Emergency Rural Health Care Grants

What does this program do?

This program provides up to $500 million in grant funding to help broaden access to COVID-19 testing and vaccines, rural health care services, and food assistance through food banks and food distribution facilities. Funding is distributed to eligible applicants through two tracks:

• **Track One: Recovery Grants provide immediate relief to address economic conditions arising from the COVID-19 emergency**

• **Track Two: Impact Grants advance ideas and solutions to solve regional rural health care problems to support the long-term sustainability of rural health**

Who may apply?

Eligible applicants include:

- Public bodies
- Community-based nonprofits
- Federally-recognized Tribes

Track Two: Impact applicants also must establish a network or group of health care provider organizations, economic development entities, or institutions of higher learning (which may include academic health and research institutes).

What is an eligible area?

Rural areas including cities, villages, towns, townships, and federally-recognized Tribal lands with no more than 20,000 residents – as determined by the latest U.S. Census data available at this link: (https://data.census.gov/cedsci/) – are considered eligible areas. Facilities and projects must be located in – and primarily serve – rural areas.

How may funds be used?

Grant funds must be used to support health care and nutritional assistance in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Track One: Recovery funds must be used to support immediate health care needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, to help prepare for a future pandemic

event, or to increase access to quality health care services and improve community health outcomes. Applicants may request assistance for one or more of the categories below for expenses incurred on or after March 13, 2020. Grant awards range from $25,000 - $1 million, and funds must be used to:

- Increase capacity for vaccine distribution
- Provide medical supplies and equipment to increase medical surge capacity
- Reimburse for lost health care related-revenue used to maintain capacity during the pandemic
- Increase telehealth capabilities, including underlying healthcare information systems
- Construct temporary or permanent structures to provide health care services
- Support staffing needs for testing or vaccine administration
- Support facilities, equipment, and operating expenses associated with food banks and food distribution facilities

Track Two: Impact funds must be used to support the long-term sustainability of rural health care. Long-term sustainability is defined as "improved health outcomes, improved access to quality health care, and creating and maintaining sustainable economic development for small communities." Applicants may request assistance for one or more of the categories below for expenses incurred during a three-year award period. Grant awards range from $5 million to $10 million, and must be used to:

- Establish or scale a regional partnership or group of community and health care leaders to plan, implement, and evaluate models to help solve regional health care problems and promote the long-term sustainability of rural health care

- Establish or scale evidence-based models and share lessons learned

- Identify a health-related problem within a region, develop and implement a method and solution, and conduct a program evaluation to examine health-related outcomes, long-term sustainability, and ability to successfully replicate

For both tracks, grant funds are limited to an applicable percentage of eligible project costs based on population and median household income of the population served.

What are the funding priorities?

Applications will be selected for funding based on a priority point system.

Factors for Track One: Recovery applications include: Distressed Communities, median household income, population, COVID-19 impacts, and socioeconomic equity

Factors for Track Two: Impact applications include: Distressed Communities, median household income, and population; need, methodology, and innovation; organizational capacity and strength of consortium; workplan and proposed budget; evaluation, impact, and ability to replicate; and socioeconomic equity.

How do we get started?

Contact your local RD office (available at this link: https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/state-offices) to discuss and submit your application.

Track One: Recovery applications will be accepted on a continual basis until funds are exhausted. Each Rural Development state office will conduct an initial review, rating, and selection of complete applications received by 4 p.m. local time on October 12, 2021. Rural Development will conduct subsequent reviews as long as funding remains available.

Track Two: Impact applications must be received by the applicable Rural Development office by 4 p.m. local time on October 12, 2021. **Track Two: Impact** applications received after October 12, 2021 will not be considered.

What governs this program?

- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and other program materials are available at this link: https://www.rd.usda.gov/erhc.

- 7 CFR part 3570, subpart B