**Medicaid Food Security Partners Program**

**Request for Proposals**

Share Our Strength and HealthBegins are launching the second cohort of grant funding for the Medicaid Food Security Partners Program. Share Our Strength will be funding four state-based organizations or coalitions to pursue the creation or implementation of state Medicaid regulatory or administrative changes that promote promising food and nutrition security policy initiative(s), with a special focus on strategies that promote SNAP and WIC enrollment among children and families. Grantees will receive $75,000 for an 18-month period as well as full cohort learning opportunities and individualized technical assistance. Preference will be given to candidates with the necessary relationships, strategy, and positioning to reasonably achieve success. The Medicaid Food Security Partners Program is an initiative of the [National Medicaid Food Security Network](https://medicaidfoodsecuritynetwork.org/).

Submit your application [here](https://forms.gle/7Uxhw3TvejMNgbEd6).

# Background

Share Our Strength and HealthBegins developed a [National Medicaid Food Security Network](https://medicaidfoodsecuritynetwork.org/) (MFSN) that launched in January 2024. MFSN supports food security advocates to engage, influence, and partner with state Medicaid programs, Medicaid-serving systems, and/or Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) in adopting and implementing strategies to support the food and nutrition needs of children and families enrolled in Medicaid, with an emphasis on closing the SNAP and WIC enrollment gaps. The Network hosts the Medicaid Food Security Partners Program, a grant opportunity for state-based organizations or coalitions to advocate for or implement effective Medicaid-based policy to improve food security.

## RFP Timeline

| **Activity** | **Date** |
| --- | --- |
| RFP Release | 1/6/2025 |
| Informational Webinar[Register Here](https://strength.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SqfDFKZpSxqRx276xvGfSg) - the webinar will be recorded and published on our website | 1/9/25 |
| Proposal Submission Deadline | 2/14/2025 |
| Review Period | 2/17/2025-3/14/2025 |
| Award Notifications | 3/17/2025 |
| Grant Start | 5/1/2025 |
| Grant End | 12/1/2026 |

## Contact

For questions about this RFP, please email mfsn@strength.org which is monitored by the Share Our Strength team - Julian Xie, Director of Medicaid and Benefits Integration and Katrina Scott, Health Systems Associate.

## About the Network Co-designers

**Share Our Strength**

Share Our Strength is a leading national organization dedicated to ending childhood hunger in the US through its No Kid Hungry (NKH) campaign. By ensuring that kids have access to critical federal nutrition programs, the NKH campaign surrounds children with healthy food where they live, learn, and play. Since its launch in 2010, the NKH campaign has worked to expand access to federal nutrition programs, including the School Breakfast Program and Out of School Time programs.

**HealthBegins**

HealthBegins is a national mission-driven strategy and implementation firm that specializes in helping healthcare, and community partners collaborate to improve the social and structural drivers of health equity. HealthBegins partners with and trains courageous leaders to improve the social drivers of health and equity at all levels: individual social needs, community-level social determinants of health, and deeper structural determinants of health equity.

## Commitment to Racial Equity

Share Our Strength is committed to addressing the systemic and structural health, social, and economic inequities that disproportionately impact historically under-resourced communities, and people of color in particular. Through its campaigns, Share Our Strength has advanced solutions to childhood hunger in the United States, but we recognize that hunger is a consequence of poverty; ending it is impossible without addressing economic inequality and generational poverty. For this grant opportunity, respondents must detail how projects will advance racial equity and work toward eliminating structural barriers faced by the communities they serve. Agency respondents and all members of project teams must demonstrate intentional commitment to advancing racial equity by acknowledging and honoring specific community needs. This should include engaging people within the communities affected by proposed process innovations to guide project planning, implementation, and sustainability. Please visit the No Kid Hungry website to learn more about Share Our Strength's [grantmaking beliefs and values](https://www.nokidhungry.org/no-kid-hungry-grants-our-beliefs-and-values), as well as how [Share Our Strength prioritizes grant funds](https://www.nokidhungry.org/no-kid-hungry-grants-how-we-prioritize-grant-funds).

# Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Applicants can be state-based nonprofit organizations, government entities, coalitions, or academic centers with a focus on health, food insecurity and/or the needs of children. Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate existing collaboration with other organizations operating in these subject areas and/or the ability to build coalitions and develop or maintain deep relationships with anti-hunger or food security organizations and community members experiencing food insecurity. Applicants must be able to engage state agencies, including the Medicaid agency, on regulatory policy and operational practices - a demonstrated history of this is preferred, but not necessary.

Receiving organizations must commit to the following:

* A clear articulation of a proposed focus that includes either advocating for adoption or modification of a state’s Medicaid policy, or improving the implementation of such a policy. This may occur through mechanisms such as an upcoming Medicaid Procurement Request for Proposals (RFP) or Medicaid funding flexibilities.
* Articulate how their proposed focus contributes to closing the SNAP and WIC enrollment gap among children and families enrolled in Medicaid.
* Solicit the input and partnership of community members historically harmed by institutionalized and structural racism and other health inequities.
* A willingness to share lessons learned and successes in public-facing documents to be shared with the entire MFSN and in public-facing forums.
* Willingness to commit around 0.5 full time equivalents (FTE) to this work for the duration of the 18 months.

States will be prioritized for the Partners Program based on the following considerations:

* Health inequities: Metrics like food insecurity rates and SNAP and WIC eligible-but-not-enrolled rates will be used to prioritize applications from states that may have higher gaps in SNAP and WIC enrollment.
* Rural/Urban diversity: The MFSN will seek to include states with a range of rural and urban contexts.
* Political diversity: The MFSN will seek to include states that have a range of political contexts.
* Racial and ethnic diversity: The MFSN will prioritize the inclusion of organizations that primarily serve individuals historically harmed by institutionalized and structural racism.
* Readiness: Applicants will be selected with a range of partnerships or coalitions to support the work, funding, capacity, knowledge, and skill. We encourage all interested applicants to apply.
* Policy change: Share Our Strength will dedicate at least two of the four slots to states with clear upcoming policy opportunities (i.e. in the next 3 years the state plans to procure their Medicaid managed care contracts). Proposals should ideally take into account an upcoming Medicaid policy opportunity, such as ongoing conversations around designing a Medicaid 1115 waiver or In Lieu of Services program, or a known Medicaid contract procurement opportunity.

Previously funded organizations have worked on the following activities including but not limited to:

* Influencing the implementation of a food and nutrition ILOS program
* Influencing the design of food is medicine partnerships with MCOs, such as postpartum food boxes combined with nutrition counseling and SNAP application assistance
* Advocating for data-sharing between Medicaid, SNAP, and WIC agencies
* Advocating for a Medicaid 1115 waiver that includes food and nutrition services

# Funding Levels & Use

The award will be $75,000.00 and will be provided to a single agency. The organization can choose to use the funding to accommodate project needs including staff time, reimbursing community stakeholders for their time, funding participation in the coalition, or any other purpose associated with supporting advocacy for or implementation of a Medicaid-based food program.

Funding will be provided in one $75,000 disbursement upon contract execution.

## Grantee Benefits & Requirements

### **Timeline and Success Metrics**

Selected participants will be required to create a project plan to be included in the grant contract. Organizations will also work with the MFSN team and other participating states to establish metrics for measuring success at the start of the project. Project plans must include:

* Project Scope
	+ Purpose, goals, timeline, key stakeholders, constraints, assumptions
* Project Deliverables
* Project Milestones and Dependencies
* Budget

### **Cohort Learning**

Participants will commit to participating in monthly group calls with the other participating states as well as the national quarterly MFSN meetings. Grantees may be asked to prepare for these meetings in various ways. All learning and TA will be virtual unless otherwise specified.

Grantees will be asked to attend the MFSN National Summit on May 7-8, 2025 in Washington DC. Travel and accommodations will be covered for at least 1 team member. This will be funded separately from the grant (i.e., do not include travel costs to the summit in your budget).

**Technical Assistance**

Each participating organization or team will have a monthly 1:1 with the MFSN technical assistance team. The goal of these meetings is to identify technical assistance needs and opportunities for support. The technical assistance team may offer an in-person site visit as helpful and relevant.

### **Grant Reporting**

Grantees will have three deliverables. All deliverables will be streamlined with the goal of reducing the reporting workload.

* Workplan - Due upon contract execution
* Full project plan - Due one month after contract execution
* Two mid-point report - Due six and twelve months after contract execution
* Final Reporting - Due thirty days after the end of the performance period

### **Information Sharing**

Grantees may be asked to share sample documents (i.e. advocacy documents to the state) or participate in interviews or other activities for the purpose of sharing information and learnings with the state cohort and the MFSN. These will be collaboratively developed with the grantee.

#

# How to apply

Please navigate to [this online form](https://forms.gle/7Uxhw3TvejMNgbEd6) to complete and submit the application before the deadline on February 14 at 11:59 PM EST.

Note: when signed into your Google account, your progress is saved as a draft for up to 30 days. To find a draft response for a form, reopen the form URL in the same Google Account you used to create the draft. However, we recommend that you download this Word document version of the application questions so that you can draft outside of the form and then copy-paste responses into the survey form once you’re ready to submit.

Please note that some of these questions are part of a standardized set of questions Share Our Strength asks from grant applicants. Some questions may not feel relevant to your organization or this project - if this is the case, do your best to respond or put “not applicable” as needed. Reach out to the MFSN team with any questions at mfsn@strength.org.

## Organization Information

1. Please provide the name, address, and EIN (federal tax identification for nonprofits) of your organization.
2. How would you like your organization's name listed on public-facing materials?
3. Please provide the estimated percentage of the organization's Board of Directors that identifies as Persons of Color.
4. Please provide the estimated percentage of the organization's senior leadership that identifies as Persons of Color.
5. Please provide the estimated percentage of the organization's staff that identifies as Persons of Color (excluding senior leadership).
6. How are your staff, leadership, and volunteers reflective of the community you impact and/or how is your organization working to become more reflective of your community? (Maximum Characters: 10,000)
7. Person Authorized to Sign a Grant Agreement Letter for this Grant

First Name

Last Name

Title

Phone Number

Email

## Community Characteristics

1. Please estimate what percentage of students are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch in the areas you plan to reach through this grant funding. If necessary, please refer to the NKH's eligibility map (<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/Averaged-Eligibility-Map>).
2. Please provide information on your community and the specific needs your project will address. Note: This grant must address the food needs of children and families. Please include any relevant demographic information about the population you are trying to reach, such as age, disability, religion, income, unhoused, LGBTQIA+, kinship caregiver, parenting college student, and race/ethnic composition including persons of color, immigrant and refugee families, and Native and Indigenous communities. [See how No Kid Hungry is prioritizing grant funds](https://www.nokidhungry.org/no-kid-hungry-grants-how-we-prioritize-grant-funds). (Maximum Characters: 30,000)
3. Please describe how the population your organization aims to reach is actively involved in your organization’s work. How will you ensure that their voices and perspectives are included in the project's design, implementation, and ongoing development? (Maximum Characters: 10,000)
4. Please provide your best estimate of the ethnic diversity of the community served by the program for which you are submitting a grant application by providing a percentage breakdown. If an individual identifies as more than one race, such as Black and Hispanic, please include this in "Two or More Races." Please refer to [NCES race and ethnicity definitions](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/race-ethnicity-definitions) if further guidance is needed.

| American Indian / Alaska Native |  |
| --- | --- |
| Asian |  |
| Black or African American |  |
| Hawaiian Native / Pacific Islander |  |
| Hispanic or Latinx |  |
| Two or More Races |  |
| White |  |

1. Which of the following communities will be impacted by this grant funding? Select all that apply.
* Rural
* Suburban
* Urban
* Tribal Community
1. Will grant funding impact local, state-wide, regional, or national efforts?

*[IF ‘LOCAL’ OR ‘REGIONAL’ IS SELECTED]* Please list the county or counties that will be impacted by the proposed project.

 County

 State

## Project Information

1. Please provide a concise description (2-3 sentences) of the project for which you will be using grant funds. What is the desired impact of your project? (Maximum Characters: 1,500)
2. Describe the problem your organization is trying to solve. In your response, include the following details:
* **Problem Statement:** Provide a brief description of the issue, including relevant data or evidence that highlights its significance and impact on the community you are trying to reach through this work.
* **Proposed Solution:** Explain how the grant funds will be utilized to address this problem. Briefly outline the project timeline key strategies, activities, or programs you plan to implement with the grant support. Please address whether you are interested in pursuing new Medicaid policies in your state around food or whether you are applying to support the implementation of the current policy. Strong applications will include increasing SNAP and WIC enrollment as one component of the solution. Please provide as much detail as possible about where you see an opportunity and what you hope to achieve. Include information on work to date if applicable.
1. Describe 1-2 measurable objectives for your proposed project. Objectives may be quantitative or qualitative and should reflect your intention for the proposed program. Consider the following in your response:
* Clearly define the objective of your project and the specific outcome you hope to achieve.
* Outline the strategies or approaches you will use to accomplish these goals, highlighting any innovative or evidence-based practices.
* At least 1 objective should focus on SNAP or WIC - it does not have to be an increase in enrollment; rather, we expect this might be a policy change objective like, “establish a state requirement for Medicaid MCOs to offer SNAP application assistance to new members” or “establish new data sharing between SNAP and Medicaid, including Medicaid MCOs, to support cross enrollment”
* Successful applications should include the following information:
	+ Where you see an opportunity to either pursue new Medicaid policies in your state around food or support the implementation of existing policies
	+ How your proposed project will promote health equity
	+ How your project will incorporate the perspectives of Medicaid enrollees, food advocates, and other key stakeholders

Objective 1 (Maximum Characters 32,000)

Objective 2 (Maximum Characters 32,000)

1. Describe 1-2 metrics that will help measure the achievement of your primary objectives.
* Success Measure 1:
* Success Measure 2:
1. Please share more about the other organizations you are working with on this project. For each organization, please include the following details:
* Name of the organization
* Role the organization will play in the proposed project
* Expected impact of the organization's involvement in the project
1. Please describe your coalition building plans and experience. Specifically, address whether you currently have a cross sector coalition including healthcare and food advocates or stakeholders and/or your plans to create such cross-sector partnerships.

## MFSN-specific questions

1. This grant requires that you commit around .5 FTE on this work, at minimum. That FTE can be divided across multiple staff and multiple organizations. Please describe your staffing plan including the names and credentials of staff if they are currently in place and/or an identification of where additional staff would need to be hired and their proposed role.
2. Please attach a draft budget (note that Share Our Strength can approve a maximum of 10% in indirect costs). The budget will be refined and finalized if awarded. (Unscored Question)
3. What do you anticipate being the biggest barrier to the success of your effort? How does your organization plan to prevent or address those barriers?
4. Are you already receiving technical assistance or funding from another organization to support the work proposed in your application? If yes, please describe.
5. Please confirm your willingness to partner with the Medicaid Food Security Network to document your lessons learned through webinars and public-facing blogs and communications.
6. What technical assistance do you anticipate needing (topics or type of assistance)? (Unscored Question)
7. Would you be available to attend the MFSN National Summit on May 7-8, 2025 in Washington DC? (Unscored Question)
8. Please upload the required documents or details as outlined in the Request for Proposal (RFP) document associated with your proposal. Documents may include narrative responses to specific questions, letters of support, a detailed overview of the project team, etc. You may upload up to 5 files. Reach out to the MFSN team with any questions at mfsn@strength.org.