

Keep Maine Healthy
2020 COVID-19 Health Equity Improvement Initiative
Financial Assistance Available for Community-Based Organizations to Promote
Prevention and Support

Funding Period: August 1 – November 15, 2020

**Applications must be Submitted to Maine Department of Health and Human
Services by Monday, August 24, 2020**

As part of the Keep Maine Healthy initiative, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has created the 2020 COVID-19 Health Equity Improvement Initiative. The goal of this Initiative is for the DHHS to partner with community-based organizations conducting culturally-tailored COVID-19 prevention, education and social support activities. Eligible organizations that submit plans approved by DHHS will be reimbursed for costs associated with approved public health education, prevention, and social support activities during the funding period from August 1 through November 15, 2020.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) led or run by members of their community may be best positioned to reduce the disproportionate spread and impact of COVID-19 among racial and ethnic groups in Maine. Such organizations can provide culturally and linguistically appropriate education on how to protect individuals and families from the disease and prevent the spread of the disease, such as using face coverings. They can promote an understanding of the value of early detection, testing, quarantine or isolation as warranted, and treatment. They can provide or facilitate connection with the types of services and supports needed to maintain quarantine, isolation, or treatment. And, they can help people in their communities affected by COVID-19 to recover. In addition to providing emergency support to disproportionately impacted communities, this initiative will help the Department identify interventions that can have a lasting impact on reducing systemic disparities.

Maine DHHS's Office for Family Independence (OFI) will oversee this initiative. Applications must be submitted to OFI by **Monday, August 24, 2020**. Applications that are incomplete or are received after this deadline will not be accepted. Complete application submission includes a completed Application Form, a project narrative that includes an itemized list of proposed costs and a budget detailing anticipated expenses, including anticipated subcontracts and related expenses.

You can email the completed Application to DHHS.CovidSocialSupport@maine.gov. Or, if you wish to send a paper version of this Application, please mail with a postmark of August 24, 2020 to:

Denise Richardson, Office for Family Independence
Maine Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station, 109 Capitol Street
Augusta, ME 04333-0011

Who is eligible to apply for funding? All nonprofit 501(c)(3), community-based organizations (CBOs) whose executive director, majority of their staff, or majority of their board are members of the racial or ethnic community that they primarily serve in Maine are eligible to apply for available funding using this Application. Under limited circumstances, a fiscal sponsor that does not meet these criteria but sponsors one or more racial or ethnic organizations may be determined eligible on a case-by-

case basis. CBOs who wish to partner with other community organizations to implement approved prevention, education, and support activities will be allowed to subcontract with those organizations.

How much funding is available for each CBO? The Department will fund up to a total of \$1 million for all eligible organizations with approved Health Equity Improvement Plans. The amount of funding available for reimbursement to each CBO will be based on the number of CBOs applying and the plans and budgets they request, subject to limits. Such limits will be based on funding availability, whether proposed expenditures are consistent with this initiative, and factors such as the size of the community served since this will influence the amount of work needed to complete the tasks involved in COVID-19 prevention, education, and support activities. The budgets are intended to calibrate the size and scope of activities by each CBO. If the total requested amount across all applications exceeds the funding limit, then the Department will work with CBOs to scale back activities, which makes the submission of an itemized list of proposed costs important. Actual funding for approved activities conducted by each CBO will be based on expenses – which is the requirement imposed by the federal government for the use of the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

Who can be served under this initiative? The initiative is designed to reduce COVID-related racial and ethnic disparities, so funding is available to support individuals from Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, or New Mainer communities at elevated risk of COVID-19. Communities for this initiative are defined by race and / or ethnicity and thus can be in multiple towns, cities, and counties. This includes individuals and their families who are not currently eligible for social services from the Department such as (but not limited to) people in quarantine who are awaiting test results or work in settings that put them at risk of COVID-19. CBOs may also provide additional services to those already receiving social services through the Department such as culturally appropriate counselling or nutrition. CBOs that provide extra or different types of service to people confirmed positive for COVID-19 otherwise receiving social services from it or another organization funded by the Department must not duplicate services. Additionally, the initiative supports community-level interventions such as organizing COVID-19 testing events, food boxes at testing sites, canvassing communities with public health information, and distributing face coverings.

How will services be coordinated with existing services? DHHS currently has a system for referrals for social services for people with COVID-19 and their families or for close contacts and the contacts' family members. This system will be modified and adapted to include community referrals and to ensure services are coordinated (details to be posted before the application deadline).

What kinds of activities should be included in the plan? Health Equity Improvement Plans need to include a point of contact for the CBO and a description of one or more of the following activities:

- **Public education activities:** This could include printing and posting of existing State or national COVID-19 prevention information and/or developing community-centric educational activities that are consistent with CDC guidelines. Costs eligible for reimbursement would include staff time for planning and providing education activities and costs for signage, interpreters, translation of existing resources, materials, website development, brochures and mailing.
- **Physical distancing and public health prevention activities:** This could include renovation costs or rental of space to promote physical distancing at sites like community centers; purchases of personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand sanitizer to be made available for community members and staff; cost associated with grassroots organizing to encourage testing at a certain site on a certain day, ensuring physical distancing while waiting to be tested and providing outreach and education on the day of testing; and extra cleaning supplies and additional staff time required for enhanced cleaning and management of public spaces and restroom facilities.

- **Supportive activities:** This could include staff time for educating and enrolling community members in relevant programs (e.g., general assistance, MaineCare); connecting and providing them with services not otherwise being delivered to members under existing contracts (e.g., food delivery for home-cooked meals); temporary COVID-19 social supports for those not already receiving them to ensure public health and safety; providing psychological and social care to ensure that the person, family, and community can understand the need for the public health response; providing temporary housing to assure safe quarantine and isolation for patient/contact safety and to prevent transmission of the virus if Maine State Housing Authority or the General Assistance Program are unable to meet this need; providing food security and support; providing communication and social mobilization to assure that a community and its representative agencies are aware of COVID-19 pandemic prevention and response actions and to prevent stigmatization or harms to all persons; and addressing transportation needs related to COVID-19 prevention, detection, and treatment.

Are project expenses to plan and organize activities eligible for reimbursement? Yes. The costs of staff to plan for, organize, arrange, and conduct these activities may be reimbursed. Salaries for staff already hired or redeployed and working on eligible activities can be paid with these funds for work completed within the duration of the State contract. Some capital costs are not eligible – these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

What project expenses are not eligible for reimbursement? Work funded by another source of funding, activities not listed or approved in the application, or work performed outside of the funding period (August 1 – November 15, 2020) are not eligible for reimbursement. See FAQ for more specific information.

Can a CBO submit an application for limited activity? Yes. A CBO may choose to conduct one or a few of the activities listed in this application. For example, a CBO may receive support to develop, hire staff, and conduct a face covering public education campaign for its community members. A CBO may also participate in a collaborative application with an existing organization if that organization can demonstrate leadership by the CBO and benefit to the population it serves.

How will the Department determine which CBOs will be approved? Each Application will be reviewed for completeness and a determination that the proposed activities and budgets are consistent with the goals of this program as outlined above.

When will the approved applications be announced? All applicants will be contacted, and funding recipients will be informed on or before August 31, 2020. Cost settled contracts will be awarded to all approved CBOs. Upon award, the Department will begin working with the awarded entity to establish contracts and to finalize budgets based upon the award amount. Contracts will include reporting requirements and the mechanism for reimbursement of expenses. Contract budgets, which can include subcontractors, will be reviewed for allowable expenses.

Are there specific requirements in place for the administration of this federal grant? These contracts are funded through the Corona Virus Relief Fund (CRF), CFDA # 21.019; therefore, the Federal Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 applies to the administration of these grant funds. Specifically, award recipients (CBOs) and sub-recipients (your community partners) must adhere to all applicable federal requirements, including Office of Management Budget (OMB) guidance: Title 2 C.F.R. subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. §200). Due to the nature of this funding, it is almost certain that you will be considered a sub-recipient of the State. Additionally, if you enlist the aid of

your local partners, you may be creating additional subrecipient relationships. Please be especially mindful of the “sub-recipient” requirements set forth in 2 CFR 200.330 and 2 CFR 200.331.

Thank you for your interest in 2020 COVID-19 Health Equity Improvement Initiative to protect public health. Actions taken by community-based organizations will greatly aid the State in our efforts to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus and COVID-19 infections in Maine. Please complete the Application below, including a project narrative and a budget detailing anticipated expenses for the activities indicated, as well as anticipated subcontracts and related expenses. If you need additional information or have questions about this Application, please contact Alexandria Lauritzen at 207-624-4109. Or, send your questions via email to Alexandria.Lauritzen@maine.gov.

**2020 COVID-19 Health Equity Improvement Initiative
APPLICATION**

Please complete this form and return to DHHS no later than **August 24, 2020**. Applications received after this date will not be eligible for funding.

Contact Information for Community-Based Organization (CBO)

Name of Community-Based Organization: _____ County: _____

Name of Community-Based Organization Contact Person:

Name and Geographic Location of Community or Counties Served (This May Be Statewide):

Estimated Population Size of Community Served (If Data Are Unavailable, Include Rough Estimates With An Explanation of the Methodology):

Mailing Address (Street or Box #):

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Health Equity Improvement Plan will include the following activities (check all boxes that apply):

Public Education Activities

- Print and post COVID-19 Educational Signs**
- Create and distribute COVID-19 Informational Brochures**
- Provide educational campaign on local social media platforms**
- Develop training events for local leaders (online or in person)**
- Develop educational pages on the CBO's website**
- Pay for translation and interpretation costs for education and outreach.**
- Other similar items (please describe in one sentence or less)**

Physical Distancing and Prevention Activities

- Promote physical distancing in community sites (e.g., renovation, expansion)
- Install signs, visual, or physical barriers to limit congregation and encourage distancing
- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand sanitizer for staff and public use
- Increase sanitization of public spaces used by the organization, including benches, picnic tables, public restrooms
- Other similar items (please describe in one sentence or less):

Supportive Activities

- Educate and enroll community members in relevant programs
- Connect community members with services not otherwise covered under existing contracts to provide support during or immediately following COVID infection or contact
- Provide social supports for those not already receiving them to ensure public health and safety
 - Provide psychosocial care to ensure that the person, family, and community can understand the need for the public health response
 - Provide temporary housing to assure safe quarantine and isolation for patient/contact safety and to prevent transmission of the virus to family and community members if Maine State Housing Authority or the General Assistance Program is unable to meet this need
 - Provide food security and support
 - Provide communication and social mobilization to assure that a community and its representative agencies are aware of COVID-19 pandemic prevention and response actions and to prevent stigmatization or harms to all persons
 - Provide transportation support related to COVID-19 prevention, detection, and treatment
- Other similar items (please describe in one sentence or less):

Short Narrative

Provide a brief 1 to 3-page narrative describing additional public health activities unique to the CBO (e.g., work to translate CDC material into a different language that will be included in plan).

Also include, within the narrative, an itemized list of proposed costs and an explanation for each item selected above that describes how the costs were determined and will be tracked.

Budget

Complete the attached budget detailing anticipated expenses for the activities indicated in the plan. This should include anticipated subcontracts and related expenses.

CBOs are responsible for promptly submitting revised budgets for approval should there be any deviation of planned activities or identified subcontracts. Reimbursement of expenses will not be approved unless they correspond to the submitted, approved budget.

NOTE: If a CBO intends to subcontract with an organization, then the organization needs to be identified and the contracting vehicle must be submitted to the Department. If a subcontract is for \$25,000 or more of the requested funding, then the organization receiving the subcontract must also submit a budget for the Department's approval.