GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Human Services

DC SNAP Employment & Training Program – Request for Applications -
Frequently Asked Questions

LAST UPDATED: April 2025

Questions and Answers:

Funding and SNAP E&T Participant Totals

Q1. **How much funding does SNAP E&T have available? How many grants will be awarded? What is the maximum amount of funding covered by the 40% reimbursable amount?**

A1. As noted in Section 2.1(d) of the RFA, the total amount of funding available through this RFA is not predetermined and is instead contingent upon the amount of eligible program costs proposed to and approved by USDA-FNS for reimbursement in the District's FY 2026 SNAP E&T State Plan (total costs submitted are informed by the results of this RFA process). DHS/ESA expects to make multiple awards in amounts to be determined by approved budgets submitted by selected applicants in response to this RFA. Award totals must be approved by both DHS/ESA and USDA-FNS and are subject to availability of federal funds, documentation that required nonfederal funds necessary to leverage federal funds are in place, and documentation that all costs proposed are allowable and reasonable.

Q2. **Do grants awarded under this RFA fully fund proposed projects? Is the 50-60% of funding that is not covered by SNAP E&T funds not reimbursable?**

A2. No, projects are not fully funded and a significant portion of the total cost necessary to support proposed projects is not reimbursable. As noted in Section 2.1(d) of the RFA, this is a cost-reimbursable grant funding opportunity that only covers a portion of total program costs. Each applicant must propose a program budget to serve SNAP E&T participants that includes other nonfederal funds covering 60% of their proposed budget, with SNAP E&T grant funds awarded covering the remaining 40% (except for eligible participant reimbursement costs and subsidized employment wages or stipends, which are funded at 50% of total costs by SNAP E&T grant funds). The entire cost of allowable expenditures must be borne initially by the grantee and can then be reimbursed by DHS/ESA after receipt of appropriate documentation of allowable expenditures.

Q3. **What were the amounts awarded to previous grantees?**

A3. Current grantees that were selected through prior RFAs have been award amounts ranging from $24,000 - $324,000 (amount provided by DHS/ESA through SNAP E&T grants, does not include other funds used to leverage DHS/ESA funding).

Q4. **Is the award amount based on the type of program proposed?**

A4. The award amount is based on the budget submitted by the applicant, contingent upon review and selection by DHS/ESA and approval from USDA. For a budget to be compliant with RFA criteria, it must clearly identify other non-federal funds that will be used to support the total cost of the program, consistent with criteria in Section 1.3 and other elements of the RFA. An evaluation of the applicant's proposed budget is part of the scoring criteria in Section 2.2(h) of

the RFA, including criteria related to costs per participant being reasonable based on the scope of services provided.

Q5. **Does DHS have a goal for number of individuals to serve through this funding?**

A5. No. Applicants may propose to serve any number of eligible District SNAP recipients, consistent with their capacity to provide high quality services to participants within the project period. Proposed project budgets should reflect the number of participants they propose to serve and costs they will incur to serve that number of participants through the proposed project activities.

Q6. **When looking at the funding model, can partnering organizations use community service block grants as matching funds?**

A6. Yes, as long as they are not federal dollars.

Q7. **Can you share the number of people who receive SNAP benefits in DC?**

A7. As of April 2025, over 141,000 DC residents receive SNAP benefits each month. See Section 2.2(a) of the RFA for additional information on the Target Population for SNAP E&T.

Applicant Eligibility

Q1. **Do you have to be based in DC now to be eligible for funding?**

A1. Organizations that are not based in DC may still be eligible for funding under this RFA if they meet additional conditions specified in Section 1.6 of the RFA. If applicants are planning new locations that would not start serving participants until later in the fiscal year, they may still apply for funds, but should clearly specify the time they would serve customers within the overall project period (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026). In addition, their budget should reflect this shorter timeframe.

Q2. **Can a SNAP E&T grantee also receive Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding from the U.S. Department of Labor through the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES)?**

A2. Grantees may be recipients of funds from other federal sources, including federal WIOA funds. However, these funds cannot be blended with SNAP E&T funds, which instead must be blended with eligible non-federal funds.

Additionally, while WIOA funded organizations are still eligible to apply for SNAP E&T funds, they cannot propose projects through this RFA that consist of services that are already available to SNAP recipients through the District's WIOA investments. These services are not eligible for SNAP E&T funding in order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure federal compliance. Applicants that are on the District's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and receive funding from DOES through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are operating WIOA-funded programs. However, if project services proposed for SNAP E&T participants under this RFA are substantively different than those provided through WIOA funding and/or more directly accessible to SNAP recipients, the project is eligible for funding consideration.

Q3. **Are for-profit organizations eligible to participate in this grant? Do "private enterprises" include for-profit agencies?**

A3. Yes, for-profit organizations are among the categories of eligible applicants specified in Section 1.6 of the RFA and are included under the "Private Enterprise" category.

Q4. Are for-profit vocational training groups/schools eligible for funding under this RFA, and if so, does this affect the paperwork in significant ways?

A4. Yes, for-profit vocational training groups/schools are eligible for funding under this RFA. Please see Section 1.6 of the RFA for a full list of eligible type of applicants. No additional paperwork is required for these types of applicants relative to other applicants.

Q5. Are DC adult charter institutions eligible to apply for and receive SNAP E&T funding?

A5. Adult charter institutions are eligible to apply for SNAP E&T funding. However, applicants proposing to use SNAP E&T funds for services under an education and vocational training component may not receive funding to support educational activities and expenses that are universally free and open to all District residents (entitlements), which USDA-FNS considers to be supplanting other funds. Please see Section 2.2(d) of the RFA for additional information on these limitations.

Q6. Can you talk a little bit about Letters of Support from partners to include in the proposal? Do you need to have a letter of support from all organizations your program works with, such as agencies that you may make referrals to?

A6. Letters of Support are only needed for applicants applying in partnership for funds under this RFA. In general, "Partners" refers to multiple organizations that will receive significant funding if awarded a grant. Letters of Support are not needed from organizations that may work with the applicant in various capacities but would not be receiving a subgrant of funds if awarded under this RFA. We encourage potential applicants to apply in partnerships if they provide complementary services that could be coordinated to better serve project participants. See Section 4.2(b)(3) for additional information on Letters of Support.

Q7. Can prospective grantees partner with existing grantees?

A7. Grantee/subgrantee partnerships are allowable. If an existing grantee wants to partner with a prospective grantee, the existing grantee would need to reapply and include documentation for the prospective grantee's programming.

Q8. Is this a bidding process?

A8. No, SNAP E&T is seeking applications from prospective partner organizations. In the application, the organization would outline their programming and the services that are provided. SNAP E&T makes its decision based on the programming and whether the overall services make sense for the SNAP E&T population.

Budget

Q1. Can the salary of an individual funded through DC appropriated dollars be used as a match if they will provide services under this new program?

A1. Staff salaries are one of several types of costs that may be eligible for reimbursement, provided that their time is allocated based on the percentage of time spent supporting services to SNAP E&T participants and that 60% of this allocation is supported through other non-federal funds. Please refer to Appendix 4 "SNAP E&T Applicant Budget" and Appendix 5 "SNAP E&T Applicant

Budget Instructions" for additional details on how to factor staff salaries into an application budget.

Q2. **Before applicants submit their proposals, is it possible to determine if provider pricing is consistent across other government funded projects?**

A2.   No, DHS/ESA cannot decide on whether an applicant's proposed cost of services under this RFA is consistent with other government funded projects prior to submission of their proposal. As noted in Section 4.1(d)(3) of the RFA, costs charged to the SNAP E&T program must be consistent with how other Federal, State, and local grants are charged. If the applicant charges other grants for these services, SNAP E&T must be charged consistently with how other grants are charged. SNAP E&T cannot be charged more (or less) than how other grants are charged. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposed budgets are consistent with these requirements, and if awarded funding, could have costs submitted for reimbursement disallowed if an invoice review or audit demonstrates noncompliance with these requirements. If applicants propose services that are substantively different from other government-funded projects, they may propose a different cost level than the amount awarded through other projects. For example, if an applicant proposes to provide each participant with a laptop needed to complete training or additional case management services that were not supported through previous funding, a higher proposed funding level could be justified.

Q3. **Is it accurate that our school's tuition expenses for vocational education training would be 40% cost reimbursable and the remainder would count for 60% match? If so, does the "Student-paid tuition cannot be used as a match for SNAP E&T funds match" not apply because this would be provider paid tuition expenses?**

A3.   Student paid tuition cannot be used as a match for SNAP E&T funds because services provided through the SNAP E&T program must be provided free of charge. If an education provider proposes to use SNAP E&T funds to offset tuition costs, they must attempt to secure other federal assistance (not including loans) such as the Pell Grant, and document that such funds are not available before requesting SNAP E&T reimbursements. If an applicant is proposing to use SNAP E&T funds to support tuition for SNAP E&T participant students, they may be reimbursed for 40% of the tuition amount that is published and billed to all other students and funding sources, provided that the other 60% of the tuition amount is paid for using other non-federal funds and is not borne by the SNAP E&T participant. See Sections 2.2 and 4.2 of the RFA for additional information on allowable and unallowable project activities and costs.

Q4. **Is tuition a line item or does it need to be broken down to specify what costs tuition covers?**

A4.   Tuition is not a separate budget line item. Applicants that charge tuition for education and training services and are proposing to use SNAP E&T funding to support part of those costs should allocate project costs by expense categories that tuition helps support, such as staff salaries or contractual costs. For example, if 50% of tuition is used to fund staff salaries, then that 50% should be allocated to that line item accordingly. Please refer to Appendix 4 "SNAP E&T Applicant Budget" and Appendix 5 "SNAP E&T Applicant Budget Instructions" for additional details on the submission of an application budget.

Eligible Services

Q1. **Do applicants have the option of just proposing to provide services under one eligible SNAP E&T Component (e.g., just Education and Vocational Training)?**

A1.   Yes. Applicants may propose to provide eligible services in any combination of one or more of the Components and subcomponents detailed in Section 2.2(b) of the RFA. They should also propose to provide eligible participant reimbursements consistent with the supports needed for participants to succeed in their project activities. All participants must also receive case management services in addition to participating in at least one Component to be considered active in the program. DHS/ESA SNAP E&T program staff provide services within the job search training and job retention Components, as well as case management, though most program grantees provide these services for their participants directly. If an applicant proposes not to provide job search training, job retention, and/or case management services, they should include a description of how they propose to work with DHS/ESA SNAP E&T staff to ensure these services are received by all participants.

Q2.   Can applicants write an application for funding that involves both SNAP E&T services and participant reimbursements, or should applications only focus on one area?

A2.   Applicants cannot propose projects that just provide participant reimbursements or case management; and funded SNAP E&T providers typically provide a robust range of services that is inclusive of participant reimbursements and case management. As noted in Section 2.1 (d), applicants must propose projects that offer individualized service delivery to all SNAP E&T participants through comprehensive case management and services that fall under one or more of the eligible categories designated as "Components" by USDA-FNS. All SNAP E&T participants must be actively participating in a Component and receive case management services to be considered program participants, so applicants must propose projects that will allow participants to meet this criterion. Applicants that do not propose to provide their own case management services should describe how they plan to work with DHS/ESA SNAP E&T program staff to help coordinate the delivery of those services for participants that they recruit into their programs; including the provision of more comprehensive assessments that may assist individuals in receiving case management and other Component services not offered through the proposed project. SNAP E&T participants must be reimbursed for all expenses that are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to participation in a SNAP E&T Component.

Q3.   What about self-employment? Is entrepreneurship a supported service. If not, why?

A3.   Yes, that is one of the allowable Components that can be supported through the SNAP E&T program. These Components are specified in by Section 2.2(b) of the RFA.

Q4.   What is the current DHS position on Cosmetology and Early Education career pathways?

A4.   This RFA does not have any specific requirements regarding career pathways. However, as noted in Section 2.1(c) of the RFA, applicants must propose projects that provide meaningful connections to work opportunities. Proposed projects should be informed by and responsive to employer hiring needs. Applicants should demonstrate a strong understanding of employer hiring needs through their project design and choice of sectors and occupations to focus on in achieving job placement outcomes. See additional details in this section on the selection of sectors and occupations for proposed projects.

Q5.   Does SNAP E&T pay for criminal background and drug testing or is this a reimbursable expense? If the customer fails the drug test and does not get employed, would we lose money?

A5.   SNAP E&T pays for the process, whether the candidate passes or fails.

Q6. **Does the District allow its grantees/grantee staff to travel to a location, such as a shelter or group home to provide its services?**

A6.   Yes.

<u>Application Submission</u>

Q1. **In Appendix 3 – Proposal Submission Template, on pp. 7 – 9, (d) Scoring Criteria Narrative: Does this entire section have to be completed if only a small part of the section applies – depending upon which component the applicant is submitting? And is it possible that some responses may be "N/A" or Not Applicable?**

A1.   As noted in Section 4.1 of the RFA, proposals must be submitted by completing a copy of Appendix 3 – Proposal Submission Template and Appendix 4 – SNAP E&T Applicant Budget. Section 4.2(d) - Scoring Criteria Narrative of the RFA further notes that "*Scoring Criteria Narrative Section 2.2(h) describes the scoring criteria that will be used by the selection panel to evaluate applications submitted in response to this RFA. Appendix 3 – Proposal Submission Template includes prompts to provide additional information related to each scoring criterion if applicable. Applicants should briefly elaborate on content provided in other areas of the application in this section to summarize how their proposed project satisfies each criterion*." [Note that Section 4.2(d) is erroneously labeled twice in the RFA, and this refers to the second time that (d) occurs.] Applicants should respond to each element of the Scoring Criteria Narrative in Appendix 3, as these are the criteria that each project will be evaluated on regardless of the Component(s) proposed in the project. Responses may be brief and should accurately reflect the proposed project. Responses to some portions of this section may be left blank or listed as "not applicable" in some cases if accurate. For example, the Criterion 4 table on p. 7 of the RFA would not be applicable if the applicant has never offered services that are like their proposed project previously.

Q2. **I wanted to know whether we had to keep all our written answers in the template available on your website, or whether we could put them in a separate document. In addition, I was curious about the page limits--you mention 10 pages as the limit, but also note that checklists and tables that all applicants must fill out don't count towards that limit. How do you calculate how much each of these tables counts towards the limit?**

A2.   As noted in Section 4.1 of the RFA, proposals must be submitted by completing a copy of Appendix 3 –Proposal Submission Template and Appendix 4 – SNAP E&T Applicant Budget. Completed Appendix 3 – Proposal Submission Template documents submissions are limited to 10 pages using an 11 point or larger font. Content in tables and lists included in the template do not count towards the page limit. Additional budget tables, flowcharts, photographs, work plans, and other supporting documentation may be attached in addition to the project description. Additional content that is not specifically part of Appendix 3 or 4 may be included in separate file attachments that do not count towards the page limit. In counting the number of pages towards the 10-page limit, we will only look at the number of pages taken up by narrative content within the Appendix 3 template document, excluding any tables and lists.

Q3. **Would it be possible for DC SNAP E&T to accept a statement from our banking institution or a statement from our accounting firm in place of an audited financial statement?**

A3.   As noted in Section 4.3(e) of the RFA, if the Applicant has undergone an audit or financial review, they must provide the most recent audited financial statements or reviews. If audited financial statements or reviews are not available, the Applicant must provide its most recent complete

year's unaudited financial statements.

<u>Other/ Miscellaneous</u>

Q1.   Are there First Source or CBE requirements?

A1.   First Source and Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) applicants may apply based on project specifications. Please see https://does.dc.gov/page/first-source-employment-program- for additional details on First Source and https://dslbd.dc.gov/page/cbe-compliance for additional details on CBE.

Q2.   For awarded grantees, what is the timeframe for SNAP E&T eligibility verification when a grantee recruits a proposed participant and sends their information to DHS/ESA?

A2.   DHS/ESA completes SNAP E&T eligibility verification in 5 business days or less for all participants that a grantee recruits and sends to DHS/ESA through the required template and process. Eligibility verifications are typically turned around quicker than 5 business days.

Q3.   What systems will be available for grantees to verify participant eligibility?

A3.   Participant eligibility is initially verified by DHS/ESA eligibility staff through a process outlined during grantee orientation. Ongoing participant eligibility for SNAP E&T services can be verified through the program's database to which SNAP E&T grantees will have direct access. Please note, awarded projects are expected to have their own tracking systems that meet the requirements specified in Section 2.2(c)(2) of the RFA. Awarded projects will be provided with further guidance on specific data that must be submitted monthly on program participants.

Q4.   What is the reimbursement turnaround schedule?

A4.   After execution of a grant agreement and startup of program activities, awarded grantees may submit invoices monthly. Invoices for each month should be submitted within 10 business days after the end of that month and must include detailed documentation of all eligible costs incurred and be accompanied by required data and narrative files. After receipt of a complete and eligible invoice, grantees typically receive payment within 30 days. Awarded organizations should have the capacity to operate for multiple months prior to receiving reimbursement from DHS/ESA if needed.

Q5.   Is hybrid training acceptable, with a mix of both virtual and in-person services?

A5.   Yes.

Q6.   Is there a cost ceiling per participant?

A6.   There is no ceiling; however, the cost per participant should be reasonable.