

**Funding Opportunity Number: RISE AR YR 1-2026**  
**Issuing Agency: Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DF&A)**  
**Program Authority: CMS Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program**  
**Contact Information: [Info@arkansasrhtp.com](mailto:Info@arkansasrhtp.com)**

## Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

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### **Recruitment, Innovation, Skills, and Education for Arkansas (RISE AR)**

#### **I. Program Overview**

The RISE AR initiative is a core component of Arkansas's Rural Health Transformation Program. It strengthens rural healthcare systems through recruitment, training, and retention programs. RISE AR supports the RHT Program's goals of expanding access, improving quality, and fostering long-term provider engagement in rural areas.

#### **II. Program Objectives**

- Expand access to high-quality care in underserved rural areas
- Improve outcomes for chronic disease and behavioral health
- Strengthen emergency response systems
- Advance health equity
- Enhance sustainability and efficiency
- Support data-driven care coordination

#### **III. RISE AR Sub-Initiatives**

##### **A. LEAD - Leadership Education, Advancement, and Delivery**

Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Focuses on building leadership capacity within healthcare and community organizations
- Supports emerging and current leaders through training, mentorship, and leadership pipelines
- Aims to strengthen organizational effectiveness and sustainability in rural systems

Total budget for **LEAD** projects up to **\$4,300,000.00** in Year 1

##### **B. PATHWAY - Preparing Arkansas Talent for Health Workforce Advancement Yield**

Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Expands entry and advancement pathways into healthcare and support professions
- Supports education, certification, and career progression opportunities
- Targets pipeline development for high-demand and hard-to-fill roles

Total budget for **PATHWAY** projects up to **\$7,000,000.00** in Year 1

### **C. RETAIN - Recruit, Educate, Train, Advise, Integrate, Nurture**

Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Focuses on keeping existing healthcare workers in rural communities
- Supports strategies like:
  - Employee engagement and wellness
  - Incentives and retention programs
  - Improved workplace conditions
- Aims to reduce turnover and stabilize the workforce

Total budget for **RETAIN** projects up to **\$14,400,000.00** in Year 1

### **D. SKILL UP - Strategic Knowledge, Innovation & Lifelong Learning for Upward Professionals**

Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Provides training and professional development to enhance workforce skills
- Supports continuing education, certifications, and cross-training
- Helps staff practice at the top of their credentials and adapt to evolving care models

Total budget for **SKILL-UP** projects up to **\$1,600,000.00** in Year 1

The State will require each awardee to submit **quarterly progress reports** and a **final evaluation report** to support compliance with CMS Rural Health Transformation Program requirements.

## **IV. Eligibility**

Eligible applicants include State health agencies, hospitals, clinics, F QHCs, rural providers, nurses, PAs, behavioral health counselors, non -credentialed paraprofessionals, higher education institutions, residencies and fellowship programs, and academic medical institutions.

In addition to meeting eligibility by entity type, applicants must demonstrate sufficient organizational, operational, and financial capacity to administer grant funds in compliance with state and federal requirements, including **2 CFR Part 200**.

*Applicants must have an active SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (UEI); please note that SAM registration can take up to eight (8) weeks to complete and approve.*

## **V. Award Information**

No match is required.

Allowable budget categories may include personnel, contractual services, equipment, software and licensing, training, and data and evaluation costs, provided they are reasonable, necessary, and directly tied to approved project activities

All awards are subject to the State's receipt of funds under the RHT Program. The State plans for future funding opportunities available in future RHT Program years. An Eligible participant's award of funding in one Program Year does not guarantee the award of funds in future years.

The performance period for Program Year 1 runs from the award through **September 30, 2027**, meaning all Program Year 1 funds must be spent by then. However, per CMS rules, all funds must be obligated by **October 30, 2026**. The State will provide awardees with more detailed guidance on what is required to show that funds have been obligated.

## **VI. Reporting and Compliance**

Quarterly reporting is required. Compliance with **2 CFR Part 200**.

The State will monitor Grantee's performance, including, but not limited to, through review of financial and programmatic reports and performance measures, under any Grant Agreement awarded as a result of this NOFO.

The State is required to submit detailed reports to CMS regarding activities and expenditures under the RHT Program. The State will require each awardee to submit quarterly progress reports and a final evaluation report to permit the State to fulfill its RHT Program requirements. Also, awardees may be required to respond to questions from or submit information to the Department of Finance and Administration for Plan implementation.

## **VII. Funding Restrictions**

RISE AR funds cannot be used for any purpose for which the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) prohibits the use of RHT Program funds. Funding restrictions include, but are not limited to:

- Total administrative costs may not exceed 5% of the award
- Generally, indirect costs

- Funds may not replace existing funding and must support new or expanded activities
- Salaries charged to the award may not exceed the federal salary cap (\$225,700)
- Funds may not support ongoing costs without a sustainability plan
- Broadband infrastructure is not an allowable use of funds
- Lobbying or advocacy activities are not an allowable use of funds
- Investment vehicles or endowments that generate profit are not an allowable use of funds

Please refer to the RHT Program [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) and CMS' [Frequently Asked Questions](#) regarding the RHT Program for detailed information regarding funding restrictions.

#### **VIII. Application Information**

- **Application open date:** June 22, 2026
- **Application close date:** July 24, 2026 12:00 PM CDT

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