

NJ Department of Human Services

DIVISION OF DISABILITY SERVICES: Notice of Availability of Grant Funds for the Food Pantry Accessibility project.

The NJ Department of Human Services (DHS), the Division of Disability Services (DDS) hereby announces the availability of grant program funds from the Kessler Foundation's Special Initiatives Program, for emergency food provider organizations to implement a physical accessibility improvement plan.

I. Statement of Need/ Background

Approximately 54 million people in the U.S. live with a wide array of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities. As such, people with disabilities constitute the single largest minority group identified in the U.S., surpassing older adults, African Americans and Hispanics. Based on this prevalence, it is estimated that over one million N.J. residents have disabilities of varying severity. With a 70% unemployment rate, and more than 40% of homeless adults experiencing disability, people with disabilities represent some of the most food insecure individuals living in N.J.

Emergency food providers are serving record numbers. Often, facilities that operate food pantries and other emergency assistance programs are inaccessible to someone using a walker, wheelchair or other assistive device. Due in part to stairs, narrow doorways and other barriers people with physical disabilities cannot access these buildings or the life saving programs that are provided within. Many of these barriers can be fairly easy and relatively inexpensive to overcome.

II. Objective

The overall goal of this project is to maximize the physical accessibility and use of emergency food provider assistance and other services provided within for people with disabilities living in N.J. DDS will make funds available to a carefully selected number of emerge food providers operating in N.J., for the purposes of making capital improvements to the organization's building enabling people with physical disabilities to access the services provided within.

DDS will award two (2) to three (3) small grants to emergency food providers that demonstrate the need for accessibility and develop a well detailed plan on how to make their building more accessible. Preference will be given to emergency food providers that offer additional assistance programs such as SNAP (food stamps) at the same location. In many cases, minimal capital improvements will afford people with physical disabilities access to the food, clothing and other assistance that is provided in these buildings.

DDS reserves the right to make the determination of awarding one (1) larger grant, if that accessibility plan is highly feasible and documented as such, and will result in reaching a significant number of people with disabilities who have not had access to these services in the past.

III. **Scope of Work**

The applicant must comply with the DHS contracting rules and regulations that appear in the Standard Contract Language, DHS's Contract Reimbursement Manual and Contract Policy and Information Manual.

The applicant must not discriminate in providing services to consumers based on age, race, creed, national origin, sex, disability or financial status.

The applicant must be prepared to initiate accessibility plans of the approved project within 30 days following the date the award is provided by DDS.

Proposals must be feasible within budgetary parameters and should include a proposed means to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

The applicants awarded grant funds must agree to report the numbers of people with disabilities served, after the new accommodations, at 3 months and then again at 6 months after the conclusion of the grant period. The awarded applicants must also submit a Final Expenditure Report within 30 days of the conclusion of the grant period, to the Disability Health & Wellness Program Manager. All unobligated funds must be returned to DDS within 30 days after the conclusion of the grant period.

Proposals must be received by DDS by 4:00 PM, Monday, April 14, 2014. In order to be eligible for consideration, all proposals must include the following for consideration:

- a. Overall accessibility plan (proposal), highlighting Kessler funded portion;
- b. permission from landlord, if applicable;
- c. timeframe; and
- d. photographs of area(s) to be modified.

Date by which applicants will be notified of acceptance will be no later than 4:00 PM, Monday, May 12, 2014.

Successful applicants will be required to submit an architecturally feasible plan **(reviewed and approved by a licensed and insured contractor)** by 4:00 PM, Monday, June 9, 2014. All plans must be reviewed by local planning board before the full amount will be awarded. A deposit of 50% of the actual award will be provided upon award announcement. The remaining funds will be disseminated after the completion of the project. Grant funds cannot be used to reimburse for past or current projects.

IV. **Funding**

A total of \$10,000 is available for this project.

This award is a one-time award and no further funds will be available for the completion of this project.

V. **Qualifications**

The following eligibility criteria shall apply:

- a. In order to be eligible for consideration for this Notice of Funds Available, applicants must be a for profit or not-for-profit corporation, governmental entities and educational institutions duly registered to conduct business within the State of New Jersey.
- b. The applicant(s) must demonstrate the ability to meet all rules and regulations for any DDS program element of service proposed by the applicant(s).
- c. The applicant(s) must operate within the New Jersey Emergency Food Provider System.
- d. The applicant(s) must comply with the terms and conditions of DHS' contracting rules and regulations as set forth in the Standard Language Document, the Contract Reimbursement Manual (CRM), and the Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM).
- e. Any fiscally viable corporation, as noted above, which meets the qualifications of DHS' Contract Policy and Information Manual, N.J.A.C. 10:30, may apply. Contracting Manuals are online at http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ocpm/contract_manuals.htm or at the State Depository Libraries.
- f. Applicants may contact DDS at (609) 631-2478 with general questions about the requirements in these manuals.

VI. **Submission Requirements** (details provided in application packet)

- a. **Proposal Narrative**
- b. **Budget**
- c. **Questionnaire**
- d. **Operating and Service Resources**
- e. **Additional Required Documentation:**
 - Evidence of legal status (i.e. IRS tax exemption)
 - Current NJ Business Registration Certificate
 - Age of agency
 - Most recent audit
 - List of Board Members
 - Table of Organization
 - Mission Statement

Procedure to apply: Eligible and interested organizations may obtain a copy of the application packet on or after March 17, 2014 by contacting:

Susannah Combs, Program Manager
Division of Disability Services
P. O. Box 705
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0705
Telephone: (609) 631-2478

Proposals/applications must be received by the Division on or before Monday, April 14, 2014 by 4:00 p.m.

No fax or electronic submissions will be accepted.

Please drop off or mail applications to:

Susannah Combs, Program Manager
Division of Disability Services

11A Quakerbridge Plaza
Hamilton, NJ 08/619

OR

P. O. Box 705
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0705

Date by which applicants will be notified of acceptance will be no later than Monday, May 12, 2014.

Jennifer Velez, Commissioner

Date