

Food Stamp Outreach in Buncombe County

FY 2017 Buncombe County Community Funding

MANNA FoodBank

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Application Form

Project Name*

Name of Project

Food Stamp Outreach in Buncombe County

Amount Requested*

Amount Requested

\$20,000.00

Service Area***Which Commissioner Districts are served by this program?**Access a map of Buncombe County Commissioner districts [here](#).

District 1

District 2

District 3

Which county sustainability goal aligns best with the goals of this project?*Based on the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan, select a Category, Goal & Objective that align with the focus of the project and the specific results that will be achieved.Access the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan [here](#).

Community > Equity in Access > Increase the availability of and education about locally produced foods to low income individuals

If applicable, select a second sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.**Result 2 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Community > Equity in Access > Build an extensive network of social services with locations in each high school district

If applicable, select a third sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.**Result 3 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Project Description

Project Description*

Description of Project

The goal of MANNA's FNS (Food Stamp) Outreach is to provide information and assistance to low-income households that may be eligible for North Carolina's Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits. Initial screening and help with applications is carried out by MANNA staff and trained volunteers at community locations, such as emergency pantries, senior centers, etc., as well as through the MANNA Food Helpline. This program utilizes skilled volunteers, communication technology, and partner-assisted marketing to greatly augment the visibility and accessibility of FNS. MANNA's goal is to narrow the gap between the number of people currently accessing FNS benefits and the total number that may be eligible but are unaware of the program or face barriers in applying. With the Helpline, wherever the person in need may be – at home, at work, or anywhere near a phone – they have immediate access to help. In Buncombe, an average of 334 households/month apply for FNS through MANNA's program.

With renewed project publicity, the Helpline is expected to receive approx. 300-400 calls/month and result in an average of 143 FNS applications/month in Buncombe. The target of completed applications for the next fiscal year (FY16-17) is 1,716 (unless significantly impacted by ABOD disqualifications).

How many people will this project serve?*

State the number of individuals or households in Buncombe County that will be served by this project. Also state the number of people that will experience the desired result. For example, if dropout prevention services are being delivered to 100 students, how many will successfully graduate from high school?

Goal is 1,716 households/year in Buncombe, an increase of 10% over current rate.

Describe the people this project will serve.*

Characterize the demographics of the project's target population in terms such as age, gender, income, race, ethnicity, geographic area, etc. Include information about method of referral/recruitment of the target population.

The target population are those individuals who are potentially eligible to receive FNS benefits but are not participating. Demographics of food stamp recipients (as a proxy for non-recipients) are estimated by the US Census and USDA and reported by Congr. District. We have used the District 11 data as representative of Buncombe County.

Race: 85% white, 10.5% black, 6% hispanic

Household comp.: 24% have a member 60 years of age or older, 52% have children. In general, 2 out of 3 seniors who are eligible for FNS are not enrolled.

We are reaching out to this population in several ways:

- MANNA partner agencies include printed information in food boxes
- donated PSA's and purchased radio and newspaper ads
- posters, cards, leaflets are being distributed by MANNA staff and volunteers at locations such as job centers and senior centers
- the Helpline is publicized through NC 2-1-1 and AVL-Buncombe 2-1-1
- NC AARP will be sending a mailing to potentially eligible (low income) seniors

What key steps will you take to achieve the results of this project?*

Describe the core elements of your implementation plan, including milestones that will take place within the funding timeframe.

A project coordinator, reporting to the FNS Manager, is responsible for scheduling phone duty for MANNA staff and Helpline volunteers. There are currently 15 volunteers on schedule. All volunteers undergo rigorous training on FNS, call center protocols, and use of the client intake software. Although the Helpline is expected to grow and account for a majority of outreach effort, MANNA staff and volunteers continue to do on-site intake at partner sites.

Clients are supported through the entire process: initial inquiry, assessing eligibility, completing the application, and submitting paperwork to DHS. Clients are also referred to other resources, such as local food pantries and 2-1-1.

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Describe the evidence of success that backs this project's approach.*

What evidence of success (i.e. evidence-based research, practice model, accreditation, industry standards, and/or other framework) are you using as a basis for your project design?

In 2014-2015 the Helpline became an important new strategy in our FNS Outreach program. On-site outreach (at food pantries and other locations) misses many potential applicants who may be chronically ill, elderly and frail, or otherwise housebound, as well as those who lack transportation to pantry sites or who do not come on a regular schedule. Others may be reluctant to apply for public assistance face-to-face. In addition, lack of access to the Internet, or lack of computer proficiency, means that many are not able to use the State's new online application portal. The Helpline removes these barriers.

The Helpline has been active for the last 16 months. Based on our success to date—the volume of calls and the number of completed applications— we can say that the project model is tested and proven successful. The Helpline has increased our monthly applications by 30-40% . We continue to fine-tune the volunteer training, client intake procedures, and project marketing.

Describe your data collection, tracking, and reporting procedures.*

Explain your methods for documenting project, service and client information. Include a description of any software or other tools utilized.

The Helpline utilizes two web-based software platforms: Medicaider and Cloud Five 9. The two software systems work in tandem to help us manage incoming calls, make note of the client's needs and direct them appropriately, and receive and record all necessary client data in order to assemble the application packet for the client.

Medicaider is a client intake software program that allows us to test each client for potential eligibility, work up an accurate application, and – when assisting in person – scan and enter supporting documents required by the DSS office. Cloud Five 9 is a virtual call center management software platform, which allows us to take calls via laptop computers as well as cell phones, transfer calls to third party cell phones or partner referral agencies, and track all interactions with the client. The system also serves as a management and quality control tool.

Explain your technological resources and capacity.*

Explain your current technological strengths and barriers and how this impacts your ability to track data and report outcomes. Who is responsible for adaptation and use of technology within your organization?

MANNA uses a set of informational technology (IT) products and services that are at par with those used in private industry, in order to achieve maximum efficiency and customer service in each of our departments.

Operations uses the Primarius data system to manage food inventory and online ordering by agencies. Our FNS (food stamp) outreach team uses Medicaider (described above). Volunteer Services makes use of a database system to most efficiently recruit, deploy, and recognize our thousands of volunteers.

Departmental staff receive regular trainings on the software tools they need, and we have a dedicated IT professional on staff to address any software and hardware issues that might arise. All public communications, including our website and social media tools, are monitored and continually updated by our communications staff.

Organizational Profile

How does the proposed project support your mission and strategic plan?*

State your mission and the date of your most recent strategic plan, and explain how the proposed project helps advance your organizational goals.

The FNS Outreach Program is one of the main goal areas in MANNA's Strategic Plan. The stated goal: to identify and assist people eligible for food stamps to capitalize on one of the most effective means of addressing hunger.

Strategies for reaching this goal:

- Improve and expand technological capacity of outreach program
- Recruit and train more field volunteers
- Contingency planning for reductions in federal funding

Measures of success include:

- FNS applications submitted & approved
- Number of partner organizations actively promoting FNS outreach.
- Number of field volunteers

The Helpline was designed to be a significant change in client outreach techniques and service and is a direct response to the need to improve our technological capacity, recruit and retain a greater number of highly trained volunteers, and increase the number of individuals served. As well, the new approach is proving to be highly cost effective as it reduces the amount of travel time of staff.

What expertise/accomplishments do you have that are relevant to the proposed project?*

List your organization's strengths as well as accomplishments from the past 3 years that position the organization to be successful with the proposed project.

MANNA began conducting FNS outreach in partner agencies and in partnership with county DSS offices in 2007. As the program grew in subsequent years we hired more outreach workers to carry out program work in Buncombe County and the surrounding region. Recognizing the efficacy of this structure, the State of North Carolina included MANNA in its state outreach plan, making MANNA eligible for matching funds from USDA.

MANNA is leveraging the funds available from the USDA to increase the overall FNS outreach effort. The next step in the evolution of MANNA's FNS Outreach Program was to develop a telephone-based support system similar to an actual call center and utilizing highly trained and staff-supervised volunteers in MANNA's service area. The MANNA Food Helpline was developed in collaboration with the region's DSS offices, 2-1-1 program, and NC AARP. With the help of a Feeding America grant, the program set up was completed in early 2014 and the Helpline publicly launched in July 2014.

Describe partners that are critical to the success of your organization.*

List any external partners, intermediaries or advisors important to your success, and describe their role and evidence of their commitment. Describe successful collaborations with these people or groups.

Our key partners in the Helpline project, who have been involved since the early stages of developing the project concept are:

- North Carolina DSS offices in each of the 16 counties of our service area: they are our partners in processing the applications generated by the Helpline and reporting requested data (i.e., number of successful applications) to MANNA
- North Carolina 2-1-1: gave consultation to MANNA on call center methodology and customer service; continues to market the program and do cross-referrals with us.
- NC-AARP and AARP Foundation: a partner in our Helpline publicity effort; will be mailing Helpline flyers to AARP members in Western North Carolina.

All of these organizations continue to be close partners with MANNA as we plan for Helpline activity in FY16-17. We have briefed our partners about the likely impact of ABOD rules for food stamp eligibility and have prepared our staff and volunteers for an increase in number of calls and the questions clients might ask.

Financial Information

Nonprofit financial assurance requirements:

Financial statements, prepared using a recognizable basis of accounting (i.e., modified accrual) and IRS Form 990s must be submitted to Buncombe County annually.

- Organizations with annual revenues of \$300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
- Those with revenues between \$100,000 and \$300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with SSARS 19.
- Those with revenues of less than \$100,000 must submit non-disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with SSARS 19.

All financial statements must be reported on by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

These requirements are considered minimum requirements. Organizations may submit a higher level of assurance than is required.

IRS Form 990 - Upload Here

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the 990 form you most recently completed.

MANNA 2013 Form 990 PUBLIC INSPECTION COPY.pdf

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

Financial Statements - Upload here

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements (audit, compilation or review).

2013-2014 final audit.pdf

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

The FY14-15 Audit (June 30, 2015) audit has been completed and presented to the Board (November 2015). The final document is in preparation and will be forwarded as soon as it is available.

Complete Budget Worksheet - Upload Here*

Download the budget form [Here](#).

Complete the budget form for this project/program and the overall agency. Save it to your computer, then upload it by clicking Choose File.

MANNA.FNS.budget.pdf

Budget Narrative*

Describe all differences between current year and proposed year. List all pending funding sources with expected date of notification. Please detail any other information that may help clarify the budget.

Our budget narrative exceeds the character limit for this space. Please see the narrative pasted into the attached Excel budget sheet. Thank you.

What (if any) portion of requested funds will be used to support capital expenses?*

Capital projects are defined as those used to acquire or upgrade physical assets such as property, buildings, or equipment. Please detail.

No portion of this grant will be used for capital.

Employee Wages

Please provide information about the wage breakdowns of your employees. Living wage for Buncombe County has been identified as \$11.00 per hour for employees with employer-provided health insurance and \$12.50 per hour for employees without.

Employees with employer-provided health insurance*

List the number of employees in your organization with employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

\$7.25 - \$10.99 per hour

\$11.00 - \$14.99 per hour

\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour

\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour

\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour

\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour

\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour

\$40.00+ per hour

\$7.25 - \$10.99 per hour - 0
\$11.00 - \$14.99 per hour - 15
\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour - 14
\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour - 7
\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour - 1
\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour - 3
\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour - 0
\$40.00+ per hour - 0

Employees without employer-provided health insurance*

List the number of employees in your organization without employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

\$7.25 - \$12.49 per hour
\$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour
\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour
\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour
\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour
\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour
\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour
\$40.00+ per hour

\$7.25 - \$12.49 per hour - 0
\$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour - 2 (PT)
\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour - 8 (4 FT - offered declined/ 4 PT)
\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour - 0
\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour - 0
\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour - 0
\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour - 0
\$40.00+ per hour - 1 (FT - declined)