



GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

Fiscal Year 2027-2028 Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP)

Maryland Department of Human Services

Family Investment Administration

25 S. Charles Street

Baltimore, MD 21201

Application Opens: Monday, September 21, 2026

Deadline: Wednesday, October 21, 2026

No later than 5:00 p.m. EST

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Family Investment Administration's Office of Community Grants is the Administering Agency for the Maryland Emergency Food Program. The following parties will cooperatively ensure the ongoing development and implementation of the strategies outlined in this guidance:

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Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Notice

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the agency will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals who require assistance with the application process. If you have a disability and need assistance with the FY2027 - 2028 MEFP application, please contact the Office of Community Grants MEFP staff at:

- Milanga Abeysuriya, Contract Manager
Phone: (410) 767-7411
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- Casandra M. Key, Contract Manager
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Our team is happy to provide technical support to ensure your organization has an equal opportunity to apply for funding.

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SECTION I - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP) provides grants to Emergency Food Providers (EFPs) to provide groceries and meals, at no cost, to eligible households and individuals. These organizations are tax-exempt agencies as well as local government-run agencies such as soup kitchens, food banks, food pantries, shelters, residential treatment programs and after-school programs. MEFP is a complement to The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and funds allow organizations to purchase foods that might not be available from TEFAP and/or hard-to-obtain items such as fresh produce, meats, and poultry which they otherwise could not easily afford.

EFPs are required to provide information to program participants about employment and training programs in their jurisdictions and disseminate information regarding state and federal Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC).

EITC provides tax credits for low to moderate-income individuals, couples, and families. Each food site must display the EITC flyers in a prominent location for customers and make copies available for distribution.

Supplemental information on the EITC can be found at: [Maryland Comptroller Tax Credit and Deductions/Earned Income Tax Credit](#) and: [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#)

MEFP grantees are encouraged, but not required, to help MEFP participants submit an application for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). At the beginning of each State Fiscal Year, the Maryland Department of Human Services will conduct an orientation meeting for EFPs receiving MEFP grants and will provide information regarding the process for becoming a SNAP Outreach partner. In the meantime, MEFP applicants can access SNAP Outreach Program information on our [website](#).

Reference: [Md. Code Ann., Human Services Article §§ 6-409- 414; COMAR 07.01.20.01-.09](#)

SECTION II - GRANT NOTICE AND OVERVIEW

The Maryland Department of Human Services Family Investment Administration (DHS/FIA) is pleased to announce the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 - 2028 Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP) Grant Guidelines. All Emergency Food Providers (EFPs) receiving MEFP grants (grantees) must follow the provisions and requirements listed in this document. **Please read the FY 2027-2028 MEFP Guidelines carefully before completing the [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#).**

Name of Grant Program: Fiscal Year 2027 - 2028 Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP)

Purpose: To provide funding for the purchase of food to be distributed at no cost to low-to-moderate income individuals and families.

Grant Period: Covers two years of funding: **Year 1** (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) and **Year 2** (July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028).

Funding Amount Available: \$1,241,661 Total award to be distributed

Award Range: Maximum grant award is \$50,000; Minimum is \$5,000.
Note: First-time grantees or those not awarded in the last three years are capped at \$5,000.

Eligibility: Local government-run programs or tax-exempt EFPs in "Good Standing" with SDAT that have operated for at least three years.

Submission Instructions: Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm, October 21, 2026 via [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#).

Program Page: <https://dhs.maryland.gov/office-community-grants/>

If you need technical assistance please contact the assigned Contract Manager at (410) 767-7411 or milanga.abey Suriya@maryland.gov.

SECTION III - ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for MEFP funding, EFPs applying for a MEFP grant must:

1. Be a local government run program that provides food at no charge to needy individuals. These programs are administered and operated

directly by a government agency or in partnership with a government entity; or

2. Be a non-profit organization that provides food at no charge to needy individuals and must be:
 - a. a verifiable tax-exempt entity as defined by the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Refer to [APPENDIX A - SAMPLE IRS TAX-EXEMPT DETERMINATION LETTER](#);
 - b. have a physical location;
 - c. an EFP for at least three years;
 - d. able to demonstrate community support in the form of cash or food donations from outside entities (as examples: local schools, churches, community food drives);
 - e. In "good standing" with SDAT, the State Department of Assessment and Taxation. If applicants are not in good standing and/or have a tax offset or lien, the applicant's organization will not be eligible for the Fiscal Year 2027-2028 MEFP grant. Refer to [APPENDIX B - SDAT "GOOD STANDING" SCREENSHOT](#); and
 - f. Administratively Aligned: Applicants must provide a current, signed IRS Form W-9 that matches the MEFP application exactly; to prevent disqualification, the Legal Name (Line 1), Business Address (Lines 5 & 6), and Employer Identification Number (EIN) must be uniform across all state and federal records. Refer to [APPENDIX C - IRS W-9 TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION FORM](#).

SECTION IV - FUND ALLOCATION AND USAGE

DHS/FIA will award a total of \$1,241,661 to jurisdictions in Maryland based on indicators such as number of individuals/families living in poverty; unemployment rate; and number of individuals/families receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The FY2027 - 2028 MEFP funding application will cover two years of funding: **Year 1** (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) and **Year 2** (July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028).

Level Funding for Year Two

If your organization is approved for a grant, the dollar amount you are awarded for the first year will be the same amount you receive for the second year. This is known as "level funding." For example, if you are awarded \$10,000 for Year 1, you will be eligible to receive another \$10,000 for Year 2 without having to submit a new full application next year (based on funding availability).

Funding Availability

Please note that all awards for the second year (FY 2028) are based on funding availability. This means the second year of your grant depends on the State of Maryland having the funds available in the budget. Additionally, to receive your second year of funding, your organization must remain in "Good Standing" and be up-to-date on all reports and receipts from the first year.

The maximum FY2027 - 2028 MEFP grant award is \$50,000. The minimum FY2027 - 2028 MEFP grant award is \$5,000. If awarded, first-time grantees or those not awarded in the last three years will receive funding capped at \$5,000.00.

Allowability

The range of programming allowed under this grant is intentionally flexible. Examples of project models that will be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:

1. Choice pantry model, offering participants a choice model with access to a variety of culturally relevant, healthy shelf-stable and fresh food items including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and eggs;

2. Pre-packed box/bag distribution that includes healthy, locally sourced produce options, or healthy shelf-stable and fresh food items including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and eggs; or
3. Delivery and/or distribution of nutritious, medically and/or preference-tailored prepared meals to households with unique needs.

MEFP funds must be used **exclusively to purchase food for meals or groceries**. Grantees are strongly encouraged to purchase food that is produced, grown and harvested in the State of Maryland, and to purchase from local farmers markets when feasible and cost-effective. Allowable costs include (but not limited to):

Category	Items
Baking Ingredients	Flour, sugar, honey, and baking mixes.
Beverages	Non-alcoholic beverages like coffee, coffee creamer, hot chocolate, tea, and water. Sugary drinks are strongly discouraged.
Condiments	Ketchup, mustard, mayo and salad dressings.
Dairy Products	Fresh milk, shelf-stable milk (e.g., canned, evaporated), powdered milk, yogurt, ice cream and cheese.
Grains and Cereals	Rice, grits, pasta products, dried cereal, oatmeal, whole grain bread, and crackers.
Home Gardening	Seeds and plants that produce food to eat within the grant year are generally considered allowable food expenses.
Infant Needs	Baby food and infant formula are allowable.
Medical Necessity	Liquid Nutrition (e.g., Ensure, Boost) and Disease-Specific Formulas (e.g., Nepro, Glucerna). <i>*Referrals</i>

Category	Items
<i>*This category must be pre-approved by DHS/FIA</i>	<u>must be made to Moveable Feast or Food & Friends, Inc.</u>
Pantry Staples	Soups, canned chili, spaghetti sauce, cooking oils, salt, pepper, sugar and various other spices.
Plant-Based Proteins	Dried or canned beans, peas, lentils, peanut butter, and other nut butters.
Produce	Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables, as well as 100% fruit and vegetable juices.
Staple Meats	Canned, fresh, or frozen meats such as poultry, ground beef, and fish (e.g., tuna, salmon, sardines).

Prohibited costs include (but not limited to) items such as:

- Alcoholic beverages;
- Annual service fees;
- Candy is not considered to be “emergency food” and should not be included as a MEFP purchase;
- Capital expenses;
- Costs for deposits, pre-payments, or "sales orders" that do not represent a final, delivered product;
- Cutlery;
- Debts and penalties imposed on the grantee;
- Delivery fees;
- Food storage containers;
- Grocery store or other gift cards, unless designated as “food only” **and** requires pre-approval by DHS/FIA;
- Late fees or interest charges;
- Lobbying expenses;
- Membership fees;

- Paper/cleaning products;
- Pet Food;
- Processing and/or administrative surcharges;
- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes;
- Restaurant meals (e.g., pizza delivery, fast food) or retail-prepared 'hot foods' are strictly prohibited;
- Sales tax; and
- Supplanting (replacing) other funds.

MEFP funds are authorized exclusively for the procurement of human food for meals and/or groceries. Dietary supplements and patent medicines do not meet the legal definition of “food” for this grant and will not be reimbursed.

Refer to the following specific prohibitions:

- Vitamins and Dietary Supplements: Any product that carries a "Supplement Facts" label rather than a "Nutrition Facts" label is prohibited. Examples include multivitamins, individual minerals, herbal botanicals, fish oil, and probiotics.
- Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications used as health aids are ineligible. Prohibited items include aspirin, cough drops, cold syrups, and antacids.
- Therapeutic Products: Any products intended to treat, diagnose, mitigate, or cure a disease are excluded. This applies even to products that resemble food, such as therapeutic energy bars or protein drinks, if they carry a "Supplement Facts" label.

All food purchases made with MEFP funds must be necessary to meet the program's core goal of providing emergency nutrition and must be reasonable in cost. Extravagant or luxury food items including but not limited to crabs, lobster, and premium seafood are strictly prohibited. Additionally, the purchase of alcohol, including non-cooking wine, and prepared "hot foods" at point of sale are unallowable expenses. Grantees are expected to exercise prudent judgment and prioritize high-volume, shelf-stable, or nutrient-dense food items that maximize the impact of state funds for the greatest number of Marylanders in need.

Grantees must distribute food purchased with MEFP funds at no cost to eligible individuals or households and may not require individuals or households to purchase MEFP foods. This includes purchases through Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards (EBT). Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are intended for the recipient and his/her household exclusively.

SECTION V - PROOF OF PURCHASE DOCUMENTATION

Invoices or receipts alone do not constitute proof of purchase.

Invoices/receipts must be accompanied by a copy of the canceled check (or one of the alternative methods identified in this section) with the amount of the payment matching the amount on the invoice/receipts..

To ensure the integrity of state funds, grantees must maintain a transparent audit trail for every purchase made with MEFP funds. Below are the required documentation components.

Each expenditure must be backed by the following "Proof of Payment" packet:

1. Original Itemized Invoices/Receipts:

Must be legible and include the vendor name, transaction date, and a detailed description of each item purchased.

- Point of Sale Receipts: Must show the payment method and a zero balance remaining.

2. Eligible Items Only:

Documentation must reflect only MEFP-eligible food items; non-food items must be on a separate transaction.

3. Canceled Checks:

For program compliance, you must **provide a scan of both the front and the back of the check to prove it has been endorsed and cleared by the bank.** See the example below.

Fig. 1 - Sample Canceled Check Documentation



When preparing your proof of payment packets, ensure your canceled check images include these six critical elements:

1. Check Date: Must fall within the eligible grant quarter.
2. Payee Name: Must match the vendor on the associated invoice.
3. Dollar Amount: Must match the total on the itemized receipt.
4. Authorized Signature: The check must be signed by the program's authorized representative.
5. Endorsement: The back must show the financial institution's stamp or the payee's signature, proving the funds were deposited.
6. Memo Line: It is recommended to include a brief note (e.g., "MEFP Food Purchase - Q1") for easier auditing.

Digital & Credit Card Documentation

If using digital payment methods or credit cards as part of the proof of payment packets, ensure that the merchant name and details are clearly visible on the submitted copy. Additional verification is required to show the expense was actually settled:

- Credit Card Statements: While statements verify a charge occurred, they are not accepted as receipts because they lack itemization. You must provide the itemized receipt plus a redacted copy of the bank or credit card statement showing the specific MEFP charge.
- Electronic Wire Transfer/ACH/Debit Card Payment: The Grantee must provide a copy of the bank statement highlighting the transaction(s).
- PayPal Business/Digital Statements: For payments made via PayPal or similar business services, provide the platform's transaction confirmation showing the highlighted merchant name, amount, and date, alongside the underlying itemized vendor invoice or itemized receipt.
- Verification of Payment: Statement statuses must show "Completed," "Paid," or "Cleared". Pending or Cancelled transactions are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Data Security: Before submission, you must redact sensitive information from statements such as account numbers, full credit card numbers, social security numbers except for the last 4 digits and personal account balances.

Prohibited Payment Methods

1. The use of personal Peer-to-Peer (P2P) payment applications including but not limited to Venmo (Personal), Cash App, Zelle, and personal PayPal accounts is strictly prohibited for all MEFP-funded transactions. Grantees may not use these platforms to pay vendors, nor will the State provide reimbursements for purchases made by employees or volunteers using personal P2P accounts. All grant-funded expenditures must be executed through verifiable institutional methods, such as agency-issued checks, corporate debit/credit cards, or authorized business-profile merchant accounts.

2. To ensure the integrity of the grant's financial records, all submitted receipts, invoices, and proof of payment must be original documents generated directly by the vendor (e.g., official retail receipts, PayPal transaction summaries, Walmart or Sam's Club business invoices); and
 - a. Manually typed Word/PDF documents, internal spreadsheets, or recreated invoices produced by the grantee are not acceptable as primary source documentation. Submissions that do not include authentic, third-party verified records will be flagged as "Incomplete", and associated costs may be disallowed until official documentation is provided.
 - b. Screenshots from the grantee organization's internal payment system showing that an invoice was paid, is not an acceptable proof of payment.

Financial Standards & Retention

- Fund Separation: MEFP funds must be tracked as a distinct line item in your financial statement or bookkeeping system; they should not be commingled with other grants.
- Record Retention: All supporting documentation, including customer demographic files and meal counts, must be retained in your program files for a period of three years.
- Accessibility: These records must be available for review during the annual or semi-annual site visit.

SECTION VI - APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please answer all of the questions on the application accurately and thoroughly. Use additional pages, as needed, to answer questions completely.

Applications that are incomplete, submitted without signatures, or without the required documentation will be deemed ineligible.

Applications are evaluated based on factors such as: including all required documentation and signatures; thorough completion of all information requested in each section of the application and proposed outcomes;

including a specific description of how grant funds will be used; goals for increasing outreach; and an explanation of need. DHS/FIA will also review prior performance of applicants that have previously received MEFP funding when considering their new applications.

DHS/FIA will consider grantee responsiveness as a factor in our evaluations. This assessment will apply to all inquiries regarding requests for information and grant payment status. All instances of non-compliance will be considered when reviewing and scoring future MEFP grant applications.

Parent and Umbrella Organizations

It is no longer required that an organization administering more than one EFP in a jurisdiction apply separately for each site or food program. The umbrella organization and fiduciary agent may submit one application for a grant that will be used to purchase food for all of their EFPs in that jurisdiction. In the single application, all organizations utilizing MEFP funds for food should be identified by location, program type, and population served.

Note: While a single application is permitted, successful applicants must maintain distinct records for each program. Quarterly and final reports must be submitted separately for each program/site identified in the application to ensure accurate tracking of fund utilization and service impacts.

Applicant and Grantee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each applicant and grantee to read and become familiar with the MEFP Guidelines. A grantee that fails to meet any of the grant requirements, such as timely reporting and submission of receipts, may be prohibited from receiving subsequent grants. The grantee may be required to return the current year's grant to the State of Maryland. Signing and submitting the application constitutes an EFP's agreement to abide by the MEFP Guidelines.

Application Deadline and Submission Information

The FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application is an electronic submission and the link can be found here: [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#). The FY2027 - 2028 MEFP application must be received no later than **5:00 PM on October 21, 2026**.

Late applications will not be considered

An application will be considered late if it is not received electronically using the [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#) by 5:00 P.M. on October 21, 2026. The MEFP application and **all required documents must be submitted at the same time**.

Late applicants will be notified in writing of their ineligibility. Please note that, except for additional pages on which to complete an answer, changes to the application will not be permitted without prior agency approval. Any additions or deletions to an application will not be accepted after the deadline. Applications with incomplete, illegible, or corrupted digital materials will not be considered.

Tax Exemption and EIN

If applicable, documentation of tax-exempt status must be included with the application. The name of the organization on the IRS 501(c)(3) tax exemption letter must match the name of the organization applying. If you are included in an IRS 501(c)(3) group ruling as a member of a larger or parent organization you must verify your inclusion in the group ruling by providing a statement from your parent organization on official letterhead.

If you do not have a recent version of your tax exemption documentation, please use this link to the IRS website [Tax Exemption Documentation](#), or contact the Maryland Office of Taxation and Assessments to locate your current tax-exempt status information. Submit the current tax-exempt information with your application.

The applicant organization must provide their current EIN. Please upload a screenshot of your EIN on the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) website with your application submission.

Visit the [Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation website](#) and search for your business:

1. Enter the organization's name in the search box;
2. Look for your organization in the *Search Results* and click on your organization's name;
 - a. Your organization's *General Information* page will open in a new tab.
3. Take a screenshot of the *General Information* page and upload it to the field below.

Provider Information and Program Changes

MEFP applications must include the **full legal name** of the EFP director and, if applicable, the name of the sponsoring organization (i.e. church, government agency, etc.) responsible for the program. MEFP award checks will be made payable to the legal name of the applicant organization.

Any changes to the food program structure, including a change in leadership or food program closure, must be communicated to the MEFP Coordinator via email within 30 days of the event. Programs that close or suspend operations for more than 60 days must return all unspent award funds before terminating operations.

Population and Service Data

Applicants must accurately complete the section of the application that requests demographic and service data, population served, and number of meals and/or groceries provided. Please complete the appropriate information for your type of food program. For example, a soup kitchen, shelter, or residential treatment program will provide the number of meals served per month; whereas a food pantry will provide the number of bags of

groceries distributed per month. **Applications will not be considered without information.**

Budget Information

The budget section of the application must be accurately and thoroughly completed.

MEFP funds must be kept separate from other funds on a financial statement or bookkeeping system. Records and customer files must be securely stored. All supporting documentation must be maintained in your program files, available for review at the annual site visit, and retained for a period of three years.

References

If your organization has not received a MEFP grant from DHS/FIA in the last three years, you must provide two letters of reference with original signatures. The letters must be from community groups or businesses with which the organization has done business. Additionally, letters of reference may be from an agency that refers customers to the applicants' organization or provides volunteers for the applicants' program. The letters must be uploaded through the [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#). The letters may not come from members of the applicants' organization or State agency employees.

Application Submission Package

To be considered for funding, applicants must complete the Google electronic form and upload the following documents:

1. The Electronic Application: Completed via the [FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form](#).
2. IRS Tax-Exempt Letter: A copy issued within the **last five years**.
3. Signed IRS W-9: This form **must match** the legal name and address on your application.

4. SDAT "**Good Standing**" Screenshot: Verification from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation.
5. Two **(2)** Letters of Support: (Required only for new applicants or those not funded since July 2023).
6. Signed FY27 Assurances & Verification Form: **Please note that the Assurances and Verification Page (found on pages 34 -36) must be printed and signed by the Program Director. This document requires a wet signature and must be scanned and uploaded as part of your electronic submission.**

SECTION VII - APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Each application is evaluated and scored using a structured Scoring Rubric to provide an objective review of all submitted materials. This rubric contains specific criteria mapped directly to the FY2027 - 2028 application form and grant requirements. The primary factors considered during the review include the applicant's programmatic data, financial stewardship, and operational safety. Once the review is complete, designated DHS/FIA staff will submit award recommendations based on these scores and historical performance data. Final funding decisions will be determined by DHS/FIA based on these scores alongside any other factors deemed relevant at the time of the award. To ensure that grant funds are awarded to eligible, high-performing, and financially responsible organizations, DHS/FIA utilizes a tiered evaluation process that includes the following sequential steps:

Evaluation Phases

- Phase 1: Administrative Screening & Eligibility Review
This is the initial gate for all applications. Applications are reviewed for completeness and technical eligibility.
- Phase 2: Past Performance & Due Diligence (Returning Grantees)
Reviewers assess the historical reliability of applicants who have previously received MEFP funding.

- Phase 3: Technical & Programmatic Evaluation

Applications are scored by a committee on a scale of 0 to 180 points based on the quality and detail of the narrative responses.

- Phase 4: Final Tax Clearance & Compliance

Before an award is finalized, the State conducts a mandatory compliance check with the Maryland Comptroller's Office. This review is designed to ensure that the applicant organization is in good standing and does not have any outstanding tax liabilities, offsets, or liens owed to the State of Maryland.

Any organization identified as having unresolved tax issues will be deemed ineligible for an FY2027 - 2028 MEFP award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to verify their status with the Comptroller's Office prior to submission to ensure there are no barriers to receiving state funds.

Technical Evaluation Criteria

During Phase 3, reviewers evaluate the quality and depth of your responses. Applications are evaluated based on thoroughness, proposed outcomes, and explanation of need. All applicants should answer every question in detail, using complete sentences and providing additional descriptions where requested. Applications are rated based on the following specific criteria:

1. Justification of Need and Use of Funds: The ability to clearly state the need for MEFP funds and define exactly how they will be used.
2. Funding Increase Justification: If an increase in funding is requested, the EFP must describe why the increase is needed and provide a plan for its use.
3. Geographic Need: Priority is given to programs located in food deserts or areas where there is a demonstrated gap in emergency food services (e.g., no similar EFP within a 5-mile radius).

4. Overall Application Quality: Use of clear and concise language throughout the application.

Applications are scored on a scale of **0 to 180** points across five primary areas. Each area is evaluated based on the clarity, detail, and data-informed evidence provided in the application.

Evaluation Category	What We Look For	Max Points
I. Compliance & Eligibility	Timely submission, valid tax status/W-9, "Good Standing" with SDAT, and successful history of fund expenditure (for returning grantees).	Pass/Fail
II. Program Demographics	Clear description of program type, capacity, organization history and experience, accessibility, hours of operation, and effective outreach strategies to target populations.	100
III. Financial Stewardship	Demonstrated ability to track "units of service" (meals/bags), calculate average monthly costs, and manage diverse funding sources.	30
IV. Future Projections	Reasonableness of data-informed forecasts for individuals and families to be served in the coming fiscal year.	30
V. Safety & Compliance	Documented adherence to health department regulations for food storage and professional pest control protocols.	20

Award Notification

Applicants granted MEFP funds will receive an award letter stating the terms of the agreement including the award amount, grant year, deliverables with

all relevant report submission links and timelines, and DHS contact information.

SECTION VIII - GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE (Estimated)

The FY2027 - 2028 MEFP grant application covers two state fiscal years of funding: **Year 1** (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) and **Year 2** (July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028). All applicants and awarded grantees must adhere to the following key administrative milestones:

Activity	Target Date
MEFP Guidelines Released:	September 21, 2026
Grant Application Deadline:	October 21, 2026
Grant Award Period Begins:	July 1, 2026
Budget Amendments Due (Year 2 Adjustments):	May 1st annually
Funds Expended By:	June 1st annually
Unspent Funds Returned to DHS By:	June 30th annually

SECTION IX - MEFP FOOD STORAGE AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT

All MEFP food, perishable and non-perishable, must be kept in a designated area and labeled “MEFP.” Food may be stored in a separate unit or separated by labeling the individual shelves designated for MEFP food storage. MEFP storage areas and/or containers must be locked when not in use. Grantees must also ensure that expired foods or dented cans are not distributed, and a consistent inventory system is in place. Storage areas will be inspected during the MEFP monitoring visit.

Any grantees repackaging loose non-perishable or large packages of perishable food (e.g. separating bulk grains or bulk chicken breast packages into individual servings), must ensure that kitchen and pantry staff follow USDA safe food handling program protocols. If you have questions about those protocols, please contact the MEFP Coordinator for clarification.

EFPs must follow their local health department regulations for sanitation, food service, quality control and cleanliness. All MEFP grantee organizations must have rodent and insect infestation controls for their facility.

SECTION X - RECORD KEEPING

Grantees must maintain accurate and detailed records regarding the use of MEFP funds. The grantees' records must include EFP customer demographic information (adults, children, families, etc.) and number of bags of food distributed or number of meals served ("Units of Service") by the program.

Grantees must document all purchases made using MEFP funds and include proof of payment. Proof of payment documentation consists of an invoice(s) with a copy of the canceled check(s) and/or receipt(s) showing payment at point of sale. Receipts must:

1. be legible;
2. include the store name and date of purchase;
3. reflect only MEFP eligible food items; and
4. not exceed the MEFP grant amount **by more than a reasonable amount (within one hundred dollars whenever possible).**

Invoices not paid in full at point of sale must be accompanied by a canceled check or another form of verification that shows the payment has been completed or cleared such as a bank statement or credit card statement. All canceled checks must show legible front and back sides.

SECTION XI - REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Data Collection

Data collection is more than an administrative requirement; it is the primary way the State of Maryland and our partners demonstrate the real-world impact of the MEFP. By documenting who we serve, we are able to prove that state funds are reaching the most vulnerable populations, justify continued or increased funding, and strategically plan for future community needs.

This section outlines the core data points all grantees are required to collect. While we understand that some clients may be reluctant to share personal information in times of crisis, it is essential to explain that this data is collected to ensure the program's sustainability and to help us better understand the specific barriers our neighbors are facing.

Core Collection Requirements

Grantees must implement a standardized system for gathering and reporting the following data points to maintain program compliance and financial accountability.

1. Service Reach (Unduplicated Counts): Grantees must track the specific number of unique individuals served for program demographics.
 - a. If a participant falls into multiple demographic categories (e.g., a veteran with a disability), the grantee must choose one primary characteristic for that individual to maintain the integrity of the unduplicated count.
2. Operational Volume (Duplicated Counts): This measures the total number of "service events" or "households served". If a household receives assistance weekly, they are counted each time to accurately reflect the staffing, volunteer hours, and physical inventory required to run the program.

Meal and Food Volume Reporting

MEFP requires accurate, data-informed evidence to justify the allocation of state funds and to measure the collective impact of our feeding

organizations. Because our partners operate through various models ranging from congregate soup kitchens to mobile pantry bags, the Department recognizes that a "one-size-fits-all" counting method is not always possible.

This section is designed to provide clear, standardized formulas that allow your organization to estimate food volume and meal counts with precision. Grantees must use this section to:

1. Select the appropriate calculation method that best aligns with your current operations (e.g., weight-based for bulk intake vs. household-based for pre-packed bags).
2. Establish a consistent reporting baseline so that quarterly data is comparable across different reporting periods.
3. Maintain verifiable records of how estimations were reached, ensuring your program remains in "Good Standing" during annual site visits.

While the **Weight-Based Formula (1.2 lbs = 1 meal)** is the preferred standard for State reporting, grantees may use alternative methods when necessary. Grantees have the discretion to choose the method that best fits their operations; however, all reported outcomes must be accurate, verifiable, and supported by factual data.

Meal Equivalent (MEQ)

This calculation serves as the industry standard for converting bulk food weight into a measurable number of meals provided to the community. While food types vary in weight, 1.2 pounds is the national average used to account for the total mix of distributed products (including heavy produce and lighter grains).

Why use this method: This formula must be used when reporting "Units of Service" for food boxes or grocery bags where actual meal counts are not available.

Formula: Total Meals = $\frac{\text{Total Weight of Bag/Box (lbs)}}{1.2}$

Example: If a food box weighs 24 lbs., the calculation would be:
 $24 \div 1.2 = 20$ meals

Household/Days Calculation or Emergency Food Supply Formula

This is a standardized way for pantries to report "Meal Equivalents" when they do not have the equipment to track food by weight.

Why use this method: Ease of use as it only requires tracking the number of individuals in a household and the number of days the food is intended to last, rather than weighing every box. It provides a uniform way to report service impact across different sites that may distribute differently sized bags.

Formula: Total Meals = Household Size x Number of Days x 3 (Meals Per Day)

Example: For a 4-person family receiving a 3-day emergency supply:
 $4 \text{ people} \times 3 \text{ days} \times 3 \text{ meals/day} = 36 \text{ meals}$

Serving-to-Meal Conversion Method

This method is often used for pre-packaged kits or commodity reporting where you need to show the specific nutritional impact of a container, rather than just raw weight.

This method relies on the Nutrition Facts label or a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (PFS) to determine the exact meal contribution of a single container.

Formula: Meals Per Container = $\frac{\text{Total Servings}}{\text{Servings per Meal}}$

Example: A box of cereal contains 980 grams and the serving size is 113 grams. To find the number of servings:
 $980 \text{ grams} \div 113 \text{ grams per serving} = 8.6725 \text{ grams}$
(Determine Meals): If 1 serving equals 1 meal component, that box provides 8.67 meals.

Economic Efficiency Metrics

This evaluates the economic return on investment (ROI) for food bank programs, assessing the long-term benefit to the community per dollar spent on food.

Formula: Cost Per Meal (CPM) = $\frac{\text{Total Operating Expenses}}{\text{Total Meal Equivalents (MEQ)}}$

Example: A local pantry spent a total of \$1,500 in a single month on food purchases and distribution operations. During that same month, they distributed 2,400 lbs of food to the community.

Step 1: Determine Meal Equivalents (MEQ) Using the industry-standard weight-based formula (1.2 lbs = 1 meal):
 $\$ 2,400 \div 1.2 = 2,000 \text{ Meals}$

Step 2: Calculate Cost Per Meal (CPM) Divide the total expenses by the total meals: $\$1,500 \div 2,000 \text{ meals} = \0.75 Per Meal

Quarterly Reports

Grantees are required to submit quarterly reports through the official FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Quarterly Report Submission link, **regardless of whether grant funds were expended during that specific period**. The EFPs Director must still submit a Quarterly Activity Report for that quarter noting that no MEFP funds were expended and the reason why they were not used.

A reporting template link will be provided within each organization's award letter to ensure consistency in data collection. These submissions must include itemized receipts, canceled checks or another type of payment verification, and a comprehensive summary of services provided, including the total number of individuals and families served and the total meals or groceries distributed using MEFP funds. To ensure administrative efficiency, all receipts must be calculated and totaled by the grantee prior to submission.

In addition to financial data, quarterly program progress serves as a vital tool for capturing the real-world impact of an organization's community efforts and identifying challenges that may require customized technical assistance from the MEFP Coordinator. When paired with the quarterly, "Proof of Payment Packet" these progress reports provide a narrative of your

organization's work and help tell the story of the program's reach during the quarter. Grantees must use the progress reporting template link provided by the DHS/FIA and submit completed reports to the MEFP Coordinator by the 10th of the month following the end of each quarter, unless otherwise directed. To support the success and transparency, please adhere to the following progress reporting and record-keeping requirements:

1. **Receipts reflecting purchases funded by sources other than MEFP will not be accepted.** MEFP purchases should be made separately from other funding sources. This will help prevent the perception of misused state funds.
2. If receipts reflect purchases made with non-MEFP funds, Grantees will be notified of the requirement to only submit receipts reflecting MEFP purchases. Grantees will be notified within ten business days following DHS/FIA's review of a grantee's documentation.
3. Grantees must keep copies of documents and records relating to the MEFP award in their files.

Reporting Deadlines

MEFP Quarterly Reports are due on or before the deadlines listed on the following page. The MEFP Quarterly Report will be submitted through a link designated by the Department. The reports are due each quarter, by the dates outlined in the chart below, regardless of whether funds were spent during the reporting period.

All records, receipts, and documentation providing proof that grant funds were expended must be maintained by the grantee for three years.

Late report submissions will be documented and noted in the grantee's MEFP file as "non-compliant" for that quarter. All instances of non-compliance will be considered when reviewing and scoring future MEFP grant applications.

Grantees must expend all MEFP funds for the fiscal year by June 1st annually, unless special permission is given; any unexpended funds must be returned to the agency by June 30th.

FY 2027 MEFP Quarterly Closing and Reporting Deadlines

Quarter	Date Purchased	Submission Deadline
1 st	July 1, 2026 - September 30, 2026	January 10, 2027
2 nd	October 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026	January 10, 2027
3 rd	January 1, 2027 - March 31, 2027	April 10, 2027
4 th	April 1, 2027 - June 30, 2027	July 10, 2027

FY 2028 MEFP Quarterly Closing and Reporting Deadlines		
Quarter	Date Purchased	Submission Deadline
1 st	July 1, 2027 - September 30, 2027	October 10, 2027
2 nd	October 1, 2027 - December 31, 2027	January 10, 2028
3 rd	January 1, 2028 - March 31, 2028	April 10, 2028
4 th	April 1, 2028 - June 30, 2028	July 10, 2028

SECTION XII - SITE VISITS

Grantees will receive an annual or, in some cases, a semi-annual site visit. New programs under consideration for funding will receive a site visit prior to the award decision. Returning grantees will be scheduled for an onsite visit during the fiscal year covered by the grant. During a site visit, DHS/FIA staff will tour the food storage areas and review program records. DHS/FIA may request to review copies of current year financial statements, single audit reports, receipts for MEFP purchases, and any other items that may be needed for evaluation during the site visit. [Refer to APPENDIX D - SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM.](#)

Grantees with an unsatisfactory site review will be granted a 60-day period to submit a corrective action plan and address the problem areas. All MEFP spending will be suspended until the corrective action plan has been accepted and a satisfactory site review is achieved. If the corrective action plan is not implemented or is not successful, the program's award will be revoked and any unspent funds must be returned to DHS/FIA.

SECTION XIII - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To ensure that all grantees have the support needed to meet program standards and successfully manage their awards, the DHS/FIA provides comprehensive Technical Assistance (TA) throughout the fiscal year. Technical assistance is designed to bridge the gap between grant requirements and operational reality, offering tailored guidance to help grantees thrive and remain in compliance.

SECTION XIV - PERFORMANCE PLAN

If a partner organization does not currently track the specific demographics as outlined in MEFP requirements, your organization may be required to submit a Performance Plan. This plan must outline the specific steps and timeline your organization will take to implement data collection methods, ensuring full reporting compliance by an agreed upon deadline between DHS/FIA and partner organization.

SECTION XV - NETWORK PARTNER REFERRALS: SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

DHS/FIA is committed to more than just emergency food distribution; through the Office of Community Grants (OCG), DHS/FIA aims to foster a "full circle" of care by addressing the diverse socio-economic challenges facing Marylanders. Beyond the MEFP, OCG manages a suite of Support Services and partners with many organizations that provide specialized assistance to vulnerable populations across all 24 jurisdictions. By connecting your clients to these network partners, you help provide a comprehensive safety net that addresses health, education, and emotional well-being. Grantees are encouraged to refer clients to the following organizations, which provide specialized support.

Associated Catholic Charities, Inc.

Provides support and enhance programs that address economic hardship and prevent homelessness in Maryland. Offers services for transitional housing, employment and educational training, life skills, recovery support, and access to mental health services for homeless and low-income individuals and families to help them achieve economic stability and self-sufficiency.

1. [Anna's House serves Harford County provides transitional housing to families and chronically homeless adults and assists in achieving permanent housing, increasing life skills geared toward self-sufficiency, and reducing barriers that may have contributed to periods of homelessness.](#)
2. [Christopher Place Employment Academy serves Baltimore City and provides men with the tools to transition from homelessness to stable living. The program fosters the professional skills and personal strength needed to maintain full-time employment and embrace a life of sobriety.](#)
3. [Our Daily Bread Employment Center serves Baltimore City and provides people in need with a daily hot meal, case management, job training, and employment counseling.](#)
4. To search all available services by area go to: <https://cc-md.org/>

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

Provides monthly food packages to improve the health of low-income seniors (aged 60+) who meet income requirements. CSFP supplies 25-30 lbs of nutritious USDA-purchased foods, such as canned fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, and grains, to help supplement diets and reduce food insecurity.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

1. [Allegany County Human Resources serves Allegany County](#)
2. [The Capital Area Food Bank serves Prince George's and Montgomery Counties](#)
3. [The Salvation Army, Central Maryland serves Baltimore City](#)

Cash Campaign of Maryland

Provides free income tax assistance to help low-income individuals and families file tax returns and claim Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); provides free financial education and coaching and a suite of online financial tools and resources for low to moderate income individuals.

URL: <https://cashmd.org/>

Home-Delivered Meals for Individuals Living with Chronic Illnesses (HDMILCI)

These programs provide home-delivered meals seven days a week and nutritional counseling to individuals who are chronically ill, under 60 years of age, especially those who are mobility-challenged. Clients are identified based on clinical and/or medical referrals and meet with a certified nutritionist to receive meals addressing specific dietary needs.

1. [Food & Friends, Inc. serves Allegany, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Garrett Montgomery, Prince George's, St.Mary's and Washington counties](#)
2. [Moveable Feast, Inc. serves Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester counties](#)

Make-A-Wish, Inc.

Provides wishes to children in Maryland with critical illnesses by granting wishes to children, ensuring equitable access regardless of background, and supporting their positive mental, emotional, and physical health.

URL: <https://wish.org/midatlantic>

Mission of Love Charities, Inc.

Assists low-income individuals and families with accessing essential items such as food, clothing and furniture. They serve as a community resource, providing eviction prevention and housing counseling, parenting classes, job readiness classes and services such as legal advocacy and English/Spanish language classes. Serves Prince George's County and its surrounding areas.

URL: <https://molcinc.org/contact-us/>

Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA)

MORA supports programs that stabilize newly arrived refugees, and prepares them for productive lives in their new country. MORA's network of contracted service providers support clients for their first few years in the United States. This includes Resettlement Agency affiliates, community colleges, state agencies, and non-profit organizations.

URL: <https://dhs.maryland.gov/maryland-office-for-refugees-and-asylees/moras-programs/>

Operation Warm, Inc.

Provides essential clothing to children in need across Maryland by distributing new winter coats and athletic shoes with socks. The program seeks to enhance children's educational engagement, foster social-emotional development, boost self-confidence, and promote dignity by ensuring they have appropriate and comfortable clothing, thereby removing barriers to learning and healthy development.

URL: <https://operationwarm.org/wish-list-application/>

Parent Encouragement Program (PEP)

Provides parenting education and support to Maryland families. The program focuses on addressing the mental health needs of both parents and children, with cohorts offered in English, Spanish, and Amharic. PEP provides outcomes in improved parent-child communication and reduced stress; and offers extended follow-up services to participants.

URL: <https://pepparent.org/>

Roberta's House, Inc.

Provides grief counseling to low-income children and their families whose lives have been impacted by violence. Services are targeted to those who have experienced the death of a loved one, who have a friend or family member who were homicide victims and those who live in high crime areas in Baltimore City.

URL: <https://robertashouse.org/behavioral-health-program/>

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program

Maryland offers Employment and Training (E&T) services to SNAP recipients throughout the state. This program is called SNAP E&T, and its primary goal is to connect people who receive monthly food supplement benefits (SNAP benefits/formally known as “Food Stamps”) to job-driven training programs.

URL: <https://dhs.maryland.gov/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-employment-training/>

Additional Contact: For additional questions about the SNAP E&T program or information on how to enroll, please contact your [Local DSS](#) or call the DHS helpline at [\(800\) 332-6347](tel:8003326347).

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

Provides food commodities to each state to be distributed among eligible soup kitchens, food pantries and shelters in all 24 jurisdictions. DHS is the TEFAP Administering Agency in Maryland working through two emergency response hubs:

1. [Capital Area Food Bank](#), primary coordinator for Prince George’s County or Montgomery County
2. [Maryland Food Bank](#), primary coordinator for Baltimore City and surrounding counties

Section XVI: Assurances and Verification of Accuracy

To ensure compliance with policies described in this Guidance, the MEFP application shall include the following assurances. Mark your response to the right. Before signing this Fiscal Year 2027-2028 Maryland Emergency Food Program assurances, please read each line and attest that the following statements are accurate:

MEFP APPLICATION ASSURANCES	YES	NO
-----------------------------	-----	----

Electronic Signature Acknowledgement:		
I have reviewed the FY 2027 -2028 Maryland Emergency Food Program Guidelines document prior to completing this application. I have understood and followed all instructions provided therein.		
I have included a recent (five years or less) copy of my organization's tax-exempt designation issued by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. If my program/organization is designated as a subordinate in a group tax-exemption status ruling provided to my parent organization, I have included a signed official statement from my parent organization verifying my program/organization's inclusion in this ruling.		
If I am a new applicant or have not received MEFP funding since July 1, 2023, I have included a W-9 for the applicant organization and two original letters of support from outside community organizations (check FY 2027-2028 MEFP Guidelines for requirements).		
I have listed my MEFP grant award request on page 1 of the MEFP application as \$ _____ and am aware that grants below \$5,000 will not be considered.		
I have printed a copy of my MEFP application packet for my files.		
I understand that I will be asked to verify the information provided in this application during an unannounced or scheduled site visit conducted by a staff member from the Office of Community Grants prior to or during Fiscal Year 2027.		

By accepting MEFP funding, I agree to submit quarterly reports, including all the following: Quarterly Activity Report form, with units of service provided; Receipt Documentation log, with receipts reflecting MEFP eligible purchases only; and proof of payment of those receipts. I also understand that failure to submit these reports, submitting illegible or inaccurate original receipts or any other MEFP funding mismanagement may require me to return my MEFP grant money and disqualify my program/organization for subsequent funding through MEFP.		
I have arranged to submit my completed application by October 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. I understand that late submissions will not be accepted. Applications may be submitted electronically using the FY2027 - 2028 MEFP Application Submission Form.		

EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDER STATEMENT

I certify that the information provided above is accurate and correct. I understand that failure to provide an accurate representation of my program and/or the requested supplemental documentation may result in significant penalties, up to and including removal of my organization from consideration for MEFP funding.

Signature of Program Director

Date

Printed Name of Program Director

DHS USE ONLY - CERTIFICATION

Signature of FIA/OCG Reviewer

Date

Printed Name of FIA/OCG Reviewer

APPENDIX A - SAMPLE IRS TAX-EXEMPT DETERMINATION LETTER

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

YOUR NONPROFIT, INC.
P. O. BOX 123
MISSION WAY, CA 95050

Employer Identification Number:
12-3456789
DLN:
123456789910
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption
January 3, 2002
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because of this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mission

Director, Exempt Organization

Letter 111

APPENDIX B: SDAT "GOOD STANDING" SCREENSHOT

Screen capture of an online verification of Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation NOTE: You should **NOT** purchase an official document; simply provide a screenshot from:

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>

4/30/25, 3:08 pm

YOUR NONPROFIT, INC.: D00987654

Department ID Number:
D00987654

Business Name:
YOUR NONPROFIT, INC.

Principal Office: ⓘ
123 SOMEWHERE STREET
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

Resident Agent: ⓘ
LAWYERS INCORPORATING SERVICE COMPANY
99 ST. PAUL STREET
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

Status:
INCORPORATED

Good Standing:
THIS BUSINESS IS IN GOOD STANDING

Business Type:
CORPORATION

Business Code:
04 ORDINARY BUSINESS – NON-STOCK

Date of Formation/Registration:
01/24/1994

State of Formation:
MD

Stock Status:
NONSTOCK

Close Status:
NO

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch/Business>

Note: The screen has the date in the upper left corner of when the screen print was executed, and the source of the website is on the footer of the page.

APPENDIX C: IRS W-9 TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION FORM

Note: Please make sure the W-9 has been signed and dated.

IRS W-9 - Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

Note: Please make sure the W-9 has been signed and dated.

Form W-9 (Rev. November 2017) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service		Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification		Give Form to the requester. Do not send to the IRS.
Go to www.irs.gov/FormW9 for instructions and the latest information.				
1 Name (as shown on your income tax return). Name is required on this line; do not leave this line blank.				
2 Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above				
Print or type. See Specific instructions on page 3.	3 Check appropriate box for federal tax classification of the person whose name is entered on line 1. Check only one of the following seven boxes.			4 Exemptions (codes apply only to certain entities, not individuals; see instructions on page 3):
	☐ Individual/sole proprietor or single-member LLC			Exempt payee code (if any) _____
	☐ C Corporation			Exemption from FATCA reporting code (if any) _____
	☐ S Corporation			(Applies to accounts maintained outside the U.S.)
	☐ Partnership			
☐ Trust/estate				
☐ Limited liability company. Enter the tax classification (C—C corporation, S—S corporation, P—Partnership) ▶ _____				
Note: Check the appropriate box in the line above for the tax classification of the single-member owner. Do not check LLC if the LLC is classified as a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner unless the owner of the LLC is another LLC that is not disregarded from the owner for U.S. federal tax purposes. Otherwise, a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner should check the appropriate box for the tax classification of its owner.				
☐ Other (see instructions) ▶ _____				
5 Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.) See instructions.				6 Requester's name and address (optional)
7 City, state, and ZIP code				
8 List account number(s) here (optional)				
Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)				
Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on line 1 to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is generally your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the instructions for Part I, later. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see <i>How to get a TIN</i> , later.				
Note: If the account is in more than one name, see the instructions for line 1. Also see <i>What Name and Number To Give the Requester</i> for guidelines on whose number to enter.				
Part II Certification				
Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:				
1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me); and				
2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding; and				
3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below); and				
4. The FATCA code(s) entered on this form (if any) indicating that I am exempt from FATCA reporting is correct.				
Certification instructions. You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return. For real estate transactions, item 2 does not apply. For mortgage interest paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, contributions to an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), and generally, payments other than interest and dividends, you are not required to sign the certification, but you must provide your correct TIN. See the instructions for Part II, later.				
Sign Here	Signature of U.S. person ▶			Date ▶
General Instructions				
Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.				
Future developments. For the latest information about developments related to Form W-9 and its instructions, such as legislation enacted after they were published, go to www.irs.gov/FormW9 .				
Purpose of Form				
An individual or entity (Form W-9 requester) who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) which may be your social security number (SSN), individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), adoption taxpayer identification number (ATIN), or employer identification number (EIN), to report on an information return the amount paid to you, or other amount reportable on an information return. Examples of information returns include, but are not limited to, the following:				
• Form 1099-INT (interest earned or paid)				
• Form 1099-DIV (dividends, including those from stocks or mutual funds)				
• Form 1099-MISC (various types of income, prizes, awards, or gross proceeds)				
• Form 1099-B (stock or mutual fund sales and certain other transactions by brokers)				
• Form 1099-S (proceeds from real estate transactions)				
• Form 1099-K (merchant card and third party network transactions)				
• Form 1098 (home mortgage interest), 1098-E (student loan interest), 1098-T (tuition)				
• Form 1099-C (canceled debt)				
• Form 1099-A (acquisition or abandonment of secured property)				
Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN.				
If you do not return Form W-9 to the requester with a TIN, you might be subject to backup withholding. See What is backup withholding, later.				
Cat. No. 10231X				
Form W-9 (Rev. 11-2017)				

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM

Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP)
Fiscal Year 2027 Provider Monitoring Form
(July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027)



APPENDIX D: SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM - continued

How many individuals and/or families do you typically serve, with MEFP-funded food, in an average month? _____

Has that number increased or decreased over the previous State Fiscal Year (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)?

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM - continued

Food Storage and Safety

Are you able to purchase, with MEFP funds, food that is produced, grown and harvested in Maryland (for instance: at stores selling "locally grown" produce and meats, farmers' markets, Capital Area Food Bank or Maryland Food Bank)?

How/where is perishable MEFP food stored? _____

How is perishable MEFP food kept separate from other perishable food items (for instance: separate refrigerator or freezer, separate labeled shelves, or is the food labeled):

How often is your food inventory inspected for expired or compromised food? _____

What are your protocols for identifying and discarding expired, damaged or otherwise inedible food?

What is the current temperature of your refrigerator? _____

What is the current temperature of your freezer? _____

Where is your non-perishable MEFP food stored? _____

Is there a separate storage container (pantry, cupboard, etc.) for MEFP food? _____. If not, how is the MEFP food separated from the other food on the premises? _____

Are storage spaces and/or rooms locked when not in use? _____. If not, how is your MEFP food secured against theft or misuse? _____

At what frequency is your food supply inventoried?: _____

Who is responsible for checking and maintaining these records?: _____

(OCG USE ONLY) Corrective Action Required:

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM - continued

NO ____ YES ____ if so, please describe, with timeline for resolution: _____

Sanitation

Who is responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of your facility (including the waiting room, kitchens for meal preparation, and MEFP food storage areas)? _____

Does your facility keep a record of sanitation procedures or cleaning frequency? _____

Does kitchen staff have Serv-Safe or other certification? _____

Does the facility receive regular food safety inspections? _____

How does staff handle unpackaged food (including fruits, vegetables) prior to disbursement or meal preparation? _____

If your program serves meals, what protocols are in place to prevent food contamination and adhere to Maryland Department of Health (MDH) food service regulations?: _____

Does your facility receive routine rodent/pest treatments? _____. How often? _____

Exterminator Name: _____

Has your facility had an infestation or other serious problem with pests in the last two years? _____

If yes, please explain and include prevention protocol information _____

(OCG USE ONLY) Corrective Action Required:

NO ____ YES ____ if so, please describe, with timeline for resolution: _____

(Maryland Emergency Food Program Site Monitoring Visit final page)

MEFP Monitoring Form (V.1)
Page 4

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE MEFP SITE VISIT FORM - continued

Provider Statement

I certify that the information provided above is accurate and correct. I understand that failure to provide an accurate representation of my program and/or the requested supplemental documentation may result in significant penalties, up to and including removal from my organization from consideration for any subsequent MEFP funding.

Name of Program Director

Date

For OCG Use Only

FIA/OCG Reviewer: _____

Date: _____

SECTION XVIII - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Find answers to the most common questions about the MEFP grant including eligibility requirements, application rules, and how to use the Google platform.

Eligibility	
Q1.	If we apply for the maximum, would the grant still be considered for a lower amount?
A1.	Yes, it is possible to receive a lower amount than you asked for in your application. The review team looks at how much total money is available and the specific needs of each group to decide how to share the funds fairly. Because of this, grantees may be given a smaller grant than their original request.
Q2.	Is there a way to provide feedback about the grant application process?
A2.	Yes. Applicants can fill out an annual survey to share feedback on the grant application process.
Administrative	
Q3.	Will I be notified when my quarterly report has been received?
A3.	Yes, you should expect to receive a response within a few working days of the submission. You may certainly email the MEFP Coordinator to ask if the report was received if you have not received feedback within 10 business days.
Q4.	Why does the State ask for "Unduplicated Counts" for demographics?
A4.	Unduplicated counts answer the question: "How many unique lives were touched by this funding?" This is the more accurate reflection of the scope of community impact or unique reach, while duplicated counts show the frequency of engagement.

Q5.	Should “Households Served” be an Unduplicated or Duplicated Count? What’s the difference?
A5.	“Households Served” focuses on the volume of work (often duplicated). It is commonly used to measure operational workload. Example: If a food pantry serves 100 “unduplicated” households once a month, that is 100 service events. But if those same 100 households come every week, that is 400 service events. Why it matters: Reporting 400 (duplicated) accurately reflects the staffing, volunteer hours, and physical inventory required to run the program.
Q6.	Is there a formula to calculate meals per bag or box?
A6.	Yes. Refer to pages 23-25 for food volume formulas.
Q7.	How do I report healthy snacks?
A7.	In alignment with federal nutrition standards, if a child or adult receives three healthy snacks as part of an activity, this is considered the equivalent of one full meal for MEFP reporting purposes. Each individual snack should meet standard nutritional patterns (e.g., a grain and a fruit) to be counted toward this 3-to-1 conversion. Please refer to pages 23-25 for food volume formulas.
Q8.	If I am purchasing food from a store and need some non-food items, can I purchase those together, on the same receipt, and deduct the non-food items from the total?
A8.	No. The MEFP Guidelines have prohibited this for many years but the Office of Community Grants has allowed some of these receipts to be processed. This can no longer be allowed due to the frequent errors in identifying and deducting the amounts from the total purchase amount, thus creating errors in the quarterly reports. There is an exception, however, if you are allocating MEFP funds for a

	percentage of a large receipt (say, 35% of the entire receipt which includes at least that amount of food purchases) you may include non-food items.
Grant Category Specifics	
Q9.	Why does the application ask , “Are you able to purchase, with MEFP funds, food that is produced, grown and harvested in Maryland”? What is meant by that question? Do I have to purchase food from a farmers market?
A9.	The purpose of this question is to encourage, whenever possible and cost-effective, purchase of food that will support businesses located in Maryland. The intent is to support local businesses and “buy local” whenever possible but you are not required to purchase food directly from farmers.
Q10.	What about sales tax, delivery fees, bags for food distribution, plates/cups/utensils or aluminum foil?
A10.	Those cannot be included because funds can only be used for food items.
Google Platform	
Q11.	Can I print my application while working on it?
A11.	Yes. Right-click anywhere on the form, select “Print” to preview the document page, select your destination printer and select “Print” again to generate the PDF. If available through your organization, you may also be able to download the document to your computer as a PDF. Right-click anywhere on the form, select “Adobe PDF” to preview the document, and select “Print.” Once the “Save PDF File As” window appears map to your destination file, give your document a file name, make sure

	the “Save as type” is set at “PDF files(*.PDF) to download a PDF with all completed questions and answers. Printing the form does not save or submit your application. If you want a copy of information entered on multiple sections, you may need to print or save each section separately.
Q12.	How do I know if my application is complete and submitted?
A12.	Your application is not submitted until you select the “Submit” button at the end of the application. Before submitting, review your responses and make sure all required questions have been completed and all required documents have been uploaded. After you select Submit, you should see a confirmation message indicating that your application has been submitted successfully. The Google platform checks for completeness — required fields that are blank will show red error messages to highlight fields that need attention. You can make changes after submission until the deadline.
Q13.	The application platform is not loading properly. What should I do?
A13.	If the application page is not loading, start by clearing your internet browser’s cache, which is a simple way to wipe away old, "clogged" information that might be stopping the new page from appearing. To do this, go to your browser settings or history and select the option to clear browsing data or cache, then try opening the link once more. If that does not work, you should try opening the application using a different internet program altogether, such as switching from Google Chrome to Microsoft Edge. If the problem continues while you are working at your office or organization, your computer's security system may be blocking the

	website. In this case, please ask your IT or computer support person to ensure that Google Platform is added to the organization's list of trusted or approved websites so that you can access the form safely.
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***Thank you for your interest in the Maryland Emergency Food Program
and for your service to the people of Maryland.***