



## Department of Health

Mike DeWine, Governor  
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, Director

Date: February 3, 2020

To: Interested Parties

From: Alicia Leatherman, Administrator   
Early Childhood Home Visiting & Maternal and Infant Wellness Programs

Subject: Notice of Availability of Funds-State Fiscal Year 2021-Choose Life Fund  
July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH), Bureau of Maternal, Child and Family Health announces the availability of funding through the Choose Life Fund. The Choose Life Fund provides eligible organizations with funds for the provision of services to pregnant women within the State of Ohio planning to place their children for adoption. Created in the State Treasury pursuant to Section 3701.65 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Choose Life Fund consists of contributions paid to Registrar of Motor Vehicle by applicants who voluntarily elect to obtain Choose Life License plates pursuant to Section 4503.81 of the Ohio Revised Code and any money returned to the fund and investment earning. To participate, an organization must meet the definition of the eligible organization.

To obtain an application packet:

1. Go to ODH website at <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/about-us/funding-opportunities/choose-life-funds/>
2. From the home page go to "Funding Opportunities"
3. From this page click on "Choose Life Funds"
4. Select "Notice of Availability of Funds" to read about the program
5. Next select application to apply for funding
6. Make sure all counties that you serve are listed in the application

### APPLICATION SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE PURPOSE

In 2005, the 125<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assemble adopted language creating the Choose Life Fund. The Ohio Department of Health administers the Choose Life Fund which provides funding to organizations around Ohio that assist women who plan to place their children for adoption. The following criteria are crucial to successful application:

- Is a private, nonprofit organization
- Is committed to counseling pregnant women about the adoption
- Provides services within Ohio to pregnant women who are planning to place their children for adoption, including counseling and meeting the material needs of the women
- Does not charge pregnant women for any services received

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The State of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of ADA Services.

- Is not involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion related procedures, or pro-abortion advertising
- Does not discriminate in its provision of any services based on race, religion, color, marital status, national origin, disability, gender or age

### **DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS**

The Director of Health shall allocate the funds to each county in proportion to the number of "Choose Life" license plates issued during the preceding year to vehicle registered in each county. The Director of Health shall distribute funds allocated for a county as follows:

- (a) To one or more eligible organizations located within the county (entity must be physically present in the county to apply for funding);
- (b) If no eligible organization located within the county applies for funding, to one or more eligible organizations located in contiguous counties (entity must be physically present in the county to apply for funding);
- (c) If no eligible organization located within the county or a contiguous county applies for funding, to one or more eligible organizations within any other county (entity must be physically present in the county to apply for funding).

The Director of Health shall ensure that any funds allocated for a county are distributed equally among eligible organizations that apply for funding within the county. Organizations that wish to obtain funding from the Choose Life Fund shall apply by June 1, 2020, for distribution of funds. Interested applicants shall complete the application in accordance with the instruction. If the organization receives Choose Life Funds during the previous year, the organization shall submit with the application an audited financial statement verifying its compliance with this rule regarding the use of funds distributed to the organization during the previous year. If the organization does not traditionally have an audited financial statement and to have one would create a hardship, the organization may submit a tracking form or a notarized financial form. All unspent funds more than 10 percent of the pervious year's award must be returned to ODH by June 1, 2021.

### **UNALLOWABLE COSTS**

- None of the funds can be used for administrative expenses, legal expenses, or capital expenditures;
- Use not more than 60 percent of the funds received for material needs of pregnant women planning to place their children for adoption or infants awaiting placement with adoptive parents, including clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities and transportation;
- Use not more than 40 percent of the funds received for counseling, training, or advertising;
- Counseling and training funds cannot be spent for adoptive families. Counseling services are for birth families; and
- Cannot be involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinic, providing medical abortion related procedures or pro-abortion advertising.

**Application must be received by ODH on or before June 1, 2020**

**ODH/Choose Life Fund**

Bureau of Maternal, Child and Family Health, Attention: Marius Igwe  
246 North High Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Columbus, OH 43215

Questions regarding the application process can be directed to Marius Igwe at (614) 446-4634 or email [Marius.igwe@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:Marius.igwe@odh.ohio.gov)