**Program Narrative Template for the**

**FY 2020 National Community Courts Site-based Initiative**

**NOTE:** This template if for Category 1 only (site-based applications).

# Introduction: This template is designed to support you in successfully completing the program narrative section of the above referenced solicitation. This template guides you through each question that is part of the peer review process.

**Formatting Requirements:** The following pages have been properly formatted for you. Please do not change any of the formatting. The program narrative should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. If you need to insert a table, your table may be single spaced.

**Page Limits:** Your program narrative may not exceed 20 pages. The following sections are part of the program narrative:

a. Statement of the Problem

b. Program Design and Implementation

c. Capabilities and Competencies

d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures

Your program narrative should be numbered “1 of 20,” “2 of 20,” etc. Until you erase the text in red, your application may exceed 20 pages. Keep that in mind during your initial review.

# How to Use This Template as the Grant Writer: To maximize the chance that you score well in peer review, it is important to answer every question in this template in the order it appears. Do not rearrange questions in any way. If questions are repetitive, you must still answer them.

# Have a colleague review your answers against the question asked to ensure that your answer makes sense to an external reviewer other than yourself. Once you are comfortable with your answers, erase this front page and all text that is red and/or highlighted. Double check to make sure you have not exceeded 20 pages once you have removed all the red text and this front page.

You should allocate your 20 pages in a way that reflects the scoring of each section. You should allocate several pages of your applications to sections worth the highest percentage of your score.

**Statement of the Problem**

**This section accounts for 15 percent of your overall score.**

Identify the applicant agency.

Clearly identify the state, region(s) or communities covered by the proposed program, including the population of the proposed service area.

If your application offer enhancements to public safety in economically distressed

communities (Qualified Opportunity Zones), note it here. For resources on QOZs, and for a current list of designated QOZs, see the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s resource webpage, accessible at <https://www.cdfifund.gov/pages/opportunity-zones.aspx>.

If your application addresses specific challenges that rural communities face, note it here. You must describe what makes the geographic service area rural (using U.S. Census or other appropriate government data; for assistance, applicants may wish to refer to <https://www.census.gov/programssurveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html>), how isolated the area is from needed services, and how they will address specific challenges in rural communities.

If your application meets the criteria below and is intended to benefit individuals who reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties, note it here. For purposes of this priority consideration, the term ‘‘high-poverty area’’ means any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2013–2017 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Census Bureau (applicants may search by census tract at <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2017/>) and the term ‘‘persistent poverty counties’’ means any county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (applicants may search by county at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/censuspoverty.html> and at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html>).

Provide information that documents the impact of criminal behavior, including substance abuse and behavioral health issues, on the proposed service area.

Describe the underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior, including substance abuse and behavioral health issues, being addressed by the community court.

Identify any specific challenges motivating the applicant’s interest in participating in this grant.

Explain the inability to fully fund the proposed program without federal assistance.

Describe any existing funding or resources that are being leveraged to support the proposed program.

**Project Design and Implementation**

**This section accounts for 40 percent of your overall score.**

All Category 1 applicants under this solicitation must demonstrate how the proposed community court conforms to the key community court principles. For more information on community courts see <https://www.bja.gov/national-community-courts-program/index.html>. In addition, Category 1 applicants must demonstrate that the proposed community court conforms with statutory requirements:

* Continuing judicial supervision over offenders with substance abuse problems
* Coordination with appropriate State or local prosecutor
* The integrated administration of other sanctions and services, which shall include—
* Mandatory periodic testing for the use of controlled substances or other addictive substances during any period of supervised release or probation for each participant;
* Substance abuse treatment for each participant;
* Diversion, probation, or other supervised release involving the possibility of prosecution, confinement, or incarceration based on noncompliance with program requirements or failure to show satisfactory progress;
* Offender management, and aftercare services such as relapse prevention, health care, education, vocational training, job placement, housing placement, and child care or other family support services for each participant who requires such services;
* Payment, in whole or part, by the offender of treatment costs, to the extent practicable, such as costs for urinalysis or counseling; and payment, in whole or part, by the offender of restitution, to the extent practicable, to either a victim of the offender's offense or to a restitution or similar victim support fund.

Describe which program areas the proposed project will address. Your options include:

* Establish or enhance court-based intervention programs to prioritize and expedite the provision of treatment and recovery services to individuals who are frequent users of justice, health, and other services who commit low-level misdemeanor offenses.
* Build and maximize the capacity of jurisdictions to ensure that all participants are identified, assessed, and referred to services.
* Enhance the provision of treatment and recovery support services, including transitional housing assistance, to reduce recidivism and reduce homelessness.
* Expand the use of community services by defendants in the community court docket.
* Support case management and service coordination.
* Support data collection and program evaluation.

Describe the deliverables to be produced.

If applicable, describe how the applicant will address the program-specific veterans priority.

Describe any potential barriers to implementing the project and the strategies that will be used to overcome them.

If an evaluation is proposed, articulate how an in-depth evaluation of the subject will provide meaningful insights into solving local, state, or regional challenges while contributing to the national body of knowledge about best practices.

**Capabilities and Competencies**

**This section accounts for 30 percent of your overall score.**

Describe the project management structure and staffing, specifically identifying the key person (or people) responsible for carrying out project activities. Demonstrate the capability to implement the project successfully.

Identify each partner agency that has demonstrated its engagement in the project via an interagency agreement or letter of support. Discuss any previous collaboration that occurred that will help to achieve the objectives. Explain existing partnership agreements.

For applications involving a research component, describe the qualifications of the research partner and the prior experience of the researcher with action research, including prior work with drug monitoring and treatment agencies and other partners.

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the research partner in the project**.**

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

**This section accounts for 5 percent of your overall score.**

Describe who will be responsible for collecting and reporting the required performance measures and how data will be collected, including any records management systems and/or electronic data storage processes. The required performance metrics can be found here:

List any additional performance metrics that will be used to assess the project’s effectiveness and the process for collecting information, including who will be responsible and how data will be collected.

Discuss what data sources will be used and any legal, policy, or other barriers to gaining access to the data and how they will be addressed.