



Notice of Fund Availability

Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

The Hunger-Free Campus Act (P.L.2019, C.89) provides grants to public institutions of higher education that have one or more campuses designated as hunger-free campuses. The purpose of the program is to foster innovative ways to combat food insecurity on public college/university campuses and assist in planning for long term solutions. The purpose of the grant funding shall be to address student hunger, leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on campus, raise awareness of services currently offered on campus which address basic food need, and continue to build strategic partnerships at the local, State, and national levels to address food insecurity among students.

Eligibility Criteria

The secretary shall allocate grant funding to each **NJ public institution of higher education** that has one or more campuses designated by the secretary as a hunger-free campus in accordance with the criteria established below:

- establish a hunger task force that meets a minimum of three times per academic year to set at least two goals with action plans;
- designate a staff member responsible for assisting students with enrollment in the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NJSNAP).
- provide options for students to utilize SNAP benefits at campus stores;
- participate in an awareness day campaign activity and plan a campus awareness event during the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week;
- provide at least one physical food pantry on campus, or enable students to receive food through a separate, stigma-free arrangement;
- develop a “Swipe Out Hunger” student meal credit sharing program, or designate a certain amount of funds for free meal vouchers that might otherwise be raised through a “Swipe Out Hunger” program; and
- annually conduct a student survey on hunger, developed by the Secretary of Higher Education, and submit the results of the survey and a best practices campus profile to the secretary at a time prescribed by the Secretary for inclusion in a comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-free campus. In the development of the survey, the secretary may utilize any existing

surveys designed to collect information on food insecurity among students enrolled in public institutions of higher education.

Application Criteria for Hunger-Free Campus Designation & Grant Funds

Eligible public institutions of higher education may apply for the Hunger-Free Campus Designation and Grant Funds. Institutions of Higher Education must demonstrate that they meet the aforementioned eligibility criteria. Institutions will be asked to submit both a grant narrative and a budget.

Grant Narrative

The grant narrative should include:

- **Contact Information:** The name of the institution, Contact information for person or persons implementing the grant at the institution
- **Letter of Support from the Institution's President/Chancellor**
- **Campus Hunger Task Force:** Please describe your Campus Hunger Task Force. Provide a list of task force members (Name & Titles) and actual meeting dates, times, and locations for the current academic year. Briefly describe the goals of the task force (minimum of two) and corresponding action plans.
- **Staff Member for SNAP Assistance:** Please provide the name, title, and contact information for the staff member(s) responsible for assisting students in SNAP screening and application process. Briefly describe how this service is advertised on campus or how students are referred to this staff member. This staff member may have other responsibilities on campus, but must be knowledgeable and aware of SNAP eligibility and application procedures as they pertain to college students. (Note: Training is available through the New Jersey Department of Human Services).
- **Provide Options for Students to Utilize SNAP at Campus Stores:** Please list if students can utilize SNAP at campus stores. If campus stores do not accept SNAP, please describe any steps taken to determine if these vendors are able to accept SNAP benefits or how you plan to have students utilize SNAP at campus stores in the future. Alternatively, please also describe how students are informed about which local off-campus establishments accept SNAP if this is not currently an option at campus stores. To learn more about becoming a retailer, visit the USDA page here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer>
- **Make information on SNAP and other public benefits available to students:** Please describe opportunities for the school to promote information on SNAP and other public benefit programs available for students through the school's website, online student portals, training residential/student life representative or student led organizations.
- **Participation in National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (Anytime during month of November):** Please describe your institution's plans to participate in or implement an awareness event surrounding student hunger. Describe the event, the intended goals and outcomes of the event, and any student organizations, departments, or

institutional partners that will be involved in the event. If the grant is submitted after the event takes place, please detail the outcomes of the event (number of participants, etc.).

- **Evidence of a Campus Food Pantry:** Provide the address of the campus food pantry and a web link that advertises the pantry to students. Flyers/advertisements, media reports, and pictures of the campus pantry are accepted forms of verification. If you do not have a campus pantry, but have other mechanisms in place to help students receive food free of cost, please describe these arrangements.
- **Evidence of a “Swipe Out Hunger” or Meal Plan Donation Program:** Please provide your institution’s written policy, dining services promotion or advertisement, web link describing the program, or Swipe Out Hunger certification as verification. Other forms of verification can be submitted on an as needed basis.
- **Student Hunger Survey:** Campuses must measure food insecurity among their students using the USDA’s 18-item food security measure. Additional guidance regarding survey requirements is provided below as an appendix. If your institution measured food insecurity among students in the past 12 months using an alternate USDA measures (6-item or 10-item scales), or used a different student hunger survey, please contact Stefani Thachik, Director of Policy and Outreach to confirm if this would be an accepted alternative. If you have plans to conduct a survey as we have outlined in this Notice of Funding before the end of Academic Year 19-20, please detail the plans for the survey. If you have already conducted the survey at time of submission, attach the results of your hunger survey, including the number and percentage of students that are food insecure to the application. If your institution does receive grant funding, you will be required to submit raw data to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE).
- **Best Practices Campus Profile:** Please include best practices campus profile. This profile should be no more than one page and include a brief description of campus efforts being undertaken to address food insecurity among students, highlights from student hunger survey, and any other items you think best highlight the work on your campus to combat food insecurity.
- **Other:** Identify any other topics or data you would like to share with the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. Please share any other relevant information from your institution that would help address food insecurity.

Budget

These grants are intended to help “Hunger-Free” designated campuses with a onetime award to facilitate food insecurity projects. Funds shall be used by the institution for further address food insecurity among students enrolled in the institution.

- **Template and Justification:** Please contact Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov for the proposed budget template. Grant awards may range from \$40,000-\$100,000 per public institution of higher education. The budget should include the amount of money you are requesting, as well as specific details regarding how the funds will be used. Also, include a short paragraph about how you believe additional funds from this grant program will improve, expand, or continue to support current campus efforts.

The OSHE requests that applicants limit the grant narrative to no more than 20 single-spaced pages, exclusive of any appendices or data requested in this notice.

Process for Submission and Notification

Completed applications are due to the OSHE from eligible institutions no later than 5pm, January 31, 2020. All applications shall be submitted via email in PDF format to Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov with the subject line “Hunger-Free Campus Act Grant Program” followed by your institution’s name.

Applications will be reviewed by the OSHE according to the criteria outlined above. Questions about this notice may be directed to Stefani Thachik, Director of Policy and Outreach for the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov or 609-984-2804).

Appendix A

Student Survey on Hunger: Items and Scoring

To receive both the ‘Hunger-Free Campus’ designation and grant funds, institutions must annually conduct a student survey on hunger developed by the Secretary of Higher Education and submit the results. In accordance with the Hunger-Free Campus Act, institutions seeking this designation are required to *“Annually conduct a student survey on hunger, developed by the Secretary of Higher Education, and submit the results of the survey and a best practices campus profile to the secretary at a time prescribed by the Secretary for inclusion in a comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-free campus. In the development of the survey, the secretary may utilize any existing surveys designed to collect information on food insecurity among students enrolled in public institutions of higher education.”*

All institutions must determine the number of food insecure students on their respective campuses using the USDA’s 18-item food security measure. Institutions are also required to ask the demographic questions listed below. Campuses that have used other USDA measures such as the 6-item or 10-item to study campus food insecurity in the past year should contact Stefani Thachik (Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov). The USDA measure is validated (Bickel, Nord, Price, Hamilton, & Cook, 2000) and is commonly used to study food insecurity in the general population and among college students. OSHE recommends asking all food security questions with a 30-day timeframe.

Before using the 18-item measure, you must ask the following question to determine if there are children present in the household.

Children Screener: Do you have any biological, adopted, step or foster children who live in your household?

- Yes
- No

18-Item USDA Food Security Measure (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/media/8271/hh2012.pdf>)

ADULT STAGE 1

1. “I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.” Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true
- Never True
- Don’t know

2. “The food that I bought just didn’t last, and I didn’t have money to get more.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true

- Never True
- Don't know

3. "I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true
- Never True
- Don't know

If the respondent answers "Often True" or "Sometimes True" to any of the three questions in ADULT STAGE 1, then proceed to ADULT STAGE 2.

ADULT STAGE 2

4. In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

5. ***[IF YES TO QUESTION 4, ASK]*** In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen? _____

6. In the last 30 days, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

7. In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

8. In the last 30 days, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If the respondent answers “Yes” to any of the questions in ADULT STAGE 2, proceed to ADULT STAGE 3.

ADULT STAGE 3

9. In the last 30 days, did you ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

10. **[IF YES TO QUESTION 9, ASK]** In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If the respondent indicated that children under age 18 are present in their household (a response of “Yes” to the Children Screener question), proceed to CHILD STAGE 1. If children are not present, this is the end of the food security module.

CHILD STAGE 1

11. “I relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed my children because I was running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true
- Never True
- Don't know

12. “I couldn't feed my children a balanced meal, because I couldn't afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true
- Never True
- Don't know

13. “My child was not eating enough because I just couldn't afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- Often true
- Sometimes true
- Never True
- Don't know

If the respondent answers “Often True” or “Sometimes True” to any of the three questions in CHILD STAGE 1, then proceed to CHILD STAGE 2.

CHILD STAGE 2

14. In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your children’s meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

15. In the last 30 days, did your children ever skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

16. *[IF YES TO QUESTION 15, ASK]* In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?

17. In the last 30 days, were your children ever hungry but you just couldn’t afford more food?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

18. In the last 30 days, did any of your children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Scoring for USDA 18-Item: Use the chart below to score responses. Each affirmative response (answers of “sometimes true” or “often true”, “yes”, or “3 days or more”) equals one point. Calculate the total number of affirmative responses per respondent and categorize them according to the chart below. Respondents with high or marginal food security are food secure and those with low or very low food security are food insecure.

Food Security Level	18-Item Raw Score with Children Present	18-Item Raw Score without Children Present
High	0	0
Marginal	1-2	1-2
Low	3-7	3-5
Very Low	8-18	6-10

Mandatory Demographic Information

If the IR office on your campus already collects some of this information, consider working with them to link student data to institutional data in an effort to reduce survey fatigue.

What is your year in school?

- 1st year undergraduate
- 2nd year undergraduate
- 3rd year undergraduate
- 4th year undergraduate
- 5th year or more undergraduate
- Graduate or professional
- Not seeking a degree
- Other

What is your major? (Either open ended or with University’s majors listed)

What is your enrollment status?

- Full-time (12 credits or more)
- Part-time (less than 12 credits)
- Other

What is/are your gender identity/identities? *Select all that apply.*

- Man (1)
- Woman (2)
- Gender queer/gender variant (3)
- Transgender (4)
- Non Binary (5)
- Other (6)

What year were you born?

How do you describe your race?

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino/a/x
- Asian or pacific islander
- American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian
- Biracial or Multiracial
- Other

Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard?

- Yes
- No

Are you a first-generation college student (i.e. neither of your parents have a college degree from a 4-year institution)?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following ways do you pay for the expenses associated with attending college? (check all that apply)

- Federal Grant/Scholarships
- Federal Student Loan(s)
- State Grant/Scholarship
- Outside Grant/Scholarship
- Institutional Grant/Scholarship/Tuition Remission
- HESAA Loan(s) (NJCLASS)
- Outside private loans
- Self Paying- Cash
- Self Paying- Credit Cards
- Parents Paying- Cash
- Parents Paying- Credit Cards
- Employer Tuition Remission
- Other _____

How would you describe your current relationship status?

- Single
- In a relationship
- Married or domestic partnership
- Divorced
- Widowed

Where do you currently live?

- Campus residence hall
- Fraternity or sorority house
- Other college/university housing

Parent/guardian's home
Other off-campus housing
With a friend until I find other housing
Houseless
Other

Did you receive free or reduced price lunch in high school?

Yes, I received free lunch (1)
Yes, I received reduced price lunch (2)
No (3)

Are you currently employed?

Yes (1)
No (2)

If yes, about how many hours do you work each week? *Include all of your jobs.*

1-4 (1)
5-9 (2)
10-14 (3)
15-19 (4)
20-24 (5)
25-29 (6)
30-34 (7)
35-39 (8)
40 or more (9)

**In the past 12 months, from which of the following programs did you receive assistance?
(check Yes/No)**

1. SNAP (food stamps)
2. WIC (nutritional assistance for pregnant women and children)
3. TANF (public cash assistance)
4. SSI (supplemental security income)
5. SSDI (social security disability income)
6. Medicaid (NJFamilyCare or Public health insurance)
7. Child care assistance
8. Unemployment compensation/insurance
9. Utility assistance (e.g. help paying for heat or water)
10. Housing assistance
11. Transportation assistance
12. Tax refunds (including EITC)
13. Veterans benefits (Veteran's Administration benefits for a servicemen's, widow's, or survivor's pension, service disability or the GI bill)

If Yes, do you receive household benefits on your own or are they shared with other household members?

Appendix B

Best Practices for Survey Implementation

Please use the guide below as you begin to disseminate your survey.

- **Acquire IRB Approval by your institution if needed.**
- **Collaborate with Institutional Research:** IR or professional researchers are the most equipped professionals to conduct this research. Importantly, you will need to involve a unit within your institution that can provide an email list of all active students. If this is something you are considering, this would need to be included in student informed consent forms. It is also important that the survey is anonymous and confidential.
- **Survey Invitations & Recruitment:** When recruiting students to take your survey, it should NOT be advertised as a survey about food insecurity, basic needs insecurity, or material hardship. Highlighting the content of the survey may cause an over response from students that experience these hardships. Possible title suggestions could include “Student Experience Survey” or “Student Success Survey.” You can advertise the survey as an effort to understand how to help students be successful during their time in college. If the survey is being administered electronically via survey monkey, Qualtrics, etc., think about who (president, vice president, dean of students, student affairs administrator, etc.) should invite students to take the survey via email. You can refer to this guide from The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice for more information about disseminating your survey <https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Basic-Needs-Insecurity-College-Students.pdf>.
- **Survey All Enrolled Students:** All students should be invited to take the survey. Sampling students is much more complicated and a census survey is appropriate for this survey. Once you have surveyed students, you should work with IR to determine if your sample is representative of the larger student population. Ideally, the best time to implement a survey on food insecurity is early in the fall semester.
- **Incorporate the 18-Item Scale into Campus Climate Surveys:** College students are frequently surveyed, which can potentially lead to survey fatigue and low response rates. If your institution is conducting other surveys regarding campus climate, consider adding the 18-item food security scale to these surveys.
- **Analyzing Data:** When analyzing data, work closely with a researcher or professionals from your institution’s IR office. The 18-item scale does include skip patterns, meaning it may be difficult to interpret. You will want to report the number and percentage of students that are food insecure, but you should also conduct additional analyses. For instance, if your institution is interested in delivering resources to students, it is helpful to identify any patterns regarding the populations that are most likely to be food insecure.

Further, you may also want to determine how food insecurity is influencing other aspects of students' lives (i.e. working patterns, GPA, etc.)

- **Reporting Results to the OSHE:** If selected for the grant, campuses must report the raw data to the OSHE. Details about how to securely transmit this data and the deadline for submitting the data will be provided upon selection. For purposes of the application, general results should be shared.
- **Reporting Results to Your Campus Community:** Results of your survey should be made available to students, faculty, and staff. We recommend including links to SNAP and information about local food pantries, so students can get information about help available. If you learn that many students are food insecure and in need of resources, be prepared to address this problem. Work with campus leaders or administration regarding how food insecurity can be addressed on your campus. When reporting results, it is beneficial to have a plan of action in place regarding institutional plans to help alleviate food insecurity among students.

For more information about NJSNAP, visit:

<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dfd/programs/njsnap/students/>