



Date: May 24, 2024

To: Interested Parties

From: Alicia Leatherman, Chief Strategy Officer
Ohio Department of Children and Youth

Subject: Notice of Availability of Funds - State Fiscal Year 2025 - Choose Life Fund July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

The Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) announces the availability of funding through the Choose Life Fund. The Choose Life Fund provides eligible organizations with funding to support services for pregnant women within Ohio planning to place their children for adoption. Created in [Section 3701.65](#) of the Ohio Revised Code, the Choose Life Fund includes contributions paid to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, by Ohioans who voluntarily elect to obtain "Choose Life" license plates pursuant to [Section 4503.91](#) of the Ohio Revised Code. To participate, an organization must meet the definition of an "eligible organization" established in Ohio Revised Code Section 3701.65.

APPLICATION SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE PURPOSE

In 2005, the 125th Ohio General Assembly adopted language creating the Choose Life Fund. DCY administers the Choose Life Fund, which provides funding to organizations within Ohio to assist women who plan to place their children for adoption. For a successful application, it is crucial that the applying organization meet the following requirements per [Section 3701.65](#) of the Ohio Revised Code:

- Is a private, nonprofit organization.
- Is committed to counseling pregnant women about adoption.
- Provides services, including counseling and meeting material needs, to pregnant women in Ohio who are planning to place their children for adoption.
- Does not charge pregnant women for any services received.
- Is not involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion related procedures, or engaging in 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

DCY allocates funds in proportion to the number of "Choose Life" license plates issued in each county during the preceding year to vehicles registered in that county.

Organizations that wish to apply for funding from the Choose Life Fund for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025) must apply by June 7, 2024. Interested applicants must complete the



application in accordance with instructions. If the organization has received Choose Life funding during the previous year, the organization must submit an audited financial statement with the application. All unspent funds of more than 10% of the previous year's award must be returned to ODH by July 1, 2024.

UNALLOWABLE COSTS

- None of the funds can be used for administrative expenses, legal expenses, or capital expenditures.
- Not more than 60% of the funds received may be used for material needs of pregnant women planning to place their children for adoption or infants awaiting placement with adoptive parents. This could include clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities, and transportation.
- Not more than 40% of the funds received may be used for counseling, training, or advertising.
- Counseling and training funds cannot be spent to assist adoptive families. Counseling services are for birth families only.
- The organization cannot be involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion-related procedures, or engaging in pro-abortion advertising.

Application must be signed and returned along with required documentation via email to Melissa Kuhn, Melissa.Kuhn@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov.

Contact Melissa Kuhn with questions, at Melissa.Kuhn@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov or 614-466-1349.