



# THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

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## White House Faith-Based & Community Initiative

*(PDF version of this brochure coming soon)*

Faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) have a long tradition of helping Americans in need and together represent an integral part of our nation's social service network. Yet, all too often, the Federal government has put in place complicated rules and regulations preventing FBCOs from competing for funds on an equal footing with other organizations. President Bush believes that besides being inherently unfair, such an approach can waste tax-payer dollars and cut off the poor from successful programs. Federal funds should be awarded to the most effective organizations—whether public or private, large or small, faith-based or secular—and all must be allowed to compete on a level playing field.

### The Initiative in Action

President Bush created the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives and Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in eleven Federal agencies to lead a determined attack on need by strengthening and expanding the role of FBCOs in providing social services. The Federal government has worked to accomplish this mission through an array of regulatory and policy reforms, legislative efforts, and public outreach to FBCOs. Additionally, by making information about Federal grants more accessible and the application process less burdensome, the Initiative has empowered FBCOs to compete more effectively for funds. The ultimate beneficiaries are America's poor, who are best served when the Federal government's partners are the providers most capable of meeting their needs.

### Focus of the Initiative

- Identifying and eliminating barriers that impede the full participation of FBCOs in the Federal grants process.
- Ensuring that Federally-funded social services administered by State and local governments are consistent with equal treatment provisions.
- Encouraging greater corporate and philanthropic support for FBCOs' social service programs through public education and outreach activities.
- Pursuing legislative efforts to extend charitable choice provisions that prevent discrimination against faith-based organizations, protect the religious freedom of beneficiaries, and preserve religious hiring rights of faith-based charities.

### Increasing Accessibility

The underlying premise of the President's Initiative is that a more open and competitive Federal grant-making process will increase the delivery of effective social services to those whose needs are greatest. Thus, Federal agencies have successfully undertaken a variety of measures to do this, including:

- Making information more accessible
- Providing training and technical assistance
- Broadening program eligibility

- Changing regulations
- Streamlining grant applications
- Focusing on the unique needs of grassroots organizations; and
- Eliminating preferential treatment for existing and former grantees

### White House Conferences

The White House is hosting a series of regional conferences and targeted workshops to continue its support for the work of effective faith-based and community social service programs. The events will provide participants with information about the government grants process and available funding opportunities, an overview of the legal responsibilities that come with the receipt of Federal funds and various grant writing tutorials. The conferences will also provide an opportunity to inform State and local officials about equal treatment regulations and other central elements of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

The conferences are supported by the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, and the Agency for International Development.

### Written Documents

The White House Office has published several written resources to assist grassroots groups in navigating the Federal grants system. These documents include *Federal Funds for Organizations That Help Those In Need* (a catalog of Federal grant opportunities), *Guidance to Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government* (a guide to the legal responsibilities associated with the receipt of Federal funds), and *Protecting the Civil Rights and Religious Liberty of Faith-Based Organizations* (a booklet which outlines the protection of religious hiring rights).