



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2755

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The funding will expand the Family Initiative autism continuum of care to cover Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades counties. In addition, funding will allow Family Initiative to launch a Military Family Support Program to assist special needs families at Florida military bases. Services will include early screenings and intervention, clinical services, and other ongoing resources to assist families.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	1,500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	1,500,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,500,000	43%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	2,000,000	57%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	3,500,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested?

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

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

Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects



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10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

11. List 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.

12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits	Funds a portion of the salaries for Family Initiative administrative staff (bookkeeper, accountant, contracts specialist).	150,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	5 additional Master's level clinicians 5 additional bachelors level clinicians 2 Navigators for ongoing resource support	1,000,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Travel to bases around the state Distribution of Sensory kits and additional Sensory Trailer Leased vehicle to pull trailer	350,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,500,000

13. Program Performance

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

Funds will expand current clinical and community supports provided to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families into 8 additional counties (Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades). Funds will also launch the Military Special Needs program to provide much needed support to military families with autistic children at military bases. Our servicemen and women who have children with autism face numerous challenges with securing support, particularly when relocating to new locations. Family Initiative will support these families.



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

Family Initiative's continuum of care currently provides early screenings and intervention, social skills groups for children from infancy to young adult, support groups for siblings, parents, and other caregivers, vocational training, workforce programs, clinical services including applied behavior analysis and occupational therapy and educational services. The services will be expanded into Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades counties. Further, services such as early screenings and interventions, parent and caregiver training and support, clinical services, and access to the sensory trailer and kits will be provided to military families of children with autism.

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

The Family Initiative continuum of care will be expanded into Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades counties. Direct services include early screenings and intervention, social skills groups for children from infancy to young adult, support groups for siblings, parents, and other caregivers, vocational training, workforce programs, clinical services including applied behavior analysis and occupational therapy services, and educational services. Direct services for the Military Special Needs program includes early screenings and intervention, parent and caregiver training and support, clinical services, and access to the sensory trailer and kits.

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

The population served by this funding will include families of children with autism and individuals with autism in the following counties: Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades. Family Initiative served 2,400 families in 2024. We expect the funds to greatly increase the number of families we serve. Also, military families of children with autism will be served by this expanded program. According to the Florida Military Compact Council, in the 2017 school year, there were 39,686 school age children of military families. Based on CDC prevalence rates, this would mean in 2017, there were approximately 1,100 children with autism. While there is no current data, it is estimated close to 3,500 children with autism are children of military families in Florida. The funds will provide the potential for the Military Special Needs Program to reach all of these children.

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

The funding will benefit families with children with autism in the following counties: Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee, Collier, Hendry & Glades. The service will enable these children to live as independently as possible through community programs and clinical services. Military families with autistic children will have critical support and services to ensure their children can thrive. Studies show the early identification and intervention is critical to ensure optimal development for individuals with autism. Outcomes will be measured by number of families supported and each individual's progress realized, the resources provided, the ability to link families to necessary medical services.

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 in the contract?

Recoupment of funds for failure to meet deliverables.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?

- Yes, Applied



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- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

18. 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



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Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.