

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Office of Grants Management
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

FY25 Community Food Assistance Grant Program

Program Summary: The Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR), in partnership with the Office of Grants Management (OGM), is soliciting grant applications for the County’s FY 2025 Community Food Assistance Program from currently active food assistance provider organizations that have consistently provided regularly scheduled services on at least a monthly basis, to Montgomery County residents at County-based sites for a minimum of two years. \$3,500,000 in total is available for awards of direct funding and/or shopping credits to order food for distribution.

The minimum award that applicants may request is \$5,000 and the maximum award is \$300,000. Final award amounts may be lower than \$5,000. The performance period for these grant awards is one year (anticipated to be on/about October 15, 2024 to October 15, 2025).

Key Program Dates:

- **Program Opens for Applications:** Friday, August 23, 2024 at 4:00 PM
- **MS Teams Live Grant Program Information Session:** Wednesday, August 28, 2024 at 12:30 PM ([Click to join the Information Session OR for an event recording](#))
- **Submission Deadline:** **Monday, September 23, 2024 at 3:00 PM**

Key Program Resources:

- **Online Grants Application Platform:** <https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org>
- **Program Page:** <https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org/prog/FY25CFA>

Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the OGM to discuss alternative submission options. Applications that are incomplete, do not meet legal requirements, or are submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. For alternate ADA submission options please contact the OGM using the contact information below:

Ali Hoy, Program Manager II
OGM
(240) 773-3384
grants@montgomerycountymd.gov

For any technical questions related to the application, please contact the OFSR using the contact information below:

Catherine Nardi, Program Manager
OFSR
(202) 816-9083
Catherine.Nardi@montgomerycountymd.gov

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SECTION I – GRANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. Background

The Montgomery County Council appropriated \$3.5M in the County’s FY25 budget for OFSR grants to established food assistance provider (FAP) organizations, in order to fund their procurement and distribution of shelf-stable, fresh food, and/or prepared meals to Montgomery County residents. The goal of these funds is to provide continuity of existing critical community food assistance services, while also closing service gaps, enhancing program impact, standardizing data collection, providing greater flexibility and transparency in funding processes, and strengthening the capacity of the provider network and resilience of the local food system.

B. Target Population

The target populations served by this grant program are Montgomery County households that are in underserved communities and currently experiencing or at risk of experiencing food insecurity. According to estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau, roughly 110,000 children in Montgomery County live in households whose incomes are below the self-sufficiency standard, which is the amount needed to meet a family’s basic needs (i.e. with household incomes below 400% of Federal Poverty Line (FPL)). These households likely do not have sufficient resources to support access to nutritious diets and meet other health-related needs and could benefit from accessing community-based food assistance services.

C. Funding Priorities

The range of programming allowed under this grant is intentionally very flexible. Examples of project models that will be considered for funding include, **but are not limited to:**

- Choice pantry model, offering participants a choice model with access to a variety of culturally relevant, healthy shelf-stable and fresh food items including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and eggs;
- Pre-packed box/bag distribution that includes healthy, locally sourced produce options; or
- Delivery and/or distribution of nutritious, medically and/or preference-tailored prepared meals to households with unique needs.

Applicants are **not** limited by the list above and are highly encouraged to incorporate data-driven recommendations into their proposals that demonstrate an understanding of community needs and that will have the greatest impact for the target population.

It is anticipated that funding requests will greatly exceed the resources available. As limited grant award funds are available, applicants are encouraged to submit proposals with budgets that reflect accurate and essential projected costs based on current-year operational expenses, with the goal of continuing service delivery at existing levels of scale and scope.

To receive a grant award, applicant organization proposals must:

- Meet all eligibility criteria, including demonstrating a strong track record (at least two years) of successfully delivering food assistance services on a consistent basis in underserved communities in Montgomery County;
- Demonstrate cultural competency and a strong understanding of community food access needs, particularly within the priority population to be served;
- Describe a detailed program proposal including the operational logistics of food sourcing, purchase, receiving, storage, packaging, and distribution;
- Include detailed and accurate budgets that are based upon robust research and/or previous experience with food procurement, and reflect the realistic cost of food purchases and operational costs (including supplies and staffing needs);
- Include financial management and data collection and analysis strategy for successful grant administration and compliance with reporting requirements;
- Clearly identify the minimum and maximum number of households that will be supported by the organization, including details on the format of food assistance that would be provided;
- Describe an actionable and realistic model for leveraging grant funds to continue current levels of services reflecting awareness of capacity limitations and resource needs along with a defined strategy to address existing gaps;
- Identify current and potential service area zip codes; and
- Align with the OFSR’s core values of equity, systems focus, innovation, and data driven strategies. For full details visit: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ofsr/>

The OFSR will prioritize proposals from organizations that:

- Support the local food economy through purchasing partnerships with County farms, locally-owned retailers, and/or DMV-region businesses owned/operated by individuals representing historically underserved communities;
- Operate a “participant choice model” for food access, allowing participants to select what food they receive;
- Leverage additional resources to support this program, including in-kind contributions, direct organizational investment, non-county public dollars, and secured outside grant funds;
- Commit to participating in an edible food diversion assessment with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP);
- Commit to reporting service metrics beyond what is required for the grant program; and/or
- Express commitment to regular participation in an FAP peer learning circle.

D. Eligible Organizations

Applicant organizations must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be a **non-profit food assistance provider** that has provided regularly scheduled, uninterrupted food assistance services at least: once per month, at one consistent site, for a minimum of two years.
- Organizations designated as Service Consolidation Hubs in partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services are not eligible to apply;

- Provide a Letter of Support from organizational leadership or partner(s) confirming commitment to allow use of all key physical infrastructure assets and/or resources (storage space, packing or distribution location, vehicles, etc.) outlined in the proposal for the entire grant period;
- Be currently registered and in Good Standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT);
- The organization’s principal place of business for delivering these services must be located in Montgomery County; if a national or regional organization, it must have a location in Montgomery County through which it provides related services; and
- Be in compliance with all reporting obligations and performance requirements for other County grants and procurement contracts.

Award requirements:

All activities and expenditures funded through this grant program must:

- Be provided exclusively for Montgomery County residents;
- Be provided free of charge (this includes a prohibition on requesting donations and use of County resources for fundraising); and
- Not be provided in promotion of a particular religion, political party etc. or with a requirement of service or program attendance.

All awardee organizations will be required to:

- Participate in a minimum of one OFSR-hosted Food Assistance Provider training per quarter;
- Be available for one site visit with OFSR staff during the grant period, scheduled at a mutually beneficial day and time;
- Comply with the performance reporting requirements outlined in this NOFO;
- Respond to the 2024 Food Assistance Provider Survey by the advertised deadline; and
- Publicize grant-funded services in the Montgomery County Food Council’s Food Assistance Resource Directory (a waiver may be requested of the OFSR).

Grant funding cannot be used for:

- Gift cards;
- Capital expenses (one-time purchases of infrastructure, equipment, etc.)
- Any purchase which has already been made;
- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Montgomery County;
- Prior obligations of and/or fines;
- Debts and penalties imposed on the grantee;
- Lobbying expenses;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Supplanting (replacing) other funds; and
- Providing services that wholly occur outside of Montgomery County.

E. Award Amounts and Duration

Award sizes will vary and will be determined by the nature and strength of the request, the program format, performance history, plans to sustain and enhance existing programming, the total number of households that the applicant indicates they can support with the requested funding amount, and availability of funds. Applicants may request a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$300,000; final funding amounts may be lower than \$5,000. The performance period for these grant awards is one year (anticipated to be on/about October 15, 2024 to October 15, 2025). Programs must be run and evaluated during this period. This grant program does not commit Montgomery County to make an award.

Awards of \$49,999 or less will be distributed in a single up-front payment following successful completion of the grant agreement. Awards of \$50,000 or more will be distributed in two installments, half at the beginning of the grant period, and the second half following successful performance and reporting requirement compliance for the first two quarters of the grant period.

F. Application Review & Awards

The OFSR will recruit an independent Review Committee that will develop and submit recommendations for funding based on their review of applications. The Review Committee will be composed of neutral, qualified individuals from Montgomery County Government and possibly the broader Montgomery County community, selected for their experiences in the grant program's subject area, grants administration, project management, and/or ability to analyze programs from a Racial Equity and Social Justice lens. The panel members will review and score applicant proposals based on the criteria outlined in this NOFO and submit recommendations for awards. Final decisions will be made based on the scores and such other factors and considerations as the County deems relevant at the time of award. These may include the expert opinion of grant administrators with prior experience with applicants, updates to priorities, or other factors.

G. Award Notification

Award notification letters are expected to be released via email roughly one month after the application deadline. For successful applicants, the Grant Agreement will contain the total amount awarded and funding restrictions; programmatic, administrative, and policy requirements; reporting requirements; and payment terms.

H. Submission Guidelines

Applications must be submitted through the Montgomery County Office of Grants Management - Grants Application Platform through the links posted on the first page of this document. Once the applicant clicks on the link, they will be prompted to create a SM Apply account, select the FY25 Community Food Assistance Program, and then access the grant application. Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact OGM (contact listed on the first page of this document) to discuss alternative submission options.

Applications are due no later than Monday, September 16, 2024 at 4:00 PM. All applications will be recorded upon receipt. Applications received after the deadline will be disqualified and will not be forwarded to the Review Panel for funding considerations. Any additions or deletions to an application, unless requested by the OFSR and OGM, will not be accepted after the deadline. Applications with incomplete, illegible, or corrupted digital materials will not be considered.

SECTION II – APPLICATION TASKS

Applicants are required to follow the content requirements and submission instructions listed within the online application platform and NOFO document. Document uploads should ideally be submitted as PDF documents with budgets uploaded as an MS Excel file. **Do not submit Mac formatted documents (i.e. Pages, Numbers, and Key Note) as they are unreadable by SM Apply. Applications will be considered incomplete if any part of any section is missing.**

1. Applicant Information (Reusable) Task

Organizations must provide the following information and documents using data entry fields or uploads. The document uploads will be used to assess legal eligibility for the Grant Program and data fields will be used to populate any resulting grant agreement. Applicants should fill out this information as if they were drafting a contract using specific and exact information.

- Legal Name of Applying Organization as registered with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT)
- Organization’s Maryland SDAT Department ID Number - Verify SDAT status via this link: <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>
- Organization’s Federal Tax Identification Number
- Organization’s Montgomery County Central Vendor Registration Service (CVRS) Vendor ID
- Organization’s mission statement
- Organization’s website (optional)
- Contact Information for **two** of the proposed project’s point-of-contacts (POC)
- Description of Organization's Grant and Financial Management Practices
- Description of Organization’s Data Collection and Management Practices
- Upload of IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organizations as applicable
- Upload of Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations or an explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s (optional)
- Upload of Current Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) (optional)
- Upload of Current board list with names, affiliation, and contact information, as applicable
- Upload of Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures. If not available, please submit a brief statement of explanation.
- Upload of Most Recent Annual or other Organization Reports (optional)

The County is required to check applicants’ status of Good Standing (or equivalent status) with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) at the time of application review, finalization of grant agreements, and for payments during the life of a grant agreement. Although proof of Good Standing is not required as a component of the application, it is critical that applicants remain registered and in Good Standing with SDAT as applicants will be disqualified from a grant competition, delay or even lose a grant award, and/or face delays in grant payments if they are not in Good Standing.

2. Applicant Background (Reusable and Optional) Task

The Office of Grants Management collects data through this Task for post-award analysis to understand application and award trends as well as how to support the diverse communities in

Montgomery County. Data collected through this Task will **not** be visible to Review Committees and will **not** be used in evaluation and scoring of applications.

In line with Montgomery County's Racial Equity & Social Justice goals, the Office of Grants Management is collecting racial and ethnic information on the leadership of nonprofit organizations, based on federal standards for collecting racial and ethnic data. Note that the information entered should be based on how the person identifies themselves.

- Organization estimated staffing size serving Montgomery County in a given year;
- Organization estimated budget, including by funding source, for Montgomery County programs, services, and other initiatives in a given year; and
- Organizational leadership, including CEO or Executive Director and Board Members (if applicable), race and ethnic information.

Responding to these questions is **optional** and will have no impact on application reviews.

3. Applicant Food Security Program Overview (Reusable) Task

The following data fields for the Food Security Program task must be completed by each applicant:

- **Total Food Assistance Program/Project Current Year Budget** – Total expenses for the organization's Montgomery County food assistance services (including staffing, proportional operational expenses, food purchases, etc.)
 - **Food Assistance Program Previous Fiscal Year Budget to Actuals (upload)**
 - **Format of Food Assistance** - *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Family Market, Choice Pantry, Pre-packed Box/Bag Distribution, Home Delivery, Other (please specify)
 - **Food Type(s) Offered** - *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Shelf-stable goods, Meat/Dairy/Eggs, Produce (Fruit/Vegetable), Prepared food/meal, Other
 - **Frequency of Services** - *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Weekly, Bi-Weekly, Monthly, Other
 - **Zip Code(s) Currently Served** – Zip codes that your organization currently serves
 - **Average Number of Montgomery County Households Served (Monthly)** – The average number of Montgomery County households that your organization supports on a monthly basis based on previous fiscal year's total number of unduplicated households served. Please specify if this figure is unduplicated (Yes or No)
 - **Do you accommodate cultural or medically-tailored diets?** (Yes or No)
 - **Day/Time/Location of Current Distribution(s)**
 - **Eligibility Criteria to Receive Services** – Please list any criteria that clients are required to meet in order to receive services, such as (appointment, income verification, address documentation, etc.)
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4. Project Strategy Task

The following **Project Strategy data fields** must be completed by each applicant:

- **Project Title** – If awarded, the Project Title will become the grant agreement name
- **Project Overview** – Brief description of the project (100 words maximum)

- **FY25 Community Food Assistance Grant Requested Amounts** (*must match amounts in application Program Budget*):
 - Food Staples Credits (current Staples program partners only)
 - Direct grant funds for Operational Expenses
 - Direct grant funds for Food Purchases
 - Total FY25 Community Food Assistance Program Grant Request Amount
- **Organization’s Current Fiscal Year Budget** – Board approved budget for the organization for the current fiscal year (upload)
- **Start Date for Qualifying Food Assistance Services in Montgomery County:** See Eligibility section for full details. If an interruption of food assistance services longer than one month occurred after this date, please enter the date when services resumed and continued monthly through the current date.
- **Total number (average, estimated) of individual services delivered per month** (ex. total number of boxes or meals distributed, total number of households visiting a choice pantry, etc. during a calendar month)
- **Additional Zip Codes(s)** – Zip codes that your organization has the capacity to serve with funding through this grant program
- If you are unable to provide unduplicated data, please explain why not, and please provide an estimate of the total number of Montgomery County households and children served in Calendar Year 2023. (optional)
- **Program Commitments (Y/N Check-boxes):**
 - Does your organization commit to participating in an Edible Food Diversion assessment with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection Recycling and Resource Management Division? Participation requires an intake phone assessment and on-site visit to gather information on current food generation and waste disposal practices, which will last approximately 1-2 hours total. All information collected during this study will be reported in aggregate form and your specific data will not be attributable to your organization.
 - Will a representative of your organization commit to regular participation in a newly established Food Assistance Provider peer learning circle (approximately 2 hours per month) designed for sharing resource information and best practices and collectively troubleshooting common service delivery issues?

The following **Project Strategy narrative questions** must be completed by each applicant:

- Outline how the program service delivery will work from start to finish, including strategies for (*250-word limit*):
 - Participant outreach, recruitment, and intake
 - Sourcing food for distribution, including details on anticipated/established purchasing partners, summary of cost analysis and source of cost estimates, and plans for product transport, delivery, inventory management, and storage
 - Providing food assistance tailored to participant preferences and dietary needs
 - Incorporating nutritional guidelines in program offerings
 - Providing external benefits and program referral, co-located services, and/or educational resources to participants

- Which underserved populations/communities do you plan to support with this grant award and why? How will your organization ensure that the proposed project is specifically reaching your target population(s)? *(250-word limit)*
 - Describe your goals for your services in the coming year, in comparison to the year prior. Do you anticipate any changes in your operational model, scale, or type of services provided? *(100-word limit)*
 - What resources do you rely on to inform program development, refinement, and enhancement? *(100-word limit)*
 - Describe your relationship with the demographic/geographic community in the zip codes where you currently provide services, and those in which you would potentially like to expand to support. How does community insight inform your program planning? *(250-word limit)*
 - What is your organization’s capability to implement this project in a culturally, linguistically, and/or technically proficient way? *(100-word limit)*
 - Why is your organization uniquely suited to have a positive impact on Montgomery County households through this program? Please include information about partners with whom you collaborate in the implementation of your food assistance programming and the nature of these collaborations. *(250-word limit)*
 - Describe your organization and program’s alignment with [OFSR Values](#).
 - OPTIONAL:
 - a. What are your organization’s long term (1-3 years) goals for your food assistance program(s)? Describe any actionable plans your organization has to enhance or strengthen your current services to center equity and food sovereignty, improve sustainability, leverage new resources, incorporate education, build operational efficiency and/or resilience. *(250-word limit)*
 - b. What resources outside of this grant program does your organization need to reach these goals (please describe the financial, technical, infrastructure, and other support that is needed)? *(100-word limit)*
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5. Program Budget and Budget Narrative Task

The **Program Budget** will be uploaded as an attachment to the application using the **[required Budget Template](#)**. The budget should apply to the grant term (October 15, 2024 to October 14, 2025) and contain:

Expenses: Detailed itemized cost information. Allowed expenses must fall into the categories of:

- Food Sourcing for Distribution
 - Direct food purchases through retailers, wholesalers, distributors, and/or producers
 - If you are requesting funds to distribute pre-packed produce boxes, please include the total estimated cost for boxes during the grant period in this section, calculated at \$20 for each box.
 - Staples Program Credits (Manna Food Center and/or Capital Area Food Bank current program partners only)
 - Other (Please Describe)
- Operating costs (No more than 15% of total requested grant budget)
 - Staffing (specify salaries, benefits, and contract/hourly worker expenses)

- Supplies (Boxes, Bags, PPE, Packaging)
- Location (rent, utilities, etc.)
- Transportation (Gas, Rental, Recurring Expenses)
- Indirect expenses (Accounting, IT, etc. If calculated organization wide, include only the amount proportional to the Food Assistance Program Budget specifically)
- Other (Please Describe)

Other Revenues:

- Include the total value of direct funding (financial contributions, grants, etc.), remaining Staples credits, and in-kind/pro bono resources (donated food, etc.) that are projected for the grant period, separating applicable funding from the County (grants, Manna and CAFB Staples credits, contract funds, etc.) and non-County resources.
- Current Staples credits and produce box/pallet allocations expected to be available to you during the grant period should be included in the “Other Montgomery County Funding Sources (Total \$)” column.
 - If you currently receive produce boxes from the Capital Area Food Bank, please reflect the total value of these boxes that you have already been allocated to receive during the grant period (calculated at \$20 for each box) in this section.

A required Budget Template is available to download and use in your application.

- On the first tab of the Budget Template (“Overall Budget”), enter number values for each budget item only. **The template will automatically calculate the totals for you.**
- **On the second tab (“Budget Detail”),** outline the individual expenses budgeted for each section (adding rows as needed) and use the Justification/Description column to provide narrative details on the purpose and cost calculation of budget items.
- **Make sure budget totals match throughout your entire grant application.**
- If an organization wishes to include quotes or documentation for expenses reflected in the budget, they may upload these items in the Other Supporting Materials section of the application.
- The Program Budget should be in **MS Excel format** and follow this **file name format:** “[ORGANIZATIONNAME]CFAbudget2025”

In addition to a Program Budget, the proposal must use designated text boxes in the online application to answer the following **Budget Narrative** questions:

- Provide any needed additional detail on the purpose of expenditures and outline how costs were calculated (*500-word limit*).
 - As applicable, include how the “Food Sourcing” CFA Grant Request and/or Other Funding sections of your application budget:
 - Break down into projected cost/value of shelf-stable foods, produce, protein, etc.
 - Reflect expenses of specialized products or unique sourcing partnerships
- Specify how your project would be affected if total funding awarded were less than the amount requested. State whether your project could be completed with a smaller amount and how your projected outcomes would be affected by any funding reduction (*250-word limit*);
- Describe how the request aligns with your current level of services. Will the requested funds reduce, sustain, or expand existing service levels? Outline how projected costs are calculated

and what strategies are being implemented for programmatic cost efficiency (500-word limit); and

- If your organization provides services outside of Montgomery County, please describe in detail how your organization will ensure that funding provided through the Community Food Assistance grant will exclusively benefit Montgomery County residents (250-word limit).
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6. Performance Plan (2-page limit, PDF format preferred)

The Performance Plan outlines how you will measure, collect data, and track metrics of success for your proposed project. This Program **requires** reporting on specific metrics and evaluation mechanism (see table below). Develop a Performance Plan that outlines the anticipated outputs for your organization if awarded funding through this program. Please summarize the evaluation methods and efforts your organization will use to collect, track, and report the required service data and financial reporting metrics, as well as additional organizational strategies to gather participant feedback and measure the program's impact on the target population. The reporting platform will allow organizations to report service metrics beyond what is required for the grant program, and applications that demonstrate a commitment to collecting and reporting data beyond base requirements may receive additional points in the application review process.

Milestone Estimates: In your Performance Plan, please estimate the following figures at 6 months (mid-cycle) and 12 months (end-cycle) of program implementation. Numbers reported should be unduplicated and not double-count residents. If providing unduplicated service data is not possible, please explain the barriers to doing so.

The totals to be provided include:

- 1) Number of individual service deliveries per month
- 2) Number of households receiving food assistance per month

Applicants must include and clearly outline these estimates in their submitted performance plan.

Performance Plan Requirements: During the grant term, all awardees will be required to:

- Be available to host OFSR staff for one onsite visit during the grant period;
- Circulate the OFSR participant satisfaction survey to program participants; and
- Submit reports to the OFSR on a quarterly basis including:
 - Service data (as outlined below)
 - Financial reporting (as outlined below)
 - Narrative feedback answering four core questions on:
 - The implementation or experience running this program, including unexpected challenges and success stories.
 - Efforts to ensure cultural proficiency, inclusivity of underserved community members, and the use of a racial equity lens in providing services.
 - How would you rate and self-evaluate the effectiveness of communication and collaboration with the residents served?
 - Cultural or medically tailored diet accommodations offered.

Award Amount	Reporting and Evaluation Requirements
\$20,000 or less	<p>Service Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report number of Montgomery County households receiving food assistance each month <p>Financial Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the credits/funds spent to date. Provide additional comments on budget variations and the percentage spent as needed. • Financial Report Narrative summarizing expenditures to date with grant funds and outlining any funding or financial management challenges or opportunities encountered during the reporting period. • Financial Uploads: Receipts, proof-of-payment, and/or other relevant proof of program costs incurred should be tracked and may be requested. <p>Narrative Feedback (see questions directly above this table)</p>
\$20,000-\$49,999	<p>Service Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report number of Montgomery County households receiving food assistance each month (duplicated and/or unduplicated) • Total households served by home zip code <p>Financial Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the credits/funds spent to date. Provide additional comments on budget variations and the percentage spent as needed. • Financial Report Narrative summarizing expenditures to date with grant funds and outlining any funding or financial management challenges or opportunities encountered during the reporting period. • Financial Uploads: Receipts, proof-of-payment, and/or other relevant proof of program costs incurred should be tracked and may be requested. <p>Narrative Feedback (see questions directly above this table)</p>
\$50,000-\$100,000	<p>Service Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report number of households receiving food assistance each month (duplicated and/or unduplicated) • Total households served by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Home zip code ○ Household size • Report Total estimated amount of food distributed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Market - (pounds) ○ Choice Pantry - (pounds) ○ Pre-Packaged Box/Bag - (pounds) ○ Prepared Meals- (total quantity) ○ Other <p>Financial Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the credits/funds spent to date. Provide additional comments on budget variations and the percentage spent as needed. • Percentage and/or total value of food sourced from County farms, DMV-region farms owned by people of color, and/or locally owned retailer(s). • Financial Report Narrative outlining any funding or financial management challenges or opportunities encountered during the reporting period. • Financial Uploads Required: Receipts, proof-of-payment, and/or other relevant proof of program costs incurred. <p>Narrative Feedback (see questions directly above this table)</p>

\$100,001 +	<p>Service Data:</p> <p>Report number of households receiving food assistance each month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Unique (unduplicated) households served. <i>If unduplicated data is currently not collected, a performance plan outlining the organization's path to collect, track, and report unduplicated data by the end of the grant period is required.</i> • Total households served by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Home zip code ○ Household size ○ Age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With Children (0-18) ▪ With Seniors (60+) • Total households served (duplicated) • Report Total estimated amount of food distributed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Market - (pounds) ○ Choice Pantry - (pounds) ○ Pre-Packaged Box/Bag - (pounds) ○ Prepared Meals- (total quantity) ○ Other
	<p>Financial Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the credits/funds spent to date. Provide additional comments on budget variations and the percentage spent as needed. • Percentage and/or total value of food sourced from County farms, DMV-region farms owned by people of color, and/or locally owned retailer(s). • Financial Report Narrative outlining any funding or financial management challenges or opportunities encountered during the reporting period. • Financial Uploads Required: Receipts, proof-of-payment, and/or other relevant proof of program costs incurred.
	<p>Narrative Feedback (see questions directly above this table)</p>

7. Project Staffing Plan Task (1-page limit, PDF format preferred)

This section should detail the staff and/or contractor(s) assigned for the program, including position descriptions and percentage (%) of time spent on the program. If applying as a collaboration, please note the organizational affiliation of each staff member.

The Staffing Plan should provide the following details for the staff member(s) and/or contractor(s) reflected in the program budget, or those contributing at least 10% of their time to the food assistance program. If the organization does not have paid staff, please provide the following information for volunteers in leadership positions.

- Position titles
- Percentage (%) FTE or hours per week of each position's time dedicated to the food assistance program
- Description of each position's role in relation to the program
- Any relevant degrees, licenses, certifications, or other professional credentials related to the project
- Outline of language skills and/or cultural competencies
- Indicate if each position is a salaried employee, contractor, or volunteer
- Provide salary, fringe rate, hourly rate, and summary of benefits for each staffing position requested to be funded through this grant.

Notes:

- If an employee is 100% fully funded through grant funds from this program, all of their professional time, over and above routine administrative tasks, must be devoted to the proposed program. If the staff will at times contribute to organizational efforts outside the grant project, be sure to include only partial salary for that person in the staffing and budget proposals.
- Resumes of incumbents in the positions and/or position descriptions of these positions may be uploaded as Other Program Materials if desired.

8. Performance History (1000-word limit)

The Performance History focuses on outcomes already achieved as evidence that the proposed project will have a meaningful impact on the target population.

Provide a brief narrative summary of your organizational history of providing non-profit food assistance services based in Montgomery County that are regularly scheduled, and have been operating uninterrupted at least once per month, at one consistent site, for a minimum of two years. Include available service data and key outputs and outcomes of recent food assistance program(s) supporting Montgomery County residents.

The central question to be answered in this section is: how do the outcomes achieved in the past provide evidence that your proposal will achieve these outcomes in the future? The outcomes described in the Performance History should include the results of projects currently and/or previously funded by the county, as well as supported by other funding sources. Please focus your responses in the Performance History section on information not included elsewhere in this grant application.

Responses in this section should outline examples from the organization's performance history that demonstrate the capacity to comply with performance and financial data collection and reporting requirements, successfully operate all aspects of the proposed food assistance program (including food procurement, safe storage, transportation, and distribution), effectively conduct culturally competent participant outreach and engagement with the priority geographic and demographic populations to be served, and adapt program operations as needed to reflect challenges and opportunities that arise.

9. Supporting Documents to be Uploaded Task

- Letter of support from organizational leadership or partner(s) confirming commitment to allow use of all key physical infrastructure assets and/or resources (storage space, packing or distribution location, vehicles, etc.) outlined in the proposal for the entire grant period (required)
- Collaborative partner materials, if applicable (optional)
- Program Related Materials (optional)
- Other Supporting Materials (optional)

SECTION III – SCORING OF APPLICATIONS

Scoring Criteria

Applicant’s proposal submissions will be evaluated using the following confidence ratings based on the below weighted criteria. Confidence ratings are another form of objective rating that allow evaluators to assign ratings more holistically. Confidence ratings provide evaluators the ability to look more holistically at the strongpoints and weak points of a proposal to capture raters’ overall confidence in the applicant’s likelihood to succeed, helping smaller organizations who may be stronger overall than some more seasoned larger organizations. Confidence ratings are identified by the federal government as an innovative practice that may help with reducing the lead time from solicitation to award.:

3 – Confident	The Reviewers are confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.
2 – Somewhat Confident	The Reviewers are somewhat confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.
1 – Not confident	The Reviewers are not confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.

Depending on the volume of applications, number of Review Committee members, and whether they all review each application, OGM may employ a [statistical rescaling](#) of scores to put applications on a more level playing field.

Criterion A: Project Goals and Grant Program Priorities (1-3 rating; weighted at 25/100 points)

In line with the priorities for the FY25 Community Food Assistance Grant Program, the proposal:

- Demonstrates a strong understanding of their target population’s/community’s needs, experiences, and preferences, based on recent data and literature available, and describes an effective program strategy to effectively meet these needs of the underserved populations/communities of focus (5 points);
- Clearly identifies the minimum and maximum number of individuals/households that could be supported by the funding request, including details on the format, types, estimated amounts, and frequency of food assistance that would be provided (10 points);
- Demonstrates technical, cultural, and linguistically proficient services, inclusivity of underserved community members, and the use of a racial equity lens in providing services within this proposal (5 points); and
- Program design is well researched, strategically and efficiently structured, and designed intentionally to address the unique needs of the population served, including distributing a wide variety of food products (produce, meat, etc.) and offering culturally considerate products whenever possible (5 points).

Criterion B: Sound Fiscal Management and Budget (1-3 rating; weighted at 20/100 points)

- Applicant demonstrates sound grant and fiscal management practices and will be able to submit financial reports and back-up documentation to meet administrative and audit requirements (5 points);
- Expenses listed in the Budget and Budget Justification are consistent with the Project Strategy, Staffing Plan, and other parts of the proposal (5 points);
- Applicant’s Budget and Budget Justification reflect reasonable and realistic costs needed to implement the project, based upon robust research on a sourcing strategy (5 points); and
- Applicant demonstrates that they will achieve the stated outcomes for the target population/community and use resources efficiently (5 points).

Criterion C: Organizational Capability and Relevant Experience (1-3 rating; weighted at 20/100 points)

- Applicant organization and proposed staff/team members have demonstrated expertise and experience to deliver the proposed outcomes to the target population (5 points);
- Applicant has demonstrated the capability to effectively collaborate with residents and organizations in the community to coordinate regular food distributions and/or delivery, as evidenced by previous experience work (10 points); and
- Applicant demonstrates a strong history of serving Montgomery County individuals and families and can effectively conduct culturally competent participant outreach, engagement, and service delivery with the priority geographic and demographic populations identified (5 points).

Criterion D: Performance Plan and Performance History (1-3 rating; weighted at 15/100 points)

- Applicant demonstrates a clear process to measure/evaluate its project and comply with the required metrics and evaluation of participants, and provides service data and key outputs and outcomes of recent food assistance program(s) supporting Montgomery County residents (5 points);
- Performance History provides strong evidence that the organization has been providing non-profit food assistance services based in Montgomery County that are regularly scheduled, and has been operating uninterrupted at least once per month, at one consistent site, for a minimum of two years (5 points); and
- The organization demonstrates the capacity to:
 - Comply with performance and financial data collection and reporting requirements;
 - Successfully operate all aspects of the proposed food assistance program (including food procurement, safe storage, transportation, and distribution); and
 - Adapt program operations as needed to reflect challenges and opportunities that arise (5 points).

Criterion E: Soundness of the Overall Proposal (1-3 rating; weighted at 20/100 points)

- Proposal clearly describes the problem(s) the organization seeks to address, target population/community, how activities will be completed, the effectiveness of proposed activities, and, if funded, how the work will accomplish their stated outcomes (5 points);
- The implementation plan within the proposal is clear, realistic, and achievable based on the proposed timeline (5 points);

- Proposal considers challenges and strategies to address them and discusses contingency plans for a lower than requested funding amount that is realistic and still results in desired outcomes albeit at a lower level (5 points); and
- Align with the OFSR’s [core values](#) of equity, systems-based, innovation, and data-driven (5 points).

Added-Value Proposal Characteristics (1-3 rating; weighted to a maximum 15 additional points)

- Support the local food economy through purchasing partnerships with County farms, locally-owned retailers, and/or DMV-region businesses owned/operated by individuals representing historically underserved communities (3 points);
- Operate a “participant choice model” for food access, allowing participants to select what food they receive (3 points);
- Leverage additional resources to support this program, including in-kind contributions, direct organizational investment, non-county public dollars, and secured outside grant funds (3 points);
- Commit to completing an edible food diversion assessment with Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) (2 points);
- Commit to reporting service metrics beyond what is required for the grant program (2 points);
- Commit to grant-period participation in a Peer Learning Circle (2 points).

MISCELLANEOUS

- Those persons scoring the proposals on the Review Committee will confirm that they have no conflicts of interest.
- Neither the County Executive nor any elected official will be involved in the scoring of grants or determining winners and amounts of awards.
- Scores and award amounts are non-appealable.
- Scorers’ comments and the scores themselves are deliberative and privileged and will not be released. However, applicants may request a feedback report from the Office of Grants Management summarizing the Review Committee’s feedback. Winners will be announced publicly, and successful grant applications and award letters may be subject to release (with redactions as allowed by law).
- County officials may decline to debrief with unsuccessful applicants why their proposal was not granted or their funding request was not granted in full.

SECTION IV – CERTIFICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, AND ASSURANCES

The applicant shall complete and return the Certifications, Acknowledgements, and Assurances listed with the application submission provided in the Application Certification section of the application in SM Apply online grants application portal.

Montgomery County Ethics Questions

- Does your organization employ current employees or contractors of the Montgomery County Government?
 - *This applies for employees that are paid by your organization but are also paid by Montgomery County Government. Note: individuals employed by partner agencies such as Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools, and WorkSource Montgomery do not count as Montgomery County Government employees for the purpose of this Grant Program. If you are unsure if a position applies please contact OGM for clarification.*
- Does your organization's Board of Directors include current employees or contractors of the Montgomery County Government? This applies to volunteer board of director positions.
- If you answered yes to either question, please describe the employee(s) role and function as it applies to your nonprofit organization. Answering “yes” to either question does **not** exclude your organization from being eligible to apply. Instead, we would like to receive this information upfront so that we can allow adequate time for the Ethics Commission to review.

Acknowledgements Agreed to by All Applicants

- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that this grant application may not be revised or altered after submission.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that if funding is awarded, the organization will enter into a non-competitive contract or grant with the County.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that awards may not be distributed as a lump sum, but may be reimbursed or provided on a fixed schedule after sufficient documentation is submitted to the administering County agency.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that any funds submitted for reimbursement must be spent AFTER the contract is finalized and a Notice to Proceed is secured.
- ✓ Applicant has cited in this application all individuals affiliated with the organization and this program who are employed by Montgomery County.

Assurances Agreed to by All Applicants

If the grant is awarded, the applicant assures that:

- ✓ The applicant will administer all awarded funds through this Grant Program.
- ✓ Funds received will be used solely for the documented activities within the submitted proposal.
- ✓ The applicant has read and will conform to the program guidelines and any other conditions imposed by the County in connection with the grant.
- ✓ The applicant organization intends to comply with the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, indicating that no person will be excluded from participation or be denied the benefits of any program, activity or service on the basis of race, sex, sexual preference, color, religion, ancestry, age, national origin, or handicap. The applicant further agrees to make every attempt

- to ensure that the program is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Please note that applications are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) (found at Md. Code Ann., State Gov't., §10-611 through -628 (MPIA) and the County must comply with the disclosure requirements of the MPIA when a request for documents is received.
 - ✓ The applicant understands that all grantees that receive awards under this Grant Program must show proof of insurance prior to receiving the funds., when requested, must be able to show proof of all insurance coverage required by law.
 - ✓ The applicant agrees that any time before final payment and three (3) years thereafter, the County may have the grantee's expenditure statements and source documentation audited.
 - ✓ If there are any changes that need to be made to the grant application after submittal or if the organization ceases operations or becomes a subsidiary of another organization, you have the responsibility of notifying the appropriate County administrator.
 - ✓ The filing of this application is made by the undersigned individual, officially authorized to represent the applicant organization by its governing board.
 - ✓ I hereby certify that information submitted in the grant application is a true and correct statement of facts. I, as a designated legal representative of the Organization, further certify that this Organization shall abide by and be subject to all applicable Federal, State and Local laws and regulations pertaining to any subsequent grant that may be issued.

J. Terms and Conditions

- The County reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the County determines it is in the best interest of the County to do so. The County shall notify the applicant if it rejects that applicant's proposal. The County reserves the right to suspend or terminate an outstanding Grant Program;
- The County reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the posting of a Grant Program;
- The County shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the Grant Program. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility;
- The County may conduct pre-award on-site visits or request additional information to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services proposed; and
- The County may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revisions for the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations. The County shall provide the citations to the statute and implementing regulations that authorize the grant; all applicable federal, State, and County regulations; payment provisions identifying how the grantee will be paid for performing under the award; reporting requirements, including programmatic, financial and any special reports required by federal, state, or County law and/or the granting department; and compliance conditions that must be met by the grantee. If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the Grant Program and any applicable federal, State, or County law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

About the Office of Food Systems Resilience: Bill 20-22 established the OFSR as a non-principal office of the County’s Executive Branch. The OFSR works to make the County’s food system more resilient and equitable to improve the health of residents, the economy, and the environment. The Office serves as the liaison between County agencies and community partners with the goal of addressing the conditions which lead to food insecurity for residents.

About the Office of Grants Management: As charged in Bill 36-19, the OGM provides a central point of contact regarding the grants that the County receives or awards. The OGM also develops countywide policies and procedures regarding grants management and ensures these are consistent with racial equity and social justice goals and performs outreach regarding grants offered by the County and other grants functions. For additional information on other Montgomery County grant programs, please visit the OGM’s SM Apply online grants application platform linked on the first page of this NOFO.