COVID-19 Check-In Meeting Notes

Tuesday, May 17th, 2022

Participants: 51

Agenda

Schedule:
Tuesday – General Focus Meeting – Once per Month

Updates:
WSDA Focus on Food & We Feed WA & LFPA: Katie Rains
Washington Food Coalition – Trish Twomey
Harvest Against Hunger – David Bobanick
Advocacy Update – Aaron Czyzewski, Christina Wong, Claire Lane

FA Updates:
Resiliency Grants Round 2 (Lindsey); Review “Season” – June through September 2022
Closeout & Audit & Other Reminders (Kyle & Team)
Pending Grants & New Food Purchase (Kim/James)
Increasing Client Access Update
Questions? Other things on your mind?

Future Meetings:
Friday: June 3, 9:00 am – Contractor Only
Tuesday: June 21, 9:00 am – General Check-In Meeting (Northwest Harvest)

Katie Rains - USDA Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement

- WSDA hosted 4 stakeholder listening sessions in March to share preliminary thinking about WA’s LFPA proposal, and to gather questions and comments. Thank you for your participation!
- Our application was submitted to USDA earlier this month and is under review. We have indicated that we’d like to begin as early as June 1, pending notification of award.
- WSDA has requested $4.32M of a $7.2M total allocation, assuming 40% would be allocated to tribes, and will take a two-pronged approach:
  - Food Assistance will issue $2.7M in pass-through funding to contractors, including all tribes. Work may begin immediately upon executing the contract.
  - The Director’s Office will issue a competitive solicitation for $1.3M for additional work that will occur in 2023.
    - NOTE: every county will benefit from this funding!
Trish Twomey – WFC

- Thank you to everyone who attended the last conference, it went well. There were 125 people in attendance.
  - Annual Big Conference at the Kitsap Convention Center 9/28-9/30.
- WFC is also continuing work with L&I and have another SHIP grant.
  - Trying to refocus on resources that will help train volunteers.
    - In the newsletter there is a link to a short survey to figure out resources needed and which topics would be most helpful to go over
- Also working with a donor software management company
  - Made some presentations to local coalitions
    - Included in the newsletter is a special discount on software for members
- There is also information on the infant food shortage and information regarding the White House conference on health and ending hunger in the newsletter.

David Bobanick - HAH

- Farm to Food Pantry work is finishing up a few amendments transitioning to the new state fiscal year.
  - Work is continuing as it has been the past few months.
  - Finalized report getting ready to be sent out.
- The Harvest Vista program has really struggled with recruiting harvest vista in WA and other states, probably due to economic reasons.
  - HAH is considering a pushback on start dates in WA sites so not in a cycle of recruiting.
  - Also recruiting for summer associates
- Computers for Hunger Relief has seen to 34 computers sent out in the past 1.5 months
  - The program is currently on hold until they can find more MS Office software licensing.
    - If you want one without MS Office, reach out to HAH and you can get as many as needed.
- In terms of capacity grants, HAH is still sending out checks and receiving applications for the next round.
  - To apply, go onto HAH site, careful if you are using a MAC as it will cause some issues on the site.
**Resiliency Grant Round II**

- Anticipate $16 million + in funding
- Application window open!
  - April 18-June 10 (54 days) – *Start early! More in-depth application compared to round 1.*
- Requires currently active:
  - SAM, Unique Entity ID (previously DUNS), Secretary of State
  - *... may take extra time (up to 30 days)*
- Resources available at agr.wa.gov/grants:
  - FAQ updated weekly
  - Definitions
  - Info sessions and technical assistance
  - Translated grant overview and application PDF
  - *... and more!*
- Timeline:
  - April 18, 2022: Application window open (54 days)
  - June 10, 2022: Applications due
  - June 10-30, 2022:
    - Review and selection period
    - Finalization of grant awards
    - Notifications of award status
  - July 1-8, 2022: Contracts sent out pending finalization of grant awards.
  - *Note.* If awards require extensive clarification, this step may be delayed.
  - July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023: Anticipated contract period
    - *Note.* Contracts must be executed by July 31, 2022.
      - If contracts have not been finalized by this date, WSDA reserves the right to retract awards.
- Contacts: Resiliency Grants Team:
  Lindsey Robinson (she/her), Anna Berrey (she/her), Dana McKeon (she/her)
  WSDA Food Assistance Specialists foodassistancegrants@agr.wa.gov 206-817-8215
- Grant application information + technical assistance:
  - Thursdays at 11am (45 minutes) in April, May, and June 2022
  - Info sessions will be hosted in English. To arrange technical assistance in Spanish or another language, please email foodassistancegrants@agr.wa.gov.
- Thank you to:
  - **Resiliency Grant Committee** for advising on this program
  - **Harvest Against Hunger** for contract management of small equipment awards
  - **Northwest Harvest** for outreach support, especially to underserved communities
**Friendly Reminders**

- **Food Assistance Monitoring Reviews**
  - Each year our team visits several contractors and subcontractors across the state. If we will be visiting your agency this summer/fall, we'll be reaching out to you with more information in the coming months.

- **WA Secretary of State – Renewal Delays**
  - Online filings for nonprofit corporations are not currently available. **Plan for delays.** Paper filing options are available, but the process is taking much longer than normal.

- **System for Award Management (SAM)**
  - Please make sure your registration is **Active** (it needs to be renewed periodically). Also, if your registration is marked “private”, we will not be able to verify its Active status.

**Pending Grants:**

- **TEFAP Reach & Resiliency (competitive grant amongst all other states):**
  - USDA requested additional information.
    - This is a sign that we are still in the running!
  - Anticipate an award notice in late May with hopefully an award in June.

- **Local Food Purchasing Assistance:**
  - Grant application was submitted to USDA
  - Anticipate June/July Award
  - Contract amendments are targeted for July

**Resiliency Initiatives SFY 2022 Funding**

- **Food Purchase with remaining & new SFY 2022 funding:**
  - Restock Strategic Reserve Warehouse – $1.6 Million
    - Following TEFAP Allocations Methodology – Initial Allocation
      - If the allocated food is not “claimed” then secondary channels will open up
    - Timing: June – Sept 2022

- **Future Food Purchase proposals:**
  - Need consensus/approval from Resiliency Initiatives Committee/Subcommittee (not formed yet)
    - Targeted for January – March 2023 timeframe
    - May include vendor RFP
Increasing Client Access and Increase Access points – FA & Michelle Douglas, EFN, FAAC Chair

Over the last two years or so, we (Food Assistance, WFC, and FAAC) have worked to reduce client access barriers and try to understand what the future looks like, not just because of the pandemic. Part of this work has been examining how we can do more education and outreach and how we can cement these ideas as part of our future.

Regarding the client experience, we’re hearing that communities are struggling to get access to food through the traditional systems. A multi-tiered approach was taken to look at the biggest barriers and try to cut back from there, including a well-represented committee, increased education, reduce access requirements including not requiring ID or mail, and really gearing toward what people need.

This graphic is a visual starting point to help further discussions and will ultimately (once finalized) serve as a tool for statewide discussions, for contractors to use as outreach to subcontractors, as well as an education tool for subcontractors. The Venn diagram on the right highlights the key elements critical to achieving the goal – it is static and should not be driven solely by available resources (triangle). Around the outside of the triangle, you’ll see core concepts for resources such as funding, partnerships, and building a support network. Inside are a few examples of what those resources could provide. Feedback is welcome!

⭐️ GOAL = Increasing Client Access

This is not a response to COVID – it’s a vision of our future!
Questions? Suggestions?

Next Meetings:
June 3rd, Contractor meeting
June 21st, Thomas Reynolds with Northwest Harvest will be providing an in-depth update. Thank you everyone!!