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**Arlington County FY25 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)**

**Food Security Mini-Grants Supporting the Food Security Strategic Plan**

May 2024

**General Information**

The Arlington County Department of Human Services announces a grant funding opportunity to support the implementation of its [Food Security Strategic Plan](https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/departments/documents/dhs/food-security/arlington-food-security-strategic-plan-report-final.pdf) (“Strategic Plan”). The Strategic Plan was published in October 2022 and identified 28 strategies in five categories that would support the improvement of food security in Arlington.

Funding will be available to local organizations implementing selected aspects of the Strategic Plan. As a part of the FY2025 budget, a total of $150,000 in one-time funding is available through this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). An initial round of grants was issued as a part of the FY2024 budget.

Awards will be granted based in part on an organization’s ability to address selected goals and strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan. Organizations may apply for a single project, and the maximum grant award is $25,000. Funding awards will be announced in September 2024. Funds must be spent by organizations by June 30, 2025.

**Eligible Activities**

To be eligible, projects must support at least one of the following strategies of the Strategic Plan.

**Systemic Change**

1.2 Improve nutrition equity by working to eliminate, reduce, and prevent disparities in food security policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that all those in need of food assistance receive the support they need.

**Food Access**

2.1 Enhance school-based supplemental food offerings, including food pantries, in-school snacks, and weekend food support.

2.2 Establish new charitable food distributions in neighborhoods with unmet need.

2.3 Increase capacity to deliver charitable food to those unable to access available resources.

2.5 Increase food rescue & redistribution operations.

2.6 Enhance and improve existing food assistance programs serving Arlington residents.

**Outreach & Education**

3.1 Promote food assistance resources and assist residents with enrolling in programs for which they may be eligible.

3.4 Implement a coordinated SNAP outreach campaign.

3.5 Increase nutrition education opportunities for residents of all ages.

3.6 Partner with resident community leaders to share information about resources in key languages and provide compensation for their work.

**Capacity Building**

4.1 Develop training materials to inform social services staff and volunteers about food assistance programs, specifically SNAP and WIC, and help residents apply.

4.2 Provide trauma-informed care training for staff & volunteers working with food insecure residents.

4.3 Create a cultural foods guide for charitable food providers with partners from the region.

4.4 Increase the capacity to share locally-grown produce from gardeners and farms with food pantries through expanded donation processing infrastructure.

4.6 Collaborate with Arlington Public Schools (APS) through its forums to review existing programs and practices and address food equity.

**Informed Decision Making**

5.2 Use varied levels of engagement to encourage food assistance recipients to provide valuable feedback on programs and services.

5.3 Collect data from food assistance organizations that provides information about usage trends and services provided.

**Examples of Funding Uses**

* A food pantry purchasing software to better track clients and usage data. (Strategy 5.3)
* A food pantry, meal program, or housing program purchasing reusable bags or boxes to use in delivery efforts or single-use containers to distribute rescued food. (Strategies 2.3 & 2.5)
* A nutrition education provider who will teach a nutrition curriculum with a certain population of residents. (Strategy 3.5)
* A small food pantry purchasing a refrigerator or freezer to be able to offer produce, dairy and/or meat to clients. (Strategy 2.6)

A list of FY24 grantees and their funded projects is available [here](https://www.arlingtonva.us/About-Arlington/Newsroom/Articles/2023/Arlington-Awards-Food-Security-Mini-Grant-to-Community-Organizations).

**Eligibility Requirements**

Eligible organizations must serve or wish to serve Arlington residents through one of the above-listed strategies outlined in the Food Security Strategic Plan and be either:

* an IRS designated 501c3 nonprofit organization OR
* a faith-based organization OR
* a public school or university

Organizations may be based in other jurisdictions, provided that the proposed project benefits eligible Arlington County residents.

If projects are sponsored by faith-based organizations, outreach efforts and services must be provided to any eligible beneficiary, regardless of affiliation. Programs cannot be marketed exclusively to members of the sponsoring organization’s religious affiliation or denomination, and proselytizing while providing services related to this grant funding is prohibited.

**Application Documents**

* Application
* Budget Worksheet

**Submission Requirements**

All proposals, including a Word or PDF copy of the grant application and all required attachments, including the budget worksheet, must be submitted electronically through the form on the Food Security Mini-Grants webpage no later than 5:00 pm on Tuesday, July 9, 2024. The proposal also must include a 501c3 authorization letter or business license.

**Evaluation Process**

Grants will be awarded through a competitive evaluation process. Applications will be reviewed by a review panel, which will use the criteria below to consider all aspects of the application. Funding amounts may be adjusted to maximize impact among selected projects.

Responses to each question on the application will be scored using a rubric. Most questions are valued between 5 and 10 points each. The maximum point value for each category of questions is listed below.

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| **Application Section** | **Questions** | **Maximum Points** |
| Organization Information | 1-7 | Not scored |
| Program Design | 8 – 14 | 40 points |
| Strategic Plan Connection | 15 – 16 | 15 points |
| Objectives & Impact | 17 – 19 | 25 points |
| Data & Evaluation | 20 – 21 | 10 points |
| Funding Request & Budget | 22 – 24 | 10 points |
| **Total** |  | **100 Points** |

**Reporting Requirements**

Grantees will be required to submit quarterly financial and programmatic reports. Programmatic reports will indicate progress towards indicated goals and outcomes and estimated numbers and demographics of households served by their project(s) as applicable. Financial reports will indicate amounts spent in each budget category with accompanying documentation. Reports will be due in January, April, and July 2025. The County will conduct training on reporting requirements at the beginning of the project period for all Grantees.

**Grant Awards**

Following the award announcement, each organization awarded a grant will be required to execute a grant agreement with the County’s terms and conditions. A copy of the grant agreement template is available on the Food Security Mini-Grants webpage. Organizations will need to submit a W-9 form to receive funding.

Funding will be issued in quarterly reimbursements based on the Grantee’s eligible expenses. Grantees will need to submit for approval by the County an invoice of project expenses that correlate to the line items in the budget submitted with their proposal.

**Other Requirements**

Grantees will host the Food Security Coordinator for a site visit. Site visits must demonstrate the funded project.

Grantees must have a representative participate in the Arlington Food Security Coalition’s monthly meetings.

**Timeline**

* Wednesday, May 29, 2024 – Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) released
* Monday, June 10, 2024, at 2:00 PM – Virtual information session
* Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 5:00 PM – Applications Due
* Late September 2024 – Grantees and awards announced; agreements executed
* October 2024 through June 30, 2025 – Funds available to be spent by organizations

**Contact**

Any questions about this NOFA should be directed to Stephanie Hopkins, Food Security Coordinator, at [shopkins@arlingtonva.us](mailto:shopkins@arlingtonva.us) or (703) 228-1065 before the application deadline. A summary of questions asked and the County’s responses and information covered in the information session will be posted by Friday, June 14, 2024.