



**New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department
Family Nutrition Bureau
APPLICATION FOR FOOD SECURITY BRIDGE FUND**

Important Dates:

Application Opens: Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Application Deadline: Saturday, February 7, 2026. Must be Submitted by 5 p.m. (Mountain Time)

Applicants Notified of Awards: February 21, 2026

Purpose of Funds: This funding was appropriated during the 2025 Special Session (HB1) to support food security for children ages 0-13 outside of the hours in care. Funds must be used exclusively to support food security outside of regular child care hours and to improve family awareness, access, and participation in available food assistance programs. Funds may not be used for costs associated with meal services provided while children are in the care of the applicant organization.

Eligible Applicants: Sponsoring organizations and independent institutions with Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) Cooperative Agreements may apply on behalf of the children in their own or sponsored centers. Licensed community-based New Mexico PreK programs, licensed child care centers, licensed child care homes, registered child care homes, out of school time programs, tribal child care programs, early head start programs, and head start programs. Schools or organizations that have applied with the Public Education Department (PED), Higher Education Department (HED), or other agencies are not eligible to apply through this Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) application.

Award Parameters:

This is a one-time grant with a minimum award of \$2,500.00 and a maximum award of \$25,000.00 per organization, dependent on attendance. Applicants may begin spending as soon as a contract is in place, and funds must be fully expended and invoiced by May 31, 2027. Award amounts may vary based on demonstrated need, enrollment, licensed capacity and description of the program to be offered. Only one application per organization is permitted.

Award Range Criteria: Please apply only for the funding amount your organization qualifies for based on enrollment (total across all of your sites):

Average Total Enrollment Numbers across your sites (based on reported Average Daily Attendance (ADA))	Possible Award Range
12 children and under	\$2,500 - \$5,000
13 – 50 children	\$5,000 – \$10,000
51 – 100 children	\$10,000 - \$ 15,000
101 – 200 children	\$15,000 - \$20,000
200+ children	\$20,000 - \$25,000

Grant Application Scoring Criteria

Category	Description	Points
Demonstration of Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly identifies food security challenges of the children/families/communities the applicant proposes to serveClearly states why this program should be a priority for funding and what need(s) it addressesDemonstrates impact of the number of children/families served	40
Proposed Program / Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proposed program clearly addresses identified food security challenges of children/families	40

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed program/service is organized and ready to launch Provides detailed budget to begin spending as soon as possible 	
Sustainability of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes coordination with existing programs and how services will be sustainable beyond this grant funding Provides clear plan for tracking, measuring, and reporting outcomes 	20
Total Possible Points		100

Applicants must receive a score of 50 or above to be considered for an award. Award of, priority for, and amount of funding will be based on enrollment, clear demonstration of need, an organized and ready-to-launch proposed program/service, and sustainability of services.

Funds may be used for activities that provide food to children when child care services are not available, including but not limited to:

- Weekend food backpack programs*
- Food boxes provided to families during breaks in service (e.g., fall, winter, spring, holidays)*
- Food pantries for families which could include costs for purchasing, packaging, storage, and distribution of shelf-stable, nutritious food*
- Partnerships with community-based organizations to support outreach and education*

Funds may not be used for:

- Costs associated with center breakfast, lunch, snack, or supper service*
- Foods with low nutrient density and/or high sugar or sodium content*
- Any costs already covered by federal or state meal reimbursements*
- Kitchen equipment, cafeteria upgrades, or food service infrastructure*
- Permanent staff positions or long-term salary obligations*
- Construction of facility improvements*
- General operating expenses not directly tied to out-of-center food security*
- Cash assistance or gift cards to families*
- Supplanting existing federal, state, or local funding sources*
- Activities serving anyone other than birth to 13-year-old children*

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)
(Only online applications will be accepted)

Application Questions (Please note: This is for reference only. Only online applications will be accepted)

Amount Requested \$____ Please apply only for the funding amount your organization qualifies for based on enrollment (see Award Range Criteria Above)

GRANT APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Sponsoring Organization or Independent Organization Name:
Main Point of Contact(s):
Phone Number(s) (including area code):
E-mail Address:
Names of participating centers with licensed capacity and current enrollment:
Address of participating centers:

Please list the percentage (%) of children that qualify for Free or Reduced Priced meals at each center:

Is the number of children that qualify for Free or Reduced Priced meals 50% or greater of each center's current enrollment?

STATEMENT OF NEED

1.	Describe the food security challenges children in your care face when not in care, including during evenings, weekends, and other breaks in service such as holidays. Describe food security barriers specific to your community.
2.	Describe the proposed activities, how food will be purchased, distributed, timing and any partners involved.
3.	Why should your organization be a priority for funding?
4.	Target Population: Estimate the number of children served:
5.	Ages of children served:
6.	Communities served:
7.	Explain how children with the greatest need are prioritized.
8.	Describe coordination with existing programs (local food pantry, non-profit organizations, SNAP, etc.) and plans for sustainability beyond this grant.
9.	Describe how participation and outcomes will be tracked and reported.
10.	Provide a detailed budget for proposed program/services and timeline for spending. Individual purchases may not exceed \$5,000. Grant funds must be fully utilized by May 31, 2027.

General Terms and Conditions for Funding and Purchase:

- 1) The procurement in relation to this award must comply with local, state procurement guidelines. Awards will not exceed \$25,000 each. Individual items purchased will not exceed \$5,000 each.
- 2) Unexpended funds of the approved grant will be reverted to New Mexico State General Funds.
- 3) Organizations selected to receive proceeds of this grant will be required to provide the following documentation upon expenditure and request for reimbursement. Invoices detailing item(s), Copies of payment to vendor(s) and final invoices and/or packing slips to affirm delivery of items purchased.
- 4) Organizations must abide by the grant timeline or risk forfeiture or repayment of grant funds.
- 5) Organizations will be reimbursed on a monthly basis based on submitted monthly invoicing.
- 6) Organizations shall retain grant files and supporting documentation for a term of three (3) years after final payment.

ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATION

I certify that, if awarded, my organization will comply with the applicable regulations, principals, and assurances. If awarded, the grant funds will be used only for allowable purposes, will supplement and not supplant existing child nutrition program funding, and will meet all reporting requirements as included in any resultant Agreement with ECECD.