



NEW MEXICO GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

**QUALITY OF LIFE GRANT PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 2027**

“To Improve the Lives of New Mexicans with Disabilities”

Key Dates

Grant Period: August 3, 2026 – June 7, 2027

May 25, 2026	Grant application period OPENS
July 10, 2026	Grant application period CLOSES
July 20, 2026	QOL applicants notified of grant award status
August 3, 2026	Grant period begins <i>upon GCD's issuing a PO</i>
Sept 16, 2026	First monthly report due
June 7, 2027	All QOL grant activities must be completed
June 14, 2027	Final report and invoice must be submitted to GCD

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD) is to improve "the quality of life of all New Mexicans with disabilities by addressing social integration, economic self-sufficiency, political resolve, physical and program accessibility, and full participation in the benefits of life and rights of all individuals."

As part of its mission, GCD continues the **Quality of Life Grant Program (QOL)**. QOL provides small grants to New Mexico non-profits and other tax-exempt organizations **to improve or enhance** programs and services that increase the quality of life of all New Mexicans with disabilities.

Applications may be submitted to address one of five categories:

Adaptive Movement

Expand or enhance programs to promote movement for individuals with disabilities through adaptive activities. Programs can be in-person or virtual. Programs are encouraged to incorporate assistive technology or devices to help individuals find opportunities through innovative and creative adaptations to increase activity in ways that meet their needs and functional level. Examples of activities are Yoga, dance, stretching and strength exercise, seated workouts, adaptive sports programs, or any physical activity.

Programmatic Access

Physical accessibility projects (excluding residential modifications) in order to provide greater accessibility for people with disabilities. This could include making a website accessible, restroom modifications, accessible parking, accessible path of travel, Uber or Lyft coupons to travel to events and programs, installing a loop in an auditorium or other area, and/or accessible play areas.

Veterans' Programs

Enhance or expand programs that support Veterans' emotional and/or physical wellbeing. This may include retreats, therapeutic programs, peer support programs, etc.

Social Integration and Support

Expand or enhance social community programs to include individuals with disabilities. Enhance local support groups to include regular meetings for families and other caregivers of individuals with disabilities to discuss current issues around services and supports for persons with disabilities. This category can also include art and music programs as long as they include social integration in their outcomes. These groups shall be inclusive of all disabilities.

Technology Training and Accessibility

Provide basic technology training using smart phones, tablets, and computers for individuals with disabilities **or** updating, upgrading and/or adding software to make technology accessible for individual consumers with disabilities. Priority will be given to rural areas or tribal lands of the state. Training should include the use of basic smart phone/tablet features and use of the computer for searching the internet, writing documents, accessing email, and paying bills. Updates/upgrades may include adding all or a combination of the following: screen reader software to computers used by the public, reading pens for print materials, tablets with accessible software/apps used for services or communication, software to add captions or create transcripts for videos, speech recognition software to fill out digital forms for individuals with physical disabilities or paying IT developers to make your website accessible.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To qualify, grant applicants must:

- Be a New Mexico non-profit organization.
- Provide programs for, or provide services to, people with disabilities.
- Be tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code, including non-profit (501 (c)(3)) organizations, schools, religious organizations or Tribal-based organizations.
- Provide an official copy of tax-exempt status.
- *W-9 from State of New Mexico (located on QOL web page with application)*

All organizations meeting the above criteria are encouraged to apply.

HOW MUCH IS AVAILABLE?

The maximum QOL grant per recipient shall be no greater than \$15,000. Applications with lesser amounts are encouraged. GCD will negotiate the final award amount.

WHAT MAY QOL GRANT FUNDS BE USED FOR?

QOL grant funds may be used to enhance an existing program or service that will increase the quality of life for New Mexicans with disabilities. The goal of the QOL Grant Program is to allow an organization to provide more (quantity) or enhanced (quality) services in one or more of the listed categories. QOL grants are **not awarded for routine operating costs** (salaries not related to enhanced or increased services, for instance), or costs associated with starting a new program or delivering a new service. An organization may submit only one application.

REPORTS

Organizations that receive funds from GCD's QOL Small Grant Program are **required** to submit monthly reports beginning **September 16, 2026**, for the prior month and continue until project completion.

All projects **must** be completed by **June 7, 2027**. A final report with evaluation and final invoice **must** be submitted to GCD by **June 14, 2027**.

WHEN TO APPLY

The QOL grant application period opens on **Wednesday, May 27, 2026**.
The deadline to submit applications is **Wednesday, July 10, 2026, 5:00 pm**.

HOW TO APPLY

Access the QOL Grant application at GCD's website, <http://www.gcd.nm.gov>. For assistance, please contact Jeminie Shell at (505) 396-0312 / (877) 696-1470 (TOLL-FREE in New Mexico), or at Jeminie.Shell@gcd.nm.gov.

Applications must be received by GCD **by 5:00 pm July 10, 2026**. All applications must be submitted electronically via email. All applicants will be notified by **Tuesday, July 20, 2026**.

Emailed materials **must** be sent to:

jeminie.shell@gcd.nm.gov

Place "Quality of Life Grant Application" in the subject line.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Section One:

Organization Information

Provide basic information about the organization applying for QOL grant.

- If the organization has more than one location, provide only the address and contact information for the location at which QOL funds will be utilized.
- If QOL funds are planned for more than one location, provide the central office location and specify in the narrative section of the application locations at which funds will be utilized.
- Under "Director/CEO," list the head of the organization (Director, Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Manager, etc.)
- Under "Contact Person," provide information for your primary contact during the application process and the grant period. If "Contact Person" is the same as the Director/CEO, leave this section blank.
- Under "Number of Paid and Volunteer Staff," provide the current number of all paid and volunteer staff for the applicant organization.
- Under "Organizational Budget and Funding Sources," provide the total budget and funding sources of the organization.

Section Two:

Project Narrative

Project Narrative must be no more than five (5) typed pages, double-spaced. At the top left-hand side of each page of the Project Narrative, please place the title of the proposed project. Number pages consecutively.

- The narrative must include a description of each of the following topics and you must use the following headers in this order to ensure organization of the information:
 - A. Brief Description of the Organization**
 - B. Description of Existing Program or Service**
 - C. Proposed Project Description (if applicable, include outreach and educational activities)**
 - D. Proposed Project Impact and Evaluation***
 - E. Sustainability**

*Please read ***A Quick Guide to Evaluation***, page 5 of this packet, prior to completing this section of the Project Narrative. If your proposal does not have a robust evaluation plan, you will likely not be funded regardless of the strength of the overall project. If you have questions, please contact Jeminie Shell jeminie.shell@gcd.nm.gov.

Section Three: *Proposed Project Budget*

There are two areas of financial information required in the application:

- Budget Summary
 - Budget Schedule
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- **Budget Summary** information includes the total amount of funds requested and any sources and amounts of additional funds to be used for the project. **Note: matching funds are not required for the QOL Grant Program.** Ensure that it is clear exactly what amount you are requesting from the QOL grant if you will have additional sources of funding for your project.
 - **Budget Schedule Guidelines**
 1. Funds requested from the QOL Grant Program cannot exceed \$15,000 (maximum award). Applications with lesser amounts are encouraged.
 2. For projects that have a budget larger than \$15,000, applicants are welcome to submit a budget that has been developed for the entire project, showing the total cost and revenue sources **with markers that indicate the QOL budget items.**
 3. Indirect costs (“Facilities and Administration”) are **not** allowed under QOL Grant Program. This includes salaries, benefits, and travel for executive and administrative staff, rent, utilities etc.
 4. Salaries, benefits, and travel for direct program staff is allowed.
 5. Whether any proposed cost is allowable depends exclusively on the extent to which it is devoted to the enhanced program or service. **Grant funds may NOT be used to replace existing funding for on-going operating costs.**
 6. QOL Grant funds may not be used for sub-contracting or stipends for consultants without prior approval by GCD Management. Include names of proposed sub-contractors and consultants on the Proposed Project Budget Schedule.
 7. **Food and beverages for meetings and events as well as out-of-state travel are non-allowable costs.**
 8. See Proposed Budget Schedule in the application document for list of allowable expenditures. You may add and explain expenditure descriptions that are not listed on the schedule.

Section Four: *Attachments*

All of the following attachments are **required** for proposal consideration:

- Copy of Tax-Exempt Status

- List of Board of Directors, or explanation if there is no board
- Organization Information from Section One
- Project Narrative from Section Two
- Proposed Project Budget Summary
- Proposed Project Budget Schedule
- Most recent Organizational Annual Report
- *W-9 from State of New Mexico (located on QOL web page with application)*

A QUICK GUIDE TO EVALUATION

Applications **must** include one or more evaluation indicator(s) and a plan for evaluating the success of the project.

Developing Appropriate Indicators

When deciding what indicators to include, ask questions such as:

How will I know if the program worked?

How will I know if the program has been successful?

If the project is successful, what would have changed for the participants?

“Outputs” and “Outcomes”

Most of the indicators will be either “outputs” or “outcomes”.

An **output** is a quantity indicator.

Examples include:

- An increase in the number of people served
- An increase in the amount of time each client is served
- A decrease in the waiting list
- An increase in the geographical area served

An **outcome** is a quality indicator and is harder to measure than an output, yet you must have a viable plan for measurement if you will provide outcomes in your evaluation.

Examples include:

- Increases in someone’s knowledge about a topic
- Higher levels of satisfaction, happiness or quality of life
- Changes in behavior
- Changes in attitude

Helpful hints for developing the evaluation plan:

- Don’t over-promise. For every indicator included, there is a commitment to following through on the evaluation plan to collect the information by the end of the grant period. **Never include an indicator unless you also include a means to collect information/assess it.**
- The evaluation plan must be measurable. Having vague indicators or broad vague concepts (“clients will be happier” or “clients will become more independent”) are non-descript. Drill down and decide specifically what is meant by each. For outcome measures, specify what it means to “improve the quality of life” of people served in the QOL grant and identify how you will measure that; **surveys can be a reasonable way to measure outcomes.**
- In addition to final invoices, grantees are responsible for completing a comprehensive report and an evaluation summary at the end of the grant, due by **June 14, 2027.**