

**Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grants
Formal Solicitation for Applications
April 1, 2025 – June 2, 2025
for Fiscal Year 2027**

The Florida Department of State is soliciting applications for Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grants. Applications will be accepted **online** at dosgrants.com. The application submission period **will open April 1, 2025, and close at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern) on June 2, 2025** (as June 1st is not a business day). Applications will only be accepted electronically and must be complete to be considered for evaluation.

ABANDONED AFRICAN-AMERICAN CEMETERIES GRANT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant Program is to provide funding to assist efforts to protect and preserve abandoned African-American cemeteries in the State of Florida. This program provides grants on a competitive basis. The program does not fund operational support for organizations.

Project types include:

- **Cemetery Research**: awarded to research institutions, colleges and universities, and qualified nonprofit organizations for the purpose of conducting genealogical and historical research necessary to identify and contact the relatives and descendants of persons buried in abandoned African-American cemeteries. Cemetery Research projects do not fund archaeological fieldwork or comprehensive field surveys of geographic areas whose goal is to locate and identify abandoned cemeteries.
- **Cemetery Protection**: awarded to local governments and qualified nonprofit organizations for the purposes of repairing, restoring, and maintaining abandoned African-American cemeteries. This includes: planning to guide the long term preservation of the Cemetery, including existing conditions assessments, architectural or engineering drawings and construction documents, and management plans; the restoration of historic funerary resources and the in-kind replacement of resources that cannot be repaired; the removal of vegetation that negatively impacts the historic resources; erosion control and fill for the purposes of leveling sunken graves; installation of appropriate security features including lighting, fencing, and cameras; installation of limited interpretive signage; and the marking of unmarked remains, all in a manner that is approved by the Division and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation. This does not include archaeological fieldwork, other than remote sensing techniques such as ground penetrating radar and magnetometry conducted and interpreted by a Professional Archaeologist with specialized training in these techniques to determine the boundaries of the cemetery or location of interments for planning purposes. A professional Bioarchaeologist shall be present to monitor all project activities that involve ground disturbance.

For questions about project types or the eligibility of a project or work item, please refer to the *Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant Guidelines* on FLHeritage.com/grants.

AWARD AMOUNT

Maximum award amount is \$50,000.

There is no minimum request amount and no match requirement.

ELIGIBILITY

Cemetery Eligibility: The cemetery that is the subject of the proposed project must meet the following requirements.

- It shall not be a licensed cemetery under Chapter 497, *Florida Statutes*.
- It shall have a majority of interments occurring more than 50 years ago, with no recorded interment of human remains or cremated remains in the previous 10 years and no contracted future interment or other burial rights.
- Its presence shall have been previously reported, recorded, identified or documented through archival research, archaeological survey, accidental or intentional ground disturbance, oral history, Florida Master Site File form, or other means of documentation.
- It shall have a documented association with interments of persons of primarily African-American ancestry.

Applicant Eligibility: Pursuant to Section 267.21(2), *Florida Statutes*, the following types of Applicant Organizations are eligible to receive Abandoned African-American Cemeteries grants.

- For Cemetery Research projects (genealogical and historical research necessary to identify and contact relatives and descendants of persons buried in abandoned African-American cemeteries):
 - research institutions
 - colleges and universities
 - nonprofit organizations.
- For Cemetery Protection projects (repairing, restoring, and maintaining abandoned African-American cemeteries):
 - local governments
 - nonprofit organizations

For questions about project eligibility, please refer to the *Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant Guidelines*.

APPLICATION RESTRICTIONS

An Applicant Organization may submit only one (1) Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant application under a single application deadline for a particular application cycle. County or city governments or universities may submit single applications from more than one division or department under a single application cycle provided that those divisions or departments are separate and distinct budgetary units, and provided that applications do not address the same cemetery.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND PROJECT SELECTION

Eligible applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis by the Historic Cemeteries Program Advisory Council in a public meeting. The Council will review and score applications pursuant to criteria in the *Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant Guidelines*, and recommend to the Secretary of State those applications that should be forwarded to the 2026 Legislature for funding consideration in State Fiscal Year 2027.

The Council's recommendations to the Secretary of State will not result in any immediate grant award. The award and level of funding for each Abandoned African-American Cemeteries Grant Project will be subject to specific legislative appropriation.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

For projects receiving funding from the 2026 Legislature, funds will become available after July 1, 2026, which is the beginning of the 2026-2027 State Fiscal Year. To receive grant funds, grantees will be required to sign a Grant Award Agreement containing specific administrative responsibilities. Any unexpended balance of grant funds will revert to the state at the end of the 12-month period, on June 30, 2027

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding proposed projects, eligibility, or the online application form, please call the Historic Preservation Grants Program, Division of Historical Resources, at 800.847.7278 or 850.245.6333 or email at DHRgrants@dos.myflorida.com.