



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 2037

1. Project Title Children of Inmates: Family Strengthening/Reunite

2. Senate Sponsor Jeff Brandes

3. Date of Request 02/01/2021

4. Project/Program Description

Incarceration of parents/caregivers impacts 300,000 FL children. Research demonstrates that these children engage in anti-social behaviors and suffer mental illness at higher levels, putting them on the path toward incarceration themselves. COI, Inc. is an innovative approach to interrupt that pattern by collaborating with FDC to rebuild families with wellness, literacy, civic and STEM learning experiences that support both children and their incarcerated parent's improvements as a family unit. The program started in South Florida and has expanded to most of the metropolitan areas, serving over 2,600 families with over 6,000 children to date. To date, COI has coordinated over 500 child-focused visits to 22 Florida correctional facilities. However, due to the COVID pandemic, the program has pivoted by providing community support events, in lieu of the temporary visitation suspension. COI will also begin to partner with tele/video vendors such as JPay during this next fiscal year.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Department of Corrections

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	1,000,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,000,000	47%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	300,000	14%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	848,451	39%
Other	6,000	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022</b>	<b>2,154,451</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2020-21	0	375,000	615F	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? Yes

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year. 1,000,000

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

In lieu of state funding, we would develop a comprehensive fund development plan to include Request For Proposal (RFP) applications, fundraising events and an individual, corporate and foundational donor plan to diversify COI's funding platform.



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**10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes

**If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.**

COI received \$187,200 for a City Cares grant for our Jacksonville operations and a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) grant. We experienced an actual loss as a result of COVID-19, due to the fact that we were required to cancel our bonding visits. This grant allowed COI to shift our business model to provide much needed relief through home visits. On a consistent weekly basis, we provided food and social services support to address the trauma and exacerbated challenges faced by these children and families.

**11. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended**

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Executive director will be dedicated at 20 percent time to project management and leadership including building collaborative partnerships with local agencies, integrating services with FDC and overseeing operations.	31,200
Other Salary and Benefits	Fiscal staff (1 FTE) will be supported at 50% time for the management of budgeting, invoicing, internal controls and audit support.	30,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	\$11,300 will be expended for travel to administrative meetings with FDC and partnering agencies across the State. \$20,000 will be allocated to office rent to support housing of COI staff and social work interns. \$2,500 will be reserved for office supplies.	33,800
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	\$5,000 will be reserved for Operational Audit Costs. \$10,000 will be reserved for liability and associated insurance. \$10,000 will be reserved to contract an independent study of program impacts (Applications for research funds will be submitted to federal and private sources.)	25,000
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits	\$312,500 will be reserved to hire up to five social work and/or criminal justice staff to support family outreach across Florida and work with incarcerated parents within FDC system. \$67,500 will be reserved to support COI Corps college intern stipends and reemployment support.	380,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	\$150,000 will be reserved to support transportation costs for children (and appropriate caregivers) to participate in the child focused bonding visitation programs and special child focus developmental events from metropolitan and rural areas. \$100,000 will be reserved to support program supplies for wellness, literacy, civics and STEM learning experiences.	250,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	COI is a collaboration of 14 community and faith based organizations with an intention to expand to up to 20 organizations across the state. As such, \$250,000 will be reserved to support subcontracts with partner agencies that have specialized skills including mental health, physical health, literacy, child brain development, STEM, civics, information technology and advocacy to support the operationalization of the enhanced learning experiences and to support expansion to rural areas.	250,000
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>1,000,000</b>



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#### 12. Program Performance

##### a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

When a parent is incarcerated, children are uncertain about the safety of their parent and this insecurity undermines childrens' ability to cope and to grow in a healthy manner. The result for young children is insecure attachments and bonds. These broken bonds have been linked to poorer peer relationships and diminished cognitive abilities. Over half, 58%, of children with incarcerated parents are under 10 years of age. School-aged children and teenagers face problems such as poor academic performance, peer relationship issues and classroom behavior problems, often resulting in suspension and high drop-out rates. The Children of Inmates, Inc. (COI) Family Strengthening and Reuniting program addresses these challenges by reconnecting children with their incarcerated parent and working to sustain that connection. Follow-up and support services are offered to help the child overcome the challenges and achieve a positive developmental track.

##### b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Due to the impacts of the COVID pandemic and in an effort to continue to support families impacted by parental incarceration, COI will resume bonding visits (post the suspension lift of visitations and vaccine deployment) to support family strengthening in FL correctional facilities with this funding. Until it is safe to re-enter the prisons, COI will continue to work with families by facilitating socially-distanced community support events to enhance community connectedness, wellness "check-ins", public service message packages, and partnership with video and/or teleconference platforms to support daily and/or weekly communication for children to connect with parents, especially during the pandemic. In 2019, by leveraging State and local funding, COI conducted 74 visits involving over 846 incarcerated parent/caregivers, 1686 children with 848 caregivers. COI will also continue to work with incarcerated individuals and FDC to identify new families.

##### c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Upon a safe re-entry into the prisons, direct services to be provided will include transportation, trauma informed support and activities to support families during the bonding visits. For participating "fragile families" wrap-around care coordination, including facilitated referrals to appropriate service providers to meet basic needs including addressing health, homelessness, disabilities, substance abuse and educational needs, child development assessments, child therapy and child development activities and child safety protection gear will be provided. The program will continue to provide adequately socially distanced community support groups for children, caregivers and returning citizens; increased tele-conference opportunities with incarcerated parents; trauma-informed wrap around care coordination and even inmate parenting sessions

##### d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

The target population served by this project are children with incarcerated parents and their caregivers. COI serves children, ages 0-21 throughout Florida. We also serve currently and formerly incarcerated parents, assisting them to rebuild relationships with their children and caregivers. We anticipate serving 1,500 children with these funds. This equates to approximately 600 families or incarcerated individuals. Research from Cambridge University documents that children with incarcerated parents are at twice the risk of mental illness and three times the risk of antisocial behaviors. Many are economically disadvantaged and often face homelessness. Further, many within the COI population struggle with developmental disabilities and/or physical disabilities. Children with incarcerated parents are exposed to higher levels of community and direct violence.

##### e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The expected benefits are to interrupt intergeneration incarceration by identifying, working with and supporting children with incarcerated parent. Working with "fragile families", activities will focus on reducing physical, verbal aggression and anti-social behaviors in children with incarcerated parents who exhibit these behaviors. Family visits create strong bond between incarcerated parent, children and caregivers and promote family support for the incarcerated parent upon returning to community. Activities focus on increasing knowledge of civic responsibilities as a platform to connect the children to their parent/caregiver. COI also encourages one-on-one direct time between the child and incarcerated parent to bond without interruptions from caregivers. During this special bonding time, COI staff monitor the interactions for appropriateness but do not intrude into the bonding experience directly. One-on-one and family contact allows the child to experience parental engagement.

##### f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?



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Financial Consequences of \$1,250.00 per occurrence if at least eighteen (18) bonding programs are not completed-annually. Financial Consequences in the amount of \$800.00 for each child less than five hundred (500) unique children. Financial Consequences in the amount of \$1,500.00 if at least six (6) program sessions are not provided to incarcerated participants. Financial consequences of \$1000 if at least 75 unique children of "fragile families" are not provided enhanced services.

- 13. The owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.**

n/a



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#### 14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name  Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 15. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

#### c. Organization Type

- ☐ For Profit Entity
- ☒ Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- ☐ Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- ☐ Local Entity
- ☐ University or College
- ☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

#### 16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number