

Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry
CARES Act Food Security Network Reimbursement Program
(CFDA# 21.019)

Program Guidelines, Policies & Procedures

Updated for 2021 Program Extension

I. Program Overview

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry (DACF) has allocated \$2M in federal CARES Act funding for its Food Security Network Reimbursement Program. The program is offering up to \$10,000 in reimbursements to food banks and pantries that have accrued new, unanticipated expenses while working to overcome food supply and distribution challenges caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

This program will be administered by Catholic Charities Maine on behalf of DACF.

The Food Security Network Reimbursement Program was created to help support Maine food security organizations as they address supply chain disruptions, food storage and distribution infrastructure limitations, and public health and safety challenges – all in direct response to the pandemic.

This program was approved for extension into 2021.

This funding can be used to reimburse equipment purchases, capital projects/improvements, and other eligible costs (see *Eligible Activities & Expenses* section below) incurred between **March 1, 2020 and April 1, 2021**. Reimbursement will be retroactively applied to those costs (up to \$10,000).

Applicants who received funding under this program in Phase 1 (December 2020) may be eligible to submit an amended application for new/additional expenses incurred during the expanded timeframe *if* previous reimbursements received totaled less than the \$10,000 cap.

To apply, please email materials to contracts@ccmaine.org with subject line “CARES Food Security Network Reimbursement Program Application.” If you prefer, please fax a completed application package to 207-781-8560 or mail to Catholic Charities Maine, 307 Congress Street, PO Box 10660, Portland, Maine 04104. Please ensure that adequate time is allowed for physical mailing.

Applicants will be asked to upload, fax, or mail official receipts or invoices demonstrating eligible expenses within the covered time period.

II. Eligibility

Funds are available to food banks, pantries, and other food security non-profit organizations that serve Maine residents.

Organizations will be liable for any misuse of funds. The grants are **taxable income** and **subject to audit**.

To be eligible for this funding opportunity, applicants must:

- Be a food security organization located in Maine;
- Be current and in good standing with all Maine State payroll taxes, sales taxes, and state income taxes (as applicable) through July 31, 2020;
- Be in good standing with the Maine Department of Labor;
- Not be in bankruptcy;

- Not have permanently ceased all operations;
- Be in consistent compliance and not be under any current or past enforcement action with COVID-19 Prevention Checklist Requirements (<https://www.maine.gov/decd/covid-19-prevention-checklists>)

Work performed outside of the funding period (March 1, 2020 – April 1, 2021) is not eligible for reimbursement.

III. Expense Reimbursement

A total of \$2 million in grant funding for reimbursement is available through the program. DACF reserves the right to modify grant awards if total eligible applicant reimbursable expenses exceed the appropriated \$2 million program cap.

Reimbursable costs shall be incurred between March 1, 2020 and April 1, 2021 and must improve food security and supply resilience during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Eligible expenses include those incurred as a result of adjustments made to meet public health and social distancing guidelines (e.g., curb-size pick up or delivery services), as well as expenses related to supply and distribution infrastructure, including safe food transportation (see Eligible Activities & Expenses section below).

DACF will work with a third-party administrator, Catholic Charities Maine, to review grant proposals for eligibility of costs based on U.S. Department of Treasury guidance for CARES Act fund distribution. U.S. Department of the Treasury guidance on eligible costs is updated regularly, therefore, eligible costs are subject to change. DACF reserves the right to make changes to, and final determination of, eligible program costs.

Reimbursements will be awarded in the form of grants up to \$10,000 (no minimum). The program will reimburse up to 100% of eligible expenses. Reimbursements will be awarded on a first come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted.

These grants are reportable income. As administrator, Catholic Charities Maine is responsible for collecting applicant W-9s and providing 10-99 forms to funding recipients. W-9s should be collected *prior* to any fund disbursement.

All funding decisions are final.

Eligible Activities & Expenses:

Note: All eligible expenses *must* represent necessary, unanticipated costs incurred as a direct result of operational challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Adaptation of facilities to meet new safety guidelines (e.g., new signage), sanitation, and worker protection (e.g., PPE, such as gloves and masks).
- Provisions and equipment for remote and curbside pick-up or delivery (e.g., pop-up tents).
- Food storage, processing, and delivery equipment to adapt to supply chain disruptions, including cold and ambient storage, storage containers and bins, food safety equipment (e.g., coolers and thermometers), rental costs for additional delivery vehicle use, and unanticipated mileage.
- Additional, unbudgeted food costs incurred as a result of an unexpected increase in food insecurity as a result of COVID.
- Purchase of food processing, washing and packing equipment; produce and fruit sorting equipment (to reduce human contact); cleaning and sanitation equipment.

- Costs associated with repackaging food products to meet the demand and quantity sizing required by food banks and pantries.
- Information technology needs, including the development of online delivery systems (hardware and software).

Ineligible Activities & Expenses:

- Funds cannot be used for entities engaged in illegal activity under federal or state law or regulation.
- Ineligible expenses may include those expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding.
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed by insurance.
- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- Rent for building or facilities (excluding additional facility/building/storage rental expenses incurred as a direct result of the pandemic).
- Hazard pay (for employees in facilities with COVID-19 positive cases).
- Wages (non-hazard and non-reconfiguration labor).

IV. Additional Requirements and Information

- DACF reserves the right to inspect and audit the project site following the final payment received by the applicant.
- Applicants who commit fraud or misrepresentation, or who do not adequately document or retain sufficient documentation, shall be subject to state and federal civil and criminal recourse to the extent permitted by law.
- The applicant must retain records relating to the grant for a period of at least five years from the date of the final reimbursement payment received by the applicant for this grant. The applicant must agree that such records will be submitted to DACF or its designees or representatives upon request or upon audit of the completed project by DACF or other authorized state or federal authorities.
- In awarding funds under this program, DACF may coordinate with other agencies or entities deemed necessary.

V. Administration of Federal Funding

This funding is being issued under the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), CFDA # 21.019; therefore, the Federal Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 applies to the administration of these grant funds. Specifically, award recipients must adhere to all applicable federal requirements, including Office of Management Budget (OMB) guidance: Title 2 C.F.R. subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. §200).

The State will monitor the activities of sub-recipients as necessary to ensure that funding is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the award; and that funding performance goals are achieved.

This funding is not intended for research and development (R&D).