

**American Rescue Plan (ARP) State
Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF)
Request Form**

Please complete this form in accordance with
the process instructions.

Agency/Point of Contact: Sarah Aughenbaugh, DHS, sarah.aughenbaugh@state.mn.us, 651-431-3825

Title of Request: Federal Recovery Funds for Food Support

Date: 12/17/2021

Request Amount: \$ 14,000,000

Expenditure Time Period: 1/3/2022 to 6/30/2023

Brief Summary of Request: (Summary must be complete on this page with supporting information attached)

Food support continues to be in high demand due to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Minnesotans made more than 3.8 million visits to food shelves in 2020, surpassing the previous record set in 2019. Children represent 35.7% of food shelf visits in Minnesota, while senior visits were up 31% from 2019 to 2020. Relatedly, Minnesota has seen a 24% increase in the number of people participating in SNAP between February 2020 and June 2021. This increase is expected to persist throughout the pandemic and the subsequent recovery period. Even with this growth in case rates – across all geographies and demographic groups – we estimate that as many as half of eligible households are not enrolled in SNAP. Access to food ensures children and families have the resources to thrive in school, work, and their communities.

Minnesota faces an intense food security challenge: responding to immediate household food needs in the face of high COVID case rates and rising food costs. DHS and the Food Security Work Group are proposing this allocation of Fiscal Recovery Funds to address these presenting needs.

This proposal requests \$14 million to support immediate household food needs, as well as system capacity, to provide a nimble, fluid response to changing needs across emergency food response and SNAP benefit access.

Within the scope of this comprehensive food support proposal, grant funds would be made available to a diverse network of food resources such as food shelves, food banks, and meal programs, representing the efforts of community based organizations, Tribal Nations, and local units of government. Allowable uses of funds would include:

- Costs to purchase, produce, process, transport, store, and coordinate the distribution of nutritious food to needy individuals and families. This includes purchase of culturally connected food items to meet Minnesotans diverse needs
- PPE, hygiene supplies, cleaning and disinfecting to promote effective public health and COVID-mitigation strategies
- Technology to facilitate no-contact or low-contact food distribution and outreach models
- Outreach efforts to connect potentially eligible people to SNAP benefits and provide individual application assistance
- Training and technical assistance to support evolving food distribution models and effective outreach strategies for COVID safety and long-term public health approaches

Without these investments, Minnesotans will experience food hardship and insecurity due to the ongoing public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. To the greatest practical extent possible, investments will be structured to leverage funds from other levels of government. DHS authority for this proposal is derived from administration and oversight of SNAP, the Minnesota Food Shelf Program (MS 256.E34), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (7 CFR § 251), the Commissioner's authority to make contracts with and grants to entities and individuals using appropriated funds (MS 256.01, subd. 2(a)(6)), and the COVID-19 Flexible Response Account (2021 Minn. Laws. 1st Sp. Sess., Chapter 12, Article 5, Sec. 2).

Jodi Harpstead

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Date: 2021.12.20 12:12:52 -06'00'

Department Head Signature

12/20/2021

Date