



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Alabama Women's Commission
2026–2027 Research & Innovation Grant

**Improving Access to Caregiving Supports for Alabama Women:
Research, Education, and Action**

I. Purpose and Background

The Alabama Women's Commission (AWC) invites proposals for a research-focused, systems-oriented project to support Year 1 of a multi-year initiative aimed at improving access to caregiving support for women in Alabama.

Women disproportionately carry caregiving responsibilities for children, aging family members, and individuals with disabilities or chronic health needs. Alabama has many existing caregiving-related programs offered through state agencies, community organizations, employers, and faith-based partners. However, women caregivers frequently encounter barriers related to awareness, navigation, coordination, and access, even when services exist.

The purpose of this Year 1 grant is to map existing caregiving resources, identify service gaps and navigation barriers, and clarify how caregivers move through current systems. Particular attention should be given to the mental health and workforce stability implications of unpaid caregiving responsibilities. Findings from this phase will inform future convenings, education efforts, and potential implementation-focused work in Year 2.

This RFP is intentionally limited in scope and is not intended to fund new services, direct service delivery, or broad program implementation.

II. Definition of Caregiver

For purposes of this RFP, a caregiver is defined as:

1. Adult family members or other informal caregivers age 18 and older who provide care to individuals 60 years of age and older;
2. Adult family members or other informal caregivers age 18 and older who provide care to individuals of any age with disabilities or chronic health conditions;
3. Adult family members or other informal caregivers age 18 and older who provide care to other dependents of any age requiring significant ongoing medical, behavioral, or functional support; and
4. Older relatives (not parents) age 55 and older who provide care to children under the age of 18.

Consistent with the focus of the Alabama Women’s Commission, this RFP particularly seeks to understand and support the experiences of women serving in these caregiving roles.

III. Eligibility and Partnerships

Eligible applicants include:

- Colleges and universities
- Nonprofit organizations
- Research or policy institutions
- Community-based organizations
- Employer or workforce-focused entities

State agencies may participate as partners, advisors, data contributors, or collaborators, but may not serve as lead applicants.

Collaborative proposals are encouraged.

IV. Scope of Work

1. All proposals must focus on **research and systems analysis only**. Proposals that include service delivery, education campaigns, or implementation pilots will not be considered under this Year 1 RFP.

V. Required Project Components

Applicants must include a focused analysis that may include:

1. **Mapping Existing Caregiving Resources**
 - a. Identify caregiving-related resources currently available in Alabama.
 - b. Emphasis should be on resources caregivers actually interact with, not theoretical program availability.

- c. Mapping may be geographic, system-based, or pathway-based.
- 2. Identifying Service Gaps and Navigation Barriers**
- a. Examine how caregivers learn about resources, access them, and move between systems.
 - b. Identify points where caregivers disengage, are redirected, or fail to receive support.
 - c. Highlight gaps related to eligibility, coordination, transportation, timing, or awareness.
- 3. Systems-Level Insights**
- a. Describe how caregiving supports intersect with housing, utilities, transportation, workforce participation, and well-being.
 - b. Examine the mental health impact of caregiving responsibilities and assess how caregivers access (or fail to access) available behavioral health supports. Mental health should be evaluated as a systems-navigation and workforce stability issue, not as a service delivery expansion area.
 - c. Use existing data sources where available; new large-scale data collection is not required.

VI. Deliverables

Funded projects must produce the following deliverables:

- 1. Concise Written Report**
 - a. Summary of findings, resource mapping, and identified access barriers.
 - b. Written for policymakers and partner agencies (not academic).
- 2. Executive Summary**
 - a. High-level overview suitable for Commission members, agency leaders, and public partners.
- 3. Resource & Systems Map**
 - a. Visual or structured representation of caregiving resources and access pathways in Alabama.
 - b. May include identification of priority gaps for future focus.
 - c. Brief analysis of mental health resource awareness, access barriers, and referral pathways for caregivers
- 4. Recommendations for Next Steps**

- a. Clear, practical recommendations to inform Year 2 convening, education, and navigation efforts.
- b. Recommendations should focus on coordination and access, not new service creation.

VII. Funding and Timeline

Grant amount: Up to \$10,000

Proposals Due: April 30, 2026

Project period: Anticipated 6–9 months

Interim updates may be required

Final deliverables due by a date specified in the award agreement

VIII. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include:

1. Project narrative describing approach and methodology
2. Description of data sources and partners
3. Work plan and timeline
4. Budget and budget justification
5. Organizational qualifications and experience
6. Explanation of how the project complements existing services and systems

IX. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

1. Alignment with AWC's mission and statutory purpose
2. Clarity and feasibility of the proposed analysis
3. Understanding of caregiving access challenges
4. Ability to produce actionable, system-level insights
5. Strength of partnerships and coordination
6. Organizational capacity to complete the project

X. Reservation of Rights

The Alabama Women's Commission reserves the right to:

1. Fund one proposal under this RFP
2. Use findings to inform future convenings, grants, and public education
3. Share deliverables with partner agencies and stakeholders