

Maine COVID 19 Non-Profit Feeding FEMA Reimbursement Brief April 14, 2020

Prepared by Bill Guindon, MEMA Mass Care Lead

If a Local or County Municipal Government Agency wants to donate financially to a Non-profit Food Bank/Pantry is the COVID 19 expense reimbursable?

Yes, Reimbursement is eligible when a formal agreement or contract (MOU) is in place when distributing food is an emergency measure in response to the COVID 19 Public Health Emergency. In this situation, the local or county government will apply for reimbursement which would reimburse if necessary the non-profit per the formal agreement under the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) program.

What if a local or county government agency donates to a Nonprofit and does not have a formal agreement can the agency seek FEMA Public Assistance (PA) reimbursement?

No, without a formal agreement the government entity has no authority to act on behalf of the Nonprofit organization in any form. It is at the discretion of the government agency to donate with the full knowledge that FEMA PA financial reimbursement is not permitted for such act.

Can a Non-profit Food Bank/Pantry submit a reimbursement on their own behalf for their response to the COVID 19 Public Health Emergency?

Yes, when a non-profit faces an increase in the demand for resources due the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency expenses are reimbursable. The non-profit would submit an individual request through the FEMA PA Portal. This request does not require local or county municipal government assistance or approval. (*See FEMA PA Portal Information)

What expenses are eligible for reimbursement?

Note: All costs must be considered reasonable, if in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost.

- Purchasing, packaging, and/or preparing food, including food commodities, fresh foods, shelf-stable foods products, and prepared meals.
- Delivering food, including hot and cold meals if necessary, to distribution points and/or individuals, when conditions constitute a level of severity that food is not easily accessible for purchase.
- Leasing distribution and storage space, vehicles and necessary equipment.

What criteria must be met to justify financial expenses eligibility for COVID-19 Public Health Emergency reimbursement?

- Reduced of mobility of people due to government-imposed restrictions, including “stay-at-home” orders, which prevent some populations from accessing food.
- Marked increase or atypical demand for feeding resources.
- Disruptions to the typical food supply chain within a given jurisdiction.

Maine COVID 19 Non-Profit Feeding FEMA Reimbursement Brief April 14, 2020

Prepared by Bill Guindon, MEMA Mass Care Lead

What population in a community are feeding related expenses covered under the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency?

- Those who test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19, but do not require hospitalization.
- High-risk individuals, such as people over 65 with certain underlying health conditions.
- Other populations based on the direction or guidance of the appropriate public health official. (The statewide “state at home” order would be applicable in that it applies to all residents of the state.)

How to Register for Reimbursement through FEMA PA Program:

FEMA uses an online tool called the FEMA Grants Portal which allows users to Register for Public Assistance and manage their reimbursement.

Funding for non-profit feeding that is reasonable and necessary to address public health needs is an eligible expense under the FEMA Public (PA) Assistance Grant Program (per the waiver granted by FEMA Region 1 for EM-3444). This Grant is a reimbursement program whereby eligible applicants must first incur the expense before they can seek reimbursement. Eligible applicants include the State, Tribes, Local Governments and certain non-profit agencies. Lack of sufficient documentation may result in FEMA determining some or all of the costs ineligible. FEMA will not approve Public Assistance funding that duplicates funding by another federal agency.

• **Local Governments Without Existing Grants Portal Access**

State and Local applicants can now create their own accounts and submit Requests for Public Assistance directly in the Grants Portal without working through MEMA by going directly to <https://grantee.fema.gov>.

• **Local Government Users with Existing Grants Portal Access**

Entities that have already registered in the Grants Portal may submit RPA's directly through the Grants Portal or through MEMA. **If a new user needs to be added to an existing Applicant Account, please contact MEMA at maine.recovery@maine.gov.** (e.g., a new fire chief can request to be added to the town's established account. They would not register their town as a new applicant). Applicants should see a link at the top of the Dashboard to submit their Request for Public Assistance.

• **Private Non-Profit Organization Access**

Private Non-Profits need to contact maine.recovery@maine.gov with the name of their entity, contact person, email and phone number.

• **Submit Request for Public Assistance (RPA)**

Once an Applicant has registered their account, they must submit their Request for Public Assistance by clicking the link at the top of the Dashboard once they log in. This lets FEMA know they have costs to be reviewed.

All questions regarding reimbursement can be submitted to Maine.Recovery@maine.gov.