



Competitive – Federal – Federal Fiscal Year 20 (FFY20) Expanded Meal Access for Minnesota Children and Adults Grant

TO: Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status (including faith-based organizations), educational institutions, tribal nations and local governmental units serving individuals in the state of Minnesota

FROM: Monica Herrera, Director of Nutrition, Health and Youth Development

ACTION: Signed and submitted applications must be received via the [survey link](#) by July 20, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Central Time.

Instructions

Purpose and Outcome of the Grant Opportunity

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has funding available from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) for nonprofits (including faith-based organizations), educational institutions (e.g., early learning, K-12 schools and districts, higher education), tribal nations and local governmental units that serve individuals in the state of Minnesota. The purpose of the funds is to provide prepared meals to Minnesota children and adults who are experiencing food insecurity as a result of COVID-19.

This grant is intended to supplement existing funds in order to enhance the grantee's capacity to meet the increased demand for meals. Proposals may address needs on a statewide, regional or local level. Grants are intended for organizations that have an established meal distribution program, not to support start-up costs. Formal and informal partnerships with public, non-profit, or for-profit entities are encouraged.

The grant has three primary objectives:

- **Objective #1:** To increase meal access for people who are experiencing food insecurity as a result of COVID-19.
- **Objective #2:** To increase the number of meals served to children and adults in the targeted area.
- **Objective #3:** To provide additional access to a variety of nutritious and culturally-specific foods.

Eligibility Criteria

Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status (including faith-based organizations), educational institutions, tribal nations and local governmental units that serve individuals in Minnesota are eligible to apply.

Funding Available

MDE estimates \$9,500,000 is available to fund approximately 30 to 50 grants using funds from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), CFDA 21.019. The maximum grant award may not exceed \$1,000,000; the minimum amount an applicant may request is \$25,000.

Applicants who apply for grant amounts near the maximum level should articulate how the funds will impact broad geographic areas, either through reaching multiple counties, regional areas or statewide. The intent is to distribute funds between local, regional, and statewide projects. MDE anticipates awarding at least 25 percent of the funds to community-based organizations conducting local projects. Applicants are asked to not request more funding than they think can be spent in the short grant period.

The state reserves the right to offer grant amounts that differ from the applicant's request or the maximum identified above.

Grant Period

The term of the grant period is anticipated to be from September 1, 2020, through December 30, 2020. However, awards may be applied retroactively to July 1, 2020, to cover eligible expenses that meet reimbursement guidelines. Grant funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis.

Given the short length of the grant implementation window, all grantees must submit a financial reporting form (FRF) by September 30, 2020, to demonstrate they are on track to spend the full grant amount by December 30, 2020. MDE may ask for a full reconciliation at this time, if needed. Grantees who are not making adequate progress toward spending the full grant award amount may be subject to having the award amount reduced.

State's Right to Cancel

This grant opportunity does not obligate the state to award a contract and the state reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest due to lack of funding, agency priorities or other considerations.

General Information

Eligibility Requirements for Expanded Meal Access Grant Projects

Eligible activities:

Eligible projects must provide prepared meals to Minnesota children and adults impacted economically by COVID-19. 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. Distribution of individual food or grocery items that are not

supported by a menu with at least three components and require complex recipient assembly are not eligible grant activities.

Eligible grant activities may include, but are not limited to providing:

- Additional weekday meals not covered by the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or other USDA Child Nutrition Program to children under 18 years old (*typically breakfast and lunch are covered for eligible children*)
- Weekend meals to children under 18 years old
- Weekday and/or weekend meals to adults
- Expanded meal service beyond the current organizational capacity

Eligible expenses:

- Food purchases (e.g., food procured from a vendor, local/regional agricultural producer, or distributor to be used in the preparation of a meal; prepared meals purchased from a vendor)
- Transportation costs associated with transporting meals (e.g., vehicle purchase; mileage)
- Rental costs (e.g., truck delivery; food or supply storage for additional meals; commercial kitchen space)
- Supplies to distribute meals (e.g., coolers; carts to serve/deliver meals). Requests for items considered capital equipment (greater than the \$5000 federal capital threshold) must be in response to the unique needs of meal service delivery during COVID-19. Requests to utilize funds for quantities of two or more of any supplies or necessary equipment may be justifiable to respond to meal service needs during COVID-19.
- Supplies to follow public health guidelines (e.g., gloves, masks and other safety materials; signage)
- Salaries of staff conducting food operation activities that are in direct response to grant activities (e.g., preparing and cooking food; distributing food; managing food operations)
- Communication and/or outreach activities

Ineligible expenses:

- Meals already covered or subsidized by a state or federal food or nutrition program (e.g., USDA child nutrition programs, Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP))
- Food that will not be distributed as part of a prepared meal (e.g., groceries or meal kits)
- Any eligible expenses used to prepare meals for individuals outside of the state of Minnesota
- Requests for items considered capital equipment (greater than \$5000 federal capital threshold) that are not in response to the unique needs of meal service delivery during COVID-19. The grant will not cover new standard kitchen equipment or the replacement of existing equipment

CARES Act requirements under the CRF:

The CRF grant award cannot be used to fill behind lost revenues or pay for expenditures that will be reimbursed under another federal program. In addition, the following conditions must be met:

1. Expenditures must be a necessary result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
2. Costs must not be accounted for in the current biennial budget.
3. Funds must be spent (not merely obligated) between July 1, 2020, and December 30, 2020.

General Expectations of Grantees

Grantees must comply with the following:

- Submit financial reporting forms and progress reports by the dates indicated in the Official Grant Award Notification (OGAN), which will be provided to applicants who receive a grant award.
- Maintain documentation to track the grant budget expenditures and payment reimbursements, plus documentation that supports budget line item expenses.
- If you are a Minnesota public school district or charter school, you must use the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) and any other financial reporting forms provided by the department.
- Follow applicable state and federal procurement laws and select responsible vendors who are not debarred or suspended, not engaged in unlawful practices and who are qualified.

Prior to executing the OGAN, MDE will conduct a pre-award risk assessment to consider the applicant's capacity to successfully administer the grant. Potential grantees must cooperate with MDE if documentation is requested in order to complete this assessment.

Evaluation Requirements for Award Recipients

Grantees must submit the following pieces of information at the end of the grant term. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) may request additional information, which will be communicated as soon as possible.

- Total number of meals served between July 1 and December 30, 2020
- Number of additional meals served using grant funds between July 1 and December 30, 2020
- Estimated unduplicated number of children and adults served between July 1 and December 30, 2020

Resources for Applicants

UFARS Reporting

Minnesota school districts and charter schools must report their expenditures under the guidelines in the [Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting System](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/schfin/fin/UFARS) (<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/schfin/fin/UFARS>)

Capital Assets

[Read the Capital Assets Guide](http://www.osa.state.mn.us/other/GASBTools/capital_asset_guide.pdf) (http://www.osa.state.mn.us/other/GASBTools/capital_asset_guide.pdf)

State Travel Plan

[Commissioner's Travel Reimbursement Plan](http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm) (<http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm>)

State Grant Management Policies

[The Minnesota Office of Grant Management Policies](http://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms) (<http://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms>)

Economic Indicator Data Sources

The following data sources may be useful for the statement of need component of the application:

[MDE Child Nutrition Program Eligibility Map](https://education.mn.gov/Maps/sfsp.htm) (https://education.mn.gov/Maps/sfsp.htm) helps determine if sites are area eligible for the Summer Food Service Program based on school or census data. Note: Select "Hybrid" to verify the accuracy of the point and validate that the correct location is indicated on the map.

[MDE Data Center](https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=2) (https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=2) includes data on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price-meals at the state, county, district and school levels. These numbers are based on October 1, 2019 figures and not representative of the current percentages during the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide a starting point from which further justification can be made for economic need.

[Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Unemployment Insurance Data Tools](https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/unemployment-insurance-statistics/) (https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/unemployment-insurance-statistics/) provide daily, weekly and monthly unemployment insurance statistics at the county and state levels.

[Minnesota Unemployment Statistics](https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/laus/Default.aspx) (https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/laus/Default.aspx) provide unemployment rates for each of Minnesota counties, plus month-by-month data going back several years.

[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) Map](https://hud.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=77d07048482642528a9b92fe7d20ecd5) (https://hud.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=77d07048482642528a9b92fe7d20ecd5) identifies housing areas that may be eligible to participate in the Summer Food Service Program.

Federally Funded Grants Resources

Federal Guidance

Please refer to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 2, Part 200, for uniform guidance, crosswalks and cost principles for state, local, Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations. You can access the information at [electronic code of federal regulations](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl) (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl).

Indirect Rates for Minnesota Public Schools plus Charter Schools and Education Cooperatives

For information on school district and local educational agency (LEA) current fiscal year federal indirect cost rates are available on MDE's [Indirect Cost Rates webpage](http://w20.education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=45) (http://w20.education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=45).

Grant Application

Applicant Information

The following applicant information will be collected via the survey link:

- Organization name
- Grant amount requested
- Type of organization (nonprofit, educational institution, tribal nation, local governmental unit)
- MDE Organization Site Number (if school district or charter school)
- Minnesota Statewide Integrated Financial Tool System (SWIFT) supplier ID number (Minnesota Tax ID)
- Federal Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
- Primary program contact information
- Business manager / accounting contact information
- Identified Official with Authority (IOwA) contact information
- Organization's complete zip code. Refer to the [United States Postal Service](https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action) (<https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action>) website for information to look up the zip code

Most applicant organizations likely already have a SWIFT Supplier ID Number and DUNS number but should check with the organization's business office to confirm. Organizations that do not have a SWIFT supplier ID number or DUNS number at the time of submission, should put TBD (to be determined) in the field and apply for them using the information below. Organizations will need these numbers prior to being awarded a grant. Due to the time required to obtain these numbers, all applicant organizations should apply to become a vendor immediately and not wait for the official grant award notification.

MDE Organization Site Number

MDE Organization Site Numbers are required for school districts and charter schools, but not required for private, nonprofit, or nongovernmental organizations. School districts and charter schools needing an organization number may obtain it here: [MDE organization number](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/SiteVerif/) (<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/SiteVerif/>).

IOwA

The IOwA is the person with legal authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the organization.

SWIFT Supplier Number

The SWIFT vendor number included must be for the fiscal agent who will be receiving and administering the grant funds. Get a [SWIFT Supplier Number](https://supplier.systems.state.mn.us/psc/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL?&) (https://supplier.systems.state.mn.us/psc/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL?&).

DUNS Number

All organizations applying for federal funding must have a DUNS. A DUNS is a unique nine-character ID number that is used to track how the federal grant is allocated. Register for or verify a [DUNS number](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do) (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>).

Assurances – Standard and Program-Specific

Upon signing the application, applicants certify that they have read the application and will comply with the approved application, the assurances here and in the OGAN, and all other applicable federal regulations, state statutes, and local policies.

The application assurances must include an original signature from the IOwA on behalf of the applicant. If a fiscal agent is representing another organization, both the fiscal agent applicant and a representative of the organization represented must sign. The fiscal agent and the organization represented should have a letter of agreement on file.

Application Narrative Components

The application includes six narrative sections. Applicants must ensure the response includes answers to all of the bullet points in each section and that each answer is complete and succinct and in accordance with the word limits. The total points possible for all narrative components is 100.

1. Statement of Need and Impact (30 points possible)

Please limit your response to no more than 1,200 words (approximately three pages).

A complete response will answer all of following questions.

- Who are the targeted group(s) that will benefit from this expansion of meal service?
- What is the geographic area to be served using this funding?
- What data or other information supports the determination of need? (e.g., percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals, MDE Summer Food Service Program area eligibility, county unemployment statistics, business closures or other employment setbacks in the target area)
- How will the organization ensure that the proposed meal expansion doesn't duplicate efforts from other meal programs in the same area?
- To what extent will the number of meals served increase as a result of this grant? To what extent will the number of children, adults and seniors served increase as a result of this grant?

2. Community Relevance and Equity (30 points possible)

Please limit your response to no more than 1,200 words (approximately three pages).

A complete response will answer all of following questions.

- How will additional meals focus on populations currently underserved by food access and meal distribution programs during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How will additional meals be appropriate and relevant to the communities served in terms of age, geographic area, and race/ethnicity?
- To what extent will the grantee source products from [emerging farmers](#), including women, veterans, persons with disabilities, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and members of communities of color?

3. Capacity of the Applicant Organization (30 points possible)

Please limit your response to no more than 1,200 words (approximately three pages).

A complete response will answer all of following questions:

- Who will be involved? What is their role? (e.g., staff, volunteers, subcontractors, partners)
- What is the organization’s capacity to expand the existing meal distribution program to address unmet needs due to COVID-19? Include staffing, infrastructure, procurement, preparation, distribution, and outreach in the response.

4. Evaluation Plan (10 points possible)

Please limit your response to no more than 400 words (approximately one page).

A complete response will answer all of following questions:

- What will be the organization’s process for collecting the required evaluation data (as listed in the “Evaluation Requirements for Award Recipients” section)?
- How will the organization ensure that the data are accurate and consistent?

5. Excel Budget with Descriptions (required, but not scored)

Complete the template Excel budget worksheet. Specify the grant amount requested. Detail all **necessary and reasonable** expenditures anticipated during the project period that align with the project goals and activities, using the budget codes available.

Necessary means it is important to the success of the project. **Reasonable** means paying fair market price for the item or services.

Provide sufficient description and justification for budget line item entries in relation to COVID-19 response. Reviewers should be able to determine the following based on the budget narrative:

- Whether the budget aligns with the project activities and primary purpose of the funding.
- Whether the budget estimates for employee and proposed contractor services appear to correspond with reasonable approximations of the activities to be performed.
- Whether the planned expenses appear **necessary and reasonable** for the success and purpose of the project.

Since the grant is being offered by MDE, all awardees must utilize Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting (UFARS) requirements for school districts. Additional information related to budget item coding is provided in the Excel budget template.

The UFARS source code 01F499 will be used for all grant expenses.

Applicant Questions

The following program contact is available to provide information or answer questions about the grant:

Jackie Stiehl
Nutrition, Health and Youth Development Division
Minnesota Department of Education
jackie.stiehl@state.mn.us

Questions must be emailed to the program contact by **July 9, 2020**. Please indicate “Expanded Food Access Grant Question” in the subject line. A question and answer document will be published on the grant opportunity site after **July 13, 2020**. The document will be published on the grant announcement page.

Questions related to the grant opportunity may be answered **only** by MDE’s program representative identified above or his/her successor. Information received from an unauthorized source is not binding and could result in misinformation.

Application Submission and Signature

Applications must be received via the survey link by **July 20, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. central time** to be considered. MDE will not accept submissions via fax, email or U.S. mail, unless with prior notification. MDE is unable to accept hand-delivered applications at this time. Late applications will not be included in the applicant pool.

A complete submission must include all of the following via the survey link:

- Applicant Information (entered via the survey link)
- Signed copy of the Statement of Assurances (uploaded via the survey link)
- Narrative responses to all application sections (entered via the survey link)
- Completed budget in Excel format (uploaded via the survey link)

All attachments should be titled with the name of the organization and the name of the document (e.g., Your Organization Name Budget).

[Submit your application through Survey Gizmo](#)

Costs associated with preparing the application must be borne by the applicant. The burden of proof of timely submission is on the applicant.

For application submission questions, contact Tim Larson at timothy.e.larson@state.mn.us. All other questions not related to the grant process should be directed to the contact listed under the *Applicant Questions* section.

Application Screening and Review

Phase 1: Screening

Applications that meet the following criteria will be forwarded for further consideration and review.

1. Application received via the survey link by July 20, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. central time.
2. Application is complete.

3. Applicant is an eligible organization. Eligible organizations include nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status (including faith-based organizations), educational institutions (early learning, K-12 schools and districts, higher education), tribal nations and local governmental units.

Phase 2: Application Components Scored

Applications will be reviewed by an equal number of reviewers. Reviewers will apply a score to each component below. Total points possible are 100.

- Statement of Need and Impact– 30 points
- Equity and Community Relevance – 30 Points
- Capacity of the Applicant Organization – 30 points
- Evaluation Plan – 10 points
- Excel Budget with Descriptions – Required, but not scored

Grant Services may contact reviewers to obtain clarification of their feedback, during this phase, after the grant review is complete. This final score will be determined by a combination of the average score of all reviewers involved.

Phase 3: Review of Outcomes and Notifications to Applicants

Grant Services will present agency program staff and management the results from the first two phases of this review. As a standard practice, those applications with the largest score are offered grant awards. Programs may offer grant award amounts that differ than the applicant's grant request or the maximum grant amount identified by the department. During this phase or the next, agency program staff or grant services staff may contact the applicant to obtain clarification for one or more sections of the application. All funding decisions made by MDE are final.

Phase 4: Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Review of Prior Performance

After notifying the applicants of the grant award decision, but before executing of the OGAN, MDE will conduct a pre-award risk assessment on the financial capacity of the selected grantees as well as review prior performance in prior grants administered by MDE and/or any other state agency. Further information, such as financial audits, may be requested at that time.

Phase 5: Execution of OGAN or Other Grant Documentation

After the funds are awarded, along with the pre-award risk assessment, additional clarifications and negotiations, the MDE grants specialist will draft an OGAN or other grant documentation to be encumbered and signed by MDE. MDE will reimburse the grantee for grant-related expenses only after the OGAN or other grant documentation is complete. At that point, the grantee may request retroactive reimbursement for eligible expense as of July 1, 2020.

Appeals

If the application is disapproved under applicable state statute or federal programs, the applicant may submit an appeal to the state with regard to the disapproval by filing a notice and stating the state or federal statutes violated. Refer to Title 34 CFR 76.401, for more information. This is an appeal of the process; funding decisions are not subject to appeal.

Applicants should contact the Grant Services Coordinator, Tim Larson at timothy.e.larson@state.mn.us, with any questions about the grant process or to file an appeal. All other questions not related to the grant process should be directed to the contact listed under the *Applicant Questions* section.

Delays

The following may result in a delay of preparation of any grant awards.

- Clarifications to the budget or work plan
- Missing or invalid DUNS (if federal)
- Missing ZIP code
- Invalid state Vendor ID Number
- Pre-Award Risk Assessment Review

The agency anticipates the review to be completed by end of August 2020. Applicants are expected to be notified within two weeks after the review has been completed. Review feedback is considered public, but not until the competitive grant process is complete, which is upon execution of the OGAN.

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<https://education.mn.gov>

Information on this website can be made available in alternative formats by calling (651) 582-8651. Persons with a hearing or speech disability may contact the Minnesota Relay Service by dialing 711 or (800) 627-3529.

The state of Minnesota is an Equal Opportunity Employer.