

The Community Relief Fund: COVID-19 Grant Guidelines

Funding Focus: Immediate Relief

PURPOSE

The Community Relief Fund was established in October 2019 to prepare for any possible future disaster threat to our community. The Community Relief Fund is a responsive granting resource that can be deployed to assist the Rappahannock River region during times of crisis. When the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic in our community became clear, especially for vulnerable people, the Board of Governors directed foundation staff to activate the Community Relief Fund.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with the nonprofit, government, philanthropic and private sectors to accelerate recovery for a thriving, resilient and even stronger Rappahannock River region. We will support organizations that are addressing immediate needs, longer-term effects of the pandemic, and community recovery.

The Community Foundation has a 23-year history of working efficiently and effectively to direct the philanthropy of our donors to impactful community-based organizations working to strengthen our region. The foundation is committed to working with funding partners and community collaborators to move resources quickly and adapt to evolving community needs.

Through the generous support of our board, all Fund administrative costs have been waived through June 30, 2020 to ensure that 100% of funds are distributed to community-based organizations in need.

At The Community Foundation, our approach to crisis response is informed by:

- A dedicated and dynamic team of staff and board with extensive experience in economic and community development, grant management, and community-wide giving initiatives who are committed to the vitality of our region.
- An online survey of community-based nonprofit organizations to identify the most pressing needs during the pandemic's early stages.
- Proactive, purposeful and ongoing outreach to key community leaders.

The first grants from this fund will help frontline human services organizations that have deep roots in the community and strong experience working with vulnerable populations. These rapid response grants are designed to address gaps in services and increase capacity of organizations to meet basic needs of individuals and families.

While the initial priority is to address immediate needs, additional funds will be released on a rolling basis based on available funding through outbreak and recovery phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note grant guidelines are subject to change without notice due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

FUNDING FOCUS

Immediate Relief: Applications for immediate relief grants should request funding for general operations directly related to changes in service delivery resulting from the outbreak of COVID-19; or to provide direct assistance to economically vulnerable individuals and families impacted by COVID-19. Such assistance may include the provision of food, housing, utilities, transportation, childcare, education, and/or health services. Organizations eligible for immediate relief may re-apply for additional funding for the duration of the State of Virginia's Emergency Declaration.

Community Recovery: Requests for long-term community recovery grants that address the impact of lost revenue due to closures, cancellations, or service disruptions will be considered following expiration of the State of Virginia's Emergency Declaration. Requests of this type and funding levels will be evaluated once the need for immediate relief funding has subsided.

IMMEDIATE RELIEF GRANTMAKING: CRITICAL AREAS OF NEED

The Community Relief Fund is accepting applications for immediate relief projects. These grants ensure rapid funding for organizations meeting basic needs for those affected by the pandemic. This critical funding will enable nonprofits to maintain operations and support the increased demand for services.

The Fund will be proactive and responsive, making grants on a rolling basis. Individual grants will range from \$500 to \$15,000.

Community Needs Assessment

The Community Foundation is actively gathering information through a nonprofit Community Needs Assessment survey about how we can effectively provide immediate support. We are partnering with the George Washington Regional Planning Commission to evaluate survey results. We understand the implications of the current pandemic will be long lasting and recovery for many will be a difficult process.

Regional nonprofit organizations shared their primary areas of concern related to the COVID-19 pandemic using our **Community Needs Assessment**. This assessment is ongoing and will determine current and future funding priorities.

Funding Priorities

Priority will be given to nonprofit organizations with deep roots in the community that:

- Provide human services and emergency assistance, as well as health/mental health and educational resources (e.g. food, shelter, transportation, living expenses, rent/utility assistance, etc.)
- Serve vulnerable populations (e.g. children out of school, families without childcare, people who have lost income due to the pandemic, people who are experiencing homelessness or rapid

rehousing, individuals without paid sick leave or health insurance, people experiencing domestic violence or child abuse, non-English speaking residents, senior citizens, etc.)

Organizations may use funding to support client needs, provide mental health programming for clients or staff, or coordinate/facilitate in-kind goods and donations to sites and organizations that provide human services and serve vulnerable populations. Funding will also be considered for organizations to pivot/adapt their service model, for example cover costs associated with decreased staffing or remote working due to quarantine/social distancing.

Other funding needs may be considered.

The Community Relief Fund encourages projects that:

- Help make charitable organizations more effective, efficient and essential.
- Promote collaboration and avoid duplication.
- Focus on the most vulnerable.
- Inspire and encourage additional funding.
- Request seed money to leverage exciting and innovative ways to meet unmet needs.
- Reach a broad segment of the community.
- Address gaps in services or provide services for needs as they arise.

ELIGIBILITY

Subject to funding availability, The Community Foundation welcomes grant applications from nonprofit service providers or other charitable organizations serving the Rappahannock River region.

To be eligible for funding, applicant organizations must:

1. Be a tax-exempt organization under section 501 c 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.
2. Be based in or serve those in the city of Fredericksburg and/or the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania and Stafford.
3. Provide direct support services to those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to quickly deliver grants where they are most needed, the foundation has pre-screened area nonprofits that have received a grant from The Community Foundation in the last 5 years. New organizations will be swiftly vetted by foundation staff and board members.

The Community Foundation will not award grant support to organizations that, in their constitution, bylaws or practices, discriminate against a person or group because of age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief. Grantees, however, may target services to a particular population when the targeted groups require specialized programs to meet specific needs not shared by the general population.

Exclusions

The Community Foundation will not consider proposals to fund:

- Grants directly to individuals*
- Political campaigns or lobbying activities
- Endowments
- Projects that exclusively serve religious or sectarian purposes. Religious organizations providing non-religious community services will be considered.
- Annual fundraising campaigns or events
- Debt payments or legal settlements
- Reimbursement for completed projects, programs and equipment

* The Community Foundation established this fund for grants to **area nonprofit organizations** most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. **Applications to this fund on behalf of individual persons will not be accepted**, but community residents needing resources or assistance due to COVID-19 may call Rappahannock United Way’s 2-1-1 Help Line.

While The Community Foundation does not make direct grants to individuals, we can and do award funding to nonprofit organizations that provide individual financial assistance to their clients.

If you have questions regarding eligibility, please contact Casey Hu at casey.hu@cfrrr.org.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Timeline

Funds will be released on a rolling basis paced with funding availability through the outbreak and eventual recovery phases of the pandemic, making it possible to move resources quickly and adapt to evolving needs in subsequent funding cycles.

Grants will be awarded each week. Applications for immediate relief will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing, weekly basis to ensure resources are deployed rapidly where most needed. Applications are due by noon on Monday. Any applications received after noon will be considered with the next week’s funding requests.

An approval or denial notification will be sent to the grant applicant on the Monday following submission. If awarded funds, grantees must review, electronically sign and submit a Grant Agreement. Grant distribution payments will then be made electronically to the nonprofit through ACH payment. Please be certain The Community Foundation has the appropriate financial institution information in the grant application to ensure rapid payment.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applications must be submitted by noon on Monday. Grant deadlines are as follows:

Application Deadline	Grant Notification
Monday, April 13, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, April 20, 2020
Monday, April 20, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, April 27, 2020
Monday, April 27, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, May 4, 2020
Monday, May 4, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, May 11, 2020

Monday, May 11, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, May 18, 2020
Monday, May 18, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, May 25, 2020
Monday, May 25, 2020 by 12:00 PM	Monday, June 1, 2020

We will publish the names of grantees and regular updates on the foundation’s website.

Application

We have simplified our online application to facilitate rapid response. The Community Relief Fund grant application form will be available through The Community Foundation’s website at [LINK HERE]. Grant applications will be publicized in email communications directly to nonprofit organizations as well.

Organizations wishing to apply must complete the online application, including budget. Nonprofits are encouraged to submit their ACH payment information through the application to expedite the transfer of grant funds. Additional information may be requested once your application is reviewed. **Nonprofits that receive a grant must wait one application cycle before submitting additional applications.**

Nonprofits that apply but do not receive a grant may resubmit their application to be reconsidered for funding the following week(s). Organizations may only submit one application per weekly cycle.

Grant Review:

The Community Foundation will convene the Community Relief Fund Disaster Response Committee to assess urgent needs, identify short-term gaps, and gather information that will inform longer-term recovery efforts. Grantmaking decisions will be overseen by the committee. Members of the Committee consist of foundation staff and board members serving on the foundation’s Donor Services Committee. The committee will utilize a general scoring rubric for immediate relief grants based on funding priorities.

GRANTEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Grant Agreement

If approved, each grant recipient must sign an agreement that includes the following obligations:

- Public acknowledgement of The Community Foundation’s support through The Community Relief Fund
- Expenditure of the funds as specified in the application
- Return of any unused portion of the grant
- Complete final narrative and financial grant reports
- Any special conditions as mutually agreed

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit a final report on the use of grant funds using the foundation’s online report form. Reports must include numbers served and outcomes achieved. The grantee are encouraged to provide the

foundation with copies (if available) of any media releases, photographs and published material about the grant money and work it made possible.

Grantees may be asked to provide informal periodic updates on funds expended, numbers served and immediate impact. We understand needs and priorities may shift as grantees continue to respond to ongoing relief efforts. Contact the foundation to discuss potential shifts in funding area focus. The foundation prioritizes flexibility and communications during this process. A request for re-direction of any grant funds must be submitted to the foundation in writing and approval is subject to the foundation's sole discretion.

Reports are due when the project is complete, or no later than 6 months after receipt of funding.

CONTACT

If you are a nonprofit with questions about the Community Relief Fund grant application, please email Casey Hu, Director of Donor Services at casey.hu@cfrr.org.

If you would like to discuss making a gift to support our community through the Community Relief Fund, please email Teri McNally, Executive Director at terimcnally@cfrr.org.

If you have questions about The Community Foundation's COVID-19 Response, the Nonprofit Needs Assessment, or The Community Relief Fund in general, please email Ali Thomas, Programs Manager at ali.thomas@cfrr.org.

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