

Tennessee Community CARES Program **COVID-19 Relief for Non-Profits**

On July 21, 2020, Governor Bill Lee, in partnership with legislative representation on the Financial Stimulus Accountability Group will announce the launch of the Tennessee Community CARES Program, a new aid program that will provide **\$150 million** in direct federally funded aid to non-profit organizations located in Tennessee and serving Tennesseans.

This program will be funded by the Coronavirus Relief Fund, a fund created by Congress under the CARES Act to provide ready funding to State, territorial, local, and Tribal governments to address unforeseen financial needs and risks created by the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Tennessee Community CARES Program will provide funding to non-profit organizations to assist them with their ongoing efforts to address the ongoing health and economic impacts of COVID-19.

To administer these funds, the Department of Human Services is announcing an invitation for partner non-profits to serve as grant administrators. Grant administrators will be required to submit a proposal to the Department no later than 12:00 p.m. CST, Thursday, July 23 describing their ability to administer sub-grants to eligible non-profits, with specific attention to:

- Ability to administer funds in a timely and efficient manner;
- Experience with audit and internal controls for federally funded grants;
- Capacity to administer grant funds in a period not to exceed 120 days;¹
- Familiarity with the non-profit community of Tennessee;
- Administrative fee required to administer these funds.

Any non-profit interested in administering these funds must submit their grant administration proposals to <https://dhs-app-tennessee-cares-act.pantheonsite.io/>. Please email any questions to TN.CommunityCares@tn.gov

A limited number of non-profit grant administrators will be invited to an onboarding and training session on Friday, July 24. The training will be led by the Department of Human Services and Horne LLP, the state of Tennessee's CARES Act compliance partner and operator of the state's CARES Act grant management system.

For non-profits wishing to receive response and recovery grants, instructions for grant proposals will be issued by the Department of Human Services and its partner non-profit grant administrators on August 1, 2020. Grant applications will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis with monthly reporting requirements and a de-obligation date of November 15.

¹ Priority will be given to organizations that can demonstrate ability to process \$30 million or who maintain a unique ability to reach underserved Tennessee communities or demographics.

Priority will be given to grants that exceed \$25,000 and all grants exceeding \$1,000,000 will receive additional review by the Department of Human Services.

Non-profits seeking to receive a grant will be required to apply to a grant administrator organization. More information will be provided next week on the process for application for these grants. The window for grant applications will be open no earlier than August 1. All grants will be required to follow the US Department of Treasury's [additional guidance on Coronavirus Relief Fund eligible expenditures](#). The US Department of Treasury is also regularly updating Frequently Asked Questions, which can be found on their [Coronavirus Relief Fund webpage](#).

According to the CARES Act, these funds may only be used for costs that:

1. Are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
2. Were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the State or government; and
3. Were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends on December 30, 2020.

Examples of activities prioritized and encouraged for funding under this program will include:

- Support for school-aged children and families related to education needs created or exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak;
- Any of the following activities for individuals or families who have been impacted by a loss of income or economic insecurity as a result of COVID-19:
 - Workforce training;
 - Emergency food assistance;
 - Case management or assistance in accessing an eligible state or federal public benefit;
 - Care for at-risk or vulnerable populations to mitigate COVID-19 effects and/or enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions;
 - Emergency financial assistance to prevent homelessness, eviction or foreclosure;
 - Other similar services designed to mitigate the negative health or economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Providing uncompensated care or assistance for disabled or other vulnerable population to address new financial, health, or educational challenges that are in response to COVID-19.
- Public Health Support activities such as uncompensated or unreimbursed costs for services or activities dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including but not limited to

- Supports, education, and communication for individuals to increase access to testing and reliability of contact tracing;
 - Expenses for technical assistance on mitigation of COVID-19-related threats;
 - Expenses for acquisition and distribution of medical and protective supplies, including sanitizing products and personal protective equipment, for medical personnel, police officers, social workers, child protection services, and child welfare officers, direct service providers for older adults and individuals with disabilities in community settings, and other public health or safety workers in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency;
 - Mental and behavioral health services delivered in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency;
 - Expenses associated with supporting the housing or quarantining of COVID-19 positive individuals;
 - Any other expense incurred in relation to non-profit missions to directly support the public health response to COVID-19.
- Any other non-profit support provided to Tennessee business entities such as:
 - Technical assistance and support in enrolling and participating in a federal, state, or local benefit program;
 - Education on safe practices in response to COVID-19;
 - Acquisition or purchase of personal protective equipment or reimbursing costs associated with mitigating the spread of COVID-19;
 - Expenses related to mitigating the spread of COVID-19;
- Reimbursement of unreimbursed expenses incurred by a non-profit due to the COVID-19 emergency, including but not limited to increased payroll costs, PPE, or any other measures taken to protect the employees and population served by the non-profit;
- Support targeted for any at-risk, vulnerable, or underserved community for any eligible activity;
- Past and future reimbursement for the required Non-Federal Cost-Share of Stafford Act assistance for COVID-19-related costs that satisfy the CRF eligibility criteria AND the FEMA Public Assistance eligibility criteria;
- Reimbursement for any of the eligible costs incurred in the period from March 1 to Dec 30;

Activities that are not eligible for funding include:

- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any Federal Program, such as the FEMA Public Assistance program;
- Reimbursement of donors for donated items or services, previously donated; this includes reimbursement for items purchased by the non-profit with funds specifically donated and designated for the response to COVID-19
- Any expense not related to the current COVID-19 public health emergency;
- Damages covered by insurance;
- Workforce bonuses or severance pay;
- General economic development or capital improvement projects that are not necessary expenditures due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Any costs incurred prior to March 1, 2020.
- Any costs incurred after Dec 30, 2020.

An organization may apply for multiple grants if they meet eligibility criteria for each grant. Applications to partner organizations will begin on August 1.