



April 2, 2020

Hello,

This is an update about COVID-19 Minnesota Food Shelf Program (MFSP) funding, part of a larger COVID-19 response package signed by Governor Walz over the weekend. This funding is appropriated to the Commissioner of Human Services to “address food bank, food shelf, and transportation needs in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.” The Department of Human Services’ Office of Economic Opportunity and Hunger Solutions Minnesota will work together to ensure smooth, transparent, and allowable grant making and reporting on the use of these funds.

Funds will be available to:

Food Shelves (up to \$2.5 million) to purchase food, diapers, toilet paper and other necessary supplies.

- Eligible food shelves will receive \$2000 each in base funding. The remaining fund balance will be allocated among eligible food shelves using the Minnesota Food Shelf Program formula, which is based on number of individuals served.
- More than 300 food shelves currently receive MFSP funds and will be eligible for these additional COVID-19 MFSP funds. Hunger Solutions Minnesota is also coordinating efforts to add new food shelves. For questions about food shelf eligibility, contact Joe Walker, jwalker@hungersolutions.org

Food Banks (up to \$3.5 million) to support regional food banks to enable specialized responses to community food support needs.

- \$2.5 million will be allocated among the seven regional food banks that serve Minnesota using The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) grant allocation formula.
- \$1 million supplemental allocation is reserved for partnership based programming among food banks and Tribal Nations. DHS will consult with Tribal Nations to inform the direction of this work, which will be guided by and unique to the expressed needs of each Nation.

Transportation services (at least \$2.64 million) to support a network of transportation organizations in the distribution of food and supplies to clients.

- Funds will be available through a rolling application process directed by DHS in partnership with Hunger Solutions Minnesota. Providers can request funds multiple times through the

application. This application will ask questions about the level of funding you need and how the funds will be used. Proposals will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, those that are approved for funding will be issued payment within two weeks.

- Eligible entities who may apply for funds include, but are not limited to: Tribal Governments, Nonprofit Agencies, or Local Units of Government.
- Grant funds may be used to support transportation efforts through initiatives such as mobile food shelves, transportation networks, meal programs, and other support services that transport free food assistance to people in need.
- Grantees of these funds **DO NOT** need to be current Minnesota Food Shelf Program (MFSP) grantees, nor do they have to be current grantees of any funding from the Department of Human Services, or the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

DHS and Hunger Solutions are working diligently to get this funding out to providers as soon as possible, as we know the need is great. Hunger Solutions is preparing to issue funds to food shelves and food banks as soon as possible. We will release an application next week for transportation service funds. COVID-19 MFSP funds must be expended by June 30, 2021.

If you have any questions about the COVID-19 MFSP funding process or the rolling applications for transportation, **please contact Amy Doyle, amy.doyle@state.mn.us**

Sincerely,

Sarah Kniskern Aughenbaugh
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Colleen Moriarty
Hunger Solutions Minnesota