



IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING CARES FUNDING REPORTING

Greetings,

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) was appropriated supplemental funds under the **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act** in FY 2020 in the amount of \$200 million to respond to community needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded the appropriation in full to the National Board for the EFSP.

The National Board allocated the CARES Act funds to jurisdictions for local government and nonprofit organizations to provide services to individuals and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds must be used to supplement food and shelter services and may not be used as seed money for new programs. Local Boards in the jurisdictions should establish priorities among community needs, award funds to non-profit and government emergency food and shelter agencies and help monitor program compliance with these funds just as is done with annually appropriated funds to the program.

Non-profit and local government agencies, known as Local Recipient Organizations (LROs), may be awarded CARES Act funds to be used for mass shelter, mass feeding, food distribution through food pantries and food banks, one-month utility payments to prevent service cut-offs, and one-month rent/mortgage assistance to prevent evictions or assist people leaving shelters to establish stable living conditions. LROs also may use CARES Act funds to purchase cleaning supplies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Environmental Protection Agency has a list of cleaning supplies that meet its criteria for use against COVID-19, which can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.

In addition, LROs may use up to 10% of their CARES Act award funds to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as face masks and gloves. Service providers may purchase and use PPE with CARES Act funds to prevent or mitigate the transmission of communicable diseases, like COVID-19. PPE purchased with EFSP funds must comply with the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and/or state and local health requirements, as applicable to each LRO. PPE purchased with EFSP funds can be directly distributed to LRO staff and volunteers to provide services to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While PPE purchased with EFSP funds can be provided to clients in certain circumstances, such as to receive food, sheltering, and transportation services, the PPE items cannot be distributed to the general public and must be used for services within the LRO's mission. Note that masks intended for medical providers such as N95 respirators or surgical masks would not be an allowable purchase, unless the LRO can document a specific need for such items.

While LROs can use funding to purchase PPE, funding cannot be used for COVID-19 testing or vaccinations.

The CARES Act appropriation language states that the funding must be used to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in local communities. For EFSP funding, Local Boards and LROs must ensure that the services provided are used to address COVID-19 effects on individuals and families in need. Clients must demonstrate the reason for seeking services is due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. *For example, clients may need mortgage or rental assistance due to losing their jobs or having their work hours reduced due to the pandemic.*

Local Boards should document, and be prepared to report on, the process used to award funding, including:

- *The application process used to select agencies to receive funds,*
- *The factors considered when determining how and why agencies were selected to receive awards, and*
- *The specific Covid-19 community impacts addressed by the funding award. For example, explain why funding was awarded in the service categories as related to the pandemic, i.e., other food, served meals, lodging provided, rent/mortgage payments, utility payments, and supplies, including PPE and cleaning supplies.*

LROs must report on their use of funds, providing the following:

- *Types of services provided (other food, served meals, lodging assistance, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, and prevention of COVID-19 spread to providers, volunteers, and clients through supplies [cleaning supplies and PPE reported separately]),*
- *Units of services provided (number of meals served, nights of lodging provided, number of rent/mortgage payments made, number of utility payments made, supplies purchased {cleaning supplies and PPE reported separately}),*
- *Amount of funding spent for each service category (other food, served meals, lodging assistance, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, and supplies [cleaning supplies and PPE reported separately]),*
- *Count of clients served by category (other food, served meals, lodging assistance, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance), and*
- *Impacts of Covid-19 on clients receiving services (e.g., job loss, COVID-19 illness, death of family members due to the virus, medical expenses, loss of housing, or other [please specify]).*

Administrative funding, if approved by the Local Board, may be used to offset costs to administer the program, including staff salary. Agencies must confirm with the Local Board before making administrative expenditures with the funds.

Both Local Boards and LROs must be prepared to report on the uses of EFSP CARES Act funding per the respective bullets above and to submit supporting documentation to the National Board, upon request. LROs must specifically obtain and maintain documentation (proofs of payment and invoices/receipts) for all purchases made. Supporting documentation may be required with the Final Report submission.

If there are any questions regarding this notice or concerning what is required for CARES Act funds reporting, please contact the EFSP staff at efsp@uww.unitedway.org or 703.706.9660.