

Nebraska Department of Education Summer Food Service Program Grant Request for Application Instructions



Request for Application Release Date:
January 30, 2026

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATION:
March 27, 2026 by 5pm CST

If you have any questions regarding the application please call:
402-471-2967 (Lincoln)
800-731-2233 (Outside of Lincoln)

Background and Scope

On April 11th, 2012 Governor Heineman signed into effect LB 1090, a bill introduced by Senator Wallman, which established a grant program for sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to aid in expanding and creating SFSP sites in Nebraska. LB 1090 provides for the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to award grants to sponsors for nonrecurring expenses incurred in initiating or expanding services under the SFSP. Annual grants of up to \$15,000 are to be awarded on a competitive basis up to a total of \$90,000 per fiscal year.

Purpose

Grants offer an opportunity for sponsors of the SFSP to expand and/or initiate services across Nebraska.

Timeline

| Date | Activity |
|----------------------------|--|
| January 30, 2026 | Release of Request for Applications |
| March 27, 2026 5 pm CST | Applications Due to Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services *Complete grant applications with all supporting documentation, including price quotes and/or bids, must be submitted by the grant deadline – March 27, 2026. Incomplete applications or applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered. |
| April 17, 2026 | Grant award notification by the Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services |
| July 31, 2026 | Deadline for grantees to purchase all grant-approved items |
| September 30, 2026 | Report of Expenditures and receipts showing grant-approved expenses have been paid due to the Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services (see Grantee Responsibilities, #5 on page 5) *Grant reimbursement documentation will not be accepted after September 30, 2026. Documentation received after this deadline will not be processed for reimbursement. |

Eligibility

Any sponsor approved by the Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services and located within the boundaries of a school district in which fifty percent or more of the students qualify for free and reduced-price meals or within the boundaries of a census tract in which fifty percent or more of the children fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is eligible to apply for grant funds.

Under this program, eligible entities include:

- Public or private nonprofit school food service authority;
- Local, municipal, or county government; and
- Any other type of private non-profit organization.

To verify eligibility to participate as an SFSP sponsor prior to applying for the grant, contact Nutrition Services at 402-471-4407 (Lincoln) or 1-800-731-2233 (outside of Lincoln).

Eligible Projects

The grants are awarded competitively for up to \$15,000 per sponsor for projects that establish or expand Summer Food Service Program sites in Nebraska.

Examples of Eligible Projects

The grant funds may be used only for nonrecurring costs associated with expanding and/or initiating SFSP services including, but not limited to:

- Purchase of equipment to either allow the program to start-up or accommodate a higher level of participation. Cost must be prorated for amount of time used in SFSP unless equipment will also be used for food production/meal service of other USDA Child Nutrition Program(s) (i.e., Child and Adult Care Food Program or National School Breakfast or Lunch Program).

Examples:

- Items for safe transportation of food: coolers, carts, thermometers, coolants/ice packs, Cambro® insulated pan carriers.
- Items for food service: food service utensils, equipment, seating/tables, steam tables, prep tables, milk cooler, storage containers, refrigerator.
- Minor alterations to accommodate new equipment or to modify existing equipment to meet SFSP needs. Cost must be prorated for amount of time used in SFSP unless equipment will also be used for food production/meal service of other USDA Child Nutrition Program(s) (i.e., Child and Adult Care Food Program or National School Breakfast or Lunch Program).

Examples:

- Wiring, plumbing, carpentry or other alteration for additional equipment to accommodate expansion; adding shelves or other required equipment to a van to make it suitable to serve as a mobile feeding unit.

**Not eligible: pouring concrete, building walls, or other capital outlay projects*

- Nonrecurring staff salaries associated with initiating and expanding SFSP services.

Example:

- Staff personnel time used to garner support of community members who can support expansion/start-up of SFSP; salary for staff to develop and distribute SFSP marketing materials.
- **Ineligible** staff costs: staff time spent planning, preparing and serving SFSP meals (this cost is covered by the regular SFSP reimbursement); staff time spent completing administrative tasks (e.g., consolidating monthly claims).

- One-time costs associated with training staff in food service and non-food service capacities.

Examples:

- Training for SFSP support staff to become proficient in teaching/coaching a site-level enrichment activity (i.e., badminton, yoga, soccer);
- Pay for cost of SFSP staff to complete food handler or food safety course (e.g., ServSafe Starters);
- Funding to develop SFSP staff training videos.

- Outreach efforts to publicize new or expanded services.

Examples:

- Pay for newspaper and radio ads to promote SFSP;
- Pay for printing and personnel time used to develop and distribute flyers, yard signs and other promotional materials.

- Purchase of equipment to be used in food preparation for the SFSP meals. The cost of these items must be pro-rated unless equipment will also be used for food production/meal service of other USDA Child Nutrition Program(s) (i.e., Child and Adult Care Food Program or National School Breakfast or Lunch Program).

Examples:

- Warmer, oven, stove, benches/tables, pans, meal trays.
- Purchase of vehicle to transport food to sites if solely used for SFSP; otherwise, cost must be pro-rated to reflect portion time used in SFSP unless equipment will also be used for food production/meal service of other USDA Child Nutrition

Program(s) (i.e., Child and Adult Care Food Program or National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs).

Examples of Ineligible Projects

Grant funds may **not** be used to purchase:

- Food
- Computers that are not part of a Point of Service (POS) meal counting system
- Capital outlay (greater than \$5,000)
- Indirect costs such as fuel, insurance, utilities, etc.
- Prizes and giveaway items (T-shirts, aprons, hats, gift certificates, etc.)
- Office equipment and supplies such as desks, chairs, staples, pens/pencils, paper, etc.
- Disposable supplies such as paper towels, cleaning products, paper clips, writing tablets, etc.
- Purchases used to support health, physical activity, and/or education activities

Pro-rated Expenses: Please note that grant funds are allowed to pay for the cost of equipment used in the SFSP and other USDA Child Nutrition Program (CNP) (i.e., Child and Adult Care Food Program, National School Lunch Program or National School Breakfast Program). Grant funds used by sponsors who do not operate another CNP must pro-rate the cost of grant-funded equipment based upon the percentage of use in the SFSP compared to other activities. For example, purchasing a refrigerator to be used in the SFSP during 12 weeks of the year and by a church during the remaining 40 weeks of the year must be prorated at 23% (12 / 52 = 0.23) of the purchase price.

Grantee Responsibilities

Grantees must agree to:

1. Operate their SFSP not less than 2 years:
 - a. The Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services reserves the right to collect all or a portion of grant monies should grant obligations not be met;
2. Not expend funds prior to the date of receiving a Grant Award Notification
3. Expend all approved grant funds by July 31, 2026;
4. Collect and submit required data and report(s) to the Nebraska Department of Education – Nutrition Services prior to September 30, 2026:
 - a. A narrative regarding successes and challenges;
 - b. Feedback from participants (quotes and comments); and
 - c. Documentation (e.g. receipts, invoices with proof of payment) to demonstrate approved grant expenses have been paid for in full. This

documentation must indicate that approved grant expenses were purchased for and paid in full; documentation must show approved expenses were made after receiving a Grant Award Notification and that purchases have been made on or before July 31, 2026.

5. All purchases require proof of three price quotes or bids

Grant Evaluation Criteria

| Criteria | Possible Points |
|---|------------------------|
| Expansion or initiation of sustainable Summer Food Service Program | 10 |
| Special consideration for programs that offer health, physical activity, and/or education activities* | 10 |
| Site operates a minimum of 4 weeks | 10 |
| Previous experience in the operation of Summer Food Service Program | 5 |
| Itemized Budget | 5 |
| Total Points | 40 |

*Grant funds cannot be used to purchase equipment or supplies for health, physical activity, and/or education activities however, the grant instructed the Nebraska Department of Education to give preference to "sponsors in which health or education activities are emphasized."