



**PROGRAM COSTS
AND
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

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PROGRAM COSTS

Important: LROs may not operate as vendors for themselves or other LROs, except for the shared maintenance fee for food banks.

Intent of Program

The intent of this program is for the purchase of food and shelter, to supplement and expand current available resources and not to substitute or reimburse ongoing programs and services or to start new programs.

The intent regarding the use of funds is that goods and services purchased or provided with EFSP funds should be used as necessary on a daily basis to help meet community need during the spending period. Food vouchers and purchased gift certificates/gift cards must be distributed and used during the jurisdiction's spending period. Large purchases made at the end of the spending period do not meet the intent of the program and will be considered ineligible.

Questions

LROs with questions regarding interpretation of the program's guidelines **must** direct them to the **Local Board** prior to action. Local Boards unsure of the meaning of these guidelines must contact the National Board staff at efsp@www.unitedway.org for clarification prior to advising the LRO. The EFSP website has a training feature for Local Boards and LROs to familiarize new staff and board members with EFSP requirements.

Client Eligibility

The EFSP is a needs based program for which clients must qualify.

The National Board does not set client eligibility criteria. Local Boards may choose to set such criteria. If the Local Board does not set eligibility criteria, the LRO may use its existing criteria or set criteria for assistance under this award. Any criteria used must provide for assistance to needy individuals without discrimination (age, race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, economic status or sexual orientation), sensitivity to the transition from temporary shelter to permanent homes, attention to the specialized needs of homeless individuals with mental and physical disabilities and illness and to facilitate access for homeless individuals to other sources of services and benefits. In providing assistance under the EFSP, verification of proof of citizenship or qualified alien status of any applicant for assistance is not required.

Note: Funds allocated to a jurisdiction may only be used for residents and transients within that jurisdiction.

No Fee Requirement for Service

No individual, family or household may be charged a fee for service or be required to attend religious/counseling services with relation to assistance received under EFSP.

Payment to Vendors

Pay for all eligible program expenses by an approved method of payment directly to the vendor not more than 90 days after the invoice date. Approved payment methods are:

- LRO check
- LRO debit card
- LRO credit card - vendor issued (i.e., Sam's Club, other store vendor issued credit card)
- LRO credit card - third party (i.e., American Express, Visa)
- Electronic payment from LRO's bank account

This program does not allow the reimbursement of staff/volunteers, other LROs or

any party other than the vendor of services. Cash payments are ineligible.

Note: A Fiscal Agent/Fiscal Conduit must pay the vendor directly with an approved method of payment and may not reimburse other agencies for which they are serving as the Fiscal Agent/Fiscal Conduit.

Selection of Vendors

The LRO must select vendors whose requirements do not conflict with EFSP requirements. If a vendor's requirements conflict, the LRO must either use a different vendor or work with the vendor so EFSP guidelines are followed. Vendors must be able to provide a vendor originated invoice and must be able to accept an EFSP acceptable method of payment. (If a vendor only accepts cash, they may not be used for EFSP provided services unless they agree to accept an agency check or other EFSP acceptable payment method.)

Client Confidentiality

While the National Board respects the need for confidentiality, required documentation must be maintained.

When client confidentiality is protected by statute, LROs may use a unique identifier in providing and documenting services to clients. When submitting documentation where a unique identifier has been used, the LRO is responsible for providing documentation of the statute that applies to the clients served and services provided by their agency that are protected.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COSTS

Special Documentation Note: Spreadsheets are required for all expenditures in all funding categories, including administration and must be submitted with each LRO's Final Report, even if complete documentation is not required. The spreadsheets may be generated from the agency's financial or case management system. The required elements for the spreadsheets are stated in the Required Forms section, page 78. Sample spreadsheets are available on the website under **Forms**.

Eligible program costs include, but are not limited to:

Food Purchases for Food Banks/Pantries and Other Food Providers

For food banks/pantries and other food providers, eligible costs include:

Food, food vouchers, seeds, gift certificates for food (gift certificates must be marked "Food Only", "Food & Diapers Only" or Food, Diapers & Feminine Hygiene Items Only"). **Note: Gift Cards are eligible only if they can be marked/encoded "Food Only", "Food & Diapers Only" or "Food, Diapers & Feminine Hygiene Items Only". The same applies for food vouchers and gift certificates. There must be an agreement with the vendor that food, food and diapers only or food, diapers and feminine hygiene items only will be allowed and no cash will be returned to clients.**

An allowance for maintenance fees charged by food banks may be granted by a Local Board at the prevailing rate. EFSP funds cannot be used to pay such a maintenance fee twice: by a food bank and by the food pantry/LRO it is serving.

Only food banks may operate under EFSP as both vendor and LRO.

Note: EFSP funding is intended to provide for basic, nutritional meals on an ongoing basis not for non-nutritive items. The funding is not intended to be used for a singular event, special celebratory events, holiday baskets, etc. Also, dessert items (i.e., cookies, snack food, candy, etc.) used as part of a daily meal plan may be purchased in limited amounts.

(Documentation required: spreadsheets, dated receipts/invoices/completed vouchers for food purchased and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. Vouchers and gift certificates/gift cards must state "food items only" not "groceries or merchandise". Invoices and evidence of payment for the purchase of food gift certificates/gift cards are required. Additionally, a single copy of the gift certificate/gift card indicating restrictions [i.e., food items only, diapers and feminine hygiene items, if approved by the Local Board, no cash back] must be supplied along with the invoice. When using a food voucher, if all three signatures and dates are included, no itemized receipts will be necessary; however, if one or more signatures or the dates are missing, the itemized receipts must be submitted. The signatures must be from the client, caseworker and the vendor of service. See [Annex 8 \[page 99\]](#) for sample of food voucher.)

Transportation for Food Banks/Pantries and Other Food Providers Transportation expenses for picking up, delivery and distribution of purchased and donated food; contracted services or public transportation (e.g., taxi, local bus, subway). A dated mileage log at the Federal rate of \$.54 cents per mile. (**Note:** The reimbursement rate is the rate in existence at the time of publication of this manual. The begin date applies as of June 1, 2016, and is to be used throughout the entire Phase.

(Documentation required: [1] dated mileage log (Note: The mileage log serves as the spreadsheet for the mileage allowance.), with departure, destination and trip purpose noted or [2] spreadsheet, receipts/invoices from contracted services or public transportation, and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. See Annex 11 [page 102] for sample of mileage log.)

Equipment and Consumable Supplies for Food Banks/ Food Pantries

Purchase of small equipment **not exceeding \$300 per item** and essential to the operation of food bank or pantry (e.g., shelving and storage containers).

Purchase of consumable supplies essential to the distribution of food (e.g., bags, boxes).

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated, itemized receipts/invoices for equipment/supplies purchased and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Food Purchases for Mass Feeding

For mass feeding sites, eligible expenditures include:

Food (hot meals, groceries). Dessert items (e.g., cookies, snack food, candy, etc.) used as a part of a daily meal plan may be purchased in limited amounts. Also allowable are vegetable seeds and vegetable plants cultivated in an LRO's garden on-site and canning supplies.

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices for food/seeds/plants purchased and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Transportation for Mass Shelter/Mass Feeding

Local transportation expenses for picking up/delivery of food, transporting clients to a mass shelter (five or more beds in one location), or feeding site. (**Note:** The reimbursement rate is the rate in existence at the time of publication of this manual. (The begin date applies as of June 1, 2016 and is to be used throughout the entire Phase.) Limited to a dated mileage log at the Federal rate of \$.54 cents per mile, contracted services or public transportation (e.g., taxi, local bus, subway).

(Documentation required: [1] dated mileage log (Note: The mileage log serves as the spreadsheet for the mileage allowance.), with departure, destination and trip purpose noted or [2] spreadsheet, receipts/invoices from contracted services or public transportation, and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. See Annex 11 [page 102] for sample of mileage log.)

Consumable Supplies for Mass Shelter/Mass Feeding as Direct Cost

Purchase of consumable supplies essential to mass feeding (e.g., plastic cups, utensils, detergent, feminine hygiene items, etc.) and/or mass shelters of five or more beds (e.g., soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, feminine hygiene items, cleaning supplies, etc.). **Note: Supplies for mass shelter/mass feeding awards are included in per diem/per meal costs. An LRO may not be awarded additional funds for supplies if documenting their expenditures with a per meal or per diem schedule.**

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices for supplies purchased and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

***Equipment Purchases
for Mass Shelters/Mass
Feeding as Direct Cost***

Purchase of small equipment **not exceeding \$300 per item** and essential to mass feeding (e.g., pots, pans, plates, utensils, microwave oven, dining table and chairs, toasters, blenders, etc.) and/or mass shelters (e.g., beds, mattresses, cots, blankets, linens, etc.) **Note: Equipment for mass shelter/mass feeding awards are included in per diem/per meal costs. An LRO may not be awarded additional funds for equipment, if documenting their expenditures with a per meal or per diem schedule.**

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices for equipment purchased and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

***Minor Emergency
Equipment Repairs for
Mass Shelters/Mass
Feeding as Direct Cost***

With prior Local Board approval, minor emergency repair of small equipment essential to mass feeding or sheltering not exceeding \$300.00 in repair costs per item. Equipment eligible for repairs under the EFSP is any that if not repaired would force the mass feeding or mass sheltering site to terminate or curtail services (e.g., stove, refrigerator, and hot water heater). **Note: Minor emergency equipment repair for mass shelter/mass feeding awards are included in per diem/ per meal costs. An LRO may not be awarded additional funds for minor emergency equipment repair if documenting their expenditures with a per meal or per diem schedule.**

Routine maintenance and service contracts are not eligible.

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated letter from Local Board indicating approval and dated invoices for equipment repair and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Note: Good judgment must be exercised in determining the most cost effective use of EFSP funds when deciding an equipment purchase against a repair.

***Limited First Aid
Supplies for Mass
Shelter/Mass Feeding***

Limited amounts of basic first aid supplies (e.g., aspirin, Band-Aids, cough syrup, etc.) for mass shelter providers and mass feeding sites only. (**Note:** May not be claimed in addition to per diem or per meal allowance.)

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices for first-aid supplies and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

***Building Code Repairs
to Mass Shelter or Mass
Feeding Facilities***

Building Code/Accessibility Improvements – Emergency repairs to comply with building code citations for a mass feeding facility or mass shelter only, provided:

The facility is owned by a not-for-profit LRO (profit-making facilities, leased facilities, government facilities and individual residences are not eligible); and,

***National Board and
Local Board Approval
for Building Code
Repairs***

The building code plan and the contract detailing work to be done and material and equipment to be used or purchased is **approved in writing by both the National Board and the Local Board prior to the start of the emergency repair/building code project to ensure compliance with program guidelines;** and,

- a. The repair is limited to bringing a facility into compliance with local building codes; maximum expenditure: **\$2,500.00**;
- b. All emergency repair work is completed and paid for by the end of the jurisdiction's spending period;
- c. Facility must be used primarily for mass feeding or mass sheltering programs; and,
- d. No award funds are used for **decorative** or **non-essential** purposes or **routine maintenance/repairs**.

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated letters from both the National Board and the Local Board indicating approval and amount approved, copy of contract including cost or invoices for supplies and contract labor, document citing building code violation requiring the repair and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Facility Improvements for the Disabled for Mass Shelter/Mass Feeding

Expenses incurred from accessibility improvements for the disabled are eligible for mass feeding or mass shelter facilities up to a limit of **\$2,500.00**. These improvements may include those required by the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. A building code citation is not necessary for accessibility improvements. Both the National Board and the Local Board must approve in advance, any accessibility improvements.

Note: All social service providers are mandated to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Note: Building code repairs and facility improvements are allowable for mass feeding and mass sheltering sites only. These costs must have prior National Board and Local Board approval even if using the per meal or per diem rate.

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated copy of contract describing work to be done including cost, letters dated from the National Board and the Local Board indicating approval and amount approved, and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Mass Shelter Expenses

For mass shelter providers, there are two options for eligible costs. One option must be selected at the beginning of the program year and continued throughout the entire year.

Note: The documentation requirements for each option are noted with each option.

Mass Shelter/ Direct Costs

1. Reimbursement of actual direct eligible costs for supplies/equipment essential to the operation of the mass shelter (e.g., cots, mattresses, soap, linens, blankets, cleaning supplies, etc.). Refer to previous sections for description of direct eligible expenditures.

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices from vendor and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Per Diem Allowance

2. Per diem allowance of **exactly \$7.50 or \$12.50 per person** per night for mass shelter providers (five beds or more in one location), only if:

- Approved in advance by the Local Board; and,
- LRO's total mass shelter award is expended in this manner.

Note: It is the decision of the Local Board to choose between the \$7.50/\$12.50 rates. This rate may vary from agency to agency depending on the level of services provided to the clients. The \$7.50 or \$12.50 rates, if elected, may be expended by the LRO for any cost related to the operation of the mass shelter; it is not limited to otherwise eligible items. The per diem allowance may be used to cover costs such as shelter rent, shelter utilities, and shelter staff salaries if necessary to provide a night of shelter. **The per diem allowance does not include the additional costs associated with food or the food per meal allowance.**

(Documentation required: schedules showing daily rate of \$7.50 or \$12.50 and number of persons sheltered by date with totals. Note: The daily schedule serves as the spreadsheet for the per diem allowance. Supporting documentation must be retained on-site, e.g., invoices, service records and sign-in logs, proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. See [Annex 9 \[page 100\]](#) for sample.)

Mass Feeding Expenses For mass feeding programs, there are two options for eligible costs. One option must be selected at the beginning of the program year and continued throughout the entire year.

Note: The documentation requirements are noted with each option.

**Mass Feeding
Direct Cost**

1. Reimbursement of actual direct eligible costs for supplies/equipment essential to the operation of the mass feeding program (e.g., food, paper products, cleaning products, pots and pans, etc.). Refer to previous sections for description of direct eligible expenditures. **Note: EFSP funding is intended to provide for daily, basic, nutritional meal costs on an ongoing basis. The funding is not intended to be used for a singular event, special events/celebratory events/holiday meals, etc. Basic non-excessive meal costs may be applied towards special/celebratory/holiday meals served only as part of an ongoing program. Also, dessert items (e.g., cookies, snack food, candy, etc.) used as part of a daily meal plan may be purchased in limited amounts.**

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated receipts/invoices from vendor relating to operation of facility and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method.)

Per Meal Allowance

2. Per meal allowance of **exactly \$2 per meal** served if:
 - a. Approved in advance by the Local Board; and,
 - b. LRO's total mass feeding award is expended in this manner.

The \$2 per meal allowance, if elected, may be expended by the LRO for any related cost; it is not limited to otherwise eligible items. The per meal allowance may be used to cover costs such as rent, utilities, and staff salaries for those staff necessary for the preparation and serving of food. **The per meal allowance does not include the additional costs associated with shelter or the per diem shelter allowance.**

Note: EFSP funding is intended to provide for daily, basic, nutritional meal costs on an ongoing basis. The funding is not intended to be used for a singular event, special events/celebratory events/holiday meals, etc. Basic non-excessive meal costs may be applied towards special/celebratory/holiday meals served only as part of an ongoing program. Also, dessert items (e.g., cookies, snack food, candy, etc.) used as part of a daily meal plan may be purchased in limited amounts.

(Documentation required: daily schedule showing meal rate of \$2 and number of meals served by date with totals. Note: The daily schedule serves as the spreadsheet for the per meal allowance. Supporting documentation must be retained on-site, (i.e. invoices, service records and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method). See [Annex 10 \[page 101\]](#) for sample).

**Other Shelter Assistance
(Off-Site Lodging
Hotel/Motel)**

For other shelter assistance, eligible program costs include off-site emergency lodging (room and tax only) in a hotel/motel or other off-site shelter facility provided conditions 1 and 2 below are met.

1. No appropriate on-site shelter is available; and
2. It is limited to 30-days assistance per individual or household during the current program period. **(Note: Assistance may be extended in extreme cases with prior Local Board written approval.** A copy of this approval must accompany the LRO's documentation.)

(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated vendor receipts/invoices from off-site shelter [hotel/motel/etc. on their stationery] and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. Receipts/invoices must include client's name, length of stay and charge per night. Note: If using a unique identifier when submitting documentation for clients served, the LRO is required to provide documentation of the statute which applies to the protecting of clients and the services provided.)

**Rent/Mortgage
Assistance/Eviction
Prevention**

For rent/mortgage assistance, eligible program costs include:

1. Limited emergency rent or mortgage assistance principal and interest only (P&I), for individuals or households provided conditions "a" through "f" below are met:
 - a. Payment is in arrears or due within **10** calendar days.
 - b. other resources have been exhausted;
 - c. The client is 1) a resident of the home or apartment and 2) responsible for the rent/mortgage on the home or apartment where the rent/mortgage assistance is to be paid;
 - d. Payment is limited to a maximum of one month's assistance for each individual or household; assistance can be provided 1) for a full month's rent/mortgage (P&I) all at one time, or 2) in separate payments over a period of up to 90 consecutive days so long as the total amount paid does not exceed one month's cost and is paid by a single LRO;
 - e. Assistance is provided only once in a jurisdiction by a single LRO in each award phase for each individual/household (with exception of item d [2] above);
 - f. The month paid is the current amount or part of the arrearage that is still owed at the time of payment and is from the current award phase and,
 - g. Payment must guarantee an additional 30 days service.

Notes: Late fees, legal fees, deposits, and condo fees are ineligible.

If a client has two mortgages, assistance may only be given on the principal or first mortgage for the client's residence.

Payments for mobile homes and lots are eligible and can be paid to a mortgage company or to a private landlord.

*(Documentation required: spreadsheet, dated and signed letters from landlords [must include amount of one month's rent and due date] mortgage company's letter and/or copy of mortgage loan coupon showing monthly mortgage amount and date due and proof of payment to vendor by an acceptable payment method. Payments must be made to the landlord **ONLY**, not to both client and landlord. Documentation must support the payment made and is limited to a maximum of one month's assistance. A copy of the client's lease is only accepted when paying the first month's rent.) **See Annex 7, page 98.***