ALICE Stability Micro-Grant 2026 Reviewer Scoring Cheat Sheet

UNITED WAY OF WAYNE & HOLMES COUNTIES · VOLUNTEER INVESTMENT TEAM

100
Points Total

WHO IS ALICE?
Working or retired individuals/families who earn too much for public aid but still can't afford the cost of living in Wayne or Holmes County.

WHAT QUALIFIES?
Direct client services only — rent, utilities, transportation, childcare, work gear. *No salaries. No capital expenses.*

YOUR JOB
Score each question independently using the descriptions below. Don't reward perfect grammar — reward clarity, alignment, and realistic plans.

SECTION 1 — PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

	QUESTION	MAX	4 — EXCELLENT	3 — GOOD	2 — FAIR	1 — POOR
Q1	**Direct Services & Employment Link** *Ask: Is there a clear "because of this service, the client can keep/get their job" connection?*	14	2+ services clearly named. Barrier identified. Direct link to obtaining, retaining, or improving employment.	Services described with employment connection. Some lack specificity.	Services described but employment link is vague or indirect.	No meaningful employment connection, or too general to evaluate.
Q2A	**Population Served** *Ask: Do they specifically name ALICE households or working families?*	8	Clearly identifies ALICE households and/or working families. Tightly aligned with grant purpose.	Population identified, reasonably ALICE-aligned. May include broader groups.	Broad or loosely aligned. ALICE connection unclear.	Population not identified or doesn't match grant demographics.
Q2B	**Client Access / Intake Method** *Ask: Can an ALICE family actually find and access this service easily?*	6	Multiple accessible intake pathways. Low-barrier access demonstrated.	At least two intake methods. Generally accessible.	Only one method, or accessibility not addressed.	Intake unclear, overly restrictive, or not described.

	QUESTION	MAX	4 — EXCELLENT	3 — GOOD	2 — FAIR	1 — POOR
Q3	**Eligibility & Qualification Process** *Ask: Do they define who qualifies, how much they get, how often, what documents are needed, and who approves it?*	12	All 5 components present: eligibility criteria, max amount, frequency, required docs, approval process. Appropriate for ALICE households.	Most components present. Minor gaps but overall process is clear.	Partial criteria. Missing 2+ components or eligibility is vague.	Undefined, incomplete, or doesn't include income/ALICE guidelines.

SECTION 2 — BUDGET & USE OF FUNDS

	QUESTION	MAX	4 — EXCELLENT	3 — GOOD	2 — FAIR	1 — POOR
Q4	**Budget Detail & Use of Funds** ★ WEIGHTED *Ask: Do the numbers add up? Is every dollar tied to a specific service?*	20	Specific dollar amounts per service. Numbers add up to requested total. No vague or lump-sum entries.	Most funds itemized. Minor gaps but budget is understandable and credible.	Some detail but significant portions are vague, missing amounts, or don't match total.	No breakdown, single lump sum, or amounts don't correspond to named services.

SECTION 3 — ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

	QUESTION	MAX	4 — EXCELLENT	3 — GOOD	2 — FAIR	1 — POOR
Q6	**Org Experience & Capacity** *Ask: Have they done this before? Can they actually move the money appropriately?*	10	Specific, relevant experience with similar direct services. Examples, past programs, or outcomes cited. Fund administration is clearly within their capacity.	General org experience described. Some relevant context, lacks specific examples.	Limited experience. Org appears newer or pivoting to this service type.	No meaningful description of experience or capacity.

	QUESTION	MAX	4 — EXCELLENT	3 — GOOD	2 — FAIR	1 — POOR
Q7	**Employment & ALICE Verification** *Ask: How do they confirm someone is actually employed/ retired AND income-limited? Are specific documents named?*	10	Specific, practical methods for both employment/ retirement AND ALICE income threshold. Documentation clearly defined.	Verification described for at least one category. Methods plausible but may lack specificity.	Vague or inconsistent. ALICE threshold verification missing or unclear.	No process described, or relies on self-attestation alone.
Q8	**Employee Eligibility Policy** *Ask: Did they answer the question? If employees can apply, is there a clear conflict-of-interest safeguard?*	10	Directly addresses whether employees may apply. If yes: clear, conflict-of-interest-free process described. Policy is equitable.	Question answered with a reasonable policy. Minor gaps in conflict-of-interest management.	Partially answered. No clear process for handling employee applications fairly.	Not addressed, or policy raises conflict-of-interest concerns without safeguards.
Q9	**Stability Classes or Training** *Ask: Do they offer anything that builds long-term stability — not just a one-time handout?*	10	Specific classes, coaching, or training for chronic instability (financial literacy, employment skills, budgeting, etc.). Accessible to clients.	Some training/ education component described, though informal or limited in scope.	Minimal or generic training described. No substantive in-house programming.	No training or classes offered, or question not answered.

POINT SUMMARY

Q1: 14 pts | Q2A: 8 pts | Q2B: 6 pts | Q3: 12 pts

Q4: 20 pts ★ | Q6: 10 pts | Q7: 10 pts | Q8: 10 pts | Q9: 10 pts

= 100 pts

QUICK REFERENCE

✓ COUNT TOWARD ALICE ELIGIBILITY

- Employed — any job, full or part time
- Retired from a place of employment (on fixed/pension income)
- Wayne County or Holmes County resident
- Income at or below ALICE Threshold for their household size

× DOES NOT QUALIFY AS ALICE

- Unemployed (not actively working or retired from work)
- Receiving SS/SSDI benefits only with no employment history
- Resident of Orrville, Dalton, or Marshallville only → Orrville Area United Way
- Orgs located outside Holmes/Wayne County

× NOT ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS

- Staff or case manager salaries
- Intake coordinator time
- Capital expenses or equipment (unless direct-to-client)
- Programs serving people who don't qualify as ALICE
- Cash handouts with no accountability process

✓ EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE DIRECT SERVICES

- Rent, mortgage, or utility assistance
- Gas cards, car repairs, transportation costs
- Childcare support or scholarships
- Work-related expenses (uniforms, certifications, tools)
- Emergency basic needs tied to employment stability

RECOMMENDATION GUIDE

✓ Fund

Strong alignment with ALICE criteria. Services are specific, budget is itemized, eligibility is clear, and the organization has the capacity to deliver. High confidence in impact.

◑ Waitlist

Solid intent and mission alignment, but gaps in budget detail, eligibility process, or verification. Could be funded if stronger applicants don't exhaust resources.

× Decline

Population doesn't clearly match ALICE criteria, services aren't eligible uses, or the application lacks enough detail to evaluate impact and accountability.

SCORING REMINDERS

USE THE RUBRIC, NOT YOUR GUT

Score based on what's written, not what you think they meant. If it's missing, score it lower — don't assume.

MIDDLE = UNCLEAR OR MISSING

If info is vague or incomplete, score in the middle or lower range. A 2 is not a failure — it's honest feedback.

Q4 COUNTS DOUBLE — READ CAREFULLY

The budget question is weighted at 20 points. A strong program with a weak budget will be penalized significantly.

PERFECT GRAMMAR ≠ HIGH SCORE

Clarity, alignment, realistic impact, and community understanding matter most. Writing style is not a factor.

NO GUARANTEED REPEAT FUNDING

Prior year recipients are not guaranteed funding. Score each application on its own merit for this grant cycle.

SUBMIT AT: UWWH.ORG/2026ALICEMICROGRANTVITREVIEW

Rate all 9 questions, choose a recommendation, and enter your name before submitting. One submission per applicant.