

## NJCNF Equipment Grant Frequently Asked Questions

*\*Expiration date updated to 11/5/21*

Are you looking to expand or improve a Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in New Jersey as a program sponsor, site, or meal vendor? Are you serving children in one of five priority communities [Bergen County, Ocean County, Salem County, Atlantic City, Hamilton Township, or Phillipsburg]? Apply for equipment grants of up to \$5,000 for program improvement, and \$10,000 for program expansion.

### **I. Eligibility and General Questions**

#### **Who is eligible to apply?**

- Organizations who currently participate, or seek to participate, in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (Childcare or At-Risk), or Summer Food Service Program.
- Sponsors, sites, and meal vendors
- For-profit and non-profit organizations
- Organizations must be serving children at a site located in one of these priority communities:
  - Atlantic County: Atlantic City
  - Atlantic County: Hamilton
  - Bergen County: Entire County
  - Ocean County: Toms River
  - Salem County: Entire County
  - Warren County: Phillipsburg

#### **Do the organization and site(s) have to be located in one of the target communities?**

Yes. Eligible organizations must be serving children through CACFP and/or SFSP at a site located in a priority location.

We know that there is a large amount of need for equipment funding for organizations participating in CACFP and SFSP across New Jersey. Our current round of NJCNF focuses support in specific communities in order to have a deeper impact in those areas given our limited availability of funds. This place-based approach pairs partnership and capacity-building work along with equipment grants. We looked at multiple factors in selecting communities, and chose places with large gaps in participation and an opportunity to support existing coalitions and partners on the ground. The selected communities include four cities/towns and two counties, based on the opportunity to support existing collaborations at different scales. Unfortunately, our equipment grant eligibility is not broad enough to support all the organizations in New Jersey serving healthy meals to children through these federal Child Nutrition Programs, and recognize the importance of organizations carrying out all of this work.

#### **What types of organizations are eligible to apply?**

Both for-profit and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Any organization that participates or seeks to participate in the SFSP, CACFP-Childcare, or CACFP-At-Risk, is eligible to participate. This includes, but not limited to, child care centers, family child care homes, community recreation centers,

food banks, summer camps, other community-based organizations, schools (public, charter, and private), and food vendors.

**What equipment is eligible?**

Applicants may apply for support for one-time equipment and furniture purchases that will directly benefit their CACFP/SFSP program.

Example Eligible Items\*:

- Refrigerator
- Freezer
- Mobile heated cabinet
- Microwave
- Cook and hold oven
- Oven
- Stove
- Counters, cabinets, and shelves
- Utility cart
- Small appliances (rice cooker, dicer, scale, vacuum sealer, etc.)
- Pots, pans, mixing bowls
- Vehicle (for delivery, ingredient shopping, etc.)

\*Note, these are examples and not an exhaustive list. For individual questions about eligible items, please reach out to Karen Bustard: [karen.bustard@reinvestment.com](mailto:karen.bustard@reinvestment.com) or [njcnf@reinvestment.com](mailto:njcnf@reinvestment.com).

Materials and supplies, such as disposable plates and napkins, PPE, food, etc. are not eligible through this program.

**What is the maximum award amount an organization can receive?**

Program Improvement: the maximum award for equipment that supports meal quality improvement for an existing program or site is \$5,000.

Program Expansion: the maximum award for equipment that supports a CACFP/SFSP expansion project is \$10,000. A project expansion could include establishing a new CACFP/SFSP program or site, serving additional children at a current program or site, or serving additional meals (additional days or times).

**Can an organization apply for multiple awards at multiple sites?**

Each legal entity is eligible to receive one NJCNF equipment grant award. If an organization operates a CACFP/SFSP program at more than one site, they can apply for equipment items to be used at more than one location through a single award.

**What is the timeframe to spend grant funds?**

Applicants may apply to be reimbursed for equipment expenses that they have incurred on or after January 1, 2021.

Organizations may also apply for equipment they have identified but not yet purchased. If awarded, all grant funds must be spent before November 15, 2021.

**If starting a new CACFP/SFSP program, where do I have to be in the application or planning process?**

If you are applying to be the sponsor of a CACFP and/or SFSP program, you must have received an agreement number from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. If you are establishing a new site, under a separate sponsor, you must have confirmed the sponsor with whom you will work, and the site for your program.

## **II. Application Process and Technical Support**

**What is the deadline for applications?**

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed weekly based upon submissions received by 5pm each Friday. Grants will be approved as long as they meet eligibility and while funds remain available. The application window is currently anticipated to be open through Friday, November 5th at 5pm EST. Please check back for updates, as this date is subject to change.

**How can I apply?**

All applications are online through the portal found on Reinvestment Fund's grants platform: [reinvestmentfund.smartsimple.com](https://reinvestmentfund.smartsimple.com). You can complete the full application through the application portal on any internet accessible device. For more detailed instructions, please review the [Smart Simple grants platform registration and application instructions](#).

If you do not have access to an online system, email [NJCNF@reinvestment.com](mailto:NJCNF@reinvestment.com) or call 215-574-5859 to get a paper application accommodation. In order to efficiently administer the program and get funding out quickly, we ask that people please utilize the online system if they are able.

**How will award decisions be made?**

Applications will be reviewed for meeting eligibility requirements and demonstrating the following:

- Commitment to providing meals to children at risk of being food insecure.
- *If improving meal quality*: A project that will improve meal quality.
- *If expanding a program*: A project that will increase the number of children served or meals served, ideally by 20% or more for already existing programs.
- Identification of relevant equipment or furniture items that will directly help the applicant achieve their program expansion or improvement goal.

**When can I expect to be notified of my application status?**

Applications will be received and reviewed on a rolling basis. Applications will be reviewed and processed until funds are exhausted. Applicants can expect to receive an email notification stating whether their request was approved or declined within 3 weeks of submission.

## **III. Questions and Support**

**How can I get questions answered or receive support in completing my application?**

- **Email:** Please direct individual questions by email to [NJCNF@reinvestment.com](mailto:NJCNF@reinvestment.com). We will do our best to respond to all questions within 24 hours (Monday – Friday 9-5pm).
- **Other tools and resources:** This FAQ document will be updated from time to time with additional content and dates. Please also check for updates to our website: <https://www.reinvestment.com/childnutritionresourcecenter/>.

### III. Awardee Questions

#### **I received an award notification email, how do I complete documents and what is the process to receive funding?**

For questions related to the award and funding process please see our detailed [NJCNF Award Process Guide](#). If you have questions on the process, please email [NJCNF@reinvestment.com](mailto:NJCNF@reinvestment.com). We will do our best to respond to all questions within 24 hours (Monday – Friday 9-5pm).

#### **Do I need to spend funds as I requested in my application and defined in the grant agreement?**

Yes. All funds must be spent in accordance with the budget request and backup documentation submitted during the application stage. If you want to switch an item for which you submitted backup documentation before signing your grant agreement, please first reach out to [NJCNF@reinvestment.com](mailto:NJCNF@reinvestment.com) to receive written approval.

#### **Will there be grantee reporting that I need to complete including disclosing how the money has been allocated and what it has been used for?**

The grant agreement does require the grantee to complete reporting requirements. There will be a short report due on December 1, 2021 asking for a confirmation of purchase and brief updates. Please retain invoices demonstrating fund expenditures for auditing purposes. We also retain the right to ask for program data for up to 2 years after the award.