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TDHS Makes Strides to Fundamentally Change How Vulnerable Tennesseans are Served
Collaboratives Selected for \$5M Planning Grant Phase & Kick Off Work Begins

NASHVILLE – The Families First Community Advisory Board selected 17 collaborative groups to receive a portion of the nearly \$5 million the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) will make available during the [first phase of the Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Initiative](#). Up to \$445,000 will be available to each organization, made up of public-private partnerships dedicated to developing innovative, community-driven strategies for moving Tennesseans with economic, social, and developmental vulnerabilities beyond their current barriers and on to self-sufficiency.

“Tennessee is positioned to drastically transform the way low-income families are served by partnering with public-private groups across the state to tackle poverty head on,” said TDHS Commissioner Clarence H. Carter. “The groups selected for these grants have unique ideas, innovative strategies, and a dedication to help vulnerable families grow beyond the challenges they face in ways that position them for a successful life without government interference.”

Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Initiative Planning Grantees Include:

Agape Child & Family Services, Inc.
Boys & Girls Clubs in Tennessee
City of Chattanooga
East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA)
Families Matter
Family Affair Ministries, Inc.
First Tennessee Development District Foundation
First Things First, Inc.
Goodwill Industries of Middle TN, Inc.
Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC)
Martha O'Bryan Center
Persevere
Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS)
United Way of Greater Knoxville, Inc.
University of Memphis
Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency
West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation

Each planning grantee collaborative is tasked with using the grant funds during a 90-day Planning Period where they will create a comprehensive pilot program proposal for submission in support

of their request for a larger Implementation Grant. The funds can be used for technical assistance, visioning, initiative design, budgeting, and further partnership development. Pilot proposals will be presented to the [Families First Community Advisory Board](#) in April 2022. The Board will select 6 pilot grantees (2 in each grand division) from the Planning Grantees listed above to receive Implementation Grants to fund their group's Pilot Initiative. TDHS will also operate a pilot program. The pilots will run through 2025.

Funding for the Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Initiative is provided through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF is a federally funded program that emphasizes work, family strengthening, and personal responsibility to empower families for long-term success.

The [Tennessee Department of Human Services](#) is dedicated to making our state a place where all Tennesseans can move beyond the barriers they may face, to self-sufficiency, and on to new heights.

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