



Blue Earth County Individual Assistance Grants



Mental & Emotional Health Support Grant for Certified Nursing and Customized Living Facilities

Issued September 11, 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 according to a standardized process.
- 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.

Mental and Emotional Health Grant Summary

The mental and emotional wellbeing of all county residents is paramount to our overall health, but it is especially important during this pandemic. Blue Earth County has five nursing facilities, and approximately 14 customized living facilities. With the pandemic inequitably impacting some of Minnesota's most vulnerable individuals residing in nursing and customized living facilities, many of these residents have experienced extreme social isolation from family, friends and peers during this time. Experts, both local and national, are illustrating the increased needs of residents of these facilities whom otherwise do not have regular or seamless access to traditional community mental health services.

The purpose of this grant is to allow nursing and customized living facilities access to one-time funding to address barriers that exist when trying to address the mental and emotional needs of their residents. Local providers have shared that many resources in facilities have been redirected to preventing spread of the virus.

Examples of eligible uses of one-time grant funding are, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of adaptive equipment or technology to promote social interaction between residents and visitors, as well as for virtual medical visits
- Education and training on mental and emotional wellbeing for direct care employees
- Purchase of services for therapy, mental health consultation, social/recreational services, etc.
- Create or participate in networking opportunities with other existing mental health providers to support long term business relationships

Blue Earth County Human Services is requesting proposals from nursing and customized living facilities in Blue Earth County for one-time grants to be used to address barriers or invest in strategies which support healthy emotional and mental wellness for residents.

Application and Technical Requirements

Proposals may be submitted in writing in a format at the discretion of the applicant. Proposals will be taken on a rolling basis, until funding is exhausted. Reviews and subsequent award notices will occur every two weeks through Friday, October 30, 2020, or until funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply immediately due to the limited funds available.

Eligible applicants:

- Operate as a setting that provides Customized Living Services to one or more waiver program participant through EW, CADI or BI waiver programs, or operates as a Certified Nursing Facility.
- The facility is located in Blue Earth County
- 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:

- The total amount available for responding to this community need is \$100,000. Established grant amount requests are as follows:
 - Minimum - \$1,000 per entity/facility
 - Maximum - \$10,000 per entity/facility
- 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.
- *Due to the increased need to expand awareness of local mental health resources at this time, all grantees will be scheduled for a brief informational session on services and resources available through the South Central Community Based Initiative, for which Blue Earth County is a member county.*

Ineligible expenses:

- Revenue replacement
- Construction costs
- Overhead costs
- Costs for political activity, including lobbying

- All costs which are ineligible per the most recent U.S. Treasury guidance dated July 8, 2020 <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

Submission Instructions

Responses

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

- Project Name
- Applicant Information
 - Legal entity name
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Contact name, phone number and email address
 - Brief introduction of your organization
- Project Summary
 - Summary of the project
 - Anticipated community benefit from the project
- Problem Statement
 - Problems that will be addressed with your project
 - 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
- Objective and Outcomes
 - Specific, measurable project objectives
 - Key anticipated outcomes
- Project Activities and Implementation
 - Describe how you will fulfill the objectives and anticipated outcomes
 - Timetable to describe when activities are expected to be complete
- Budget
 - Identified resource(s) to be funded with corresponding budget amounts
 - Total project budget
 - In-kind, or match funding should be noted (although such funding is not required)

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 decision. 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.

Grant award decisions will be made on a rolling basis every two weeks as noted above. 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 to be in place within the written timeframes 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.