

Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response Program (HRSA-20-135)
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated: April 22, 2020

*****Applications are due on May 6, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. EST*****

Accessing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

1. Visit: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=326385>
2. Select the "Package" tab
3. Select "Preview"
4. Select "Download Instructions"

Application

Q: Does the recommended 10-20 page limit include all attachments, or is that just for the project narrative?

A: There is no official page limit requirement for this funding opportunity. What is most important is that you provide the information requested in the NOFO. You will not receive any competitive advantage based on the total number of pages that you submit; and you will not be penalized if you need more than 20 pages to submit a complete application.

Q: Are there any formatting requirements for the application?

A: No, we are not following the standard formatting requirements in order to keep this application process as simplified as possible. We ask that you use reasonable font sizes and margins.

Eligibility

Q: Our facility is an Indian Health Service (IHS) Service Unit. Is our facility an eligible entity to apply for these funds?

A: No, an IHS Service Unit is a federal facility and is therefore not an eligible applicant. We encourage you to coordinate within your Tribe to submit an application on behalf of an eligible entity.

Q: We are a tribal organization. Are we eligible to apply for these grant funds?

A: Yes, you are eligible to apply if you are a tribal organization that operates any health program, service, function, activity, or facility funded, in whole or part, by the Indian Health Service through, or provided for in, a contract or compact with the Indian Health Service under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Q: We are a tribal organization which operates a 638 program (Title I or Title V). Are we eligible to apply for these grant funds?

A: Yes, you are eligible to apply if you are a tribal health program, as defined by the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. § 1603(25)), health center. If you are an IHS Service Unit, the Service Unit is a federal facility and not an eligible applicant. We suggest you work with the local Tribe/tribal organization who can apply as the tribal health program.

Q: Can more than one organization within the same Tribe apply for grant funds under this program?

A: Because the intent is to provide funding to as many Tribes as possible, we would encourage you to coordinate within your Tribe to submit just one application on behalf of your Tribe.

Q: Are state-recognized Tribes eligible to apply?

A: For the purposes of this program, an Indian Tribe is defined as “an Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, Band, Nation, Pueblo, Village, or Community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian Tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, (25 U.S.C. 479a).” Therefore, state-recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply for this funding.

Q: Can a federally recognized Tribe in a rural area that does not have land held in trust or reservation land apply for this grant?

A: Yes, eligibility for this program is not tied having a reservation or land trust. So long as the Tribe can prove tribal status/eligibility, and has a rural population to serve, then we would consider them eligible for this program.

Q: We are an Alaska Native Corporation. Are we eligible to apply on behalf of the Tribes/Villages we serve?

A: Yes, you may apply as an eligible Tribal Organization and should indicate support from the Tribes/Villages you serve within your application. If an individual Tribe/Village that you serve also applies for this grant program and receives funding, then your HRSA project officer will work with you after the awards are made to ensure that there is no duplication of services.

Q: We are a regional area health board, and one of the Tribes we serve has asked us to submit an application on their behalf to help with the administration of the award. Is this allowable?

A: Yes, you may apply as an eligible Tribal Organization on behalf of the Tribe. Your application should indicate that you will be working collaboratively with the Tribe and that you have their support to submit on their behalf.

Q: If we are submitting proof of eligibility or a letter of support from the Tribe, is there a specific person that needs to sign the proof of eligibility and/or letter of support?

A: No, there is not one specific signatory requirement. Anyone who is allowed to provide a signature on behalf of the Tribe will be accepted. Additionally, if you are a Federally Recognized Tribe, while it is welcome, you do not need to submit extra documentation as we will consult the [Federal Register Notice](#).

Allowable Costs

Q: Will these grant funds cover construction design and/or architectural schematic costs?

A: No, any construction or construction-related costs are unallowable. However, minor revisions/repairs are allowable (e.g. a minor septic repair to a facility to make it functional as a COVID-19 testing site).

Q: Can we purchase a vehicle with grant funds?

A: Yes, a vehicle to care, or provide transportation to care, for COVID-19 suspected or confirmed patients is allowable. As with all costs, it must be clearly justified and tied to your program objectives in the budget narrative.

Q: Can we use these grant funds to reimburse ourselves for COVID-19 related costs already incurred?

A: Yes, HRSA is permitted to grant pre-award costs per the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [Memorandum M-20-11](#) for COVID-19 related costs incurred from January 20, 2020, to the date of the award.

Q: Can these grant funds be used to purchase telehealth equipment and/or train our health care providers on the increased use of telehealth?

A: Yes. Telehealth-related costs are allowable.

Q: Can we offer hazard pay to both our healthcare personnel and other non-healthcare personnel that are involved in our response to COVID-19?

A: Yes, as long as it is in line with your institutional policies and you can justify the role of the personnel in your response to COVID-19, hazard pay is allowable. All salary limitation requirements must still be adhered to (salary is not to exceed \$197,300, the Federal Executive Level II salary limit).

Service Area

Q: Our Tribe has land that spans across both urban and rural designated areas. Can we serve our entire land mass and population through this program?

A: All activities supported by the Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response program must exclusively target tribal populations residing in HRSA-designated rural counties or rural census tracts in urban counties. You may use the [Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer](#) to see whether your service area is defined as 'rural' by HRSA".

Q: Our Tribe is located in a HRSA-designated rural location, but we have many tribal members that do not live on our Reservation and are located in an urban area. Can we serve those tribal members?

A: Yes, if those tribal members return to your rural location for COVID-19 related care, you may serve them as eligible members of your Tribe.

Q: Our facility provides care to both Tribal and non-Tribal populations. Can services covered under this grant benefit the non-Tribal population?

A: Maybe:

- If you are a tribal health program, we would encourage you to continue to provide COVID-19 related services to the population that you regularly serve, so long as all services are being provided to benefit your rural population.
- If, however, you are a non-tribal health service provider to tribes (e.g., University-affiliated program, private or non-profit organization, etc.), then your services must exclusively benefit the Tribal populations within your service area. We would encourage you to either a) work with the Tribe/tribal organization so that the Tribe itself can be the applicant; or b) provide documentation, such as a letter of support, from the Tribe that you are proposing to serve to show that the Tribe is aware, and supportive of, the application.