



# VIRGINIA OPIOID ABATEMENT AUTHORITY GUIDANCE FOR INDIVIDUAL DISTRIBUTIONS AND “GOLD STANDARD” INCENTIVE AWARDS FOR CITIES AND COUNTIES

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Greetings to all Cities and Counties of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) has launched its next round of **Individual Distribution and “Gold Standard” Incentive** grant awards for cities and counties from the Opioid Abatement Fund in compliance with the national settlement agreements, Commonwealth’s memorandum of understanding (MOU), and *Code of Virginia §2.2-2370*.

**New for the 2024-2025 cycle and forward:** All applications, documents, award packages, reports, etc. must be completed and submitted through OAA’s Web-based Grants Portal – [www.voagrants.us](http://www.voagrants.us). Information on how to access and use the system is available on OAA’s website under [Grants Info](#).

- The application period is open from **October 1, 2024, through April 1, 2025**.
- Each Individual Distribution award is for one performance period. The city/county sets the number of renewals.
- Individual Distribution grant awards have a performance period of July 1 to June 30.
- Annual reports for Individual Distribution grants are due September 1 of each year for the performance period that closed June 30 of that year. Annual reports consist of financial and programmatic performance reporting.
- **All active awards must submit a renewal** application (and remain in compliance) to continue the award into the next performance period (whether additional funds are needed for the next performance period or not).
  - Carryforward of unexpended balances from the current performance period to the next require approval from the OAA or remaining unexpended balances must be repaid to the OAA.
- Cities and Counties that have opted in to OAA’s “Gold Standard” Incentive program can request “Gold Standard” funds as part of an Individual Distribution application.
  - Participation in the “[Gold Standard](#)” Incentive program is optional for every city and county. The Incentive programs provide a 25% increase in Individual Distribution funds from the OAA for each year settlement funds are available if the city or county agrees to apply the requirements of *Code of Virginia §2.2-2370* (the “Gold Standard”) to their Direct Distribution funds received from the settlement administrator.
- The OAA’s [City and County Estimated Settlement Payments Look-up Tool](#) (available on the [Grants Info](#) page of OAA’s website and in the Web-based Grants Portal) has been updated as of October 1, 2024, to reflect recent awards. This tool shows the estimated payments through 2039 for each city and county by fiscal year for their Direct Distributions, Individual Distributions, and “Gold Standard” Incentive funds.
- For applications the OAA determines do not meet the established requirements, the OAA will assist the applicant to revise the application to facilitate compliance.
  - For any Individual Distribution applications the OAA Grants Committee denies, the applicant will have the opportunity to present an appeal to the OAA Board of Directors before a final decision is made.

Please reach out to your Regional Abatement Resource Coordinator ([map](#)) or to [info@voaa.us](mailto:info@voaa.us) with any questions.

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Thanks and Regards,

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## General Guidance

### 1. 2024-2025 City/County Application Cycle Dates

<b>OAA 2024-2025 City/County Application Cycle Dates</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Links</b>
Training for Applicants	9/25/2024	Specific to Applying for Dec. Grants Committee Decision	<a href="#">Video Link</a>
Application Window Opens:	10/1/2024	System official launch on 10/3/2024	<a href="http://www.voagrants.us">www.voagrants.us</a>
Abatement Academy Webinar:	10/10/2024	Training on the New OAA Grants Portal software	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Optional Drafts Due by:	10/21/2024	(only for Dec. Grants Committee consideration)	
Open Q&A/Support Webinar:	10/30/2024	Open hour for questions and/or tech issues	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Applications Submitted by:	11/4/2024	(only for Dec. Grants Committee consideration)	
Grants Committee Meeting:	12/6/2024		
Optional Drafts Due by:	1/13/2025	(only for Feb. Grants Committee consideration)	
Open Q&A/Support Webinar:	1/22/2025	Open hour for questions and/or tech issues	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Applications Submitted by:	1/27/2025	(only for Feb. Grants Committee consideration) Last opportunity for new or amended Individual and amended Cooperative applications for FY2025	
Grants Committee Meeting:	2/21/2025		
Optional Drafts Due by:	3/10/2025	(final draft review option for 2024-2025 app cycle)	
Open Q&A/Support Webinar:	3/12/2025	Open hour for questions and/or tech issues	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Open Q&A/Support Webinar:	3/19/2025	Open hour for questions and/or tech issues	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Open Q&A/Support Webinar:	3/26/2025	Open hour for questions and/or tech issues	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Applications Submitted by:	4/1/2025	(for New, Amend, or Renewal applications for FY2026)	
Grants Committee Meeting:	5/23/2025		

2. Each city or county is entitled to receive their Individual Distribution through submission of an application for an abatement project to the OAA that is approved by the OAA Board of Directors’ Grants Committee.
  - a. The application that the city or county submits to the OAA accomplishes the following:
    - i. Explains the city or county’s plans to use the funds including details of the proposed project(s);
    - ii. Provides estimated performance measures for each proposed project(s); and,
    - iii. Confirms the city or county agrees to the [terms and conditions](#) that are for use of the funds.
3. Reporting non-OAA usage of Direct Distributions is a requirement for participation in any OAA grant program. Only one Direct Distribution report needs to be submitted each year to cover this requirement for all programs.
4. The decision on how each city or county chooses to spend its Direct Distribution and Individual Distribution rests entirely with the governing body of the city or county. Individual Distribution usage must comply with the terms of the settlement(s) and applicable state law (including specifically [§2.2-2370](#)). Direct Distribution usage must comply with the terms of the settlement(s) and are only subject to *Code of Virginia §2.2-2370* if the city or county has opted-in to the “Gold Standard” Incentive Program  
The OAA seeks to serve as a resource to help cities and counties remain in compliance with the settlement agreement(s) and with the Code of Virginia.
5. Cities and counties must account for the use of their Individual Distribution and “Gold Standard” Incentive awards separately from their Direct Distribution from the settlement administrators.



## Guidance for Individual Distributions and “Gold Standard” Incentive Awards for Cities and Counties

6. The optional “Gold Standard” Incentive program provides a 25% increase on a city or county’s Individual Distribution allocation if the city or county agrees to apply the “Gold Standard” to the usage of its Direct Distribution funds it receives from the settlement administrator. Details of “Gold Standard” usage are found in *Code of Virginia §2.2-2370*. This includes:
  - a. 100% of the funds used for abatement
  - b. No supplanting
  - c. No indirect costs

The opt-in process requires a separate one-time application available in the Grants Portal. Participation in this program is voluntary. Any city or county that participated in the program in FY2023 or FY2024 will need to submit the application in the Grants Portal to opt-in for FY2025 and forward, however no additional “Gold Standard” applications are needed for future cycles.

7. Once a city or county has an approval project(s), the city or county may continue to appropriate its Individual Distribution and “Gold Standard” Incentive for the same project(s) each subsequent year, as long as the city or county remains in compliance with the [terms and conditions](#) required by the OAA. This allows for long-term plans for considerations such as staffing and ongoing operational costs. Any renewal and/or amendment applications to support this process must be approved by the OAA’s Grants Committee.
8. It is possible, especially during the first year of a project, that a city or county intends to utilize its procurement process and needs to complete that process in order to provide budget projections as part of the application process. In that event, the city or county may submit a funding request with the expected total amount for the project, and if the actual cost of the service requires a budget amendment, the OAA will work with the city or county to make that amendment (see the amendment process section below).
9. The OAA requires cities and counties repay any unencumbered balances by September 1 of the following fiscal year, unless a submitted carryforward request meets the following:
  - a. The carryforward was planned and submitted as part of the approved project budget; or
  - b. The city or county is making reasonable and measurable progress to implement its project(s) as described in the approved proposal; and
    - i. The dates on the “Objectives” tab of the application in the OAA’s Grants Portal will be used to document reasonable and measurable progress.
  - c. The city or county remains in compliance with the [terms and conditions](#) of the OAA.
10. In June of 2024, the OAA’s Board of Directors adopted a [Policy on the on Timeframe to Apply for Individual Distribution Funds for Cities and Counties](#) that give cities and counties up to five application cycles from the time the funds are made available to apply for their Individual Distributions. FY2023 funds need to be applied for by April 1, 2028, FY2024 funds applied for by April 1, 2029, and so on. If the funds are not applied for, they will revert to the Opioid Abatement Fund or other abatement uses.

### Amendment Process

Once a proposal has been approved by the OAA, at all times, the city/county must remain in compliance with the OAA’s [terms and conditions](#). Amendments will be handled as follows:

1. Any budget changes to revenue or expenditures as well as changes to performance measures and/or objectives shall be communicated to OAA using forms approved by the OAA.
  - a. OAA will work with the city or county to determine what steps need to be taken in the amendment process based on the nature of the amendment.
2. If a city or county wants to amend an application in the current year (FY2025) the OAA has two Grants Committee meetings scheduled during the application period (see chart at the top of page 2).
  - a. Amendment applications require updates on the progress of the project including funds spent to date, performance measures achieved, progress on objectives, etc.



## Renewal Process

Once a proposal has been approved by the OAA, a renewal is required for the project to continue into the next fiscal year/performance period whether additional funds are requested or not.

1. The city or county must remain in compliance with the OAA’s [terms and conditions](#) to be eligible for renewal.
2. The renewal process is also an opportunity to make amendments to the project. This may include budget changes to revenue or expenditures as well as changes to performance measures and/or objectives.
  - a. OAA will work with the city or county to determine if any proposed amendments need to be submitted as a separate, new project application.
3. Renewal applications require updates on the progress of the project including funds spent to date, performance measures achieved, progress on objectives, etc.

## Use of OAA Individual Distribution and/or “Gold Standard” Incentive for Cooperative Partnership Projects with Multiple Cities and/or Counties

Cities and counties have the option to appropriate a portion of their Individual Distribution and/or “Gold Standard” Incentive to a Cooperative Partnership project as matching funds. Cities and counties **do not submit an Individual Distribution application** to appropriate the Individual Distribution to a Cooperative Project. The Cooperative Partnership Agreement documents the commitment and amount for any cities and or counties that elect to apply the Individual Distribution and/or “Gold Standard” Incentive to the cooperative project. If applying to use the Gold Standard” Incentive in both an Individual Distribution and a Cooperative Partnership project(s), only one Gold Standard” Incentive application is needed.

Renewals of Cooperative Partnership awards with Individual Distribution and/or “Gold Standard” Incentive matching funds do not require the Cooperative Partnership Agreement be completed again. For renewals with these matching funds, the partner cities/counties should document their match each year in writing to the fiscal agent city or county.

## Creating a Reserve with the Direct Distribution

Over the life of the settlements, the Individual Distributions from the OAA will begin to decline in the out years. For this reason, cities and counties have the option of creating a reserve with their Direct Distributions (30% of the total) to help fund projects in future years when payments are lower. If the city or county elects to implement this option, they will need to:

1. Ensure those future projects meet the OAA [terms and conditions](#);
2. Separately account for the direct distribution, the OAA distribution, and the reserved amount;
3. Publicly publish the projected financial strategy for this reserve fund; and
4. If the city or county is participating in the Gold Standard” Incentive program, the reserved funds may only be used in accordance with the “Gold Standard” as described in the [OAA’s Incentive Policy](#).

## Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on how they meet the criteria laid out in the following documents:

1. The terms and conditions of this funding opportunity
2. The conditions and restrictions under *Code of Virginia §2.2-2370*
3. The allowable uses under each settlement agreement
  - a. Example: [Exhibit E from Distributors and Janssen Settlements](#)

For any applications the OAA determines do not meet the established requirements, the OAA will assist the applicant to revise the application to facilitate compliance.

For any Individual Distribution applications the OAA Grants Committee denies, the applicant will have the opportunity to present an appeal to the OAA Board of Directions before a final decision is made.



## Information and Items to Gather for Applications

Below is a list of items that are necessary to complete the application. Additional [resources](#) are on OAA’s website.

1. Direct Distribution Information by fiscal year (amounts received, used for non-OAA projects, held in reserve and descriptions of non-OAA projects)
2. Project budget (including matching funds, OAA requested funds, and projected expenditures)
  - a. Projected expenditures will need to be entered by category (Personnel, Operating, and Capital)
  - b. A budget narrative for the funding strategy of this project is also required
3. A narrative description of the project
4. The strategy for long-term sustainability once OAA funds are reduced or no longer available
5. How the need was determined and how that need relates to abatement
6. Description of any specific group(s) of individuals this project is designed to reach and how many individuals are expected to participate each year
7. The percentage of the project’s components that are not opioid-related abatement as defined
8. Contract(s)/MOU(s) with partners/contractors/subrecipients (or drafts or scopes of work)
9. Project objectives and projected start and completion dates
10. Project performance measures including projected outcomes (a list of performance measures can be found [here](#))
11. Supporting evidence-based and/or evidence-informed documentation/web link(s)
12. Supporting documentation if project has received any awards or recognition
13. Optional: Gold Standard Incentive application
  - a. If the city/county has already opted in to the Gold Standard, no further action is required.
  - b. The Gold Standard application must be completed before Gold Standard funds can be requested for a project. The application may also be completed separately under the Grants Management tab.
14. Optional: Any letters of support, articles, or other items that may assist the OAA Grants Committee in making an award decision for this project
15. For Amendments and Renewals:
  - a. Provide an update on the status of the project
  - b. Note if any partner organizations are renewing, being removed, and/or added
  - c. Provide information to date including: funds expended and encumbered, performance measures and/or objectives achieved, and projected carryforward amount (if any)
  - d. If amending:
    - i. Provide an explanation and any methodology related to the amendments.
    - ii. List and describe any amended objectives for this project
    - iii. List any changes in the specific groups of individuals this project was designed to reach and how many individuals are expected to participate per year
    - iv. Provide information if the amendment alters the originally provided:
      1. The evidence-based or evidence-informed methods
      2. The credentialing and/or awards
      3. The estimated percentage of opioid-related abatement