent collection personnel.
- 5. Employment:** Activities intended to combat stigma and discrimination in the workplace which make it difficult for people living with mental illness to find and keep meaningful jobs. Targeted audiences may include behavioral health agencies, peer-run agencies, corporate employers, Department of Labor representatives and employment/staffing agencies. Work involving education and engagement around reasonable accommodation and creating a work culture of wellness and support is encouraged.
- 6. Parenting and Families:** Activities intended to combat the stigma and discrimination experienced by individuals with mental illness who are also parents and stigma experienced by the families and caregivers of those with mental health diagnoses.

7. **Media:** Activities intended to combat stigma, discrimination, and the negative stereotypes perpetuated in the media. This could include traditional and non-traditional forms of media.
8. **Healthcare:** Activities intended to combat stigma and discrimination in the health care system that may lead to people with mental illness not receiving equal access to the quality health care they need.

Activities include but are not limited to targeted messaging and advertising, education, print materials, use of the arts, speakers, training, community events, contact with individuals with lived experience and multimedia productions. These funds cannot be used to cover the cost of food, conference travel or other purchases precluded by law or regulation.

To be considered for these funds, proposals must include:

- o **Focus Area:** State primary focus area(s) from the list above.
- o **Type(s) of Stigma to be addressed** (public, self, structural, institutional, professional etc.)
- o **The Target Audience(s):** Identify the audience(s) you seek to reach.
- o **The Deliverable(s)/Goals:** List the specific products and goals, with projected counts, webinars, resources, presentations, etc., that this project will deliver.
- o **The approach:** Describe the methods that will be used to reach audiences and achieve deliverables.
- o **Timeframe:** Include timeframes of activities, accounting for short-term nature of the funding
- o **Measurement Plan:** Include how impacts and outcomes will be measured.
- o **Staffing Plan:** List staff and consultants involved, include names of individuals, where known.
- o **Budget:** Provide detailed, line item, accounting of the use of funds, providing where applicable:
 - o Per item costs and quantities
 - o Speaker(s) fees
 - o Itemized staff time and associated costs and detailed production and/or promotional costs
- o **Primary/Operations Contact:** Provide full name, role, phone number, and email address for individual who can answer questions about the proposal.
- o **Financial Contact:** Provide full name, role, phone number and email address for individual for purchase orders and financial questions.

The Office of Mental Health's Strategic Plan for Stigma Reduction is focused on reducing public, self, and structural stigma and promoting affirming attitudes, beliefs and behaviors among identified targeted audiences and in the public. Please note OMH will review proposals for completeness, quality of messaging, measurement of impact and alignment with desired, measurable outcomes. Projects selected for funding will receive a 75 percent advance of the funding for their project. All projects are to be completed within the specified time frame. All projects are to be completed between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Selected partners are expected to meet with OMH staff during the grant period and submit periodic progress reports and a Final Report upon completion. Selected partners must submit a final claim with a full accounting of expenditures and supporting documentation. Any unspent funds must be returned. Providers filing a Consolidated Financial Report must report funds and related expenditures on their filing. Information on claims reporting will be provided at the time of award.

Please direct questions regarding this solicitation and funds to Karin Wagner at karin.wagner@omh.ny.gov. The Office of Mental Health must receive complete proposals **by May 31, 2024**. Please email proposals to Carol Swiderski at carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov. We are excited about this opportunity and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Karin A. Wagner, PhD
Lead, Strategic Plan for Mental Health Stigma Reduction



Amanda Saake
Chief Peer Advocacy Officer