



**Date: September 27, 2023**

**Notice of Funding Availability: FY24 Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program**

**Application Deadline: 5 p.m., October 25, 2023**

The New Jersey State Plan for Higher Education: Where Opportunity Meets Innovation, recognizes that New Jersey students need affordable and predictable education costs, which goes beyond just tuition and fees. Materials hardships, such as food insecurity, are too common for many students today, causing a barrier for students to succeed on their pathway to a degree.

The State has committed \$1.5 million of FY2024 funding to fight food insecurity on campuses by offering Hunger-Free Campus grants as part of the Hunger-Free Campus Act (Act) (P.L. 2019, C.89). The Act provides grants to public institutions of higher education that have one or more hunger-free-designated campuses to help support students on their paths to success. The State will continue its expanded implementation of the grant program by also supporting food-insecure students at independent public-mission institutions of higher education that receive State operating aid.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this grant program is to foster innovative ways to combat food insecurity on college and university campuses and assist in planning for long-term solutions. The grant funding shall be used to address student hunger, leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on campuses, raise awareness of currently offered campus services that address basic food needs, and continue to build strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to address food insecurity among students.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

For this grant cycle, all New Jersey public institutions of higher education and independent-public mission institutions of higher education that receive State operating aid will be eligible for funding. *All institutions, even if they previously obtained the 'Hunger-Free Campus' designation in a previous grant cycle, will need to present evidence of satisfaction of the 'Hunger-Free Campus' criteria within the current grant application.*

The Secretary of Higher Education shall allocate grant funding to eligible New Jersey institutions of higher education that have one or more campuses designated by the Secretary as a “Hunger-Free Campus” in accordance with the following criteria:

- 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 or be in the process of providing options/seeking ways to utilize SNAP benefits on-campus;
- Participate in an awareness day campaign activity and plan a campus awareness event during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (November 13 – 21, 2023);
- 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, and submit the survey results 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 “hunger-free.” Please see Appendix B for additional details.

For this application cycle, the ‘Hunger-Free campus’ criteria must be met and demonstrated within the time frame of August 1, 2022-November 30, 2023.

Institutions may apply for a Hunger-Free Campus Grant up to the thresholds below based on Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) size category classifications:

<b>IPEDS Size Category</b>	<b>Maximum Grant Award</b>
Small (4,999 or fewer)	\$50,000
Medium (5,000 –9,999)	\$75,000
Large (10,000 or greater)	\$100,000

**Application Criteria for FY2024 Hunger-Free Campus Designation & Grant Funds:**

Eligible public institutions of higher education and independent public-mission institutions of higher education that receive State operating aid must prove that they meet the qualifications for the Hunger-Free Campus designation listed above. Eligible institutions may evidence satisfaction of the Hunger-Free Campus requirements while also applying for the grant funds in their complete application to OSHE. Institutions will be asked to submit: 1) a grant narrative with cover sheet; and 2) a proposed budget.

**Information Regarding Future Grant Cycles:**

Grant funding is subject to annual appropriation and is, therefore, not guaranteed beyond the present fiscal year. **However, to ensure compliance with statute, this will be the final grant cycle during which institutions may administer their own version of a student hunger survey instrument.** If future funding is secured, eligible institutions of higher education seeking Hunger-Free grant funding will be required to utilize an OSHE-housed survey instrument.<sup>1</sup> The OSHE-housed survey instrument will be made available throughout the fall semester of the respective grant cycle, differing from the current spring requirement. This change is part of an effort by OSHE to streamline data reporting and collection in order to ensure data results are reported consistently. Institutions interested in applying for future Hunger-Free Campus Grants, funding permitted, should plan accordingly to accommodate this forthcoming adjustment.

### ***Grant Narrative***

The narrative portion of the application must be submitted as a single PDF by each institution. Use the headings listed below within the application. Institutions must abide by the word limit indicated per section. Any information beyond the word limit will not be reviewed. The grant narrative must include:

- **Application Cover Sheet: See Appendix C for details**
- **Letter of Support from the Institution's President/Chancellor:** The institution's President/Chancellor must submit a letter of support indicating the institution's need as well as its commitment and capacity to carry out the grant proposal during the designated grant period.
  - Word limit: 500 words.
- **Campus Hunger Task Force:** Describe your Campus Hunger Task Force. Provide a list of task force members (names and 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.
  - Word limit: 500 words.
- **Staff Member for SNAP Assistance:** Provide the name, title, and contact information for the staff member(s) responsible for assisting students in SNAP screening and application processes. Briefly describe how this service is advertised on campus or how students are referred to this staff member, who 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 DHS-Division of Family Development [DFS] Program Operations Unit).
  - Word limit: 250 words.
- **Options for Students to Utilize SNAP at Campus Stores:** List the options available to students to 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 describe how students are informed about which local off-campus establishments

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<sup>1</sup> The OSHE-housed survey instrument is rooted in the USDA 18-item food security measure.

accept SNAP if this is not currently an option at campus stores. To learn more about becoming a retailer, visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s webpage here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer>

- Word limit: 500 words.
- **Information on SNAP and other public benefits available to students:** 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 representatives or student-led organizations.
  - Word limit: 500 words.
- **Information regarding participation in National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (November 12-20, 2022 and/or November 13-21, 2023):** Describe your institution's participation or planned participation in an awareness event surrounding student hunger. Describe the event, the intended goals and outcomes of the event or campaign, and any student organizations, departments, or institutional partners that will be involved. Please detail the outcomes of the event (number of participants, etc.).
  - Word limit: 250 words.
- **Evidence of a Campus Food Pantry:** Provide the address of the campus food pantry and a web link advertising 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.
  - Word limit: 250 words.
- **Evidence of a "Swipe Out Hunger" or Meal Plan Donation Program:** 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.
  - Word limit: 500 words.
- **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 Appendix A. If your institution receives grant funding, you will be required to administer a spring 2024 Hunger-Free Campus survey. Please confirm your commitment to participating in the student survey on hunger as approved by the Secretary of Higher Education by confirming the best institutional contact for the surveying process and how you would engage stakeholders to participate in the survey.
  - Word limit: 250 words
- **Best Practices Campus Profile:** Include a best practices campus profile. This profile should include a brief description of campus efforts to address food insecurity among students, highlights from any student hunger survey available, and any other items you think best highlight the work on your campus to combat food insecurity.
  - Word limit: one page.
- **FY2024 Budget Activity Plan:** Provide a brief description of your institution's proposed use of FY2024 funding. Note specific line items will be provided via the required budget

template. This section should include additional narrative regarding goals for use of funding and suggested project activities with clear ties to the budget proposed.

- Word limit: 500 words
- **Other:** Identify any other topics or data you would like to share with OSHE that relate to addressing food insecurity, this could include any survey data your institution may collect on food-insecurity.
  - Word limit: 500 words.

## ***Budget***

The budget portion of the application must be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet utilizing the template provided. The budget should be completed in accordance with the maximum grant award table provided in the ‘Eligibility’ section. Institutions may apply up to the maximum grant award and should consider their ability to spend by the expenditure as extensions will not be given.

A key component of the budget template is the column for the ‘Narrative Description.’ For each category of budgeted expenses, institutions must provide a “Narrative Description” which consists of a detailed list of, and justification for, each expense, including how each directly relates to the purpose of the grant. If the “Narrative Detail” cannot be provided within the space allowed within the template, institutions may submit a secondary spreadsheet by adding a new tab with this detail. All submissions must be in the Excel spreadsheet format.

All funding must be expended by June 30, 2024.

Link to budget template:

[https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/pdf/index/Hunger%20Free%20Budget%20Template\\_FY24\\_FINAL.xlsx](https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/pdf/index/Hunger%20Free%20Budget%20Template_FY24_FINAL.xlsx)

## **Process for Submission and Notification:**

The above requested information should be submitted as two files (one PDF of the grant narrative and one Excel spreadsheet of the proposed budget that adheres to the template provided) to OSHE by no later than **5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 25, 2023**. All applications shall be submitted via email to [OSHE@oshe.nj.gov](mailto:OSHE@oshe.nj.gov) with the subject line “FY2024 *Institution Name*- Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.” OSHE will confirm receipt of application. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications will be reviewed by the OSHE according to the criteria outlined above. Questions about this notice will be addressed until **5 p.m., Wednesday, October 11, 2023** and may be directed to [OSHE@OSHE.nj.gov](mailto:OSHE@OSHE.nj.gov).

## Appendix A

### Student Survey on Hunger: Items and Scoring

To receive both the ‘Hunger-Free Campus’ designation and grant funds, institutions must, in accordance with the Hunger-Free Campus Act, *“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 administering their own instruments must determine the number of food insecure students on their respective campuses using the USDA’s 18-item food security measure. These institutions are also required to ask the demographic questions listed below. 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 within a 30-day timeframe.

Institutions using the OSHE-provided survey will automatically meet the above requirements.

Before using the 18-item measure, you must ask the following question to determine if there are children present in the household. This answer will dictate the questions to be asked.

**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? \_\_\_\_

***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 <b>with</b> Children Present	18-Item Raw Score <b>without</b> Children Present
High	0	0
Marginal	1-2	1-2
Low	3-7	3-5
Very Low	8-18	6-10

### ***Mandatory Demographic Information***

**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 the institution'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?**

**Are you Hispanic or Latino?**

Yes  
No

**How do you describe your race?**

White  
Black or African American  
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 means help you cover 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 meals in high school?**

Yes, I received free meals (1)

Yes, I received reduced-price meals (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?  
(Select all that apply)**

- 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 guidance below as you begin to disseminate your survey.

- **Acquire IRB Approval from your institution if needed.**
- **Collaborate with Institutional Research (IR):** IR or professional researchers are the professionals best equipped to conduct this research. Importantly, you will need to work with an office within your institution that can provide an email list of all active students. It is also important that the survey is anonymous and confidential.
- **Send Survey Invitations & Recruitment:** When inviting 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 a disproportional 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 succeed 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 circumstance. 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 USDA 18-Item Scale into Campus Climate Surveys:** College students are frequently surveyed, which can 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.
- **Analyze Data:** When analyzing data, work closely with a researcher or professionals from your institution’s IR office. The USDA 18-item scale does include skip patterns, meaning it may be difficult to interpret. You should 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. You may also

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

- **Report Results to OSHE:** If selected for the grant, campuses must report the raw data to OSHE. Details about how to securely transmit this data and the deadline for submitting the data will be provided upon selection. If you include data in your Hunger-Free Campus Grant Application, it should only include general results and be non-identifiable.
- **Share Results with 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. 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/>

## Appendix C

### FY2024 Hunger-Free Campus Application Cover Sheet

**Name of Institution:**

**Contact(s) for Application:** Please include name(s), title(s), email address(es), and phone number(s)

**Please certify that your campus has met the following Hunger-Free Campus criteria during the August 1, 2022-November 30, 2023 timeframe.**

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Signature of President or Appropriate Designee

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Date