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Health and Human
Services

Applicant Conference

Request for Applications No. HHS0016733
Nutrition Incentive Program Project
January 23, 2026, at 11:00 AM CST





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Agenda

- Introductions
- Procurement Activities
- Project Overview
- Funding, Payment Method & Grant Term
- Eligible Population, Service Area & Eligible Activities
- Program Requirements & Deliverables
- Performance Monitoring
- Financial Management
- Grant Funding Prohibitions
- Application Composition and Organization
- Application Screening and Evaluation
- Closing Comments



Introductions

Speaker

- **John Norton**, Grants Specialist
Sole Point of Contact for RFA
Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement
and Contracting Services (PCS)
- **Barbara Logan**, Grants Specialist
Co-Presenter
Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement
and Contracting Services (PCS)





Procurement Roles

Procurement Team

- Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) is responsible for all procurement and solicitation activities.
- Marissa Nino is responsible for contract management activities throughout the life of the Grant Agreements including, contract development, execution, and monitoring.
- Leanne Raborn is responsible for project scope, program requirements, program performance, program outcomes, and programmatic monitoring.



Schedule of Events (RFA Section 7.1)



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| EVENT | DATE/TIME |
|--|---|
| Posted to HHS Grants RFA and ESBD websites | January 20, 2026 |
| Applicant Conference Attendance is Optional | January 23, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. Central Time |
| Deadline for Submitting Questions or Requests for Clarification | January 26, 2026 by 10:30 a.m. Central Time |
| Tentative Date Answers to Questions or Requests for Clarification Posted | February 5, 2026 |
| Deadline for Submission of Applications NOTE: Applications must be RECEIVED by HHSC by this deadline if not changed by subsequent Addenda to be considered eligible. | February 23, 2026, by 10:30 a.m. Central Time |
| Anticipated Notice of Award | August 2026 |
| Anticipated Project Start Date | September 2026 |





Solicitation Access

HHSC will post all official communication regarding this RFA on the following websites, including the notice of award:

- The HHS Grants website is located at
<https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/pcs/rfa.cfm>
- The ESBD website is located at
<https://www.txsmartbuy.gov/esbd-grants>

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HHSC reserves the right to cancel this RFA, or to make no award if it determines such action is in the best interest of the State.

HHSC may, in its discretion, reject any and all applications or portions thereof.



Sole Point of Contact

- All communications relating to this RFA must be directed in writing to **John Norton, Sole Point of Contact** at John.Norton2@hhs.texas.gov
- All communications between applicants and HHSC staff members, or any other HHS staff members, concerning this RFA are **strictly prohibited**.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may result in application disqualification.





Purpose

Nutrition Incentive Program (NIP) Projects

This funding opportunity invites Grant Applications requesting funding for the NIP Project. The purpose of this program is to provide NIP Project services. NIPs are designed to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income households participating in the SNAP by providing an Incentive for the purchase of fruits and vegetables at the point of sale to a household buying food with SNAP benefits. NIPs improve access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables for Texas families, create more business for Texas farmers and Retailers, and boost local economies.





Available Funding

- The total State grant funding available to fund NIP Projects is \$6,000,000 for the entire Project Period.
- Applicants are strongly cautioned to only apply for the amount of grant funding they can responsibly expend during the Project Period to avoid lapsed funding at the end of the grant term.
- Successful Applicants may not be funded to the full extent of Applicant's Requested Budget (Project Budget) in order to ensure grant funds are available for the broadest possible array of communities and Projects.





Payment Method

Cost Reimbursement:

- Grant Agreement(s) awarded under this RFA will be funded on a Cost Reimbursement basis for reasonable, allowable, and allocable Grant Project Direct Costs.
- Under the Cost Reimbursement payment method, Grantee is required to finance operations and will only be reimbursed for actual, allowable, and allocable costs incurred in a Service Month of the respective fiscal year and supported by adequate documentation.



Grant Term

Project Period

The Project Period begins the date the Grant Agreement is fully executed. The anticipated Project Period is September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2027.

Extension of Project Period

HHSC may, at its sole discretion, extend the Project Period to allow for the full expenditure of awarded funding and completion of Grant activities. Extensions are contingent on the availability of funds and may not exceed a five-year Grant Term.



Eligible Population and Eligible Service Areas

Eligible Population

The eligible population to be served under NIP grant awards is individuals who receive SNAP benefits.



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Eligible Service Areas

The areas eligible for NIP project funding under this RFA:

- Any county in the State of Texas.





Eligible Activities

- This grant program may fund activities and costs as allowed by the laws, regulations, rules, and guidance governing fund use identified in the relevant sections of this RFA.
- Only grant-funded activities authorized under this RFA are eligible for reimbursement and payment under any Grant Agreement awarded as a result of this RFA.
- The primary focus of the RFA is to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by providing an Incentive to low-income households participating in NIPs.
- This procurement will fund any of the three Incentive models or the expansion of a NIP Project currently using one of these models.





Eligible Activities (continued)

Incentive Models

Applicants must propose or propose to expand one of the following allowable Incentive models:

1. Fruits and vegetables for fruits and vegetables: SNAP participants purchase fruits or vegetables using their SNAP benefits and then receive Incentives that are redeemable only for the purchase of fruits or vegetables.
2. Any SNAP eligible food for fruits and vegetables: SNAP participants purchase any SNAP eligible food using their SNAP benefits and then receive Incentives that are redeemable only for the purchase of fruits or vegetables.
3. Fruits and vegetables for any SNAP eligible food: SNAP participants purchase fruits or vegetables using their SNAP benefits and then receive Incentives that are redeemable for the purchase of any SNAP eligible food.





Eligible Activities (continued)

Incentive Model Transactions

Applicants may structure fruit and vegetable Incentive models as one of the following:

1. As a single transaction where earning and redemption both take place in one transaction, and the SNAP participant experiences a discount; or
2. Two separate transactions. During the first transaction the SNAP participant earns the Incentive; and during the second transaction the SNAP participant redeems their Incentive.





Eligible Activities (continued)

NIP Project Activities

Grant funding may be used for the following activities for the awarded NIP Projects:

1. Staffing, oversight, and overall management of the Project;
2. Expanding services to increase more farmers markets/grocery stores across Texas;
3. Expanding Incentives offered by the Retailer;
4. Increasing the daily limit of Incentives, especially at Retailers with \$5 limits;
5. Additional Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Equipment;
6. Self-evaluation & Impact Reporting using shared data systems and coordinated case management.



Program Requirements & Deliverables

Program Requirements

Respondent must:

- Meet the goals and objectives of the NIP Project; and
- Demonstrate their ability to fulfill the requirements outlined in Exhibit D, Required Services of this RFA.



Required Reports and Deliverables

- The awarded grantee must submit the reports referenced in Exhibit E, Deliverables, by the designated due dates.
- Performance will be monitored by the financial and programmatic deliverables and established performance measures in this RFA.





Performance Monitoring

- HHSC will look solely to the awarded Grantee for the performance of all obligations and requirements in a Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA. Grantee shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its subgrantees or subcontractors, if any.
- Grant Agreement(s) awarded as a result of this RFA are subject to the HHSC's performance monitoring activities throughout the duration of the Grant Project Period. This evaluation may include a reassessment of project activities and services to determine whether they continue to be effective throughout the grant term.
- Grantees must regularly collect and maintain data that measures the performance and effectiveness of activities under a Grant Agreement resulting from this RFA in the manner, and within the timeframes specified in this RFA and resulting Grant Agreement, or as otherwise specified by HHSC.





Performance Monitoring (continued)

- Grantees must submit the necessary information and documentation regarding all requirements, including reports and other deliverables and will be expected to report as outlined in Exhibit F, Key Performance Requirements, and Exhibit E, Deliverables.
- If requested by HHSC, Grantee must report on the progress of the completion of the Grant Project and other information deemed relevant by HHSC during the Grant Project Period. In addition, Grantee must:
 - A. Demonstrate that the scope of services provided, their impact, quality, and levels of performance meet the goals of the NIP Project; and
 - B. Demonstrate that the Grantees' activities and services effectively address and achieve the NIP Project's stated purpose.





Financial Management System

The Grantee must have a financial management system in place to maintain internal controls, ensure proper management of federal and State funds, maximize non-federal resources, and maintain solvency. The Awarded Grantee's accounting and internal control systems must meet the following requirements:

- A. The systems must be appropriate to the size of the organization and support cost-based accounting.
- B. The accounting system must consist of source documents, a chart of accounts, journals, ledgers, and routine financial reports.
- C. The accounting system must be capable of producing expenditure reports, cost center analyses, Budget formats, and automated reports as required by, and without additional support from, HHSC.





Financial Management System (continued)

- D. Include records that adequately identify the source and use of funds for NIP Project funded activities. These records must contain information on Grant Awards, authorizations, financial obligations, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income, and interest and be supported by source documentation.
- E. Maintain effective control over, and accountability for, all funds, property, and other assets. Ensure all funds and assets are adequately safeguarded and are solely used for authorized purposes.
- F. Comparison of expenditures with Budget amounts for each Grant Award.
- G. Include written procedures to implement the requirements of this section.





Financial Management System (continued)

- H. Include internal controls system that safeguard the Grantee's assets, produce accurate accounting data, promote efficient operations, and ensure adherence to prescribed accounting policies and procedures.
- I. Possess effective internal control that include a separation of duties among different employees for a sequence of related functions, clear establishment of each employee's responsibilities and duties, and use of standards such as procurement policies, proofs, checks, and other security measures.
- J. Meet the minimum standards for financial management systems in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 277.6 - Standards for Financial Management Systems and 2 CFR Statute 200.302 - Financial Management.



Financial Management System (continued)

- K. Except as otherwise provided, for Grant Agreements with categorical Budgets, Grantee shall submit quarterly FSRs to HHSC for review and financial assessment. Refer to Exhibit D, Required Services, Section III. Performance and Reporting, A. Reporting, 2. Quarterly Performance and Financial Status Report.





Grant Funding Prohibitions

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- A. Any use of grant funds to replace (supplant) funds that have been Budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources;
- B. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
- C. Lobbying or advocacy activities with respect to legislation or to administrative changes to regulations or administrative policy (cf. 18 U.S.C. § 1913), whether conducted directly or indirectly;
- D. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- E. Vehicles for general agency use; to be allowable, vehicles must have a specific use related to Project objectives or activities;





Grant Funding Prohibitions (continued)

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- F. Entertainment, amusement, disc jockeys (DJs), mobile petting zoos, renting farm animals, or social activities and any associated costs including but not limited to admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity or sporting event unless such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- G. Costs of promotional items, and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs;
- H. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel, where pre-approved for working events, or where such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the Project's purpose;



Grant Funding Prohibitions (continued)

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- I. Membership dues for individuals;
- J. Any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the grant Project;
- K. Any activities related to fundraising;
- L. Equipment and other capital expenditures such as capital improvements, property losses and expenses, real estate purchases, mortgage payments, remodeling, the acquisition or construction of facilities, or other items that are unallowable pursuant to 2 CFR 200.439;
- M. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, State, or local law; and



Grant Funding Prohibitions (continued)

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- N. Other unallowable costs as listed under TxGMS, Appendix 7, Selected Items of Cost Supplement Chart and/or 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles, General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost, where applicable.





Application Composition

All Applications must:

- A. Be responsive to all RFA requirements;
- B. Be clearly legible;
- C. Be presented using font type Verdana, Arial, or Times New Roman, font size 12 pt., with one (1) inch margins and 1.5 line spacing; the sole 12-point font size exception is no less than size 10 pt. for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- D. Include page numbering for each section of the proposal; and
- E. Include signature of Applicant's authorized representative on all exhibits and forms requiring a signature. Copies of the Application documents should be made after signature.





Application Organization

The complete application file .pdf must:

- A. Be organized in the order outlined in the **Section XIII. Submission Checklist, and include all required sections** (e.g., "Narrative Proposal," "Requested Budget," "Indirect Costs," "Administrative Applicant Information" Exhibits to be Submitted with Application," and "Addenda")
 1. Exhibit C, Requested Budget Template is to be submitted in its original Excel format.
 2. Each Application section must have a cover page with the Applicant's legal name, RFA number, and Name of Grant identified.
- B. Include all required documentation, exhibits, and forms completed and signed, as applicable. Copies of forms are acceptable, but all copies must be identical to the original. All exhibits must be submitted and obtained directly from the posted RFA package; previous versions and copies are not allowed or acceptable.



Application Submission Checklist

- This Submission Checklist identifies the documentation, forms, and exhibits that are required to be submitted as part of the Application.
- Respondent must refer to and follow the specific instructions in Section XIII. Submission Checklist to ensure the Application is complete and organized for submission in accordance with the instructions in this section of the RFA.
- The Application **must be** organized in the order of the Submission Checklist and include each required section along with the forms and exhibits identified within each section.
- Applicants must pay close attention to the **mandatory forms that must be completed and signed to submit with the Application** to prevent potential disqualification of their Application.



Application Screening and Evaluation

A three-step selection process will be used to screen and evaluate all eligible applications:

1. Application screening to determine whether the Applicant meets the minimum requirements of this RFA;
2. Evaluation based upon Section 9.4, Evaluation Criteria; and
3. Final Selection is based upon State priorities and other relevant factors, as outlined in Section 10.1, Final Selection.





Delivery for Submission Option

Applicant must correctly deliver Solicitation Responses by the method below:

- **Submission Option #1:** Applicant shall submit the application through the HHS Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures identified in Exhibit N, HHS Online Bid Room Instructions.
- **Submission Option #2 with USB Drives:** Applicants shall submit each of the following on separate USB drives to the correct mailing address, which is dependent upon mailing method identified in this section (see mailing address options in the RFA, Section 8.3, Required Submission Method).





Questions and Answers

Written questions and requests for clarification of this RFA are permitted if submitted by email to the Sole Point of Contact by the Deadline for Submitting Questions or Requests for Clarification established in **Section 7.1, Schedule of Events**, or as may be amended in Addenda, if any, posted to the HHS Grants RFA websites. **Submissions that do not include this information may not be accepted:**

- A. RFA Number;
- B. Section and Paragraph number from this Solicitation;
- C. Page Number of this Solicitation;
- D. Exhibit or other Attachment and Section or Paragraph number from the Exhibit or other Attachment;
- E. Page Number of the Exhibit;
- F. Language, Topic, Section Heading being questioned; and
- G. Question



Questions and Answers (continued)

The following contact information must be included in the e-mail submitted with questions or requests for clarification:

- A. Name of individual submitting the question or request for clarification
- B. Organization Name
- C. Phone Number
- D. Email Address



Submit Questions via email to:

John.Norton2@hhs.texas.gov

by

**10:30 A.M. Central Time
on January 26, 2026.**



Questions & Requests for Clarification Deadline

**Questions and Requests for Clarification are due by
10:30 AM, Central Time on January 26, 2026**

- HHSC may review and, at its sole discretion, may respond to questions or other written requests received after the deadline.
- Questions and responses will be consolidated and may be posted in one or more Addenda on the HHS Grants Website **on or after February 5, 2026.**
- Responses will not be provided individually to requestors.
- HHSC reserves the right to amend answers previously posted at any time prior to the deadline for submission of Applications. Amended answers will be posted in a new Addenda on the HHS Grants Website.





Closing Comments

- Applicants are responsible for meeting the RFA requirements, including any addendums.
- All Addendums must be signed and submitted with the original application.
- Applicants must check the [HHS Grants Website](#) frequently for any addendums that may have been added regarding this solicitation.

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HHS Grants Website Link:
<https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/rfa>





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Thank you.

Request for Applications No. HHS0016733

Nutrition Incentive Program Project

