

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM

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Phase CARES
FY 2020
PL 116-136
\$200,000,000



FEMA



American Red Cross



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.



NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF THE CHURCHES
OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A



The Jewish Federations
OF NORTH AMERICA



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program (EFSP) is a Federal program administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA). It has been entrusted through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77) "to supplement and expand ongoing efforts to provide shelter, food and supportive services" by local social service organizations for people across our Nation who are hungry, homeless, and in economic crisis.

A National Board, chaired by FEMA, with representatives from American Red Cross; Catholic Charities USA; The Jewish Federations of North America; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; The Salvation Army; and United Way Worldwide, governs the EFSP. The National Board has selected United Way Worldwide to serve as Secretariat and Fiscal Agent to the National Board.

The following National Board operating principles remain in force for Fiscal Year 2020:

- *Efficiency*—fiscal administration, reporting and procedural guidance to Local Boards and LROs
- *Accountability*—good steward of taxpayers' dollars through reasonable oversight and transparency
- *Responsiveness*—prioritize the allocation of supplemental funds to the neediest areas in the nation
- *Partnership*—promote and strengthen collaboration between non- profit organizations and public sector
- *Facilitating*—maximizing appropriate local decision-making through clear guidance and training

The original authorizing legislation (PL 100-77) of the EFSP specifically calls for "sensitivity to the transition from temporary shelter to permanent homes and 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 accordance with the legislation, the National Board encourages Local Boards to place special emphasis on identification of and assistance to the elderly, families with children, Native Americans, and veterans in addition to the mentally and physically disabled. The authorization, as revised (PL 102-550) in 1992, requires that a homeless or formerly homeless person be a member of each EFSP Local Board.

This supplemental award of \$200,000,000 brings the total distributed to more than \$5.0 billion over the program's 38-year history. In funded jurisdictions, Local Boards, similar in composition to the National Board, advertise the availability of the funds; establish priorities among community needs; award funds to non-profit and government emergency food and shelter agencies; and, help monitor program compliance.

Funded agencies, known as “**Local Recipient Organizations**” (LROs), use EFSP supplemental funds for mass shelter, mass feeding, food distribution through food pantries and food banks, one-month utility payments to prevent service cut-offs, and one-month rent/mortgage assistance to prevent evictions or assist people leaving shelters to establish stable living conditions. In the most recently completed phase of funding, over 8,200 local non-profit and government agencies have received EFSP funds in in more than 2,300 jurisdictions nationwide.

Jurisdictions that qualified for awards were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. most current 12-month national unemployment rates;
2. total number of unemployed within a civil jurisdiction;
3. total number of individuals below the poverty level within a civil jurisdiction; and,
4. the total population of the civil jurisdiction.

More specifically, jurisdictions were selected to receive funding during Phase CARES according to one of the following thresholds:

- Jurisdictions, including balance of counties, with 300 or more unemployed and a 3.7% rate of unemployment.
- Jurisdictions, including balance of counties, with 300 or more unemployed and a 14.1% rate of poverty.

Poverty data was used to compensate for the fact that many in need are not shown in published unemployment statistics. Poverty data used for Phase CARES was obtained from the U. S. Bureau of the Census based on the data collected in the American Community Survey (5-year estimates, 2014 – 2018); the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provided the most recent unemployment data.

With the receipt of the \$200,000,000 for use in FY 2020 (Phase CARES), the National Board is again reserving a portion of these funds for the State Set-Aside (SSA) Committee process. This process allows for additional flexibility in selecting jurisdictions for funding. The National Board **requires** prior to selecting jurisdictions for funding, that the SSA Committee considers jurisdictions:

- that previously qualified for the program, but no longer meet the established formula and demonstrate high levels of need;
- with unusually high levels of unemployment or poverty, but do not meet the minimum 300 unemployed threshold;
- that have pockets of homelessness or poverty and do not qualify for direct funding; or,
- that are experiencing recent negative economic changes, such as plant closings.

Through direct and SSA awards, each state receives a minimum of \$250,000.

The National Board will issue grants to LROs awarded funding by Local Boards. However, LROs failing to report and document expenditures under all previous phases of the program, including Phase 33 and Phase 34, will not be eligible for funding in Phase CARES, until any known outstanding program compliance exceptions are reconciled. First payments will be released prior to receipt of the Phases 35 and 36 Final Reports. First payments will be made to eligible LROs; second payments will be made upon successful completion of the Phase 35 and Phase 36 Final Reports and as required, any National Board Reallocations compliance review process, including the resolution of any compliance issues in any jurisdiction in which the LRO received funds.