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

FY26 School-Based 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 2026 School-Based Food Assistance (SBFA) Program from 501(c)(3) designated food assistance provider organizations that are currently providing school-based food assistance services at Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) sites. $2,303,775 in total grant funding is available to support programs co-located at an MCPS school site that increase food security for students and their families.

All awarded programs through the FY26 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program **must:**

- Demonstrate past experience with successful operation of school-based food assistance program(s) in partnership with MCPS;
- Outline a quickly actionable program model to implement and/or expand food assistance services at existing/new school partner site(s) throughout the 2025-2026 school year; and
- Demonstrate a flexible service model that offers an element of choice to accommodate the food preferences, onsite capacity, and student population of the assigned school community(ies).

Successful applicants will be assigned to serve specific MCPS schools based on alignment of individual school's needs with providers' program model, experience, and capacity. Awardees will be matched with one or multiple school(s) following the grant review period; the school match(es) will be indicated in grant agreements.

The minimum award that applicants may request is $50,000 and maximum award is $750,000. Requests should be proportional to the total number of schools and/or households that the applicant proposes to serve. Final award amounts may be lower than $50,000. The performance period for these grant awards is anticipated to be on/about August 15, 2025 to on/about July 31, 2026.

Awards will be eligible for renewal annually, pending successful performance outcomes, grant administration compliance, and fund appropriation, **for an additional one-year grant period of August 1, 2026-July 31, 2027 (dates are approximate and subject to change).**

Key Program Dates:

- **Program Opens for Applications:** Monday, June 16, 2025
- **MS Teams Live Grant Information Session:** Wednesday, June 18th at 1:00 PM
- **Submission Deadline:** Monday, July 14, 2025 at 11:59 PM

Key Program Resources:

- **Program Page:** https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/1cfn3lad60aka
- **Information Session:** Click to join the Information Session OR for an event recording
- OGM Board Race-Ethnicity Reporting Template
- The Grant Program Standard Budget template is available here: https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ogm/Resources/Files/OutgoingGrants/FY26-SBFA-Budget-Template.xlsx
- The Grant Program reporting requirements for awarded applicants to review: https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ogm/Resources/Files/OutgoingGrants/FY26-SBFA-Reporting-Requirements.pdf

Grant Program Details, Submissions, and Support: Application details can be downloaded, and application may be submitted through the Online Grants Application Platform through the links above.

Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management (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:

> **Greg Weissman**, Program Manager II
> OGM
> (240) 773-3344
> 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

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. The OFSR will partner with the OGM to administer the FY26 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program.

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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I – GRANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. Background
The OFSR, in partnership with the OGM, is soliciting grant applications for the County's FY 2026 School-Based Food Assistance Program from qualified food assistance providers and organizations that offer school-based food assistance programs and services in Montgomery County.

The School-Based Food Assistance (SBFA) Grant Program was established following the passage of Special Appropriation 24-37, which was approved by County Council in December 2023 to implement the recommendations of the County's Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger. County Council, County Executive Marc Elrich, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Food Systems Resilience, and the Montgomery County Food Council collaborated to design this comprehensive strategy to end childhood hunger in the County, harnessing the expertise of more than 1,300 residents and organizations. The Plan includes 14 recommendations to address food access barriers and reduce food insecurity across all childhood age groups; several approaches identified in the strategy emphasize the importance of school-based programs to reach children and families more effectively. to reach children and families more effectively.

The FY24 School-Based Food Assistance (SBFA) Grant Program funded eight organizations to serve 30+ Montgomery County Public School sites, reaching a total of 11,847 children and 8,848 households. The program was renewed in the OFSR's FY25 Approved Operating Budget and awarded funding to eleven organizations that are currently supporting more than 60 school sites. To date, the FY25 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program has reached more than 34,000 households.

B. Target Population
For students and families that rely on school meals and/or face barriers to food access related to transportation or otherwise, an in-school pantry or at-school food distribution can help to address nutrition insecurity and provide convenient access to necessary resources. The FY26 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program will award funding to initiatives that will support food access at MCPS school sites throughout the County.

C. Funding Priorities
This grant program supports projects that close critical gaps in healthy food access for children and families, and/or that offer innovative approaches to co-locate food assistance at MCPS school sites. In partnership with MCPS, OFSR will identify priority school sites based on the level of need within the school community and the anticipated impact of new or expanded school-based food assistance programming.

Applicants will provide details within the Strategy Narrative regarding the scope of services they are capable of providing, and **successful applicants will be assigned to serve specific MCPS schools based on alignment of individual school's needs with providers' current programs, experience, and capacity.** Awardees will be matched by OFSR with one or multiple school(s) following the grant review period; the school match(es) will be indicated in grant agreements.

Funding will be prioritized to support proposals that demonstrate:

- Continuity of existing school and food assistance provider relationships with demonstrated successful performance history;
- Flexible service models that offer choice-style food offerings, accommodate the preferences of the school community, and/or increase access to culturally relevant foods;
- A cluster-based approach that supports multiple schools within the same MCPS cluster and ensures that families with students in multiple grade levels within the cluster can access services at one site;
- Capacity to accept referrals from other OFSR-funded programs for students and families attending the matched school site(s); and
- Sourcing strategies that entail collaboration with local, DMV-region farms and food businesses and/or DMV-based businesses owned/operated by individuals representing historically underserved communities.

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 at the school site, offering school community members 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 for students that includes an assortment of healthy, locally sourced options including produce and shelf-stable items; and
- Nutritious, medically and/or preference-tailored prepared meals delivered to school sites with student populations 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 in increasing access to high-quality, nutrient-dense foods.

D. Eligibility Conditions

Organizations may only submit one application, and must meet all of the following Grant Program and Montgomery County eligibility conditions:

Grant Program Eligibility Conditions

- The organization must be **an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) food assistance provider** based in Montgomery County that has provided food assistance services over the past calendar year at one or more MCPS site(s), as demonstrated through documentation* (ex: formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding, or signed letter of support from an administrator at the school site).

Montgomery County Eligibility Conditions

- The organization must be currently registered and in Good Standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT);

- The organization's principal place of business 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;
- All activities and expenditures under this grant program must be provided in Montgomery County and/or be exclusively for Montgomery County residents;
- The proposed project in the application must not exclude any potential beneficiaries and/or participants based on their race, ethnicity, gender, or any other protected class;
- Current Montgomery County contract or grant award winners must be current on all reporting obligations for other awards and those reports must reflect substantial progress towards the goals of their awards; and
- Proposed expenses must be for a new activity, expansion of existing activities, or a combination of both. Grant funding **cannot** be used for 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; or supplanting (replacing) other funds.

*Documentation is not required for organizations funded through the Office of Food Systems Resilience's FY25 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program.

Note: MCPS sites should not directly apply for this Grant program. MCPS partners interested in being assigned to a school-based food assistance program provider can contact Catherine Nardi, Program Manager (catherine.nardi@montgomerycountymd.gov) to inquire about partnership opportunities.

E. Award Amounts and Duration
Award sizes will vary and will be determined by program format and the total number of schools and students/families that the applicant indicates they can support with the requested funding amount. Applicants may request a minimum of $50,000 and a maximum of $750,000; final funding amounts may be lower than $50,000. The grants are anticipated to have a 12-month performance period from on/about August 15, 2025, through on/about July 31, 2026. Programs must be run and evaluated during this period. This grant program does not commit Montgomery County to make an award.

Awards will be eligible for renewal pending successful performance outcomes, grant administration compliance, and fund appropriation, **for an additional one-year grant period of August 1, 2026-July 31, 2027 (dates are approximate and subject to change).**

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
NOTICE: This grant program application and future grant opportunities released through the Office of Grants Management will no longer be using SM Apply to accept grant applications. This grant program will be using a new grant platform called Euna Grants (eCivis). Instructions for setting up an account are listed below, and the Information Session will walk through this process.

How to Apply:
1. **Log into the Euna (eCivis) Portal to create an application profile**
   https://portal.ecivis.com/#/login
   1. **Watch the eCivis (Euna Grants) Transition Video Training with a walk through on how to set up a Euna Grants account.**
   2. **Download the eCivis (Euna Grants) Transition Video Training Slides**

2. **Download and review the Euna (eCivis) applicant user guides for assistance prior to the Grant Program Information Session.**
   1. **Logging into Your eCivis Portal Account**
   2. **Reviewing and Submitting your application**
   3. **Transfer Application Ownership**
   4. **Guide for Applicants**, including budget assistance

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 Euna Grants account, select the Grant Program, and then will be able to access the grant application. Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management (contact listed on the first page of this document) to discuss alternative submission options.

Applications are due no later than Monday, July 14, 2025 at 11:59 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 Office of Food Systems Resilience, will not be accepted after the deadline. Applications with incomplete, illegible, or corrupted digital materials will not be considered.

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.

SECTION II – APPLICATION TASKS

Applicants are required to follow the content requirements and submission instructions listed within the online application platform and NOFO document. Please submit your proposal, as broken out by each of the Tasks, by filling out the data fields or uploading documents where applicable. Uploaded documents should have clearly titled sections and sub-sections. Document uploads should ideally be submitted as PDF documents with budgets uploaded as MS Excel file. The application platform cannot read Mac formatted documents (i.e. Pages, Numbers, and Keynote). **Applications will be considered incomplete if any part of any section is missing.**

Please note that Review Committees have historically preferred concise narratives focused on the funding priorities, questions asked, and scoring themes rather than long narrative descriptions.

A. Applicant Information Form
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 Lead Organization as registered with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT)
- Organization's Maryland SDAT Department ID Number
- Organization's Federal Tax Identification Number
- Montgomery County Supplier Number, if known (optional)
- Organization's website (optional)
- Upload: Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations or an explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s
- Contact Information for the Organization's point-of-contact (POC)
- Contact Information for the Organization's Legally Authorized Signatory
- Type in board chair (or equivalent position) names, organization title, email, and phone number

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 Lead and Support organization 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.

Applicants can verify their status with SDAT via this link:
https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch

B. Project Strategy Task

The Project Strategy section asks for several data components related to the proposal. The following 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 (500 characters maximum)
- **FY26 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Project Funding Request** – Total amount requested through this grant proposal
- **Total Project Cost** – Total cost of project from all funding sources
- **Format of Food Assistance** *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Family Pop-Up Market, Choice In-School Pantry, Pre-packed Box/Bag Distribution (snack size), Pre-packed Box/Bag Distribution (individual size), Pre-packed Box/Bag Distribution (family size), Other
  - *Successful performance history with the selected format must be demonstrated in Section E: Performance History.*
- **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
- **Quantities of Food Offered** *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Family-sized distribution (10+ family-size items), individual-size distribution (5-8 items), snack-size distribution (5-8 individual items), other
- **Frequency of Services** *Select all options that apply to your organization's possible offerings* – Weekly, Bi-Weekly, Monthly, Other
- **Has your organization worked with an MCPS school in the past calendar year?** (Yes, No) *Please note that eligible organizations must demonstrate a partnership with at least one MCPS school site over the past calendar year and submit supporting documentation in Section I, Performance History.*
- **Capacity, Number of Schools –** The maximum number of schools that your organization could support with funding from this grant program.
- **Capacity, Number of Students per School –** Include the *minimum and maximum number of students per school* that your organization could support with funding from this grant program.
- **Capacity, Number of Households per School –** Include the *minimum and maximum number of households per school* that your organization could support with funding from this grant program.
- **Cluster Preference –** Use the checkboxes below to indicate which school cluster(s) your organization: (1) currently serves, (2) is interested in serving with this grant funding, and (3) does not prefer to/cannot serve. Click here to see the middle and elementary schools that fall into each cluster.
  - Bethesda Chevy-Chase
  - Winston Churchill
  - Clarksburg
  - Damascus
  - Gaithersburg
  - Walter Johnson
  - Col. Zadok Magruder

Richard Montgomery
Northwest
Poolesville
Quince Orchard
Rockville
Seneca Valley
Sherwood
Walt Whitman
Watkins Mill
Thomas S. Wootton
Downcounty Consortium (includes all feeder schools of Montgomery Blair HS, Albert Einstein HS, John F. Kennedy HS, Northwood HS, and Wheaton HS)
Northeast Consortium (includes: James H. Blake HS, Paint Branch HS, and Springbrook HS)
Other Educational Facilities: (Thomas Edison High School of Technology, Stephen Knolls School, Rock Terrace School, Carl Sandburg Learning Center)
Other

- **Schools Currently Served** – For the clusters that your organization currently supports, please indicate which specific schools your organization is currently serving. Indicate all schools that your organization partnered with for school-based food assistance services during the 2024-2025 school year.

Strategy Narrative

Organizations applying must provide the following information using narrative entry fields *(2,500 character limit each)*:

- **Service Delivery**: Outline how the program service delivery will work from start to finish, specifically addressing:
  - The food assistance format(s), including detail on strategies to incorporate an element of choice to meet the needs of the school community (if applicable);
  - The food types and quantities that will be offered, including how school population preferences would be accommodated;
  - Food purchasing/sourcing strategies, including detail on plans to (as applicable) (1) source from Montgomery County and/or DMV-region farms or locally-owned and operated food businesses and/or (2) distribute recovered food;
  - Nutrition considerations;
  - Quality-control measures to monitor and ensure the quality and safety of food distributed; and
  - Onsite resources or support needed to carry out the proposed program, including staff time, refrigeration, storage space, shelving, etc.
- **Cluster-based approach**: Is your organization interested in a cluster-based approach that supports multiple schools within the same cluster? If so, please explain how your proposed approach would ensure that families with students in multiple grade levels within the cluster can access services at one site. If not, please write, "N/A."

- **Capacity for additional referrals**: How do you anticipate collaborating with other programs to support referral to assistance such as SNAP and other nutrition benefits screening, food assistance outside of the school setting, etc.?
- **Supporting the local economy**: How does your organization 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?
- **Community Engagement:** How will your organization ensure that the proposed project is specifically reaching the target population?
  - What is your organization's plan to implement this project in a culturally, linguistically, and/or technically proficient way for children and families?
  - How will your organization approach establishing and maintaining a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the assigned school partner(s) to ensure that the proposed scope of services meets the needs of the school community?
  - Please include detail on how your organization will facilitate communication with school staff and families regarding both planned and unexpected school closures to ensure continuity of services for families.
- **OFSR values:** How does this project align with the OFSR's core values of equity, systems-based, innovation, and data-driven?

C. Project Budget Template

The Program Budget will be uploaded as an attachment to the application, and **must use the provided template, linked below.** Please note that there **must** be a "Request Justification/Description" for each listed budget line item.

The Project Budget Task includes several data components related to the proposal:

- Upload of Project Budget (No page limit, MS Excel format preferred)
- Organization's paid staff size serving Montgomery County in 2024 (in total FTEs)
- Organization's estimated total volunteers serving Montgomery County in 2024 (in total FTEs)
- Description of Organization's Grant and Financial Management Practices *(600-character limit)*
- Upload: Current Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) *(optional)*
- Upload: Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures. If not available, please submit a brief statement of explanation.
- Upload: Previous fiscal year budget to actuals
- Upload: Organization total current-year budget (revenues/expenses), including funding sources, for Montgomery County programs, services, and other initiatives

Use the required Grant Program Standard Project Budget template available here: https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ogm/Resources/Files/OutgoingGrants/FY26-SBFA-Budget-Template.xlsx

Expenses: Detail itemized cost information for all proposed expenses, including quantities and prices, plus any indirect costs.

- Include staffing salary wages, fringe (as applicable), and contractor expenses for each involved staff position. A narrative description of the direct relevance of the position(s) to program success is required in the Budget Narrative section of this application.
  - If an employee is 100% dedicated to this project and 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's eligible work. 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.
  - Do not double count staff time paid for by other Montgomery County, Federal, State, District of Columbia, or private foundation grants.
- Itemize operating expenses including food purchases, transportation, infrastructure like refrigeration or shelving, and all additional operational costs specifically for use in this program. For the purposes of this grant program, OFSR has projected food costs within the following ranges. Food expenses outside of this range should be addressed in the Budget Narrative section.:
  - Choice pantry/market: $1500 per occurrence, serving ~130 households
  - Pre-packed bag/box for household (10+ items), with shelf-stable food only: $15-20/box
  - Pre-packed bag/box for household (10+ items), with mix of fresh and shelf-stable food: $20-25/box
  - Pre-packed bag/box for household (10+ items), with fresh foods only: $20-25/box
  - Pre-packed bag/box for individual (5-8 items), with shelf-stable food only: $6-12/box
  - Pre-packed bag/box for individual (5-8 items), with mix of fresh and shelf-stable food: $10-15/box
  - Pre-packed individual snack bag with 5-8 snacks per student: $4-6/bag
  - Prepared meals: $10-12/meal
- Indirect costs may be included for general administrative costs such as: legal, accounting, liability insurance, audits, etc. Indirect costs should not exceed 15%.
- In addition to other limitations set in this program, program funds **cannot be used**:
  - For lobbying;
  - To cover any expenses made prior to the grant award;
  - To supplant (replace) funds from other grant sources; or
  - To provide services that wholly occur outside of Montgomery County.
- **Revenues:** Program budgets must also detail all additional secured revenues that directly support this program, including in-kind contributions, individual giving, non-county public dollars, and private grant funds. Include the value of recovered food as in-kind funding.

D. Budget Narrative/Justification

In addition to a Program Budget, the proposal must answer the Budget Narrative questions below that describes how the proposed costs were calculated and their justification. If an organization wishes to include quotes or back up for prices listed in the budget, they may upload these items at the end of this section of the application.

Applicants **must** address the following:

- Brief description of each staff member and contractor role and responsibilities in relation to the proposed project *(2,500 character limit)*;
- Outline the purpose of proposed operating costs and an explanation of how costs were calculated. *(2,500 character limit)*;
- 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. *(1,000 character limit)*;
- Specify any shifts in project costs that you anticipate if the grant award were to be renewed for one additional year. Please note that if renewed, the annual award amount will not change beyond a potential inflationary adjustment; pending Council appropriations. *(1,000 character limit)*;
- If your organization provides services outside of Montgomery County, please describe in detail how your organization will ensure that funding provided through the School-Based Food Assistance grant will exclusively benefit Montgomery County residents. *(1,000 character limit)*.

Optional Budget Narrative Responses:

- If food costs fall outside of the projected ranges listed in the Project Budget Template section above, please include clear justification for expense calculations based on the proposed service format (*2,500 character limit)*;

E. Performance History

The Performance History is a summary of applicant organizational outcomes already achieved as evidence that the proposed project will have a meaningful impact on the target population. The outcomes described in the Performance History may be the result of projects funded by previous County grants and/or contracts, other funding sources, initiatives outside of the County that your proposals seek to emulate in the County or be based on research and/or other best practices.

Performance History Narrative *(2,500 Character Limit)*:

- **How do the outcomes achieved in the past provide evidence that your proposal will achieve these outcomes in the future?** Please include detail regarding the service format provided, and reference data collected through satisfaction surveys, listening sessions, or other direct feedback mechanisms offered to the school staff partners and/or households served.
- Description of Organization's Grant and Financial Management Practices *(600-character limit)*

14

The Performance History must also include the following data components related to the proposal:

- Upload of documentation of an existing partnership with at least one MCPS school (e.g., email documentation, formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding, or signed letter of support from an administrator at the school site) **(required unless the applicant was funded through the OFSR's FY25 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program)**
- Upload of a photo (or multiple photos) that demonstrate the food types, quantities, and format of a typical distribution at current or past MCPS school partner site(s)

F. Performance Reporting Requirements and Evaluation Milestone Metrics

This Grant Program **requires** evaluation, documentation, and reporting on specific metrics relevant to (1) performance and (2) financial management of grant funds (outlined in the Required and Recommended Metrics attachment). Grantees will submit **a Programmatic Report *for each grant-assigned school site*** at the **mid-cycle and end-cycle** points of every 12-month performance period.

Additionally, all SBFA grantees are required to distribute a satisfaction survey to participating students/households on a twice-annual basis and demonstrate in performance reports how they are adapting the scope, scale, and types of services offered to address feedback gathered from the school community.

Performance Evaluation Milestone Metrics:

Applicants must provide targets for the following Performance Evaluation Metrics which will be used to evaluate the anticipated impact of services. Targets should be provided for three points in time ("milestones"): at 6 months (mid-cycle), 12 months (end-cycle), and at the end of 24 months (contingent on extension). *Note: If awarded funding, Performance Evaluation Metric targets will be revised as needed to align with the actual number of school partners assigned.*

The targets should be based on the maximum number of schools indicated in the Strategy Narrative and reflect unduplicated participant counts (the targets should not count the same participants more than once during the one-year initial performance period):

1) Total number of students (unduplicated) receiving food assistance;
2) Total number of households (unduplicated) receiving food assistance; and
3) Total pounds of food distributed.

Performance Evaluation Narrative Questions:

- **Data Management:** What tools or systems will be used to record the data, and ensure data is accurate and consistent? *(500 character limit);*
- **Data Collection Roles:** Who will be responsible for collecting the data? *Note: This response should be consistent with the staffing roles outlined in the Budget Narrative section of the application. (500 character limit);*
- **Data Collection Frequency:** How often will data be collected to ensure compliance with reporting requirements? *(500 character limit);*

- **If providing unduplicated service data will not be possible, please explain the barriers to doing so.** *(500 character limit, optional);*
- **Do you anticipate changes in annual performance metrics for future years if the award is renewed for a subsequent year-long performance period?** *(500 character limit, optional)*

G. Applicant Background 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 the racial and ethnic information on the leadership of nonprofit organizations. The structure of this portion of the survey is based on **federal standards for collecting racial and ethnic data**. Given the County's significant diversity, this survey is also collecting ethnic data. Note that the information entered should be based on how the person identifies themselves.

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

If choosing to provide race and ethnicity information for their board, applicants must use the **OGM Board Race-Ethnicity Reporting Template** and upload it into application. Responding to these questions is optional and will have no impact on application reviews.

H. Budget Tool

This Grant Program is not using the Budget Tool. This item should be ignored as applicants prepare and submit proposals.

I. Goals Tool

This Grant Program is not using the Goals Tool. This item should be ignored as applicants prepare and submit proposals.

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.[1]

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.

Each criterion is attributed a specific weight out of a total of 100 points.

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

In line with the priorities for the FY26 School-Based Food Assistance Grant Program, the proposal:

- Demonstrates a strong understanding of their target population's needs and an effective program strategy to meet the needs of the school communities being served, including service format and frequency and food types and quantity;
- Clearly outlines a framework for incorporating nutrition considerations and quality control measures for food distributed and identifies specific onsite support needs from school partners;
- Flexible service models that offer an element of choice to accommodate the preferences of the school community, and increase access to culturally relevant foods; and

---

[1] See Executive Office of the President, OMB Memo for Chief Acquisition Officers, Senior Procurement Executives on reducing procurement administrative lead time using modern business practices (January 15, 2020)

- Demonstrates technical, cultural, and/or linguistically proficient services, inclusivity of underserved community members, and the use of a racial equity lens in providing services within this proposal.

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;
- Expenses listed in the Budget and Budget Narrative are consistent with the Project Strategy, identified minimum and maximum number of students/families/schools, and other parts of the proposal;
- Applicant's Budget and Budget Narrative reflect reasonable and realistic costs needed to implement the proposal, which fall within the recommended per-service cost range and are based upon a robustly researched food sourcing strategy; and
- Proposal's contingency plans for a lower than requested funding amount is realistic and still results in desired outcomes albeit at a lower level.

Criterion C: Organizational Capability and Relevant Experience (1-3 rating; weighted at 25/100 points)
- Applicant demonstrates the expertise and experience to deliver the proposed outcomes to the target population;
- Applicant has demonstrated the capability to effectively collaborate with an MCPS partner, including communication with school staff contacts to establish an MOU, coordinate regular food distributions and/or delivery, address issues that arise, and ensure continuity of services during school closures;
- The proposed program provides continuity of existing school and food assistance provider relationships with a demonstrated successful performance history; and
- Applicant demonstrates a strong performance history serving Montgomery County children and families and can effectively collaborate with school staff to carry out the proposed project.

Criterion D: Performance Evaluation Plan and Data Collection Capacity (1-3 rating; weighted at 15/100 points)
- Applicant demonstrates in their Performance Evaluation Plan a clear process to measure/evaluate its project and comply with the required metrics and program evaluation data collection and reporting;
- Proposal's milestone estimates, proposed evaluation methods, and ultimate proposed outcomes fit the project strategy and Grant Program's goals; and
- Applicant provides a strong justification for the target milestone estimates, other evaluation methods, and ultimate outcomes.

Criterion E: Soundness of the Overall Proposal (1-3 rating; weighted at 15/100 points)
- Proposal clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of proposed activities and, if funded, will result in the accomplishment of their stated outcomes;
- Proposal aligns with the OFSR's core values of equity, systems-based, innovation, and data-driven; and

- The implementation plan within the proposal is realistic and achievable based on the proposed timeline.

Added-Value Proposal Characteristics (1-3 rating; weighted to a maximum 15 additional points)
- Applicant offers a cluster-based approach that supports multiple schools within the same cluster and ensures that families with students in multiple grade levels within the cluster can access services at a matched site;
- Applicant demonstrates capacity to adjust the scope and/or scale of services to support students and families in their matched school/cluster community referred for assistance by school staff*;* and
- Applicant utilizes food sourcing strategies that entail collaboration with local, DMV-region farms and food businesses and/or DMV-based food retailers, wholesalers, and/or distributors owned/operated by individuals representing historically underserved communities*.*

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 Committees 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, ACKNOWLEGMENTS, 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 the online grant application portal.

Montgomery County Ethics Questions

Note that 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 the Office of Grants Management for clarification.

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.

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.