BFED Committee

From: Axel I. Beers
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 8:27 AM
To: Kate Griffiths; Kirsten E. Szabo; Yukilei Sugimura; Roxanne K. Morita; BFED Committee
Cc: Gabe Johnson; Jordan Helle
Subject: Re: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting
Attachments: County of Maui Grants Survey Summary.pdf

Good morning,

Attached are slides summarizing the results of CM Johnson's survey regarding the grants process.

Thank you,
Axel

Axel Beers
Executive Assistant
Office of Councilmember Gabe Johnson
200 South High Street, 8th Floor
Wailuku, HI 96793
http://mauicounty.us

From: Kate Griffiths <Kate.Griffiths@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 8:23 AM
To: Kirsten E. Szabo <Kirsten.Szabo@mauicounty.us>; Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>; Roxanne K. Morita <Roxanne.Morita@mauicounty.us>; BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Cc: Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Axel I. Beers <Axel.Beers@mauicounty.us>; Jordan Helle <Jordan.Helle@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Re: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

Axel should be sending over shortly. 😁

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Kirsten E. Szabo <Kirsten.Szabo@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 8:02:46 AM
To: Kate Griffiths <Kate.Griffiths@mauicounty.us>; Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>; Roxanne K. Morita <Roxanne.Morita@mauicounty.us>; BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Cc: Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Axel I. Beers <Axel.Beers@mauicounty.us>; Jordan Helle <Jordan.Helle@mauicounty.us>
Subject: RE: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

Aloha Kate,

If appropriate, would you mind sending us the presentation?

Mahalo and warm regards,

Kirsten Szabo
Legislative Analyst
County of Maui | Office of Council Services
Email: kirsten.szabo@mauicounty.us
Office: (808) 270-7662 | Cell: (808) 268-2402

From: Kate Griffiths <Kate.Griffiths@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 7:49 AM
To: Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>; Roxanne K. Morita <Roxanne.Morita@mauicounty.us>; BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Cc: Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Axel I. Beers <Axel.Beers@mauicounty.us>; Jordan Helle <Jordan.Helle@mauicounty.us>; Kirsten E. Szabo <Kirsten.Szabo@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Re: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

Yes, we have a slide show we can send over that he can go through.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 5:11 AM
To: Roxanne K. Morita <Roxanne.Morita@mauicounty.us>; BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Cc: Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Kate Griffiths <Kate.Griffiths@mauicounty.us>; Axel I. Beers <Axel.Beers@mauicounty.us>; Jordan Helle <Jordan.Helle@mauicounty.us>; Kirsten E. Szabo <Kirsten.Szabo@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Re: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

Thank you.
I am taking up grants, and I wonder if he would like to share the results of the survey?

From: Roxanne K. Morita <Roxanne.Morita@mauicounty.us>
Date: Monday, March 9, 2026 at 8:04 PM
To: BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>, Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>
Cc: Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>, Kate Griffiths <Kate.Griffiths@mauicounty.us>,

Axel I. Beers <Axel.Beers@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Re: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

Aloha,

My apologies for the late notice, Member Johnson will be late arriving to the BFED meeting tomorrow morning.

Expedition is cancelling some of their service to prepare for the bad incoming weather and Member Johnson's scheduled trip to Maui has been changed to tomorrow 03/10.

Thank you,

Roxanne

From: BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:04 AM
Cc: EA <ea@mauicounty.us>
Subject: BFED 03/10/2026 meeting

County of Maui Grant Process Survey

Office of Councilmember Gabe Johnson
March 2026

County of Maui Grant Process Feedback Survey

- https://forms.gle/xZvcfTDETL6z7rsa7
- Anonymous
- Responses accepted January 29 - February 15
- Questions developed in collaboration with grantees that approached us with this need
- 28 responses representing 90 grants and grant applications from FY2024 to present (one respondent was a fiscal sponsor with 30 grants over this time period)
- Range of $25,000 to $7.2M in grant amounts
- Line-item and competitive grantees
- Fiscal sponsors and direct organizations
- 10 County grantmaking offices or departments

Results

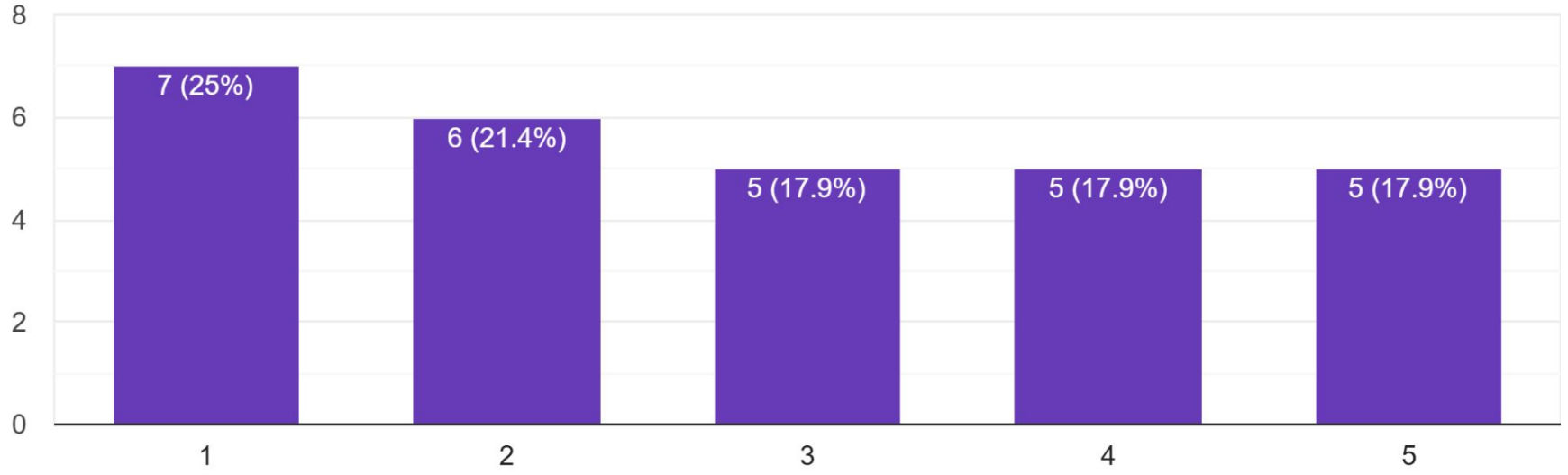
- Respondents primarily serve vulnerable populations and protect the environment and natural resources
- 93% of respondents receive funding from sources other than the County
- Common challenges:
  - 78.6% of respondents find the timely disbursement of funds to be the most challenging part of the grant process
  - 53.6% of respondents say reporting requirements are most challenging

Results

- Asked, “Do you believe that any County actions or decisions regarding your grant (reviews, approvals, denials, advancement, reimbursement, timing, etc.) were made for personal reasons? Or, have you ever chosen to not provide feedback on the County grants process to preserve your relationship with the County?” only 57.1% responded “No”
- Over a 30-day period respondents report awaiting reimbursement for amounts as high as $1.5M and $600,000

How would you rate your overall experience with the County of Maui's grant process? Five stars represents an excellent experience, while one star is poor.

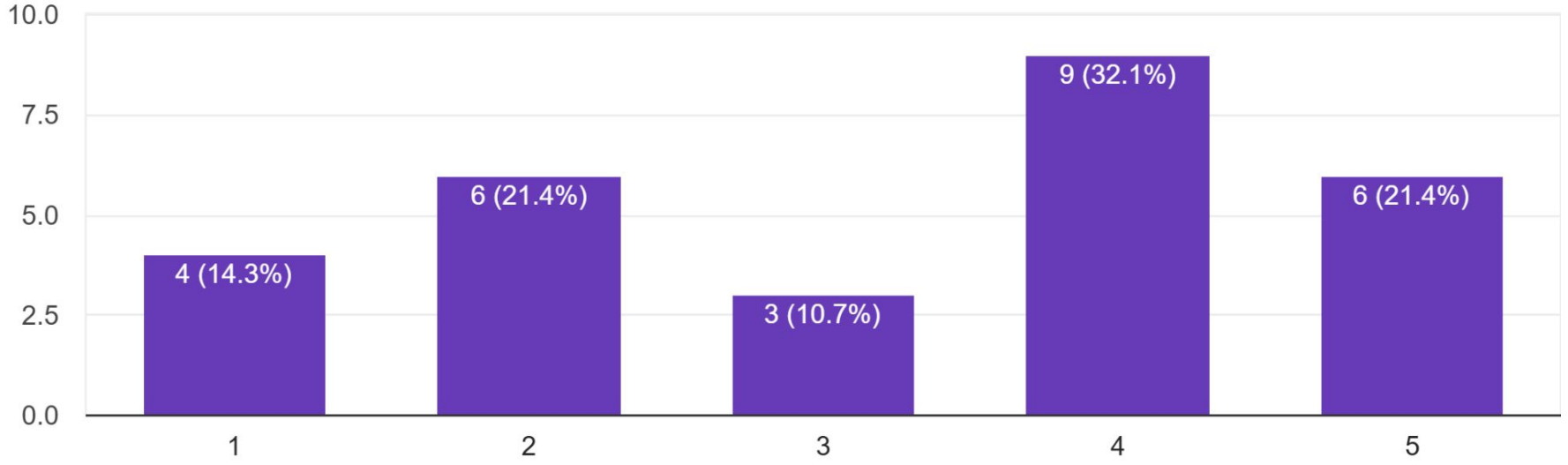
28 responses



Average rating: 2.82

With five stars being excellent and one star being poor, how would you rate the communication and response times between the County of Maui and grantees during the grants process?

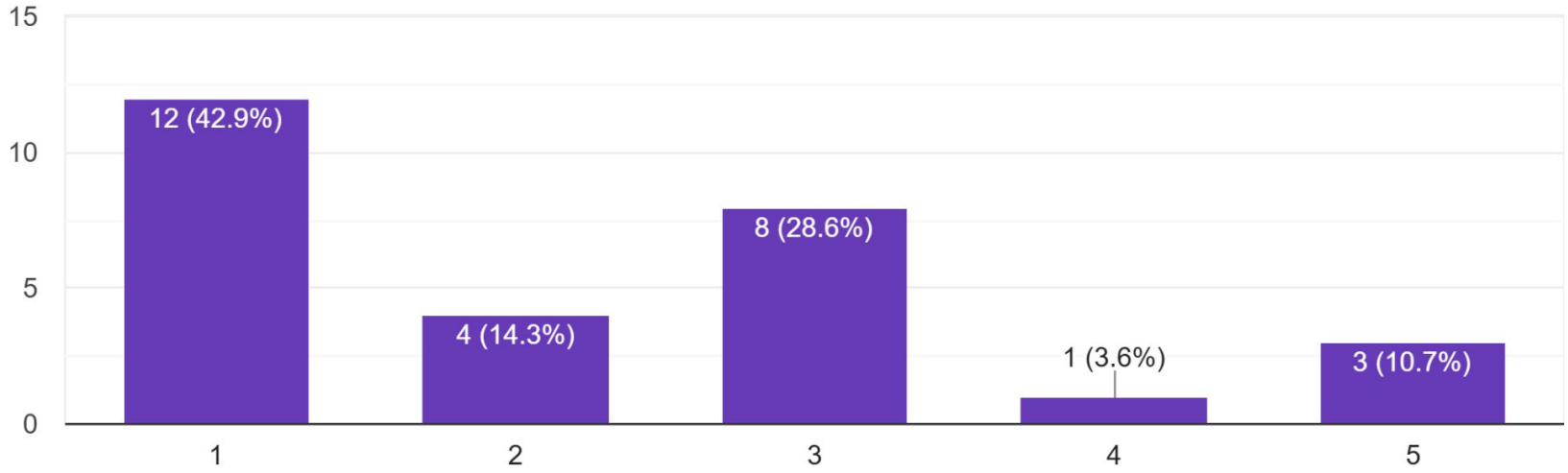
28 responses



Average rating: 3.25

How timely do you find the disbursement of funds from the County of Maui?

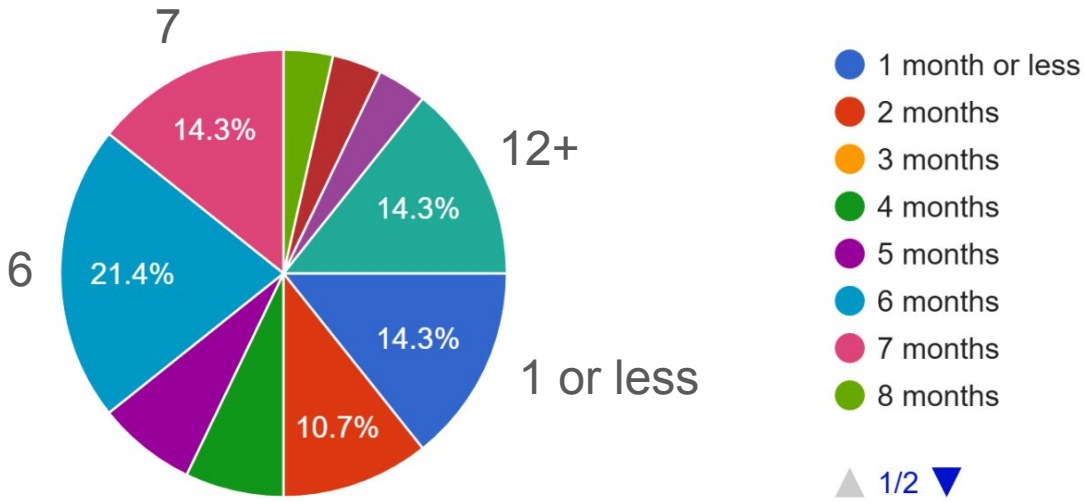
28 responses



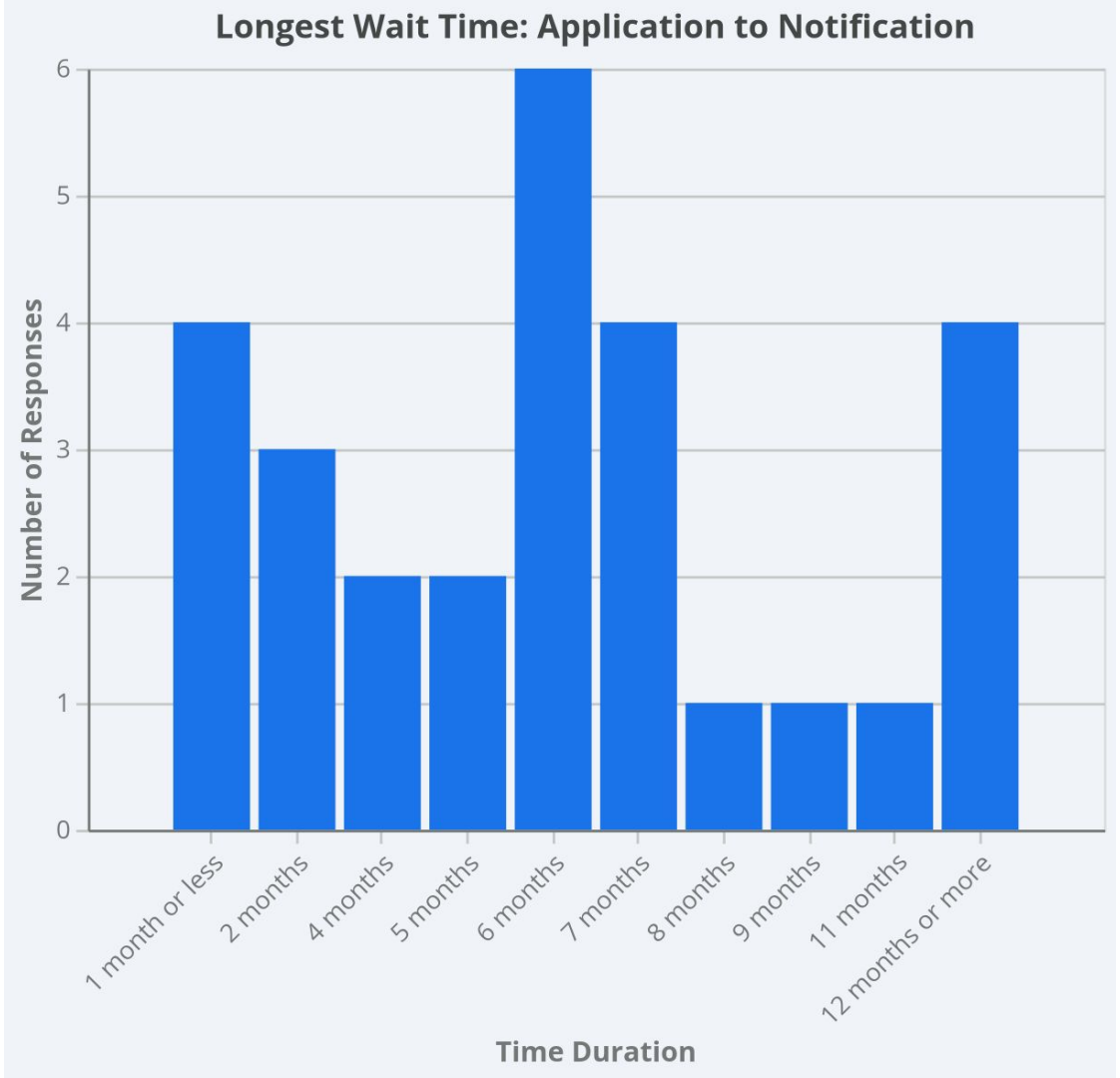
On a scale of “Not timely” to “Very timely”

What is the longest you have waited from application submittal to being notified of grant award or denial by the County?

28 responses

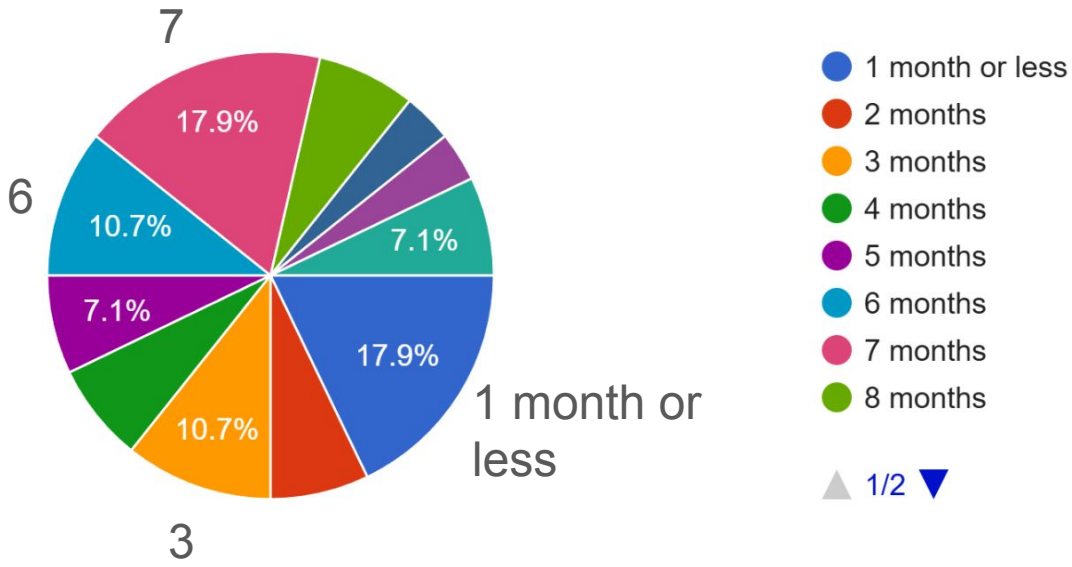


Average: 6 months


Longest Wait Time: Application to Notification
Number of Responses
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
1 month or less
2 months
4 months
5 months
6 months
7 months
8 months
9 months
11 months
12 months or more
Time Duration

What is the longest you have waited from being notified of a grant award to signing and executing a grant contract with the County?

28 responses

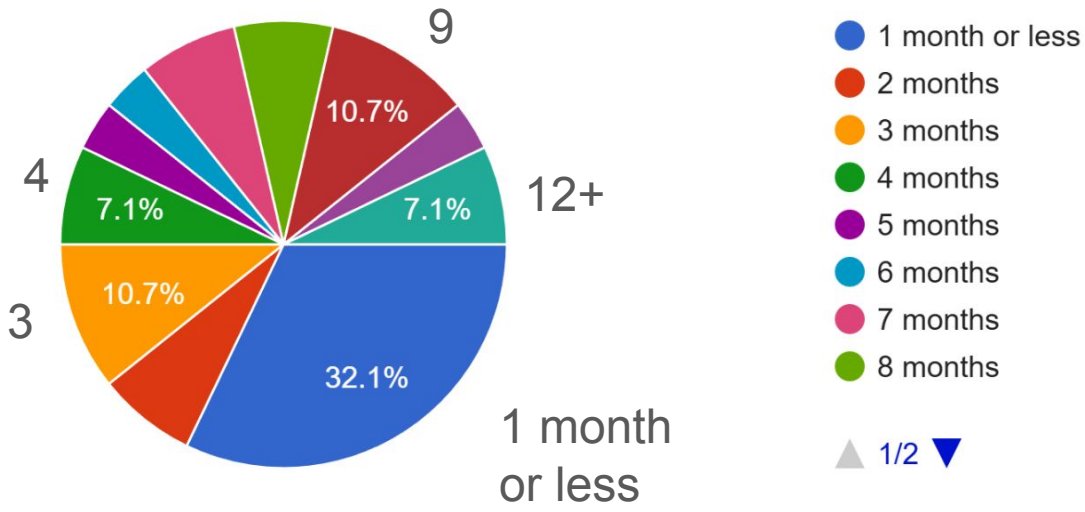


Average: 5.36 months

Longest Wait Time: Notification to Contract Execution
Number of Responses
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
1 month or less
2 months
3 months
4 months
5 months
6 months
7 months
8 months
10 months
11 months
12 months or more
Time Duration

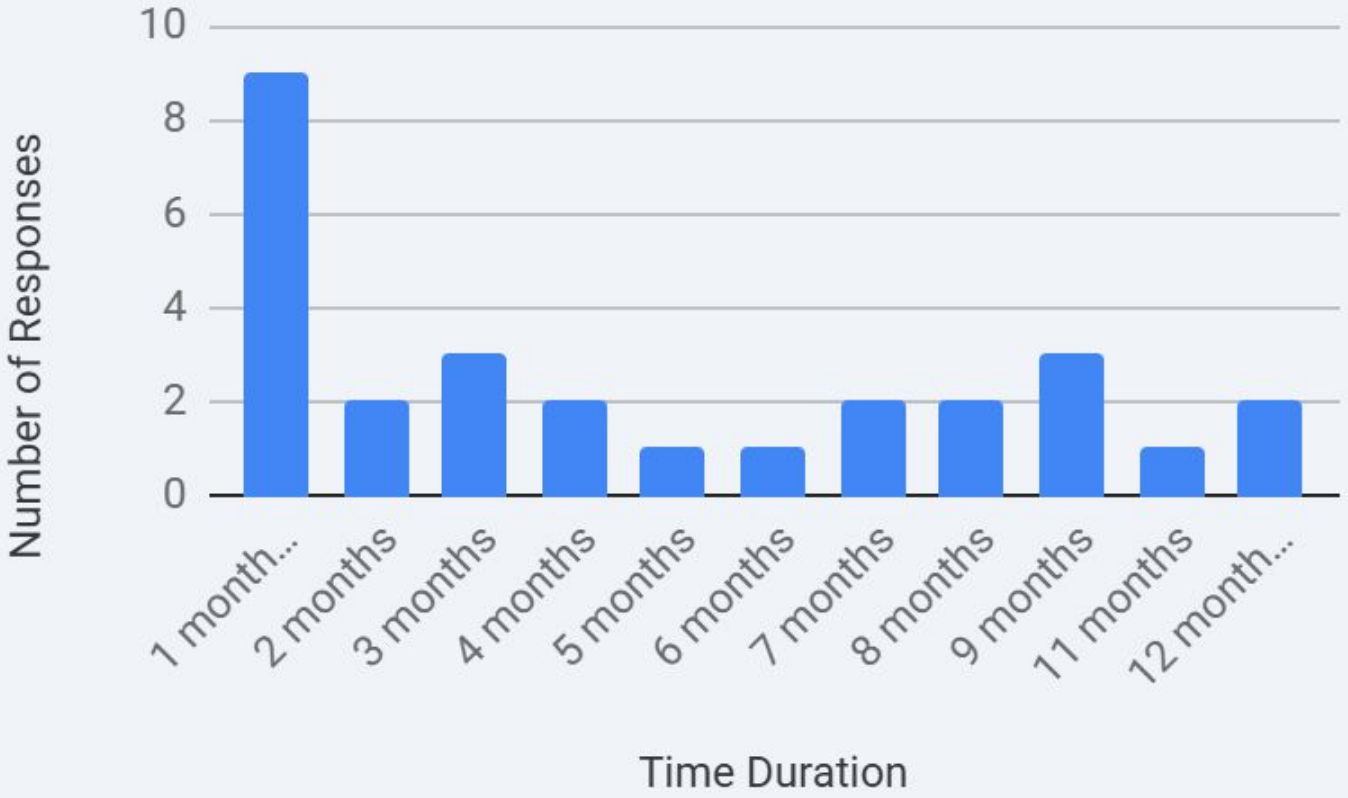
What is the longest you have waited from signing and executing a grant contract to receiving the first grant fund advancement from the County?

28 responses



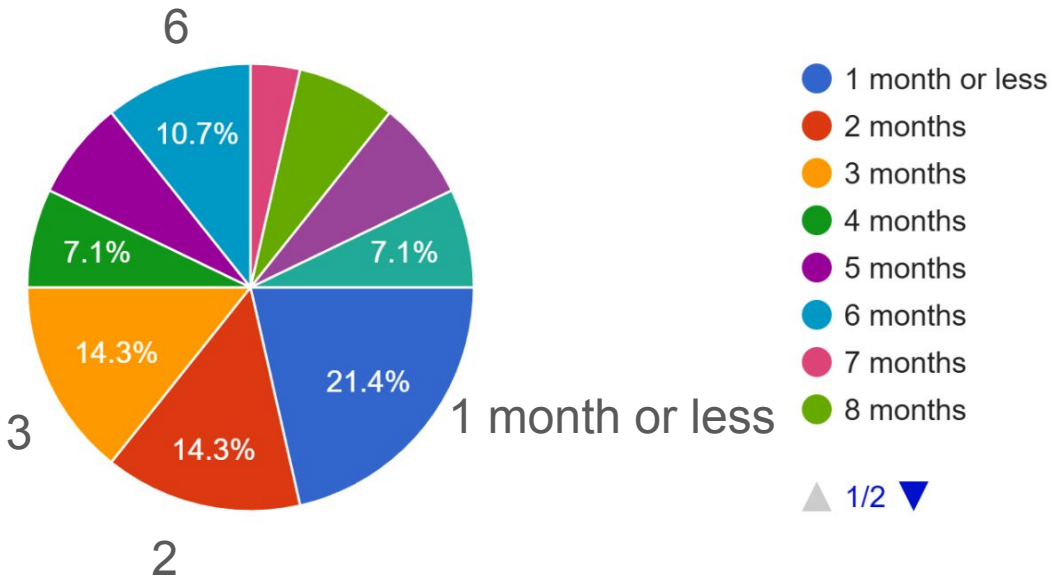
Average 4.75 months

Longest Wait Time: Contract Execution to First Advance



What is the longest you have waited from submitting a reimbursement request to receiving reimbursement for that request from the County?

28 responses



Average: 4.68 months

Longest Wait Time: Submitting Reimbursement Request to Receiving Reimbursement

Process Stage	Average Longest Wait Time (Months)
Application Submittal to Award/Denial Notification	6.00 months
Notification to Contract Execution	5.36 months
Contract Execution to First Fund Advance	4.75 months
Reimbursement Submission to Receiving Funds	4.68 months

Average Total: 20.79 months

AI Summary of Feedback, Comments, and Suggestions for Improvement

- Reimbursement and Payment Delays
  - The current **reimbursement process causes significant financial strain, project delays, and cash flow issues** for many organizations, especially smaller non-profits, with wait times extending over six months and some never receiving the advance they sought.
- Process Efficiency and Bureaucracy
  - The entire grant process is described as cumbersome, repetitive, overly granular, and lengthy, with numerous required signatures (including the Mayor's) and **excessive bureaucratic scrutiny** on reimbursement requests.
- Technology and Transparency
  - A strong need exists for modernizing county systems, with requests for a **centralized** electronic portal, automatic online processing with **full transparency on application status**, and improved user-friendliness for platforms like Amplified and Submittable, including providing Word templates for writing proposals.
- Need for Clearer Guidelines and Timelines
  - Grantees requested **set timelines for the grant process** (e.g., 30 days for payment after submission), clearer written guidelines, consistent expectations from staff, and **a cultural shift where non-profits are viewed as trusted partners rather than approached solely through a compliance lens.**
- Positive Staff Feedback
  - Despite the systemic issues, several respondents praised the individual efforts, responsiveness, and helpfulness of **specific county staff members and grant managers**.

Reimbursement Process

Maui County Code

3.36.190 - Disbursement.

Recipients of grants are eligible for upfront disbursement of twenty-five percent or more of grant funds, and any remaining grant funds must be paid through the agency's reimbursement process.

https://library.municode.com/hi/county_of_maui/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT3REFI_CH3.36MACOGRPR_3.36.190DI

Proposal

Recipients of County monetary grants are eligible for upfront disbursements of grant funds based on a determination of need. Grant funds must be paid under the grant agreement terms and conditions. The agency must notify grant applicants and grant recipients of their eligibility for upfront disbursements under this section.