



## **King County Food Security Assistance Program Request for Applications | Due December 8, 2021**

### **I. Background**

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity rates in the Puget Sound have increased significantly. In 2020, during the peak of the crisis, the number of King County households reporting food insecurity had doubled, and local experts estimate that rates of food insecurity will remain elevated beyond the end of the pandemic.

Research conducted by the University of Washington and Washington State University shows significant disparities in food security both statewide and in King County, with lower income households, households with children, and people of color experiencing hunger at disproportionate rates. While a robust network of organizations supports clients in accessing federal food assistance programs and the emergency food system, identified food access gaps persist, particularly in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

To address these food access gaps, United Way of King County has partnered with Public Health – Seattle & King County to distribute \$4,400,000 in federal funding through the Food Security Assistance Program. This funding was allocated to King County through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery fund, as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. The U.S. Treasury has issued federal guidance on the allowable uses for these funds, and King County has provided additional guidance and restrictions to United Way. The design of the Food Security Assistance Program was informed by a community engagement process led by Public Health – Seattle & King County in 2020 and 2021.

### **II. Program Purpose**

The purpose of the King County Food Security Assistance Program is to increase access to culturally appropriate and dietary specific food within economically disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Funding through the Food Security Assistance Program is intended to sustain or scale projects that address identified food access gaps in King County.

Through this program, United Way of King County will contract with community-based organizations, meal programs, food banks/food pantries, and coalitions that have consistently operated one or more low-barrier food programs for at least 12 months. This includes:

- **Distribution of groceries** through home delivery, pop-up food distribution sites, or food banks/food pantries
- **Distribution of meals** through home delivery or Grab and Go meal programs

Organizations are expected to spend at least 75% of awarded funds on food. A maximum of 25% of awarded funding may be used towards salaries, benefits, supplies, and indirect costs. The purchase of gift cards, food vouchers, and/or equipment (refrigerators, freezers, vehicles, storage units, etc.) is not allowable under this program. The Food Security Assistance Program **cannot** fund administrative capacity building, capital projects, needs assessments, or planning projects.

**Funds will be awarded under the following categories:**

**Category 1: Individual Organizations**

This category is open to community-based organizations that focus on increasing access to food for communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, through the distribution of culturally and dietary appropriate food.

United Way of King County will contract with organizations that will distribute food to:

- Populations that have been historically underserved by the local emergency food system and/or existing state and federal food assistance programs, including populations identified in the [University of Washington and Washington State University WAFOOD study](#)
- Populations that are not eligible for state and federal food assistance programs
- Projects that serve economically disadvantaged people living in regions with identified food access gaps

Individual organizations funded under this category must demonstrate the following:

- A history of engaging community members and an ability to generate and respond to community feedback
- Experience procuring purchased or donated food that is culturally relevant or dietary specific
- Experience distributing food consistently through low-barrier methods
- A clear understanding of how their participants have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19

United Way will fund 20 to 25 organizations, with award amounts ranging from \$150,000 to \$250,000. To ensure a portfolio of organizations that collectively serve the demographic groups in King County most impacted by food insecurity, United Way anticipates awarding funding to at least:

- 1 organization distributing food in North King County

- 2 organizations distributing food in East King County
- 5 organizations distributing food within the City of Seattle
- 7 organizations distributing food in South King County and unincorporated King County

### **Category 2: Coalitions**

This category is intended to support coalitions that are leveraging unique or innovative distribution models to serve populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 at a high volume. This may include large-scale home delivery programs, bulk purchasing of dietary and culturally specific groceries or meals, and/or collaborative partnerships between emergency food providers and community-based organizations.

United Way of King County will fund coalitions serving populations that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 that meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Projects that serve economically disadvantaged people living in regions with identified food access gaps, including but not limited to South Seattle, South King County and rural and unincorporated areas of King County.
- Diverse populations with a range of culturally unique food preferences.
- Populations with specific dietary needs.

Established coalitions of two or more organizations are encouraged to apply if they clearly demonstrate the following:

- Experience working together as a coalition on food programming
- Experience working at a systems level to address food access gaps
- A willingness and ability to generate and respond to community feedback
- Evidence of providing low-barrier access to food
- Experience offering dietary and culturally specific foods at scale
- Experience procuring purchased or donated food that is culturally relevant or dietary specific
- Capacity to quickly purchase and distribute a high volume of food (\$30,000 to \$40,000 in food purchasing per month for the duration of the contract period)

United Way will fund up to four coalitions, with a maximum award amount of \$500,000 for each awarded coalition. Individual members of coalitions may also apply for funding through Category 1 (Individual Organizations) if their application represents a body of work that is separate from the work that would be funded through a joint coalition application.

United Way will award funding in a manner that prioritizes the interests of economically disadvantaged people or systems that have been underfunded and intends to contract with a portfolio of coalitions that collectively serve the geographic regions and demographic groups in King County that are most impacted by food insecurity.

### **III. Funding Amount and Period**

The Food Security Assistance Program will award \$4,400,000 in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to community-based organizations, meal programs, food banks/food pantries, and coalitions. Please note that awarded projects may not have the same budget amount and some applicants may be offered a partial award.

The contract time period will be January 15, 2022 to October 31, 2022.

#### **IV. Who should apply:**

We encourage applications from agencies, coalitions and partnerships that have been providing ongoing, consistent food programming during the COVID-19 pandemic, have the capacity to distribute high volumes of food on a regular basis, and can:

- Scale or sustain existing food programs or systems
- Spend awarded funds between January 15, 2022 and October 31, 2022
- Spend at least 75% of awarded funds on food. A maximum of 25% of awarded funding may be used towards salaries, benefits, supplies, and indirect costs.
- Direct **all** Food Security Assistance Program funding towards people who live and/or work in King County, Washington
- Offer consistent access to groceries and/or meals:
  - Programs distributing groceries should offer community members access to at least two distributions monthly.
  - Programs distributing meals should provide access to at least three meals weekly.
- Meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section V

#### **. Programs cannot use Food Security Assistance Program funds for:**

- Administrative capacity building
- Capital projects
- Needs assessments
- Planning projects
- Purchase of gift cards
- Providing food vouchers
- Purchasing equipment (refrigerators, freezers, vehicles, storage units, etc.)

#### **V. Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants must meet the following requirements to be eligible to receive federal funding through the Food Security Assistance Program:

##### **A. Fiscal Status:** Agencies must either:

- Be incorporated as a private nonprofit corporation in the State of Washington and have federal 501(c)(3) status. The applicant's 501(c)(3) status must be in good standing and must not have been revoked in the previous calendar year

- Have a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)(3) status and demonstrated capacity to ensure adequate administrative and accounting procedures to safeguard funds awarded under the Food Security Assistance Program
  - Be a public corporation, commission, or authority established pursuant to RCW 35.21.660 or RCW 35.21.7301. The applicant's status as a legal entity must be in good standing and must not have been revoked in the previous calendar year
- B. SAM Registration:** Agencies awarded funding are required to have an active registration with the federal System for Award Management (SAM). While SAM registration is not required to apply for funding, funded agencies will be required to have an active SAM registration by January 15, 2022. To apply for SAM, visit [sam.gov](https://sam.gov).
- C. Client Services and Documentation:** All contracted agencies are expected to provide low barrier access to services. As such:
- Agencies should not require identification or proof of residency, income, household size, or citizenship status from any community member accessing projects that are funded through the Food Security Assistance Program.
  - Self-attestation of household size, address, income, and need should be allowed for all community members accessing Food Security Assistance Program resources.
  - Agencies should not decline services to community members who provide a self-attestation that they live in King County and have food needs.

Organizations that receive funding are required to provide services to individuals without regard to race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, or national origin.

- D. Organizational Capacity:** awarded agencies must have the resources in place to manage the distribution of high volumes of food, including existing staff, food storage, transportation resources, procurement partnerships, and trusted relationships with community members. Agencies must also have the administrative capacity to manage federal funding, including a fund accounting system that separates Food Security Assistance Program funds from other organizational expenses. Funded agencies will be required to submit a monthly report including an expanded general ledger showing debits and credits, time and effort documentation, and copies of all paid invoices and receipts each month.
- E. Distribution to Economically Disadvantaged Communities:** The purpose of the King County Food Security Assistance Program is to increase access to culturally appropriate and dietary specific food for economically disadvantaged communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Economically disadvantaged communities are

defined as communities where either 50 percent of households have incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income or 25 percent of households have incomes below the Federal Poverty Line. Applicants must attest that they meet **one or more** of the following criteria to be eligible for funding:

- **The applicant’s food distribution services are provided at a physical location in a Qualified Census Tract.** Use the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [interactive online map](#) to find the Qualified Census Tracts in King County. Enter an address in the top left blue bar, click "Color QCT Qualified Tracts" and "Show Tracts Outline", and select the year 2021. For multi-site projects, organizations must attest that a majority of sites are located within Qualified Census Tracts.
- **Over 50% of the clients that will access the applicant’s food distribution services live within Qualified Census Tracts.** Use the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [interactive online map](#) to find the Qualified Census Tracts in King County. Enter an address in the top left blue bar, click "Color QCT Qualified Tracts" and "Show Tracts Outline", and select the year 2021. Clients may provide verbal self-attestation of their address and should not be required to provide proof of residency to receive resources.
- **The applicant’s food distribution services are primarily intended for low-income clients.** Clients may provide verbal self-attestation of their income and should not be required to provide proof of income to receive resources.

**VI. Scoring Criteria:** Applications will be scored using the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Project prioritizes economically disadvantaged populations that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19	25%
Project will provide low-barrier and consistent access to food for communities served and has demonstrated experience procuring food that is culturally relevant or dietary specific	30%
Applicant has demonstrated experience distributing food, and the organizational capacity to sustain consistent food distributions throughout the contract period	20%
Applicant demonstrates an ability to generate and respond to community feedback	10%

Applicant has the administrative capacity and experience needed to track and document spending and maintain grant compliance	15%
--	-----

United Way will engage with an evaluation committee of volunteer raters to inform funding decision and will make funding decisions in collaboration with Public Health – Seattle & King County staff. United Way and Public Health – Seattle & King County reserve the right at their sole discretion to reject any and all applications they receive without penalty. The final selection of agencies will be those applications which, in the opinion of United Way and Public Health – Seattle & King County after reviewing all responses from the rating committee, best meet the requirements set forth in this Request for Applications and are in the best interests of economically disadvantaged communities in King County.

### VII. Reporting Requirements

Agencies awarded funding through the Food Security Assistance Program will be required to submit standard monthly reports via email that include:

- An expanded general ledger showing debits and credits for purchases of food, time and effort documentation, and copies of all paid invoices and receipts for the month of service.
- A distribution log listing food distributions hosted during the month of service, the number of individuals served through each distribution and the amount of food distributed
- As available, demographic data for clients served, collected from clients on a voluntary basis. Demographic data requested will include race/ethnicity, household size, housing status, and whether the household includes children and/or seniors.

During the contract period, agencies will also be required to submit brief quarterly narrative reports that include services and food provided, program successes, challenges, and at least two client success stories.

### VIII. Important Dates

Applicants should note the following key dates for the Food Security Assistance Program:

- **November 10, 2021:** Application Released
- **December 8, 2021:** Application Due
- **January 10, 2021:** Notification of Award
- **January 15, 2022 – October 31, 2022:** Contract period

### IX. Information Sessions and Technical Assistance

Application Information Sessions will be hosted on the following dates. Simultaneous Spanish interpretation will be available during all information sessions.

- November 15, 10 a.m. | [Link to Register](#)
- November 17, 2 p.m. | [Link to Register](#)

For technical assistance with the application, organizations may join drop-in office hours via Zoom on the following dates. Pre-registration is not necessary.

- November 29, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. | [Link to Meeting](#)
- December 1, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. | [Link to Meeting](#)
- December 6, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. | [Link to Meeting](#)

Drop-in office hours will be hosted in English. To arrange technical assistance in Spanish or another language, please email United Way at [foodsecurity@uwkc.org](mailto:foodsecurity@uwkc.org).

#### **X. Further Questions**

For questions about the application process, please contact United Way of King County at [foodsecurity@uwkc.org](mailto:foodsecurity@uwkc.org).

#### **XI. Application**

Please submit your organization's application online at the following link:

[https://fightpoverty.formstack.com/forms/2021FSAP\\_application](https://fightpoverty.formstack.com/forms/2021FSAP_application). The application is due no later than Wednesday, December 8, 2021.

We recommend drafting your response in a word document and copying and pasting your responses into the online application. Please only submit your application using the online form. Emailed applications will not be accepted. You will receive an automatic email message confirming your submission.

If you need assistance completing an online application due to language or technical barriers, you may submit your responses in English by Friday, December 3 to [foodsecurity@uwkc.org](mailto:foodsecurity@uwkc.org), and a United Way staff person will enter the information into our online system for you.

For reference, the application includes the following questions:

##### **Section 1: Verification of Eligibility**

##### **Section 2: Agency or Coalition Information**

1. Organization Name
2. Does your organization have a fiscal sponsor? If yes: please provide name of fiscal agent.
3. Main Contact Name
4. Main Contact Email Address
5. Main Contact Phone Number
6. Is this proposal for an individual organization or a coalition?
  - Individual Organization

- Coalition
7. If Coalition: Name of Coalition Partners
  8. If Coalition: Please provide the name and email address for the primary contact for each partnering organization
  9. Mission of Organization or Coalition
  10. If Coalition: Describe how your coalition partnership is structured, including which organization(s) will be the fiscal conduit(s), and how the group will allocate funding to the designated program partners.
  11. If Coalition: I understand that the coalition must have a written agreement between partners on file.
  12. Is your organization currently registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM.gov)? If yes, please provide a screenshot of your SAM registration.

### **Section 3: Proposal Narrative**

*We respect your valuable time. When answering the questions below, please provide enough detail to illustrate your ideas but keep your responses as short as possible. You are welcome to adapt narratives that have been used for other proposals.*

13. Briefly describe your proposed food distribution project. Include the following in your description: the type of food you plan to distribute; where, how often, how much and when the food will be distributed; who will distribute the food; and the populations, communities or systems you intend to serve.
14. How many duplicated individuals will your agency or coalition reach in total between January 15, 2022 and October 31, 2022 through this funded project? Please briefly explain how you calculated the estimated reach.
15. How have the communities that you intend to serve been disproportionately and economically impacted by COVID-19? How will you address their unique needs caused by the pandemic?
16. United Way intends to contract with organizations and coalitions that will provide low-barrier, consistent access to food for the communities served. Please describe how you currently provide low barrier access to food and any new plans to reduce barriers to accessing your agency's food programming.
17. Describe your organization or coalition's experience conducting outreach and providing food services to the communities you intend to serve. Please provide examples relevant to the Food Security Assistance Program.
18. How does your agency partner with the communities served to understand their culturally specific and/or dietary needs? Please describe how you will generate and respond to community feedback throughout this project.
19. Describe the resources your agency has in place to support food distribution (such as established cash reserves, staffing, food storage and transport, trusted partnerships, and vendors).
20. Describe your experience managing federal funding. If you do not have experience managing federal funds, please describe your experience managing city, county, or state

funds, or other grants. Please describe how you will track spending, reporting, and documentation as required by this grant.

21. Is there anything else you would like to share?

#### **Section 4: Population Data**

22. To the best of your knowledge, please share population data for clients who have accessed your organization or coalition's food programs over the last 12 months. If you are partnering as a coalition, please provide the combined totals for your programs. If you do not collect client data for a given field, please write "unknown".

- Children (18 years and younger)
- Young Adults (18 to 24 years old)
- LGBTQ+
- Unstably housed/homeless
- Seniors (60 years and older)

23. To the best of your knowledge, please share the demographic data for clients who have accessed your organization or coalition's food programs over the last 12 months. If you are partnering as a coalition, please provide the combined totals for your programs. If you do not collect client data for a given field, please write "unknown".

- African Immigrant
- African American/Black
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.)
- South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bengali, etc.)
- South East Asian (Thai, Lu Mein, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian, etc.)
- Latinx
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Middle Eastern (Iraqi, Iranian, Saudi, Turkish, etc.)
- Caucasian/White/European Descent
- Multiracial
- Unknown

#### **Section 5: Budget**

24. Funding Amount Request

25. Please complete the budget template below, outlining your spending plan for the Food Security Assistance Program funds requested. At least 75% of awarded funds must be used for food purchasing. A maximum of 25% of funds may be allocated towards salaries, benefits, supplies, and indirect costs.

- Food
- Salaries and Wages
- Fringe Benefits
- Travel
- Supplies

- Space (rent, property use fees, etc.)
- Marketing and outreach
- Indirect rate