



How Does the CCHD Application Review Process Work?

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) conducts a rigorous, consultative review process before awarding any grants. CCHD national grants staff at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) work closely with CCHD diocesan staff appointed by the local bishop to review the organizations seeking CCHD funds. The bishop of each diocese in which an applicant works, must approve or decline every recommendation before a subcommittee of bishops approves or declines the request. 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 development and economic development.

The Process

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

The pre-application 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 pre-application is reviewed by CCHD national grants staff. With input from diocesan directors, they decide whether an applicant meets the basic requirements to be invited to submit a full proposal, or will be declined at this 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 development 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 development** 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 vet the applicant organization, write extensive reviews of the 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 presented 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 that it will not engage in activities in conflict with fundamental Catholic moral or social teaching. Among other things, Grantee agrees that it will not promote or support abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, racism, discriminatory measures toward immigrants, or use of the death penalty. Prohibited activities include participation in or endorsing initiatives that promote in any way legislation, propositions or ballot initiatives (including voter guides and other written materials) that are in conflict with fundamental Catholic moral or social teaching.

Grantee agrees that it will not knowingly participate in any coalition that has as part of its organizational purpose or agenda the promotion of actions in conflict with fundamental Catholic moral or social teaching.”

How Grantees Are Funded; Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

CCHD’s grant year begins July 1. Midway through the grant period, on December 1, all funded organizations must submit a combined interim report and application for the new grant year to the CCHD national grants staff. The combined interim report and application for the new grant year reports on accomplishments made during the first half of the grant year and sets goals for the upcoming grant year. The joint interim report and application is as in-depth as the original application and the proposal goes through a rigorous evaluation process, including site visits and the written support of the local bishop. Applicants file a final report on July 15, two weeks 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 notifies both 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 organization in question are put on hold.
- 2) CCHD national grants staff coordinates a thorough review of the facts with the diocesan director, requesting specific details regarding the activity in question and sharing all information with the local bishop. .
- 3) If after the review, the diocese is convinced that the organization is in full compliance with CCHD criteria and guidelines, the diocese must submit an official letter to CCHD giving an overview of the review and their stating their continued support.
- 4) The information from the funded group is then shared with the CCHD national director, who shares it with the chairman of the CCHD subcommittee.
- 5) If CCHD determines the activity in question is in violation of the grant agreement or contrary to Church teaching, the group’s grant is canceled and is asked to return any unspent funds.

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