**Purpose of this Guide**

On the tenth anniversary of *Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness*, recognizing the continued relevance of mental health and the need to advance and expand mental health ministries, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) called for the establishment of a new grant program consisting of $250,000 spread over 2019 – 2020 (Item 10 -11) to ‘seed’ mental health ministry across the church. The grant program was one component of a larger two-year mental health initiative that has carried over into the current year and will continue as long as funding is available.

All Presbyterian congregations, mid-council bodies, and seminaries are invited and encouraged to apply for grants. (Individuals are not eligible to apply.)

The purpose of this Applicant’s Guide is to give grant applicants a step-by-step outline of the Mental Health Ministry Grant process from start to finish.

**Step 1: Preparation**

The first step for a potential applicant is to review the Application Form and *all* the supplemental materials (available at [www.pcusa.org/mentalhealth](http://www.pcusa.org/mentalhealth) ) to get a clear understanding of the purpose of the grant program, to be sure the project fits within the scope of the grant program, and to confirm that the potential applicant is eligible to apply.

The purpose of grants is to enable Presbyterian congregations, mid-councils, and seminaries to initiate or advance mental health ministries that educate, equip, and empower churches to reach out to and with people living with mental health illness and their loved ones:

* To expand mental health awareness, understanding of mental health issues and advocacy for mental health services.
* To eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health conditions, especially serious mental illnesses.
* To become more welcoming, inclusive and supportive faith communities for people living with mental health challenges.

While all funding applicants must be Presbyterian entities, it is understood that projects proposed by congregations, mid-council bodies, and seminaries may be undertaken with external partners. Such applications must demonstrate that the relationship is a genuine partnership.

Given the time-limited nature of the grant program and limited amount of money available, grants are not available to fund ongoing staff positions or sponsor individuals to pursue professional degrees in mental health.

For the same reasons, grants will ordinarily be one-time awards of up to $10,000. A few projects may be awarded more than $10,000. Such proposals would be judged as showing exceptional promise through the engagement of multiple Presbyterian entities (congregations, presbyteries, seminaries, or a mix) in the fulfillment of one or more of the action recommendations and their ability to attract wider funding support based on the strength of the proposal and its potential impact.

**Step 2: Applying for the grant**

The next step is for a congregation, mid-council or seminary to complete a grant application form describing its proposal for mental health ministry and submit it via the instructions on the application. It is important to answer every question.

Applicant congregations are expected to seek endorsement of their presbytery in the form of a letter from the Stated Clerk or Executive Presbyter. This step raises awareness and widens the potential impact of the project.

Applicants can check the submission deadline for the next meeting of the Review Committee or request a hard copy of the application form and supplemental materials by contacting the Manager of Finance and Administration, lacey.hunter@pcusa.org.

**Step 3: Notification that your application has been received and is complete**

All applicants will be notified when the application and supplemental endorsement letter (if needed) have been received and deemed complete. In the event an application is incomplete or does not fit within the grant program purpose and guidelines, the applicant will be notified in writing to that effect, advising that the application cannot be added to the pool of proposals to be reviewed at the next meeting of the Review Committee until it has been revised accordingly, re-submitted and confirmed to be complete.

**Step 4: Application Review and Notification of Outcome**

Once an application is complete, it will be assigned to the next meeting of the grant application Review Committee constituted in accordance with guidelines for Presbyterian Mission Agency grant programs. The Review Committee includes the Associate Director of the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry, the Associate for Emotional and Spiritual Care, and the Manager of Finance and Administration. The Review Committee will meet quarterly (March, June, September, November) to review and consider all the completed proposals received prior to the quarterly meeting. Grant applications will be received year-round for the duration of the grant program.

Grant applicants will be notified in writing (electronic or hard copy) of approval/denial within 2 weeks of the meeting of the Review Committee. The approved grant partner will then be asked to complete a W-9, provide banking information, and sign a grant agreement. Funding will be processed once all paperwork is complete.

**Step 5: Completing the project and preparing a report to capture learning from your project**

An interim or final report (depending on the project timeline) must be received, within 12 months of the grantee’s receipt of the grant funds. Should it be determined that additional reporting is needed, the request will be made in the grant agreement.

Final reports on a grant disbursed by the Mental Health Ministry Grant Program must include (1) how the grant funds have been used, (2) a financial accounting, (3) a narrative describing progress made toward achieving measurable goals of the project.

At a minimum, the narrative portion should summarize how the funds were spent and cover the following: (1) the anticipated impact of the grant funds; (2) the actual impact of the grant funds; (3) what was learned as a result of the use of the grant funds; (4) how the program/project/work will continue once the grant funding is depleted (if applicable).

For more information about the grant program, please contact Kathy Riley, Associate for Emotional and Spiritual Care Kathryn.Riley@pcusa.org and/or Lacey Hunter, Manager, Finance and Administration Lacey.Hunter@pcusa.org.

Learn more about resources for mental health ministry

at [www.pcusa.org/mentalhealth](http://www.pcusa.org/mentalhealth).