Frequently Asked Questions about the
Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative Grant Opportunity
Released June 22, 2020

For any questions not addressed in this document, please contact email hungerinitiatives@ncoa.org.

Application Process and Proposal Details

Q: My organization did not submit a notice of intent by the deadline. Are we still eligible to apply for the BEC grant opportunity?
A: No. You must submit the notice of intent because it contains the background information on your agency and it is the only process to receive the link to the application. After you submit the notice of intent, you will receive a separate email from noreply@ncoa.org with the link to submit the rest of the application.

Q: My letter of intent was sent to your office by email. Do I need to send the notice of intent through the link?
A: Yes. Only organizations that submit letters of intent through the appropriate web link will receive the link to submit the application.

Q: If a notice of intent is submitted, is confirmation sent?
A: Yes. All received notice of intents should automatically be sent a confirmation email within 30 minutes of submission. If you do not receive one, you may verify notice of intent submission by sending an email to hungerinitiatives@ncoa.org.

Q: Are applicants required to submit their letters of support with their application?
A: No. Applicants must submit their partners’ email addresses while filling out their proposal. Partners will receive an email with a link to electronically submit their letters of support. Note: Letters of support are required for applicants who propose to utilize partners in their proposed initiative.

Q: Are spaces included in the character count on the online application form?
A: Spaces are included in the character count on the electronic submission form.

Q: Can I save my work while filling out the application?
A: We strongly recommend that you draft your responses first in a word processing document and then copy and paste the responses into the online form. If you must step away from the application unexpectedly, then you can save the application to complete at a later time.

Q: When attempting to submit a pdf attachment, I received an error saying that the file is too big. How do I reduce the size of the file?

Q: Do we have to identify all personnel who will contribute in any way to this grant?
A: No. Staff members at your organization who will be providing only administrative or budgeting support to this grant do not need to be identified. We are interested in the staff who will be carrying out or supervising the activities you propose in your application.

**Eligibility**

Q: Is an organization that is just beginning a SNAP application assistance program eligible to apply for this grant?
A: We anticipate that we will fund organizations that are already experienced in providing benefits enrollment assistance. We will be evaluating applicants on whether they have proven access and credibility in serving their target population. However, we will not disqualify proposals from organizations that are newer to providing SNAP application assistance. We will be looking for whether those applications propose realistic and significant systems to improve SNAP enrollment in their target area.

Q: We are currently funded by our state in their SNAP outreach plan. Can we still apply for this grant?
A: Yes. As long as your organization is a nonprofit or state/local government, you are eligible to apply.

Q: Can a newly designated IRS Public Charity (501c3) be considered for funding?
A: We are not likely to fund applications from newly established organizations because they lack a track record of service.

Q: Can for-profit companies apply for these grants?
A: For-profit organizations cannot be the lead applicant on a proposal. Under very limited circumstances, we will consider proposals that include for-profit companies as partners or subcontractors. All services to seniors under this grant must be provided free of charge. In addition, activities funded by this grant cannot be used to market or promote any private product or service. If you are wondering whether you have developed a proposal that includes a for-profit partner in an acceptable way, we encourage you to contact us before submitting your proposal.

Q: Can national organizations apply?
A: National organizations are welcome to submit a proposal. However, much of this work is done locally and requires local and state relationships to make sure that the process is as seamless as possible. Please include how you will navigate this as a national organization in your proposal.

Q: Can agencies or organizations serving people in U.S. territories apply for this grant?
A: If the residents of the U.S. territory you are serving are not eligible for SNAP that you are eligible to apply. If you are interested in serving residents of U.S. territories as your target population, please contact us to discuss your service area and target population.
Quantitative Objectives

Q: What kind of assistance must be provided to a client to count that individual toward the total number of clients assisted? Will screening a client for eligibility count?
A: To count a client toward your grant goals, your organization must assist clients with completing and submitting SNAP applications. Your organization should also assist clients with recertifying for SNAP when necessary. Screening individuals without assisting them in enrollment does not count toward this total and is not the goal of the grant.

Q: What if a client is screened but does not appear to be eligible for any of the core benefits, would they count toward our goal?
A: A client who is not eligible to apply for SNAP would count toward the total number of clients screened, but they will not count toward the SNAP applications submission goal. The primary focus of this grant is assisting eligible older adults with completing and submitting applications for SNAP. We anticipate that every grantee will screen some individuals who are ineligible or choose not to apply for benefits. It is important that grantees screen clients who may not be eligible for SNAP benefits.

Q: We receive funding from other sources to do SNAP enrollment work (for example, state SNAP outreach funding). Can we count the people we serve under those sources toward this grant’s total goal of individuals assisted?
A: No, we expect that this project will serve additional clients over and above the number of people you would otherwise reach under your current activities. We are interested in proposals that leverage other benefits access work already underway, including SNAP.

Q: Are organizations required to provide personally identifiable data about clients in the monthly reporting? Some immigrant clients are concerned with this information being shared with Federal agencies.
A: Grantees are required to report data in the aggregate. We do not ask for client-specific data.

Target Area

Q: How large or small should our target area be?
A: You have broad discretion in defining the area you would like to serve. Your target area can be a city (or even a part of a city), a county, multiple cities or counties, or a state. Since eligibility for SNAP is determined at the state level, if you intend to serve more than one state we expect to see how you will handle working with multiple government agencies determining eligibility in your proposal. As with other aspects of the proposal review, we will be looking for both how reasonable your proposal is and how large of an impact it would have.

Use of Grant Funding

Q: Can we use some of these grant funds to pay for outreach activities?
A: Yes, you can use some of these grant funds for outreach. However, keep in mind that the primary goal of these grants is enrollment, not outreach. Outreach is an ancillary activity that generates
enrollment. Please explain in your proposal how any non-enrollment activities you intend to undertake, such as outreach and education, will contribute to the primary goal of enrolling individuals in these benefits programs.

**Q: Is there a maximum percentage of the grant that we can use for technology?**
**A:** We don’t have a specific cut-off in mind for funds used on technology purchases. The key guideline here, as in the case of outreach, is that the grant is focused on enrollment. If you choose to budget for technological purchases, please be clear about how those purchases will contribute to the “bottom line” of increasing enrollments.

**Q: Can we use some of the grant funding to pay for training for our staff or for staff members at partner organizations on the details of SNAP eligibility and enrollment processes?**
**A:** Yes. Since the training is ancillary (like outreach), it should be tied to the changes you propose to improve the SNAP access system in your target area.

**Q: Would it be inappropriate to use some of the grant funds to create a new staff position, or to pay the salaries of existing staff members?**
**A:** Paying a portion of staff salaries is a valid use of the grant funds. Since grant activities are being supported by specific staff time, you should be clear in your proposal about how your project will be sustainable in terms of the proposed system to reduce barriers and make SNAP access more sustainable beyond the funding period.

**Q: Is it possible to split the funding awarded via a subcontract with a local partner?**
**A:** Yes. We encourage grantees to partner with local community organizations to provide SNAP application assistance. If you choose to include a local partner in your efforts, please clearly define the designated role the partner will serve and plans to execute the agreement. It is requested that the applicant submit a letter of support from the partner that explains the role the partner will play in the project with the agency’s proposal. See “Partnerships” section for more details.

**Partnerships**

**Q: Are partnerships required as part of the Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative?**
**A:** We expect all successful proposals to describe how they intend to work with the government agency determining eligibility for SNAP in their area. We do not require specific partnerships, but since these grants are focused on the creation of a seamless person-centered system of SNAP assistance and enrollment, we strongly encourage all applicants to think about how other organizations could best contribute to that system.

**Q: What is required from intended partners in the proposal?**
**A:** You should explain clearly what role each of your designated partners will serve. Proposed partners are required to submit an electronic letter of support agreeing to serve and explain that specific role in the project. The letter of support can be addressed to NCOA or the applicant organization. The role of the supporting agency and the reason they are supporting the application must be clear. A large number of generic letters of support are unnecessary and discouraged.
Budget

Q: Are you reviewing an organization’s total operating budget? If so, what will you be looking for?
A: We will review an applicant’ proposal to determine if the grant award amount does not exceed 10% of the organization’s total operating budget.

Q: Will we receive start-up funds at the beginning of the grant period?
A: Yes, you will receive a portion of the grant award at the very beginning of the grant period.

Q: What is the limit of the indirect/administrative rate that may be charged under this grant?
A: Indirect/administrative rate is limited to 10% of the budget. You are welcome to allocate up to 10% of the funds to indirect/administrative costs. Please explain your indirect costs in your budget narrative.

Q: Are there any restrictions on what can be counted toward the 15% match?
A: No.

Q: Can we count volunteer time toward the in-kind match?
A: Yes, volunteer time can count toward the match. Independent Sector has released a study that provides very rough estimates of the monetary value of volunteer time in each state, which is available here: [http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time). If you have further questions about how to estimate the value of your volunteers, please contact us.

Q: Can the full match be an in-kind match, or does some of it need to be a cash match?
A: The full 15% match can be an in-kind match.