

Expanded Food Access for Minnesota Children and Adults Grant

Questions and Answers

The following are the questions and answers we received on the Expanded Food Access for Minnesota Children and Adults grant opportunity. The period for questions has now closed. There were 24 questions in total.

- Question:** Are we able to serve meals to adults, including seniors, under this grant?
Answer: Yes, all adults are included as long as they are not currently being served by another federal program.
- Question:** Is the grant only available to schools already serving meals?
Answer: Grants are intended for organizations that have an established meal distribution program, even if they are not currently serving meals. Grant funds cannot be used to support start-up costs.
- Question:** If we use Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP), are we still eligible for the grant money?
Answer: Educational institutions (including child care) are eligible to apply. Keep in mind that only expenses **not** currently funded by other sources (e.g., United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition programs) are eligible for funding under this grant. Applicants must demonstrate that their existing funding does not cover the expenses being requested in the grant application, even if the expenses are allowable costs under the existing funding.
- Question:** Are transportation costs for delivering meals to participants an eligible expense for this grant opportunity?
Answer: Transportation is an eligible expense. Keep in mind that only expenses not currently funded by other sources (e.g., USDA child nutrition programs) are eligible for funding under this grant. Applicants must demonstrate that their existing funding does not cover the expenses being requested in the grant application, even if the expenses are allowable costs under the existing funding.
- Question:** Can the grant funds be used to purchase a new dish machine and ovens?
Answer: Applicants may request funding for any eligible expenses as long as the total amount requested is less than the maximum grant award. Requests for items considered capital equipment (greater than the \$5,000 federal capital threshold) must be related to a unique need created by COVID-19, such as equipment for a new distribution method. Only expenses not currently funded by other sources (e.g., USDA child nutrition programs) are eligible for funding under this grant. Applicants must demonstrate that their existing

funding does not cover the expenses being requested in the grant application, even if the expenses are allowable costs under the existing funding.

6. **Question:** We sell produce to school districts, institutions, and organizations, but we do not do any meal prep ourselves. Are we eligible to apply for this funding in partnership with some of the entities that we supply, or should they be the primary applicant?

Answer: The primary applicant must be from an eligible organization that has an established meal preparation and distribution program. We encourage formal and informal partnerships.

7. **Question:** Can the funds from this grant be used to cover months during the pandemic before July 1?

Answer: Grant funds will be retroactive to July 1, 2020 and may not be used to cover expenses from time periods prior to July 1.

8. **Question:** Is this grant only for new meal types or populations we don't already serve?

Answer: Grant funds may be used to serve new meal types or populations, but other expenses associated with increasing access to meals will also be considered. Keep in mind that only expenses not currently funded by other sources (e.g., USDA child nutrition programs) are eligible for funding under this grant. Applicants must demonstrate that their existing funding does not cover the expenses being requested in the grant application, even if the expenses are allowable costs under the existing funding.

9. **Question:** We provide fruits and vegetables that allow people to prepare their own meals from home. Are we eligible for this grant even though we do not provide meat, milk, or prepared meals?

Answer: The purpose of the grant is to provide prepared meals. Food that will not be distributed as part of a prepared meal (e.g., groceries or meal kits) is considered an ineligible expense. We encourage formal and informal partnerships to meet the grant requirement of distributing prepared meals.

10. **Question:** If we have a food service management company, do we ask them about the budget? If so, which parts?

Answer: If the applicant utilizes a foodservice management company or vended meals provider, requested funds need to be for items outside of what is covered in the contract. This may be easier to identify with a cost-reimbursable versus a fixed price contract. For fixed price contracts, applicants should be able to identify via invoices any additional items charged outside of the fixed per meal price that is typically charged. For cost-reimbursable contracts, the applicant will need to work with the foodservice management company to identify additional expenses for responding to COVID-19. Costs directly absorbed by the applicant related to responding to COVID-19 could also be identified.

11. **Question:** Will there be a webinar about the grant?

Answer: There will not be a webinar. Potential grant applicants may submit questions through July 10, which will be included in a Question and Answer (Q&A) document published after July 13.

12. **Question:** Does this grant follow the CACFP adult meal pattern or a different meal pattern? I understand we would have to provide three components. Do we need to provide them in the reimbursable amounts per the meal pattern?

Answer: The grant does not require that a certain meal pattern be followed. The provided definition of a meal consisting of three food components offers a guideline for applicants to distinguish the grant from

funding groceries, meal kits or small snack items and to ensure that the meals provided are nutritious. Applicants should use their best judgement in determining what food components or items to provide in order to serve healthy meals that meet the nutritional needs of the population they are serving.

13. **Question:** I'm noticing that the Meal Access Grant is only applicable to 501(c)(3)'s. Legally, we're a nonprofit Corporation, not a 501(c)(3). I'm wondering if there is a way for us to access this grant either on our own, or through a potential fiscal sponsor.

Answer: Only nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status are eligible to apply. Partnerships are encouraged in order to meet the grant eligibility requirements.

14. **Question:** Can a food shelf apply for the grant?

Answer: Eligible organizations (nonprofits, educational institutions, tribal nations, and local governmental units) must provide prepared meals to qualify for this grant funding. The definition of a prepared meal is included in the [application instructions](#) under "eligible activities" on pages 2-3. In most cases food shelves would not be eligible for grant funding. Partnerships are encouraged in order to meet the grant eligibility requirements.

15. **Question:** We provide cans/bags/packages of shelf stable almost-ready-to-eat (open the container, warm up the food item, etc.) that are placed in a bag as specific menu created by our on-staff dietician. Would this program expression be an eligible "prepared" meal?

Answer: Yes, as long as the meal meets the definition of a prepared meal. The definition is included in the [application instructions](#) under "eligible activities" on pages 2-3.

16. **Question:** We been involved with planning, organizing, funding, and distributing nonperishable meals for the students in our district. Is a backpack program like this eligible for this grant, as I know it says prepared meals?

Answer: Backpack programs are eligible as long as the meal meets the definition of a prepared meal. The definition is included in the [application instructions](#) under "eligible activities" on pages 2-3.

17. **Question:** Can you please confirm that the following is the definition of a prepared meal? "Prepared meals consist of individual meals supported by a menu where at least three food components are included (meat/meat alternate, grains, vegetables, fruits, and fluid milk per the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition program definitions). Multiple days' worth of meals may be provided if they require minimal recipient assembly."

Answer: Yes, this is correct.

18. **Question:** For the Expanded Meal Access grant, I assume that we would not be able to charge individuals for the meals provided. Is that correct?

Answer: Yes, this is correct. Grantees may **not** charge for meals provided.

19. **Question:** As an emergency manager could I write this grant and disperse to the food shelf?

Answer: The purpose of the grant is to provide prepared meals. Food that will not be distributed as part of a prepared meal (e.g., from a food shelf) is ineligible for grant funding. We encourage formal and informal partnerships to meet the grant requirement of distributing prepared meals.

20. **Question:** If we receive a grant award, do we pay back what is not spent?

Answer: Grant funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis. Applicants are asked to not request more funding than they think can be spent in the short grant period.

21. **Question:** Could this be used to help individual families in need?

Answer: Yes, the grant can be used to provide meals to children and adults in need.

22. **Question:** What are the documentation requirements?

Answer: Grantees must submit the total number of meals served between July 1 and December 30, 2020; the number of additional meals served using grant funds between July 1 and December 30, 2020; and the estimated unduplicated number of children and adults served between July 1 and December 30, 2020. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) may request additional information, which will be communicated as soon as possible.

23. **Question:** We are working with a variety of partners. The success of this initiative has resulted in partners' desire to continue this collaborative, multi-agency approach to food access. Will you fund multiple requests per community/county?

Answer: Funding will depend on the number of applications received. We aim to cover a wide geographic spread. Your application will be strengthened if you apply as a partnership rather than individually.

24. **Question:** When you say meals is this food to be prepared (cooked) or is it perishables to distribute to the community?

Answer: The purpose of the grant is to provide prepared meals. The definition of a prepared meal is included in the [application instructions](#) under “eligible activities” on pages 2-3.