b. Applications submitted by other means. Applications which are not 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: at the Administration for Children and Families, Division of Discretionary Grants, 6th Floor, ACF Guard Station, 901 D Street, SW., Washington, DC 20447.

c. 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.

d. Extension of Deadline. The ACF Office of Community Services 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 four 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 list 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 hand-delivered after the closing date, will be returned to the sender without consideration in the competition.

3. 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 may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

explain rule.
When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to: Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Division of Discretionary Grants, 6th Floor, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW Washington, DC 20447.

A list of the Single Points of Contact for each State and Territory is included as Attachment E of this Announcement.

4. Application Consideration

Applications which meet the screening requirements in Section 5 below will be reviewed competitively. Such applications will be referred to reviewers for a numerical score and explanatory comments based solely on responsiveness to program guidelines and evaluation criteria published in this Announcement. Applications will be reviewed by persons outside of the OCS unit which would be directly responsible for programmatic management of the grant. The results of these reviews will assist the Director and OCS program staff in considering competing applications. Reviewers

scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions but will not be the only factors considered. Applications will generally be considered in order of the average scores assigned by reviewers. However, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding since the Director may also consider other factors deemed relevant including, but not limited to, the timely and proper completion of projects funded with OCS funds granted in the last five (5) years: 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 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.

5. Criteria for Screening Applications

a. Initial Screening

All applications that meet the published deadline for submission will be screened to determine completeness and conformity to the requirements of this Announcement. Only those applications meeting the following requirements will be reviewed and evaluated competitively. Others will be returned to the applicants with a notation that they were unacceptable.

- (1) The application must contain a completed and signed Standard Form SF-424.
- (2) The SF-424 must be signed by an official of the organization applying for the grant who has authority to obligate the organization legally.

b. Pre-rating Review

Applications which pass the initial screening will be forwarded to reviewers for analytical comment and scoring based on the criteria detailed in the Section below and the specific requirements contained in Part A of this Announcement. Prior to the programmatic review, these reviewers and/or OCS staff will verify that the applications comply with this program announcement in the following areas:

- (1) *Eligibility:* Applicant meets the eligibility requirements found in Part B.
- (2) *Number of Projects:* The application contains only one project.
- (3) Target Populations: The application clearly targets the specific outcomes and benefits of the project to low-income participants and beneficiaries as defined in the DHHS