



Blue Earth County Individual Assistance Grants



Transportation Provider Grant

Issued September 9, 2020 – Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Funding

Request for Proposal

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Individual Assistance Grants Overview

The Blue Earth County Human Services Department was asked to submit a plan which supports qualifying individuals and families in our county who have experienced specific hardship directly due to the impact of COVID-19. These targeted supports use one-time and short-term resources dedicated to this defined purpose.

On August 11th the County Board Authorized a plan for 6 targeted areas of service which includes issuing 5 Request for Proposals.

The summary of the 6 focus areas are as follows:

| Strategy | Grant Recipient or Fund Administrator | Approved Amount |
|--|--|------------------------|
| A1: Emergency Assistance | BEC Financial Assistance | \$314,081 |
| *A2: Housing Assistance Grants | Current Housing Assistance Administrators | \$100,000 |
| *A3: Housing Provider Grants | Housing Providers | \$200,000 |
| *B: Community Food Provider Grants | Food Support Entities | \$100,000 |
| *C: Transportation Access Grants | Transportation Provider | \$8,000 |
| *D: Mental/Emotional Health Support Grants | Long Term Care Facilities | \$100,000 |

*Indicates RFP to be issued

- Each of the 5 RFP's will be individually outlined for community responses.
- Criteria for scoring will be established before the RFP's are formally published.
- Responses will be reviewed and scored by a committee.
- Awards will be announced as soon as possible after the posted deadline for each RFP has passed.
- The county reserves the right to repost any RFP if initial responses do not appropriately or adequately address the core goals of each published RFP.
- The county also reserves the right to proactively adjust the allocation of CARES money if necessary, based on the course of the pandemic and the priority of needs in the community before the end of the year.
- Our goal is to distribute all the funds within the 5 dedicated areas approved by the Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners.

Transportation Provider Grant Summary

Blue Earth County residents without adequate personal transportation are currently struggling to find timely (same day) transportation to non-emergent medical appointments if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or are currently diagnosed with COVID-19. The increased risks and costs transportation providers face with this type of request is significant and is a barrier for both the provider and the individual in need.

A Request for Proposal is being issued and funding will be awarded to a transportation provider to serve Blue Earth County residents that need non-emergent medical attention related to COVID-19.

Funding under this grant may be used for the following purposes:

- Increased costs related to staffing and personnel, which may also include training
- Time and supplies due to increased sanitization procedures or PPE
- Increased costs for business liability due to transporting symptomatic or COVID positive individuals.

The provider must agree to enter into a contract with Blue Earth County for transportation services for individuals meeting established criteria and have no other means of transportation to and from the appointment.

Application and Technical Requirements

Proposals may be submitted in writing in a format at the discretion of the applicant. A brief letter of interest, including the relevant and necessary information will be accepted. Proposals/letters are due Sunday, September 27, 2020. Review and subsequent award notice will occur the week of Monday, September 28, 2020.

Eligible applicants:

Eligible for Blue Earth County Transportation Provider Grants include:

- Existing transportation providers serving Blue Earth County residents.
- The principal place of business is located in/very near Blue Earth County, with services rendered to a significant number of Blue Earth County residents
- Must be a registered, eligible provider of Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Services through Minnesota Health Care Programs able to provide Mode 3 transportation services. Providers who offer Mode 4 services will be considered preferred, if Mode 4 services will be offered to the target population for this grant.

- Has the ability to demonstrate and document that from March 15, 2020 to November 1, 2020, it has incurred increased costs or will incur increased costs due to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Will not use Blue Earth County CARES funding in place or instead of local, state, federal or other funds already designated for that expense or activity
- Can provide independently reviewed or audited financial statements, if requested
- Has been in operation and provided essential services since at least January 2020
- Has prior experience in successfully managing federal, state, or local financial assistance and/or grant funding
- Will not use any funds awarded under this grant for purposes outside of the approved request

Funding amounts and requirements:

- One-time grants may be used by transportation providers to address increased expenses due to the delivery of services for symptomatic or individuals testing positive for COVID-19.
- Applicant must fully demonstrate the need for additional funding and provide rationale for funding need and how the funding will be distributed.
- The total amount available for responding to this community need is \$8,000. Established grant amount requests are as follows:
 - Minimum - \$1,000 per entity
 - Maximum - \$8,000 per entity (additional funding may be available through a reissuance process)
- Expenses must be a necessary expenditure incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 response.
- Any proposed expense request must not have been accounted for in your organization's most recent budget or may not be funded through another means.
- All expenses must be incurred after March 15, 2020 or prior to November 1, 2020 and documentation for proof of expenses incurred made available upon request for auditing purposes.
- All unused/unexpended funds shall be returned to Blue Earth County by November 15, 2020, without need for demand by Blue Earth County.

Ineligible expenses:

- Revenue replacement
- Construction costs
- Capital investments or infrastructure costs
- Overhead costs
- Costs for political activity, including lobbying
- All costs which are ineligible per the most recent U.S. Treasury guidance <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

Submission Instructions

Responses

All responses (letters) to this Request for Proposal must include the following essential items, and will be scored based on the criteria defined below:

- Applicant Information
 - Legal entity name
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Contact name, phone number and email address
 - Brief introduction of your organization
- Problem Statement
 - Problems that will be addressed with funding received
 - Applicable data and statistics, including anticipated number of individuals served
- Target Population
 - Definition of the population and level of need for services in the community
 - Plan for marketing or referral systems
- Implementation
 - Describe how you will fulfill the grant expectations, including anticipated timelines
- Budget
 - Identified resource(s) to be funded with corresponding budget amounts
 - Total project budget
 - In-kind, or match funding should be noted

Proposal Review Process

Proposals must be submitted via email to Tacie Schwartz at tacie.schwartz@blueearthcountymn.gov

All proposals that meet the deadline will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with eligibility and submission requirements. Complete proposals that meet the requirements will be reviewed and scored relative to the application review criteria outlined below.

The review team will include internal Blue Earth County Human Services staff, including select management personnel and program staff. Additionally, the review team will include at least one community representative from the Human Services Advisory Committee. In order to ensure that conflicts of interest do not interfere with the proposal review process, the review teams for each grant will be comprised of members who do not have relationships with any applicant organization/entity.

The review team reserves the right to request additional information or documentation to support and validate information submitted in proposals. The team will make their recommendations to the BEC Director of Human Services who will provide a final review. Upon approval, the grant award will be made in accordance with the Blue Earth County Procurement Policy and the Director will either approve the grant at the departmental level or request approval through the Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners, depending on the award amount and other relevant factors according to policy. Decisions on grant awards will be final; there will be no appeal process.

Applicants will be notified by e-mail whether their applications were funded. Blue Earth County reserves the right to negotiate changes to the proposed budgets and/or activities.

Rating Scale

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

Prior Experience (5 points)

- The applicant has shown evidence of successful prior experience working on issues related to selected strategies.

Readiness (40 points)

- The applicant has completed an action plan that is reasonable and realistic.
- The applicant has designated appropriate activities that flow logically from one step to the next.
- The applicant has specified an amount of work that can be done in the designated time frame and with the designated resources.
- The action plan includes milestones designed to assess progress towards completion of grant activities.
- The applicant has included enough detail in the action plan to illustrate the grantee is likely to successfully complete grant activities.

Priority Populations and Health Equity (20 points)

- The applicant has identified priority populations within its service area and described the needs of these populations as it relates to the intention of the specific grant.
- The applicant has identified the scope of the priority population and has provided a realistic estimated number of people impacted by the action plan.
- The applicant has considered and addressed the interest and input of priority populations in intervention planning.
- The applicant has planned to implement change in such a way that it addresses the needs of the priority populations.

Staff Capacity (10 points)

- The applicant has existing staff capacity to implement the action plan as written or is planning to recruit staff or dedicated volunteers with expertise in the areas necessary to meet the desired outcome.
- The applicant has existing staff or is planning to recruit and hire staff that has expertise in the areas necessary to meet the desired outcome.

Budget (10 points)

- The requested level of funding is appropriate for the proposed activities.
- The budget includes a clear and reasonable description of the proposed allocation of funds.
- The proposed expenditures are clearly related to the proposed activities.

Geographic and/or Site Distribution (5 points)

- The applicant has identified a specific service area(s) within Blue Earth County.
- The grant activities, interventions, and/or impact are distributed geographically within the County.

Community Partnerships (10 points)

- The applicant has identified existing partnerships and/or new partnerships within the community(ies) that support this request.