REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Request for Application

NC Department of Human and Health Services

**North Carolina**

 **Department of Health and Human Services**

**(Division of Social Services)**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATION**

**(2020 Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Funding)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Funding Title | Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach |
| Funding Agency | United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) |
| Issuing Agency | North Carolina Department of Health and Human ServicesDivision of Social Services |
| Estimated Funding available | $2,000,000 |
| CFDA # | 10.561 |
| Applications Due | February 28, 2020 |
| Period of Performance  | October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2023 |
| E-mail Applications and Questions to | Connie W. Dixon | Email | connie.dixon@dhhs.nc.gov |

Please Direct all inquiries to:

NC Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Social Services

Connie W. Dixon

820 South Boylan Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420

(919) 527-6319

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connie.dixon@dhhs.nc.gov

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**Section A. Introduction**

# Introduction

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the cornerstone of the Nation’s nutrition safety net and an investment in our future. SNAP helps low-income people buy the food they need for good health. Although SNAP is a Federal program, it is administered by State agencies and local social and human service offices.

SNAP Outreach is a federal/state partnership that supports providing program information activities to persons eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In North Carolina, this program is called Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). The Division of Social Services is eligible to conduct outreach through the SNAP program and be reimbursed up to 50% of the total expenditures of allowable administrative costs including program informational activities, but not including recruitment activities by USDA Food and Nutrition Services to deliver SNAP Outreach. States use a variety of contractors such as food banks, universities and non-profit organizations to administer the SNAP Outreach programs.

SNAP offers the opportunity for improved nutrition and progress toward economic self-sufficiency for participants who become stronger members of the community. Every $1 in new SNAP benefits generates up to $1.80 in economic activity.

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of the SNAP/FNS Outreach is to raise awareness of the nutrition benefits of SNAP/FNS, eligibility rules, and how to apply. SNAP Outreach corrects myths and misperceptions about SNAP/FNS and enables potentially eligible people to make an informed decision to participate.

1. **Background**

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is responsible for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all North Carolinians, providing human service needs for special populations and helping poor North Carolinians achieve economic independence. DHHS touches the lives of most North Carolinians from birth to older age.

The participation rate in North Carolina is continuously increasing. Unfortunately, several barriers hinder some eligible individuals and families from participating in the program. Such barriers as perceived stigma, lack of information, transportation difficulties, etc. prevent participation; therefore, all eligible individuals and families do not receive services. To enhance and encourage more eligible North Carolinians to take advantage of this important food program, the proposed outreach project will address some of the barriers to FNS participation.

The primary objective of the North Carolina SNAP/FNS Outreach Plan is to increase the participation rate across the state by 5% using education and other outreach activities as major means of accomplishment. This will help the neediest families in North Carolina while placing special emphasis on the senior population to make an informed decision about accessing SNAP benefits.

The North Carolina SNAP Outreach Plan will continue to provide outreach activities to low-income and individuals and families below the poverty level. Designated households are inclusive of the elderly, Hispanics, and the unemployed.

DHHS, in collaboration with our partners, protects the health and safety of all North Carolinians and provide essential human services.

# Eligibility

Applications are invited from public and non-profit organizations such as universities and colleges, and food banks/pantries that can provide required services to the target audience. Additionally, to be eligible for this project, the applicant must have successfully demonstrated experience in assisting with the outreach to SNAP eligible.

Potential applicants must have the administrative capacity and financial stability to administer the funds if awarded as evidenced by their most recent financial statement/audit. Recipients of funds must follow the DSS rules and regulations, as well as the Federal SNAP Outreach Guidance policies and regulations. **USDA’s FNS will make the final decision on all allowable/unallowable costs, and which program activities support the delivery of SNAP/FNS Outreach.**

Failure to meet all eligibility criterion may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude DHHS from making an award.

# Federal Award Information

The total award amount will be based upon USDA approval of contracts.

Grant: SNAP

Federal Fiscal Year: 2021

CFDA Number: 10.561

CFDA Name: State Administrative Matching Grants for Food Stamp Program

**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF AWARDS**

North Carolina’s SNAP/FNS program does not have an estimated number of awards at this time. Awards will be based on the number of applications received and approved by the review committee as well as USDA approval of the applicants.

**Cost Sharing or Matching**

The applicant shall be responsible for a match of 50% for all costs and will be reimbursed by USDA for 50% of the total costs.

**Allowable Cost**

**ALLOWABLE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS** are operational costs for SNAP/FNS Outreach, which include all administrative expenses that are reasonable and necessary to operate an approved SNAP/FNS Outreach program. Allowable administrative expenses include:

• Salaries and benefits of personnel involved in SNAP/FNS Outreach and administrative support (see below)

• Office equipment, supplies, postage, printing costs and travel that is necessary to carry out the program’s objectives

• Development and production of SNAP/FNS Outreach materials when no other appropriate materials exist

• Lease or rental costs

• Maintenance expenses

• Other indirect costs

• Charges for travel for the purpose of fulfilling the approved plan based on official State, local or university travel regulations. (Allowable but with restrictions as to amounts involved, level of transportation costs e.g.).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Allowable Activity**  | **Example**  |
| Informational websites and other social media sites that provide factual information that is not intended to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP. Note that radio, television, and billboard advertisements are not permitted to promote SNAP benefits and enrollment.  | Purchase of publishing software to create informational content for social media or websites.  |
| Information stating where SNAP benefits are accepted  | A large sign at a farmers’ market stating SNAP benefits are accepted at the market.  |
| Factual information correcting myths or misconceptions about SNAP  | Conversing with a potential applicant at an outreach table about eligibility requirements.  |
| Toll-free information line or web address to provide information to potential clients  | A statewide 1-800 information number to connect potential clients to their local office.  |
| Development of printed educational or informational materials for potential clients  | • Development and printing of a brochure providing information to low-income households about the availability, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and benefits of SNAP. • Business cards with the outreach subrecipients’ contact information and the website of the State online SNAP application and/or SNAP information phone number. • Bookmarks with State or Federal SNAP hotline number and/or website. One side of the bookmark can be in English and the reverse side in another language.  |
| Use or customization of FNS outreach materials for clients  | Hiring a graphic design shop to customize and print the FNS posters with the phone number of the local office.  |
| Training or train-the-trainer programs for SNAP outreach workers  | Training of local community partners to run outreach seminars by the primary outreach contractor.  |
| Translation of materials and bilingual accommodation to convey eligibility requirements and assist persons with limited English proficiency during the application process  | Translation of an outreach envelope into the predominant non-English language in the community. |
| Contingent activities related to Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) operations | Informational Activities:* Funding a toll-free hotline with staff to respond or recorded messages with D-SNAP information; and
* Radio, television, or billboard messages with D- SNAP information (Note: these are only allowed for D-SNAP).

Onsite Assistance at D-SNAP sites:* Pre-screen applicants;
* Direct applicants to the right queue;
* Help applicants’ complete applications;
* Provide translation services.
 |

Indirect Cost

* + Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (FNICR)
	+ De minimis Indirect cost rate: De minimis is 10% of the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC). Conditions for claiming de minimis indirect cost rate are:
		- Agency’s first time to have federal indirect cost rate
		- The agency will use this rate for all their federal awards

FNS will accept indirect costs established through an indirect cost plan approved by DSS. DSS retains the right to review any and all such plans. In the event DSS has approved a plan, which is determined to be unacceptable by USDA, indirect costs charged through that plan may be disallowed. If a cost can be directly attributed to one grant, then that cost may not be included in either an indirect cost plan computation or any cost allocation plan.

A copy of the applicant’s Federally approved indirect cost rate must be included in the application.

1. **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)**

As an applicant of federal funds, each selected applicant will be required to provide certain information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), including the organization’s Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. Please see <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> for free registration. Additional information about FFATA is available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/>.

**Section B. Request for Application Specifications**

**1. How to Apply**

The RFA and instructions can be obtained by going to <http://www.ncdhhs.gov>. Applications must be typed and presented with the same topic headings and in the same order as set forth in Section C of this RFA. All applications must include a cover page. The cover page should include:

* + 1. The applicant’s name and address
		2. Title of the project
		3. Name and contact information of the authorized official of the agency
		4. The website of the agency (if any)

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. February 28, 2020. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. will be classified as late and will not be considered for funding. Faxed or emailed applications will NOT be accepted. Please send your application via mail to:

Division of Social Services, Economic and Family Services

SNAP/FNS Outreach

Connie W. Dixon

820 South Boylan Avenue, Raleigh NC, 27699-2420

1. **Number of copies required**
2. Email an electronic copy of all required documents to Connie Dixon, at

 connie.dixon@dhhs.nc.gov. Each document should be attached as a separate

attachment in Word or PDF format.

1. Mail one complete original and three (3) copies of the application, including all attachments. The original application must contain the original signature of an authorized official of the applicant’s agency.

**3.** **Written Questions**

All inquiries regarding the RFA must be submitted via email by February 14, 2020 to Connie W. Dixon at connie.dixon@dhhs.nc.gov.

**4. Who can Apply**

Universities, Food Banks, public or private nonprofit agencies may submit an application for this RFA.

**5. Contractual Services**

Contractual services are allowed in order to achieve the goals of the project. The budget narrative should include justification for the contractual services.

**6. Application Selection and Scoring**

An evaluation/selection committee will review and score all applications received by 5:00 p.m. on February 28, 2020. This committee will be comprised of contracts and budget staff, SNAP program staff, as well as prior review committee team members.

Scoring chart is provided below:

1. Proposal Summary 10 POINTS
2. Organization Background and Qualifications 10 POINTS
3. Need/s Assessment (Problem Statement) 10 POINTS
4. Applicants approach to the problem 20 POINTS
5. Project Narrative 20 POINTS
6. Budget and Narrative 20 POINTS
7. Supporting Documentation 10 POINTS

**TOTAL 100 POINTS**

**7. Required Documentation**

Upon approval of the application, the following documents will be required:

1. Proof of non-profit status
2. Conflict of interest policy
3. Signed state and /or federal certifications
4. Proof of no over taxes

**8. DSS reserves the right to:**

1. Modify the application and budget with the help of the applicant. Items that may be modified include, but are not limited to goals, costs, performance and reporting requirements.
2. Allow or disallow budget amendments during the performance period of project.
3. Monitor the program based on the Division’s Applicant Monitoring plan.
4. Implement any change or requirement mandated by State or Federal government during the life of a project.

**9. Applicant Financial Capacity**

Applicants must have the financial capacity to operate without reimbursement for at least the 90 days of the project period. Applicant funded through this grant must submit all requests for payment and expenditure reports by the 15th of each month following the month of service.

**10. Match Requirement**

The match requirement is 50%. Most private and public funds may be used as match. **Other federal funds cannot be used as match.**

**11. Period of Performance**

The term of any resulting award is anticipated to be for three (3) years, from October 1, 2020 until September 30, 2023. The initial contract period will be for one year, from October 1, 2020 until September 30, 2021. Contract renewal will be required for grant years two (2021-2022) and three(2022-2023), and will be based on availability of funding and grantee performance and contractual compliance.

**12. Costs**

Allowable and appropriate costs must be reasonable and necessary for the project. See item 5 Section A above for allowable costs.

**Unallowable Costs.**

* **Recruitment activities designed to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP benefits.** Prohibited recruitment activities are those designed to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP benefits through the use of persuasive practices. Persuasive practices constitute coercing or pressuring an individual to apply or providing incentives to fill out an application.
* **Radio, television, and billboard advertisements that promote SNAP benefits and enrollment**. This prohibition on using Federal funds does not apply to advertisements for Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP). This prohibition also does not apply to social media, so long as the message is not a recruitment activity designed to persuade people to apply for SNAP benefits.
* **Any agreements with foreign governments** designed to promote SNAP benefits and enrollment.
* **Determining eligibility of a SNAP applicant**. This is a certification activity and is the responsibility of State merit employees. Certification activities are not included in outreach plans.
* Activities related to authorizing retailers for EBT.
	+ - Activities that solely benefit programs other than SNAP, including Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid. Activities that benefit multiple programs must be appropriately cost allocated.
* Acting as an authorized representative for applying, receiving SNAP benefits at issuance, or food purchasing.
* Transportation of clients to or from the local SNAP office or provisions of tokens, vouchers or similar items for transportation of clients to or from the local SNAP office. For example, a transit agency could donate bus vouchers for use by potential SNAP clients to travel back and forth to the local SNAP office at no expense to the State agency.
* Compensating staff for outreach activities based on the number of people who apply for SNAP as a result of that worker’s efforts. For example, paying a staff person $10 for each application they help a client complete.
* Interfering during the certification interview or at other times to campaign on behalf of specific applicants or recipients. However, outreach workers may be present to provide support or help explain complicated terms.

**Section C. Programmatic Requirements**

Upon grant award, the Contractor shall provide the services as described in the grant Scope of Work. The Contractor agrees to abide by all applicable State and Federal SNAP/FNS and Medicaid laws, regulations, rules, policies, and procedures.

The Contractor shall:

* Increase community awareness and, ultimately, participation in the Food and Nutrition Services Program.
* Promote Food and Nutrition Services Program awareness and education to those potentially eligible but not receiving benefits.
* Provide training and education to partner agencies, volunteers, etc.
* Coordinate with local department of social service agencies and follow-up as needed.
* Adhere to State Outreach Plan Guidance found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/outreach/state-outreach-plan-guidance>.
* Submit monthly services provided report and final outreach report according to established timelines.
* Attend meetings as requested by NC DSS.
* Adhere to measures outlined in the performance measures chart.
* Securely maintain confidential client data/information especially involving the access, transport or storing of confidential information.
* Only use confidential client information to assist the applicant, recipient or their respective duly authorized representative with the FNS application process.
* Maintain sole responsibility for privacy/security breaches, should such a breach occur, along with any associated costs that may be incurred.
* Maintain sole responsibility for client notification of a breach of privacy or security, should such a breach occur, related to confidential data collected.

 **Reporting Requirements**

The Contractor shall submit the following reports to the Division at the following intervals:

1. Monthly
* DSS 1571 III Administrative Costs Report by the 10th of each month along with a Report of Services Provided (performance status report). Agencies with subcontract(s) must include monthly 1571 report(s) completed by the subcontractor(s). DSS 1571 report(s) must be submitted monthly even if not costs are incurred.
1. Quarterly
* Completed Performance Status Report and Key Evaluation Framework Indicators Report. First quarter report is due January 10th, Second quarter report is due April 10th, Third quarter report is due July 10th and the Fourth quarter report is due November 30th.
1. Annually
* Completed Performance Status Report with cumulative end-of-year data. End of year report is due November 30th.
* Completed USDA SNAP-E Annual Narrative Report due November 30th.

**Section D. – Application Contents and Instructions**

The application from the applicant shall include the following items:

1. **Proposal Summary: (page limit)**

The summary encompasses all the key points necessary to communicate the objectives of the project. It is the cornerstone of the proposal, and the initial impression of the plan. In many cases, the summary is the first part of the proposal package seen by DSS and can play an important role in the acceptance or the denial of the application.

1. **Organization Background and Qualifications: Describes the organization and its qualifications for funding (points)**
2. Mission and goal of the Organization
3. A brief overview of the history of the organization
4. Brief overview of the organization’s experience with providing the service (organization’s past achievements and accomplishments and evidence of its impact)
5. Brief overview of organization’s experience of working with DHHS or other funding agencies including:
	* + The length of the organization receiving federal or state funding
		+ The services that the organization provided
		+ Successes and some challenges
6. Qualifications/background on organization’s Board of Directors and Key Staff
* Brief bio of all board members and the key staff
* Any criminal convictions of any of the board members and key staff
* Any regulatory sanctions levied against any of the board members and key staff
* Any regulatory investigations pending against of any of the board members and key staff. *Note: DSS may reject a proposal solely on the basis of this information*.
* Any of the Contractor’s directors, partners, proprietors, officers or employees or any of the proposed project staff are related to any DHHS employees. If such relationships exist, identify the related individuals, describe their relationships, and identify their respective employers and positions.
* Assurance that the applicant is not debarred or on the suspension of funding list.
* Other major funding sources
1. **Need/s Assessment (Problem Statement) (page limit)**
2. Problem (explain why the service is necessary)
3. Describe what your organization is doing to address this problem
4. Primary counties served
5. Ethnicity, age, and gender of population served
6. Target population or who does the organization plan on serving
7. Statistical facts and figures (national, state, local)
8. Program Website
9. **Applicant’s approach to the problem:**

**Applicant needs to complete the baseline and target values for each performance measure listed in the chart below.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Performance Measure | Type of Measure | Baseline Value as of October 1, 2020 | Target Value as of September 30, 2021 |
| By September 30, 2021, increase the overall number of participants receiving FNS/SNAP by 802,583.  | By September 30, 2021 increase the number of individuals receiving information regarding the FNS Program.By September 30, 2021 increase the number of individuals receiving application assistance.By September 30, 2021 increase the number of individuals targeted through social media.By September 30, 2021 increase the number of individuals targeted through outreach efforts to raise awareness of the benefits of the FNS Program.By September 30, 2021 increase the number of local partners/volunteers who receive training regarding the FNS Program. | By September 30, 2021, 5%increase in the number of participants in the Food and Nutrition Services Program in North Carolina. | Increase the number of participants enrolled in the NC FNS/SNAP program. |

# Project Narrative

Explain the relevance of the project. Applicant should detail the tasks and/or services that will be provided. Applicant should include information like the implementation plan, schedule, and the desired outcomes.

# Budget and Narrative

The RFA/ line item budget shall constitute the total cost to provide the services. The line items should be necessary, allowable, and reasonable. For example, if setting a salary for a position, check the fair market value for the salary of the similar position in the similar area. The budget should indicate a clear relationship with the project.

Every line item should have a narrative. A budget narrative is the justification of how and why a line item is required to meet the goal of the project.

1. **Supporting Documentation**

The Applicant has an opportunity to provide more information to help the division understand the services they are proposing to provide. Some example of supporting documentation are:

* An organizational chart identifying the personnel who will be assigned to work on this project.
* A description of how the applicant will staff the project, including the name, resume and qualifications of each of the proposed team members.
* Sustainability (Steps taken to ensure future successes or continuing the project beyond the awarded period, e.g. future financial support, staff requirements, continued community contribution).
* Resolution of Challenges: an analysis of the project’s risk and limitations, including how these factors will be addressed or minimized. (regulatory, environmental or other constraints)
* Accomplishments of the agency.