Agencies and organizations interested in applying for demonstration grant funds should submit an application on the Standard Form 424, 424A and 424B included in this announcement.

Each Form 424 must be signed by an individual authorized to act on behalf of the applicant agency and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award. Applications must be prepared in accordance with the guidance provided in this announcement and the instructions in the attached applications package.

The applicant must be aware that in signing and submitting the application for this award, it is certifying that it will comply with the Federal requirements concerning the drug-free workplace and debarment regulations set forth in Attachments E and F.

B. Application Submission

1. *Deadlines.* Applications shall be considered as meeting the deadline if they are either:

a. Received on or before the deadline date at the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20447, or

b. Sent on or before the deadline date and received by ACF in time for the independent review. (Applicants are cautioned to request a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark or to obtain a legibly dated receipt from a commercial carrier or the U.S. Postal Service. Private metered postmarks are not accepted as proof of timely mailing.)

2. Applications submitted by other *means.* Applications which are submitted in accordance with the above criteria shall be considered as meeting the deadline only if they are physically received before the close of business on or before the deadline date. Hand delivered applications are accepted during the normal working hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, on or prior to the established closing date at: The Administration for Children and Families, Division of Discretionary Grants, 6th Floor, ACF Guard Station, 901 D Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20447.

3. Late Applications. Applications which do not meet one of these criteria are considered late applications. The ACF Division of Discretionary Grants will notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in this competition.

4. Extension of Deadline. The ACF may extend the deadline for all applicants because of acts of God such

as floods, hurricanes, etc. or when there is a disruption of the mails. However, if the granting agency does not extend the deadline for all applicants, it may not waive or extend the deadline for any applicant. Applications once submitted are considered final and no additional materials will be accepted.

One signed original application and two copies are required.

Note: Applicants should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated post mark. Before relying on this method, applicants should check with their local post office. In some instances packages presented for mailing after a pre-determined time are postmarked with the next day's date. In other cases, postmarks are not routinely placed on packages. Applicants are cautioned to verify that there is a date on the package, and that it is the correct date of mailing, before accepting a receipt. Private metered postmarks are not acceptable as proof of timely mailing.

Applications which have a postmark later than the closing date, or which are handdelivered after the closing date, will be returned to the sender without consideration in the competition.

C. Application Consideration

All applications that meet the published deadline for submission will be screened to determine completeness and conformity to the requirements of this announcement. Applications meeting the above screening requirements will be reviewed competitively and scored against the criteria outlined in Part IV or Part V of this announcement. The review will be conducted in Washington, D.C. Such applications will be referred to reviewers knowledgeable about programs dealing with housing, homelessness, education, community action and supportive services. Reviewers will provide a numerical score and explanatory comments based solely on responsiveness to the specific criteria published in this announcement. Reviewers' scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions but may not be the only factor considered. Applications generally will be considered in order of the average scores assigned by reviewers. However, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding as other factors are considered, including: comments of reviewers and government officials; staff evaluation and input; geographic distribution; previous program performance of applicants; compliance with grant terms under previous DHHS grants; audit reports; investigative reports; and applicant's progress in resolving any final audit disallowances on previous OCS or other Federal agency grants.

OCS reserves the right to discuss applications with other Federal or non-Federal funding sources to ascertain the applicant's performance record.

The results of the competitive review will assist the Director of the Office of Community Services, in considering competing applications. Consideration will be given to ensuring that a variety of geographic areas are served, that projects with different auspices are selected and that various project designs and models are represented.

D. Intergovernmental Review

This program is covered under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, and 45 CFR Part 100, Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities. Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

All States and Territories except Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, American Samoa and Palau have elected to participate in the Executive Order process and have established Single Points of Contact (SPOCs). Applicants from these nineteen jurisdictions need take no action regarding E.O. 12372. Applicants for projects to be administered by Federally-recognized Indian Tribes are also exempt from the requirements of E.O. 12372. Applicants must submit any required material to the SPOCs as soon as possible so that the program office can obtain and review SPOC comments as part of the award process. It is imperative that the applicant submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline date to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards.

SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations which they intend to trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to: Department of Health and