

## Mental Well-being

Florida Blue Foundation's programs are focused on improving health by impacting food security, advancing mental well-being, growing healthy communities, and addressing health disparities. **This funding opportunity is focused on Mental Well-being.**

As you prepare your online grant application, please carefully review the following four key sections to ensure you meet all the necessary requirements for a successful submission: 1) Dates and Deadlines, 2) Important Application Information, 3) Grant Funding Focuses, and 4) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

### DATES AND DEADLINES

- Application Open: **Thursday, April 2, 2026**
- Application Deadline: **Thursday, May 21, 2026, by 3:00 p.m. (ET)**
- Notification of Application Status: **September 2026**
- Required Cohort and Grantee Orientations: **September and October 2026**

### IMPORTANT APPLICATION INFORMATION

#### Pre-Application Resources

- **Informational Webinar:** All applicants are required to [watch our informational webinar](#) on the Mental Well-being grant program prior to completing their application. Watching the webinar will help prepare you for a strong and competitive application.
- **Online Application Link:** [Click here](#) to access the online application for the Mental Well-being grant program. Use Google Chrome to access the application in our grants management system.

#### Application Guidelines

- **Grant Funding:** Florida Blue Foundation is funding approximately \$3.2 million for this grant program, offering four-year grants. The total funding request for the grant period should fall within the range of \$300,000 to \$400,000, with an approximate annual allocation of \$75,000 to \$100,000.
- **Application Deadline:** The deadline is Thursday, May 21, by 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). We recommend submitting your online application 7 - 14 business days prior to the deadline to avoid potential technical issues. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

If your organization is new to our grants management system, please register at least two weeks in advance, as registration requires verification and approval. This will ensure you have enough time to complete the registration process and submit your application by the deadline. If you have trouble registering, please refer to the FAQs – Grant Management System.

- **Selection of Funding Focuses:** Organizations may apply to one or both Funding Focuses and must complete a separate application for each funding focus. Please note that current foundation grantees and large organizations with more than one affiliate/chapter and multiple divisions, should review the FAQs – Eligibility section of this document for specific guidance.

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### Application Requirements

- **Attachments:** All completed attachments must be uploaded in PDF format (pdf). Please ensure that all attachments are converted to PDFs before uploading them to the online application system.
- **Program Milestone Document:** The Program Milestone document is available for download on the online application link and must be completed and uploaded as an attachment. This document will capture detailed information for each year of the proposed program, including objectives, tasks, and expected outcomes.

There is no limit on the amount of information that can be provided. If selected as a grantee, this document will serve as the basis for all reporting requirements for funded programs and will be used to evaluate progress and outcomes throughout the grant period.

- **Budget Matrix and Narrative Template:** The Budget template is available for download on the online application link and must be completed and uploaded as an attachment. Please note that up to 10% of the total grant amount may be claimed for indirect costs, which are expenses necessary for the general operation of the organization and not directly related to a specific grant project. The Budget Narrative should include a brief explanation for each Florida Blue Foundation grant expense, by year, for all years of the proposed program.

When developing your budget, please include funds for each year of the grant to cover potential annual program meetings and attendance at Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards. Estimated cost per meeting: \$800 per person/per year.

- Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards: A two-day event typically held in Orlando. We recommend estimating the hotel cost at \$250 per night, registration at \$200, and transportation costs. There is no limit to the number of attendees from your organization. It is recommended that, at a minimum, the person who is managing the day-to-day operation of the program attend.
- Other meetings: Meetings in subsequent years are sometimes scheduled in conjunction with the Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards or at another time during the year scheduled at a central location. The schedule generally allows for closer organizations to be able to travel back and forth in one day.
- **Audited Financial Statement:** Applicants will be required to upload their organization's most recent audited financial statement, which should not be older than two years. If it is not available, we will accept your organization's internal financial statements, including a Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) and a Statement of Activities (Income Statement), for the most recent two years.
- **[Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate:](#)** Applicants will be required to upload their Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate, issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. This certificate should be less than one year old, as it must be renewed annually. This is required for nonprofits to solicit funds in Florida.

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If your organization is exempt, please attach a copy of the exemption letter issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Please note that some state agencies and organizations may be exempt from this requirement. If an organization is not based in Florida, please refer to FAQs – Eligibility.

- **Additional Documentation:** Applicants will be instructed to upload their organization’s current documentation, including: IRS Tax Form 990, Program Organizational Chart, Letters of Agreement for Collaborations/Partnerships (if applicable), and a list of Board of Directors. Please refer to the online application for detailed instructions and guidelines.

### Harvard Flourishing Index (Survey)

The Florida Blue Foundation uses the Harvard Flourishing Index – a comprehensive survey tool developed by researchers at Harvard University – to measure an individual's overall well-being and flourishing. The survey is designed to assess various aspects of a person's life, including their physical and mental health, social connections, and sense of purpose. This brief assessment is administered by organizations at intervals conducive to their proposed grant program for measuring participant improvement – pre- and post-survey administration, at a minimum. To demonstrate impact, grantees will set a goal for improvement by participants in at least one aspect of flourishing, as documented by the Harvard Flourishing Index. Grantees are encouraged to target a 65% baseline in year one, with a goal of increasing to 80% by year four, if feasible. [Copies of the Harvard Flourishing Index Surveys and related information are provided in the application’s Evaluation Plan section].

### Special Considerations

To further support our mission, Florida Blue Foundation demonstrates a strong commitment to serving specific vulnerable communities and leveraging innovative technologies. While not required, applicants that meet the following criteria will be given special consideration in the evaluation process:

- 1) Organizations that provide services in the following ZIP codes: 32206, 32805, 33612/33613, 33142, and 33311, and/or in Florida's rural counties. [Click here to reference Florida Department of Health map of rural counties.](#)
- 2) Organizations that incorporate innovative AI-powered solutions into their program. If your organization plans to leverage AI to transform the delivery of mental health services and improve outcomes, please describe your approach. Leveraged AI approaches may include but are not limited to:
  - Enhance access to mental health services
  - Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery
  - Personalize interventions and support
  - Analyze data to inform program evaluation and measurement-informed care
  - Address specific mental health challenges or populations
  - Any innovative AI-powered tools, such as self-management digital tools, chatbots or predictive analytics that will enhance your program

Please note, this information should be detailed in the Special Consideration section of your online grant application.

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### Grantee Details

The following details outline the key requirements and expectations for selected grantees:

- **Grant Effective Date:** Grant agreements will be effective as of September 2026, with operations expected to begin in October 2026.
- **Grantee Orientation:** Attend two mandatory virtual orientations, a Cohort Group Orientation, and an Individual Grantee Orientation, scheduled for September – October 2026. Specific dates and times will be provided once confirmed.
- **Annual Foundation Event:** Attend the Florida Blue Foundation’s annual Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards each year for the life of the grant. Dates and locations will be provided once confirmed.
- **ACH Payments:** Florida Blue Foundation will disburse payments via ACH transactions, and you will be required to provide requested banking information.

### Eligibility Criteria

Nonprofit 501(c)(3) public charitable organizations, public agencies, universities, colleges, training centers, community centers, schools, health care-related facilities, faith-based institutions, and others that:

1. Are incorporated in Florida
2. Have the capacity, expertise, resources, knowledge in the field, and time needed to carry out the intent of the program
3. Have expertise in delivering educational and awareness programs on targeted topics to targeted populations described in this application
4. Have expertise in developing and managing programs
5. Have the capability to reach target populations described under this application, and
6. Have been in operation for at least three years since receiving their IRS 501(c)(3) designation

What We Support	What We Do Not Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salaries, including benefits</li> <li>• Employee training</li> <li>• Rental fees for program/meeting costs</li> <li>• Webinar or other types of media/technology</li> <li>• Program materials/equipment</li> <li>• Required travel related to this grant</li> <li>• Training/educational materials</li> <li>• Printing and dissemination</li> <li>• Indirect costs – <i>an amount up to but not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount (Indirect costs are expenses necessary for the general operation of the organization and not directly related to a specific grant project).</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not have a 501(c)(3) public charity designation</li> <li>• Research and development</li> <li>• Individuals</li> <li>• Capital campaigns</li> <li>• New start-ups</li> <li>• Profit making enterprises</li> <li>• Buildings (brick and mortar)</li> <li>• Programs addressing opioids and other substance abuses, research, and entrepreneurial programs</li> </ul>

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### MENTAL WELL-BEING GRANT FUNDING FOCUSES

Florida Blue Foundation strives to advance mental well-being for families and community members to mitigate the stressors associated with issues that often impact entire families and/or communities.

To achieve this goal, we are funding two key focuses:

#### Focus 1: Enhancing Access to Mental Health Services

Access to care and treatment for mental health issues remains out of reach for most of the population in the United States even though approximately 23% of adults experience mental illness and 16% of youth experience a mental health disorder each year.<sup>1</sup> This funding focus aims to bridge the mental health service gap for individuals and families across Florida, addressing pressing issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, isolation, and loneliness. Proposed programs will enhance access to comprehensive mental health services, promote overall well-being, and foster resilient communities throughout the state. By targeting unmet needs and providing essential support, this funding seeks to improve the mental health and well-being of Floridians, empowering them to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

#### Focus 2: Strengthening Florida's Mental Health Workforce

Currently, 40% (137 million) of the U.S. population lives in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area (Mental Health HPSA).<sup>2</sup> At a state level, Florida has a severe shortage of mental health providers, with a staggering 550-to-1 ratio of residents to mental health providers, ranking 43rd in the nation.<sup>3</sup> This funding focus is intended to bolster Florida's mental health workforce by building a pipeline of professionals for enhanced care while addressing the state's growing need for mental and behavioral health services. By supporting the training, skills development and/or expansion of mental health professional programs, this funding aims to support licensed and qualified professionals entering the field, enhance their skills, and ultimately improve access to high-quality care for individuals and communities across Florida.

### Background

At Florida Blue and the Florida Blue Foundation, we believe there is no health without mental health which guides how we support the people and communities we serve.

The Foundation seeks to fund programs that support access to care and treatment for individuals and/or families at all stages that are struggling to manage life's stressors; as well as programs that are strengthening Florida's mental health workforce while addressing the state's growing need for mental and behavioral health services.

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<sup>1</sup> National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Data is from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and others. <https://www.nami.org/mental-health-by-the-numbers/>. You Are Not Alone infographic [https://www.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/NAMI\\_YouAreNotAlone\\_2025.pdf](https://www.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/NAMI_YouAreNotAlone_2025.pdf). Accessed March 9, 2025

<sup>2</sup> State of the Behavioral Health Workforce 2025. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Workforce Brief. <https://bh.w.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/data-research/Behavioral-Health-Workforce-Brief-2025.pdf>. Published December 2025

<sup>3</sup> Behavioral Health Data Profile for Florida. Data Brief. Florida Hospital Association. <https://fha.org/common/Uploaded%20files/FHA/Health%20Care%20Issues/Increasing%20Access%20to%20Behavioral%20Health%20Care/Issue%20Brief%20on%20Behavioral%20Health%20Data%20Profile%20for%20Florida%202024.pdf>. Published May 2023.

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We recognize that mental health is essential to overall health and well-being. Unfortunately, the United States is facing a mental health crisis that affects people of all ages.<sup>4</sup> Even worse, access to care and treatment for mental health issues remains out of reach for most of the population in the United States according to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).<sup>5</sup> In fact, Florida ranks 44 out of 51 for access to care, providing relatively less access to insurance and mental health care.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that rural communities are disproportionately affected, with approximately one-fifth of the US population living in rural areas, and about one-fifth of those individuals, or around 6.5 million people, struggling with a mental illness.<sup>7</sup> This emphasizes the need for targeted support and resources to address the unique mental health challenges faced by rural communities. These statistics highlight the ongoing need for improved access to mental and behavioral health services.

The country's mental health crisis also means increased levels of unmet behavioral health needs exist among people of all ages.<sup>8</sup> Dr. Naakesh Dewan, Vice President of Behavioral Health for GuideWell and Florida Blue, notes that "we do not have enough psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers to efficiently address the current demand, and are facing a significant behavioral health workforce shortage over the next decade."<sup>9</sup> As of December 2025, 40% of the U.S. population (137 million people) lives in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area (Mental Health HPSA).<sup>10</sup>

Florida ranks 35th among all states for prevalence of mental illness.<sup>11</sup> Plus, more than 6 million people in Florida live in communities that do not have enough mental health professionals.<sup>12</sup> To make matters worse, Florida has a severe shortage of mental health providers, with a staggering 550-to-1 ratio of residents to mental health providers, ranking 43rd in the nation according to NAMI.<sup>13</sup> Rural counties are particularly affected, with a shortage of psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, and counselors.<sup>14</sup> This critical shortage of mental health professionals intensifies the challenges of accessing care, leaving many Floridians without the support they need to manage their mental health.

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<sup>4</sup> Protecting the Nation's Mental Health. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/about/what-cdc-is-doing.html>. Updated June 9, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Individuals With Mental Illness. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). <https://www.nami.org/your-journey/individuals-with-mental-illness/#:~:text=If%20you%20have%20a%20mental,to%20let%20it%20stop%20us>. Accessed February 7, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Reinert, M, Nguyen, T & Fritze, D. (October 2025). "The State of Mental Health in America 2025." Mental Health America, Alexandria VA. <https://mhanational.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/State-of-Mental-Health-2025.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> A call to action to address rural mental health disparities. Journal of Clinical and Translational Science Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7681156/>. Published May 4, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> State of the Behavioral Health Workforce 2025. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Workforce Brief.

<https://bh.w.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/data-research/Behavioral-Health-Workforce-Brief-2025.pdf>. Published December 2025

<sup>9</sup> Dewan, N. (2023, May). Mental Well-being Drives Our Ability to Flourish. Op-Ed. Multiple media outlets. <https://www.floridablue.com/blog/mental-well-being-drives-our-ability-to-flourish>.

<sup>10</sup> State of the Behavioral Health Workforce 2025. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Workforce Brief.

<https://bh.w.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/data-research/Behavioral-Health-Workforce-Brief-2025.pdf>. Published December 2025

<sup>11</sup> Behavioral Health Data Profile for Florida. Data Brief. Florida Hospital Association.

<https://fha.org/common/Uploaded%20files/FHA/Health%20Care%20Issues/Increasing%20Access%20to%20Behavioral%20Health%20Care/Issue%20Brief%20on%20Behavioral%20Health%20Data%20Profile%20for%20Florida%202024.pdf>. Published May 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Mental Health in Florida Fact Sheet. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

<https://www.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/FloridaStateFactSheet.pdf>. Mental health statistics as of 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Behavioral Health Data Profile for Florida. Data Brief. Florida Hospital Association.

<https://fha.org/common/Uploaded%20files/FHA/Health%20Care%20Issues/Increasing%20Access%20to%20Behavioral%20Health%20Care/Issue%20Brief%20on%20Behavioral%20Health%20Data%20Profile%20for%20Florida%202024.pdf>. Published May 2023.

<sup>14</sup> State of the Behavioral Health Workforce 2025. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Workforce Brief.

<https://bh.w.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/data-research/Behavioral-Health-Workforce-Brief-2025.pdf>. Published December 2025

## **Mental Well-being**

In response to these challenges, Florida Blue Foundation is committed to supporting nonprofit organizations that enhance access to mental health services or strengthen Florida's mental health workforce. Through our Mental Well-being grant program, we will award four-year grants to organizations with documented expertise and experience in delivering mental well-being services or training mental health professionals, thus providing opportunities for individuals to improve their overall mental well-being.

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### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### Mental Well-being Survey and Data Reporting

**Q: What is the Harvard Flourishing Index (Survey)?**

A: The Harvard Flourishing Index is a comprehensive survey tool developed by researchers at Harvard University to measure an individual's overall well-being and flourishing. Organizations administer the survey at intervals conducive to their proposed grant program for measuring participant improvement – pre- and post-survey administration, at a minimum.

**Q: What is the expected goal for improvement in Mental Well-being that the grantee will set to achieve measured by the Harvard Flourishing Index (Survey)?**

A: To demonstrate impact, grantees will set a goal for improvement by participants in at least one aspect of flourishing, as documented by the Harvard Flourishing Index. Grantees are encouraged to target a 65% baseline in year one, with a goal of increasing to 80% by year four, if feasible. [Copies of the Harvard Flourishing Index Surveys and related information are provided in the application's Evaluation Plan section]. By tracking grantee participants' flourishing, the Foundation can evaluate the effectiveness of the overall grant program in helping underserved individuals and communities make progress towards and ultimately achieve greater mental well-being.

**Q: What are some of the data reporting expectations?**

A: In addition to the Harvard Flourishing Index (Survey), to help with documenting program impact, you will be expected to report an unduplicated count of new and existing clients served along with various outcome data specific to your program on a monthly basis. You will also need to submit brief six-month reports on your program indicators, expenses, and client demographics using Florida Blue Foundation report templates.

#### Grants Management System

**Q: I'm having trouble registering or my organization Tax ID number is not recognized in your grants management system.**

A: Click on "Contact Us" located in the blue box at the top of the page. You can also email: [floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com](mailto:floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com); or call: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215. Please include your name, organization name, organization Tax ID, contact information, and interested grant program name. A team member will get back to you.

#### Eligibility

**Q: Are current grantees eligible to apply to the same grant program? Or different grant program?**

A: We encourage current Foundation grantees with multi-year grants to wait until your current grant agreement and funding have officially ended before reapplying to the same program. Please note that our Funding Focuses may change from year to year.

However, you can explore other funding opportunities that are different from your current funded program with the Foundation. We recommend considering opportunities that best align with your organization's goals and objectives. For more information, please visit: [www.floridablue.com/foundation](http://www.floridablue.com/foundation).

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**Q: Our organization has more than one affiliate or chapter across the state utilizing the same Tax ID number. Are we able to apply from multiple affiliates/chapters?**

A: Yes, each affiliate or chapter may submit its own application. If multiple affiliates or chapters plan to submit similar programs, we recommend submitting one statewide application that combines these efforts.

For large organizations with multiple divisions, such as universities, colleges, hospital systems, or government agencies, please note that only one application per Funding Focus is allowed.

**Q: If an organization is not based in Florida but provides direct services in markets across the country including Florida, would the organization still be eligible to apply?**

A: Yes, as long as the requested funds will be directed to the Florida program and the organization can provide the required documents in the Attachments section of the online grant application, including the [Florida Solicitation of Contributions Certificate](#) from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

### Decision-Making Process

**Q: What is the decision-making process of selecting applications for funding?**

A: A review committee composed of internal and external individuals who are knowledgeable and/or experts in this funding area make recommendations to the Foundation. The Foundation's Board of Directors has the final approval for all recommended applications.

**Q: Will I receive feedback if my grant application is declined?**

A: We appreciate the time and effort invested in each application, and the interest in receiving feedback on areas to improve and strengthen. Due to the high volume of applications submitted annually, we are unable to provide individualized feedback to all applicants. We strive to ensure fairness and consistency in our review process for all applicants. A declined application is not a reflection on the merit or potential impact of your proposal.

Our multi-year grant programs are highly competitive, and we can only fund a limited number of proposals across the state. We encourage you to explore our other funding opportunities, which can be found on our website at [www.floridablue.com/foundation](http://www.floridablue.com/foundation). There, you can review our funding focuses and apply to the opportunity that best aligns with your organization's goals and objectives.

**Q: Where can I find previously funded and successful examples of projects that suit the Foundation's other Funding Focuses?**

A: The Foundation's website is a great resource for additional information that highlights some grantees. For more information, please visit: [www.floridablue.com/foundation](http://www.floridablue.com/foundation).

**Q: How many proposals do you expect to receive? How many will you fund?**

A: We do not have an estimate of how many proposals we will receive. Florida Blue Foundation has approximately \$3.2 million to fund the statewide Mental Well-being grant program in 2026.

**Need Help?** If you still have questions, you may contact us via email: [floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com](mailto:floridabluefoundation@floridablue.com); or via phone: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215. Please include your name, organization name, organization Tax ID, contact information, and interested grant program name.