

2027 GRANT PROGRAM

Updated
July 2026

**NP
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BACKGROUND

Founded in 2007, the National Public Pension Coalition (NPPC) works nationwide to counter attacks on public employee pensions and to launch proactive campaigns to protect and enhance them and their benefits. NPPC's mission has been to provide financial and strategic support to allied partners, assisting their efforts to defend pensions and advance constructive pension policies for public employees.

Since NPPC's founding, our organization has contributed over \$4.8 million to grassroots groups to combat efforts to harm public employees' retirement. We offer the expertise and resources to help multi-affiliate campaigns succeed. Whether through direct financial support, paid media support, digital support, expert testimony, or campaign planning, we are here to help.

Grant funding is awarded through a competitive application process to eligible coalitions in states and other jurisdictions. NPPC prioritizes established coalitions conducting sustained advocacy as well as active campaigns responding to immediate threats or significant opportunities related to defined benefit pensions. Funding decisions will consider the urgency and importance of the proposed work, the strength of affiliate participation, available matching support, the clarity of the applicant's goals and strategy, and the coalition's capacity to carry out the proposed activities.

NPPC distributes annual grants in two payments. Grant recipients may choose to receive payments by check or electronically. After NPPC sends the initial payment to grant recipients, we will work with you to implement a campaign plan, provide paid media assistance, and develop a strategy that utilizes staff time and expertise. Our ultimate goal is not just to win legislative battles, but to expand pension access, educate members about their pension benefits, advance pensions themselves as a solution to recruiting and retention challenges, fully leverage pensions as a source of union power, and most importantly, to seed and build autonomous infrastructure through grassroots coalitions.

ORGANIZATIONAL ELIGIBILITY

NPPC is a coalition of public employee unions, the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS), and other entities interested in preserving and expanding public employee pensions. NPPC makes all major decisions by consensus among the core partners. In that spirit, NPPC provides grants to multi-affiliate, consensus-oriented coalitions to protect, preserve, and expand public employee defined benefit pensions.

GRANT CATEGORIES

In an effort to strategically allocate resources and local coalition efforts, NPPC offers two grant categories: Sustaining Grants and Campaign Grants. Sustaining grants are aimed at maintaining ongoing capacity in key states, while campaign grants assist direct outreach around stated pension campaign goals. **Applicants must identify the grant category for which they are applying and explain how their proposed work aligns with that category in the application narrative, work plan, and budget.**

Sustaining Grant

- **Up to \$15,000**
- For established coalitions with strong affiliate and financial support.
- Supports legislative tracking, advocacy, and policymaker outreach.
- Maintains a coordinated labor table focused on pension issues.
- Intended for sustained, year-round coalition work.
- Requires meaningful in-state participation and matching funds.

Campaign Grant

- **Up to \$50,000**
- Supports active campaigns responding to immediate threats, opportunities for expansion, or member organizing
- Must include clear, measurable goals tied to legislation, organizing, education, or advocacy
- Focus on a specific bill, referendum, event, election, or critical moment
- Include a commitment for union coalition partners to participate as local NPPC affiliates, coordinating resources and sharing best practices across pension varied allies.
- Should identify the target audience, intended outcome, and campaign activities
- Requires measurable benchmarks, a timeline, and stakeholder engagement

GRANT & COALITION BUILDING PROCESS CHECKLIST

For a grant to be considered, coalitions must submit a grant application that includes the following:

✓	Identify the grant category (Sustaining or Campaign) and explain how the proposed work meets the purpose and requirements of that category within the application narrative and work plan.
✓	Letters of support from all in-state coalition partners with a commitment to contribute funds within the first quarter of 2027 or when the coalition decides contributions are necessary.
✓	A budget that includes coalition operating costs and funds the coalition is planning to expend throughout the year.
✓	A work plan that is broken down quarterly. This document should include day-to-day objectives, tasks, and milestones you'd like to achieve.
✓	An assessment of anticipated pension threats and opportunities in 2027. This should include relevant legislation, opponent activity, policy proposals, opportunities to protect, restore, or expand defined benefit pensions, and any other developments that may require sustained advocacy or an active campaign.
✓	A timeline for the year, to include pre-scheduled bi-weekly meetings with NPPC staff during the legislative session, major milestones in the legislative calendar, and significant advocacy events (like a day at the capital lobbying event). Additionally, once per quarter, a full coalition meeting should be scheduled where all partners are in attendance, whether virtually or in person.

APPLICANT NARRATIVE & WORK PLAN

Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the proposed work aligns with the selected grant category.

Sustaining Grant applicants should describe their coalition's ongoing legislative tracking, advocacy, affiliate coordination, outreach to elected officials and staff, and efforts to maintain an active table of labor partners working together on pension issues.

Campaign Grant applicants should identify the immediate threat or major opportunity being addressed; the specific legislation, referendum, event, organizing objective, or critical moment involved; the campaign's measurable goals; and the activities, audiences, timeline, and benchmarks used to evaluate progress.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Use the following questions to help guide and develop your application narrative.

Sustaining Grant Supplemental Questions

1. How long has the coalition been operating, and which affiliates currently participate?
 2. How frequently does the coalition meet or coordinate around pension issues?
 3. What legislative tracking, advocacy, and outreach activities will be conducted during 2027?
 4. How will the coalition engage elected officials, legislative staff, affiliates, members, and retirees?
 5. What financial or in-kind support will participating affiliates provide?
 6. How will the grant help maintain a coordinated labor table and strengthen the coalition's ongoing work?
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Campaign Grant Supplemental Questions

1. What immediate threat to defined benefit pensions or major opportunity for pension protection, restoration, or expansion will this campaign address?
2. What specific legislation, ballot measure, organizing effort, advocacy event, election-related moment, or other critical development is driving the campaign?
3. What is the campaign's primary goal, and what measurable outcomes will indicate success?
4. Explain this campaign within the broader context of a nationwide attack on defined benefit pensions. Please include plans to share your campaign's story, lessons, and results with NPPC affiliates and partners nationwide. In other words, why should national partners be motivated to support this initiative?
5. Which audiences or decision-makers must be reached or influenced?
6. How will coalition affiliates, members, retirees, public employees, and other partners be engaged?
7. What key campaign activities will take place, and when?
8. What portion of the requested funding will support direct campaign activity rather than routine coalition operations?

Important Notes

- Convene a meeting (virtual or in-person) with potential or current coalition partners to work through and approve the grant application. In-person or virtual representation by NPPC staff at the application approval meeting is required. The in-person or virtual meetings should take place in September or October 2026.
- All letters of support must be submitted by the application deadline listed below. If a letter of support is not included, the draft budget should not include that partner's contribution.
- NPPC is here to help. Please reach out if you have any questions about the grant application process! Please work with us well ahead of the deadlines so we can help make your application as strong as possible.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Final applications are due: **Monday, October 5, 2026**

- To request additional information or a time extension, please contact NPPC Communications & Operations Coordinator Ariel McConnell at amcconnell@publicpensions.org.
- Applications will be accepted, denied, or returned to coalitions for suggested improvements.
- Applications should be submitted as **PDF** files to Ariel McConnell via email (amcconnell@publicpensions.org). Please feel free to send any questions to Ariel throughout the application process.
- A fiscal agent must be designated to receive and administer grant funds. Fiscal agents should indicate their preferred payment method: check or electronic payment through Bill.com. A valid mailing address is required for check payments, and a payment contact email is required for Bill.com payments.

REQUESTS ARE NOT GUARANTEED

Because available grant resources are limited, NPPC may prioritize a smaller number of affiliates with more urgent pension threats, organizing campaign opportunities, strong affiliate participation, and clearly defined plans for time-sensitive advocacy or active campaign work. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding at the amount requested. Grants can be awarded on a rolling basis.

SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT (SUSTAINING)

National Public Pension Coalition
1201 16th Street NW, Suite 614
Washington D.C., 20036

[Date]

To the National Public Pension Coalition,

I am submitting this letter of support on behalf of [ORGANIZATION] for COALITION NAME]'s grant application. I have reviewed the sustaining grant application and am committed to ensuring our coalition meets the outlined goals. To support these goals, we are committed to helping strengthen the coalition and ensuring its long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

Additionally, [ORGANIZATION] pledges a financial contribution of \$XX towards these sustained efforts. I anticipate this contribution being made in the first quarter of 2027.

Sincerely,

[Name]

SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT (CAMPAIGN)

National Public Pension Coalition
1201 16th Street NW, Suite 614
Washington D.C., 20036

[Date]

To the National Public Pension Coalition,

I am submitting this letter of support on behalf of [ORGANIZATION] for [COALITION]'s campaign grant application. I have reviewed the application and am committed to ensuring our coalition meets the outlined goals. To achieve those goals, we understand my role is to assist the coalition.

To help achieve these goals, [UNION AFFILIATE] looks forward to joining the national network of NPPC labor affiliates, coordinating resources and sharing best practices across pension coalition allies.

Additionally, [ORGANIZATION] pledges a financial contribution of \$XX towards these efforts. I anticipate this contribution being made in the first quarter of 2027.

Sincerely,

[Name]

2027 NPPC GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET TEMPLATE

Grant Category (select one): ☐ Sustaining ☐ Campaign

The proposed budget must align with the purpose of the selected grant category. Sustaining Grant requests may not exceed \$15,000. Campaign Grant requests may not exceed \$50,000.

Costs (Money Outgoing)

Day-to-Day Operations	List Anticipated Costs for Regular Operations (staffing, technology, digital, meetings, etc.)	Amount
	Total Amount	\$

Potential Campaign Expenditures	Large Campaign Expenditures (<i>ads, speakers, lobby day(s), in-district meetings, travel, one-time website costs, research, consultants</i>)	Amount
	Total Amount	\$

Contributions/ Grant Ask

Coalition Partner Contributions	Partner Name (<i>NEA, AFSCME, etc.</i>)	Commitment Amount
	Total	\$

NPPC Grant Request	Total Funds Needed (total of outgoing costs)	\$
	In-State Contributions Commitment Total	\$
	Anticipated Balance Gap	\$
	Total Ask Amount	\$

FISCAL AGENT & PAYMENT INFORMATION

To ensure proper disbursement of grant funds, each coalition must designate a fiscal agent to receive and administer grant dollars. This may be a specific affiliate, an umbrella organization, or a newly created entity.

Please complete the information below. If this is a change from a previous year, please highlight that in your application.

Fiscal Agent Name: _____

Organization Name (if different): _____

Preferred Payment Method:

- ☐ Check
- ☐ Electronic payment through Bill.com

Mailing Address (for check delivery):

Point of Contact Name & Title: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Note: NPPC cannot release funds without confirmation of a valid fiscal agent and required payment information. Fiscal agents selecting electronic payment may be asked to complete Bill.com onboarding before payments are issued.