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**Metro Government of Nashville - Direct Appropriations Funding Application**  
**Volunteers of America Mid-States**  
**Middle Tennessee Developmental Disability Services**

**Application Questions:**

**1. What services does your organization provide to the residents of Davidson County?**

Volunteers of America Mid-States' (VOA) is one of the region's oldest, largest, and most diverse nonprofit organizations. Working in partnership with government agencies, businesses, individuals, local faith congregations, and other nonprofit organizations — and supported by thousands of individual donors and volunteers — we address the most pressing social needs in the communities we serve. We offer more than 40 distinct human service programs across our service area, including care and support for individuals with developmental disabilities in the Nashville area.

VOA's Developmental Disabilities Services in Middle Tennessee have been vital to the health and well-being of some of Davidson County's most vulnerable people since 2001. The people we support live safely in a nurturing environment that promotes community involvement and a greater quality of life for a population characterized by substantial limitations, including self-care; capacity for independent living and economic self-sufficiency. These acute needs demand individualized special services and supports that are likely to continue indefinitely.

Beyond meeting a person's medical needs and providing a safe living environment, we have also committed to encouraging community engagement to enhance social and emotional well-being of the people we support. This program is currently engaged in the process of becoming a "Person-Centered Organization" through the State Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, which fosters a culture of understanding that puts people before their disability. Our program assists individuals with making community connections and developing a valued social role in the community through work, membership in a club, or volunteer opportunities.

Over the last two years, VOA has been focused on expanding our services to offer our residents Employment & Community First CHOICES services, a program providing independent living support for people with an intellectual or developmental disability. Whether living at home with family or in supported living homes, such as in VOA's Developmental Disabilities Services program, CHOICES helps the person to live as independently as possible in the community. This occurs through such endeavors as receiving care from a personal attendant and in-home respite care to relieve caregivers. These services allow family members who often serve as the primary support person for their sibling or child to potentially seek outside employment and take a break from their often demanding role as caregiver.

**2. How many residents are you currently serving and how do they benefit?**

Through 12 community-based supported living homes in Middle Tennessee, we provide 24-hour professional support and care to 31 residents with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Clients like Sean, 43, who has lived in one of our Hermitage area supported living homes for 10 years, live safely in a nurturing environment that promotes community involvement and a greater quality of life. While Sean and other clients spend at least 5 hours per week in the community at locations such as senior citizen centers, the YMCA, and the movies, VOA recognizes that opportunities for employment and more comprehensive community engagement can lead to more independence for any individual with a disability. In response, VOA wishes to offer an Employment and Community First CHOICES program to our residents. As a new program, Employment and Community First CHOICES will provide a range of services, including attendant care, in-home respite care, community-based residential alternatives, and community living supports, all designed to enhance the independence of individuals with disabilities—within and outside of our established DDS program.

**3. How much funding are you requesting from Metro? - \$20,000**

Funding from Metro Government of Nashville would allow us to grow our program and reach a new group of target participants who would benefit from our services, but do not need full-time residential support. As we establish and grow our ECF CHOICES program, funding would be used to support the salary of an employee dedicated to delivering these services and growing our reach.

**4. If funding is awarded, how many additional residents will be served and how will they benefit?**

Metro Government of Nashville Funding would allow our program to expand the services provided to the 31 residents we currently support, as well as offer CHOICES services to new residents. We anticipate that if received, this funding would enable us to serve 5 more residents in FY2020. Furthermore, by supporting our current residents and potentially new clients through in-home respite care, the impact of our services is felt beyond the 31 individuals we serve. Entire families benefit from the high quality support we provide to their loved ones, and our services allow them to spend more time working and participating in their community.

**5. In addition to serving more residents, are there other community benefits Metro funding would help you achieve?**

Yes, in addition to allowing us to serve more residents, Metro funding would support our efforts to foster community engagement among our residents and better integrate them into the communities where they live. Beyond meeting our residents' medical needs and providing a safe living environment, we have also committed to encouraging community engagement to enhance social and emotional well-being of the people we support. VOA is currently engaged in the process of becoming a "Person-Centered Organization" through the TN State Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, which fosters a culture of understanding that puts people before their disability. Our

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program assists individuals with making community connections and developing a valued social role in the community through work, membership in a club, or volunteer opportunities.

**6. How would you use this funding to help create a more equitable Nashville, where all residents have an opportunity to participate in the city's success?**

VOA's Developmental Disability Services are focused on fostering connections and helping our residents live enriching and fulfilling lives. Metro's support would allow us to focus more time, energy and resources on residents' community engagement, as well as their residential and medical needs.

VOA's mission to create positive in the lives of individuals and communities is aligned with Metro's desire to create a more equitable city, and support of our DDS program would allow for more of our residents to participate and be part of this effort. With Metro's support, VOA will be able to grow our program and empower and uplift some of Nashville most hidden individuals.