

How Does the CCHD Application Review Process Work?

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development uses a multi-step, consultative review process involving CCHD national grants staff at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, CCHD diocesan staff appointed by the bishop, and the bishop of each diocese in which the applicant organization proposes to operate. The process is designed to ensure each applicant organization meets all the criteria and guidelines established by the bishops for CCHD-funded groups. CCHD funds projects of two general types: community organizing, and economic development.

The Process

The process begins with the CCHD *Eligibility Quiz*, which clearly lays out CCHD guidelines and asks applicants to provide details about the mission, goals, structure, and methodology of their organization.

The Quiz requires the applicant organization to stipulate their organization does not “participate in or promote activities that contradict the moral and social teaching of the Catholic Church” (with explicit direction on what that means), that their organization does not endorse any candidate for public office, and that their organization does not support or endorse a political party.

The Eligibility Determination and Full Application

The *Eligibility Quiz* is reviewed by CCHD national grants staff and by the CCHD diocesan director. Together, they decide whether an applicant meets the basic requirements to be invited to submit a full proposal, or will be declined at the Eligibility Quiz stage.

The full proposals require applicants to thoroughly explain both the structure and activity of their organization, including past efforts and proposed efforts. Applicants are again required to attest that their organization is not involved in promoting activities contrary to Catholic teaching. Specifically, the proposal application for both community organizing and economic development applicants asks:

*“Organizations that receive CCHD funds must not participate in or promote activities that contradict the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church. Organizations that support or promote, for example, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, racism, war, discrimination, or same-sex marriage are not eligible for CCHD funding. **Do the activities of your organization conform to the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church?**”*

The CCHD **community organizing** application restates the requirement that applicant organizations be strictly non-partisan (economic development initiatives would not engage in political activity). Applicants are also required to describe any voter registration activities:

*“Please indicate if your organization is planning to engage in voter registration and/or voter education or “get out the vote” activities during the proposed grant year. If so, provide a brief description of those activities. Please note, while CCHD encourages activities that promote civic engagement, **organizations that participate in partisan activities and/or take stances which promote in any way (including voter guides and other written material) legislation, propositions, or ballot initiatives that contradict the moral or social teaching of the Catholic Church are ineligible for CCHD funding.**”*

How Proposals Are Reviewed

Full proposals are reviewed by both CCHD national grants staff and CCHD directors in the diocese in which the applicant proposes to operate. CCHD diocesan directors initiate and build relationships with each applicant through site visits, where they learn more about the applicant organization, and share with them the mission of CCHD, including criteria and guidelines for funding. National grants staff, who cover multiple dioceses in specific regions of the country, also conduct site visits throughout the year, and build and maintain relationships with funded groups. Site visits play a key role in ensuring applicant organizations understand the requirements of CCHD funding: that their organizational activity may not be contrary to Catholic teaching; and that investments truly result in the human development of low-income people, through personal growth, civic engagement, and making changes in policies and structures that foster the common good.

After the site visits, the CCHD diocesan director and CCHD national grants staff each write extensive reviews of the applicant organization, consult to discuss their respective reviews, and jointly make a recommendation to the local bishop. The bishop, considering both the national grants staff and the diocesan director reviews, ultimately determines whether to endorse an applicant for funding.

If the local bishop endorses the applicant for funding, the application is forwarded to the subcommittee of bishops at the USCCB who oversee CCHD. The subcommittee of bishops then reviews and approves or disapproves the funding recommendations.

Start Up of Grants

Immediately after an applicant has been awarded a grant, CCHD national staff sends the grantee their “start-up” materials, or all the materials CCHD needs in order to release funds. These materials include an official grant award letter, and a legally binding contract between the USCCB and the funded groups. The grant agreement details all the conditions of the grant, and includes this language:

“Grantee agrees to adhere to the basic principles of Catholic mission as contained in Attachment #1.” Attachment #1 states: “In the light of the Catholic Church’s moral and social teachings and tradition, CCHD requires organizations requesting funding to understand and adhere to some basic principles which are central to the Catholic mission. CCHD asks those responsible for seeking and managing funds from CCHD to carefully consider the following statements: Central to all Catholic moral teaching is the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) will consider favorably only those organizations which demonstrate respect for the dignity of the human person. CCHD will not consider groups or organizations which promote or support abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, or any other affront to human life and dignity. Signatures of authorized organization officials on the Grant Agreement indicate adherence to these principles in the administration of any CCHD-funded organization.”

How Grantees Are Funded; Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

CCHD’s grant funding year begins July 1. Approved applicants are funded for a maximum of six consecutive years, one year at a time. Midway through the grant period, on December 1, all funded groups must submit a combined *Refund Application and Interim Report* to the CCHD national grants staff. The *Refund Application and Interim Report* is as in-depth as the original application and the proposal goes through the full evaluation process, from site visits to support from the local bishop. Applicants file a final report on August 1, one month after the end of the grant year.

Violations of Grant Agreements

When CCHD learns a funded group may be involved in activity that violates the grant agreement or is contrary to Church teaching, the following process is immediately implemented:

- 1) CCHD national grants staff notify the CCHD national director, who notifies the chairman of the bishops’ subcommittee overseeing CCHD; and the CCHD diocesan director, who notifies the local bishop. Any pending grant payments to the funded group in question are suspended immediately.
- 2) CCHD national grants staff contacts the funded group to request specific details regarding the activity in question.
- 3) The information from the funded group is then shared with the CCHD national director, who shares it with the chairman of the CCHD subcommittee, and the CCHD diocesan director, who shares it with the local bishop.
- 4) If CCHD determines the activity in question is in violation of the grant agreement or contrary to Church teaching, the group is immediately de-funded and asked to return the CCHD grant.

The CCHD grant process requires close and constant coordination between national and diocesan staff. It is a priority for CCHD to build strong relationships with CCHD-funded groups to ensure CCHD knows the groups and their work, and the groups know CCHD and our Catholic mission.

About CCHD

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the domestic anti-poverty, social justice program of the Catholic bishops in the United States. Its mission is to address the root causes of poverty in America through promotion and support of community-controlled, self-help organizations and through transformative education.

Founded in 1969, CCHD’s pastoral strategy is empowerment of the poor through a methodology of participation and education for justice, leading toward solidarity between poor and non-poor as impelled by the Church’s biblical tradition, modern Catholic social teaching, and the pervasive presence of poverty in the United States. This ministry for justice is rooted in our baptism and faith commitment.

The grants, economic development, and education for justice programs of the Campaign, implemented in collaboration with local dioceses, are supported from an annual collection in U.S. Catholic parishes.