



American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF)

Overview:

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which establishes the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (FRF), was signed into law by the President. The ARPA provides a substantial infusion of resources to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild a stronger, more equitable economy as the country recovers.

While the pandemic affected communities across the country, it disproportionately impacted some demographic groups and exacerbated health inequities along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines. The CDC has found that racial and ethnic minorities are at increased risk for infection, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19.

Similarly, low-income and socially vulnerable communities have seen the most severe health impacts. Counties with high poverty rates also have the highest rates of infections and deaths. Low-income and minority communities also exhibit higher rates of pre-existing conditions that may contribute to an increased risk of COVID-19 mortality.

Funding will allow for communities to lay the foundation for a strong, equitable economic recovery, not only by providing immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses, but also by addressing the systemic public health and economic challenges that may have contributed to more severe impacts of the pandemic among low-income communities and people of color.

Through the FRF, Congress provided significant resources to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its economic impacts through four categories of eligible uses:

- (a) To respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;
- (b) To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers;
- (c) For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency; and
- (d) To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

While the COVID-19 public health emergency affected many aspects of American life, eligible uses under this category must be in response to the disease itself or the harmful consequences of the economic disruptions resulting from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Local Program:

Bexar County has received \$388 million in ARPA State and Local Recovery Funds (FRF). These funds are provided for Bexar County to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts.

Bexar County Commissioners Court has allocated funding through Fiscal Recovery Funds to be utilized by local organizations providing a program, service, or other assistance that responds to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts with an emphasis in providing relief to low income communities.

It has been recognized that local environmental and various socioeconomic factors, also known as Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) are critical contributors to health and well-being at the neighborhood level. SDOH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of life outcomes and risks. SDOH also contribute to wide health disparities and inequities, particularly among racial and ethnic minority and disadvantaged populations.

Purpose:

Funding from the Fiscal Recovery Funds shall respond to the direct and immediate needs of the pandemic and its negative economic impacts and, in particular, the needs of households and businesses that were disproportionately and negatively impacted by the public health emergency.

The County intends to provide funding from its FRF allocation to assist local non-profits that provide critical services to the vulnerable populations and underserved residents of the Bexar County community through the SDOH. The SDOH are the social and environmental conditions that affect health outcomes, specifically economic stability, health care access, social context, neighborhoods and built environment, and education access.

The Fiscal Recovery Funds provide resources to not only respond to the immediate harms of the pandemic but also to mitigate its longer-term impact in compounding the systemic public health and economic challenges of disproportionately impacted populations.

Scope:

Social Serving agencies whose services are in increased demand and importance for COVID-19 support are also impacted by the pandemic. To be eligible for funding, a program, service, or other assistance must:

1) Respond to the public health emergency or 2) COVID-19's negative economic impacts through the following expenditure categories:

Public Health:

COVID-19 Vaccination

COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Prevention in Congregate Settings

Personal Protective Equipment

Medical Expenses

Capital Investments to public facilities that respond to the public health emergency

Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (communications, enforcement, isolation/quarantine)

Payroll costs for Public health, safety and other public sector staff responding to COVID-19

Mental Health Services

Substance Use services

Other Public Health Services

Negative Economic Impacts:

Household Assistance: Food Programs
Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid
Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs
Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention
Job Training Assistance (sectoral job training, subsidized employment, employment supports or incentives)
Small Business Economic Assistance
Aid to Nonprofit Organizations
Aid to Tourism, Travel or Hospitality
Aid to other impacted industries
Other Economic Support

Services to Disproportionally Impacted Communities:

Education Assistance: Early Learning
Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts
Education Assistance: Academic Services
Education Assistance: Social, Emotional and Mental Health Services
Education Assistance: Other
Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care
Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting
Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families involved in Child Welfare System
Healthy Childhood Environments: Other
Housing Support: Affordable Housing
Housing Support: Services for unhoused persons
Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance
Social Determinants of Health: Other
Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators
Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation
Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions

Program Outcome:

The County has made the allocation to ensure non-profits who serve the most vulnerable populations are able to sustain their operations and have the potential for the greatest impact on the quality of life and positive outcomes for individuals and families living in Bexar County.

Funding from the FRF will help to ensure that communities have the resources needed to continue to take actions to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and bring the pandemic under control and support costs incurred in addressing public health and economic challenges resulting from the pandemic.

Funding programs to foster a strong, inclusive, and equitable recovery, especially uses with long-term benefits for health and economic outcomes.

Eligibility:

To be eligible, a program, service, or other assistance must “respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts with an emphasis on providing relief to low income communities by encouraging use of funds to:

- Address health disparities and the social determinants of health

- Investments in housing and neighborhoods to address individuals experiencing homelessness
- Address educational disparities
- Promote healthy childhood environment
- Identification of a need or negative impact from COVID-19
- Identification of a program or service that addressed the need or impact
- Public health and public safety payroll – employees must be dedicated to COVID-19 response only

Applicants Must:

- Be designated as a 501(c) 3 by the IRS for at least one year as of March 1, 2021.
- Be located in Bexar County, serve Bexar County residents and serve a public purpose.
- Agencies must carry at minimum general liability insurance, additional insurance may be required and deemed necessary by the Risk Manager.
- Meet the program design, purpose and scope.

Funding Availability:

One-year or three-year reimbursement grants will be available to social serving agencies that have established roots in our community and substantial experience working with the vulnerable populations for a term beginning on October 1, 2021. Agencies will determine the category for which they will be applying.

The County will not consider any funding request in excess of 50% of the organization’s total annual expenses as noted on their IRS form 990. This ensures that public funding is not the sole support at risk in any organization’s efforts and allows the County to provide a base leverage of at least 1-to-1.

Terms of Payment:

Grant funds will be paid to the agency as a reimbursement for allowable costs that the agency has incurred to prevent, prepare for and respond to the corona virus.

The agency will be responsible for providing required documentation to include but not limited to invoices, a detailed breakdown of costs incurred and submitted, proof of payment of all items purchased with these funds via bank or credit card statements and client data reports. Any unallowable expenditures will not be considered for reimbursement.

Each agency must agree to the terms and conditions of the award and is responsible for ensuring all Federal and State laws and regulations covering programs of this type are complied with, as well as all additional regulations and requirements imposed by the FRF program, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act under which it was authorized. Agency must also work with the County to fulfill Treasury FRF Reporting and Compliance requirements.

Application Process

The Bexar County Economic & Community Development Department has designed a simplified application process and expedited review for the distribution of these funds. We acknowledge that the needs of our community related to COVID-19 will continue to evolve and grow over time. Proposals should consider their program changes/needs that may be required in the future as the economy reopens and clients’ needs change or increase. Reimbursement for properly documented COVID-19 costs incurred since March 1, 2020 will also be considered.

Interested parties are invited to complete their application through our online grant portal, Zoomgrants. The application will provide agencies the opportunity to give a synopsis of their increased needs as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and the funding amount requested.

The Application portal will open on Monday, July 26, 2021 at 3PM for a period of 2 weeks.

Application Period	3PM July 26 th – 4 PM August 6 th
Evaluation Period	August 6 th – August 31 st
Award Announcements	September 2021
Programs Approved by Commissioners Court	October 2021

Official Notification of approved funding award will be sent to applicants on October 2021.

To Apply: https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/Bexar_County_ARPA_FRF

For Questions regarding this NOFA, contact:

Monica Martinez, Special Projects Coordinator – monicamartinez@bexar.org

Olinda Martinez, Community Development Specialist – omartinez@bexar.org

Resources:

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Interim Final Rule

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-05-17/pdf/2021-10283.pdf>

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds FAQs

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRPFAQ.pdf>

American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF) ELIGIBLE USES

Recipients should provide services to populations, households, or geographic areas disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. In identifying these disproportionately impacted communities, recipients should be able to support their determination for how the pandemic disproportionately impacted the populations, households, or geographic areas to be served.

Eligible services include:

- Addressing health disparities and the social determinants of health, including community health workers, public benefits navigators, remediation of lead paint or other lead hazards, and community violence intervention programs.
- Building stronger neighborhoods and communities, including: supportive housing and other services for individuals experiencing homelessness, development of affordable housing, and housing vouchers and assistance relocating to neighborhoods with higher levels of economic opportunity.
- Addressing educational disparities exacerbated by COVID-19, including: early learning services, increasing resources for high-poverty school districts, educational services like tutoring or afterschool programs, and supports for students' social, emotional, and mental health needs.
- Promoting healthy childhood environments, including: child care, home visiting programs for families with young children, and enhanced services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth.

Responding to COVID-19

Non-exclusive list of public health eligible activities:

- 1. COVID-19 Mitigation and Prevention**
 - a. vaccination programs
 - b. medical care
 - c. testing
 - d. contact tracing
 - e. support for isolation or quarantine
 - f. supports for vulnerable populations to access medical or public health services
 - g. public health surveillance (e.g., monitoring case trends, genomic sequencing for variants)
 - h. enforcement of public health orders
 - i. public communication efforts
 - j. enhancement to health care capacity, including through alternative care facilities
 - k. purchases of personal protective equipment
 - l. support for prevention, mitigation, or other services in congregate living facilities (e.g., nursing homes, incarceration settings, homeless shelters, group living facilities) and other key settings like schools
 - m. ventilation improvements in congregate settings, health care settings, or other key locations
 - n. enhancement of public health data systems
 - o. capital investments in public facilities to meet pandemic operational needs, such as physical plant improvements to public hospitals and health clinics or adaptations
- 2. Medical Expenses**
 - a. Care and services to address near- and longer-term needs, including genomic surveillance and including the potential for symptoms like shortness of breath to continue for weeks or months, for

multi-organ impacts from COVID-19, or for post-intensive care syndrome

3. Behavioral Health Care
 - a. mental health treatment
 - b. substance misuse treatment
 - c. other behavioral health services
 - d. hotlines or warm-lines
 - e. crisis intervention
 - f. overdose prevention
 - g. infectious disease prevention
 - h. Services or outreach to promote access to physical or behavioral health primary care and preventative medicine
4. Public Health and Safety Staff
 - a. payroll and covered benefits expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees, to the extent that their services are devoted to mitigating or responding to the COVID– 19 public health emergency
 - i. public health and safety employees may be considered entirely devoted to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency if the employee or the operating unit or division, is primarily dedicated to responding to the COVID- 19 public health emergency
 - ii. other presumptions for assessing the extent to which an employee, division, or operating unit is engaged in activities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency are allowed, provided that the recipient reassesses periodically and maintains records to support its assessment, such as payroll records, attestations from supervisors or staff, or regular work product or correspondence demonstrating work on the COVID-19 response.
5. Expenses to Improve the Design and Execution of Health and Public Health Programs: planning and analysis in order to improve programs addressing the COVID19 pandemic, including through use of targeted consumer outreach, improvements to data or technology infrastructure, impact evaluations, and data analysis
6. Eligible Uses to Address Disparities in Public Health Outcomes:

In addition to the non-exclusive list above, states/local governments may provide the below services on a **presumptively eligible** bases in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), to families in a QCT, or by Tribal governments. *Recipients may also provide these services to other populations or geographic areas that are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic*, but must support their determination that the pandemic resulted in disproportionate public health or economic outcomes to the specific populations, households, or geographic areas to be served. These are services that connect residents with health care resources and public assistance programs and build healthier environments, such as:

 - a. Funding community health workers to help community members access health services and services to address the social determinants of health;
 - b. Funding public benefits navigators to assist community members with navigating and applying for available Federal, State, and local public benefits or services;
 - c. Housing services to support healthy living environments and neighborhoods conducive to mental and physical wellness;
 - d. Remediation of lead paint or other lead hazards to reduce risk of elevated blood lead levels among children; and
 - e. Evidence-based community violence intervention programs to prevent violence and mitigate the increase in violence during the pandemic.

Responding to Negative Economic Impacts

Non-exclusive list of eligible activities:

- 1.** Assistance to impacted households. Impacted households may be presumed to be impacted by COVID if they experienced unemployment or increased food or housing insecurity, if they are low-or moderate-income experienced negative economic impacts resulting from the pandemic. Assistance may include:
 - a. food assistance
 - b. rent, mortgage, or utility assistance
 - c. counseling and legal aid to prevent eviction or homelessness
 - d. emergency assistance for burials, home repairs, weatherization, or other needs
 - e. internet access or digital literacy assistance
 - f. job training to address negative economic or public health impacts experienced due to a worker's occupation or level of training
- 2.** Assistance to impacted non-profits to adopt safer operating procedures, weather periods of closure, or mitigate financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency, including:
 - a. Grants to mitigate financial hardship such as declines in revenues or impacts of periods of business closure, for example by supporting payroll and benefits costs, costs to retain employees, mortgage, rent, or utilities costs, and other operating costs
 - b. Grants to implement COVID-19 prevention or mitigation tactics, such as physical plant changes to enable social distancing, enhanced cleaning efforts, barriers or partitions, or COVID-19 vaccination, testing, or contact tracing programs
 - c. Technical assistance, counseling, or other services to assist with business planning needs
 - d. Grants to mitigate financial hardship such as declines in revenues or impacts of periods of business closure, for example by supporting payroll and benefits costs, costs to retain employees, mortgage, rent, or utilities costs, and other operating costs
- 3.** Aid to impacted industries disproportionately and negatively impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency
 - a. Tourism, travel and hospitality have a presumed COVID impact (must still be documented), and based on that a recipient may provide aid such as supporting safe reopening of businesses in the tourism, travel, and hospitality industries and to business districts that were closed as well as aid for a planned expansion or upgrade of tourism, travel, and hospitality facilities delayed due to the pandemic.
- 4.** Building Stronger Communities through Investments in Housing and Neighborhoods
 - a. eligible bases are located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), to families in a QCT
 - b. Recipients may also provide these services to other populations or geographic areas that are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, but must support their determination that the pandemic resulted in disproportionate public health or economic outcomes to the specific populations, households, or geographic areas to be served
 - c. Services to address homelessness such as supportive housing, and to improve access to stable, affordable housing among unhoused individuals
 - d. Affordable housing development to increase supply of affordable and high-quality living units
 - e. Housing vouchers, residential counseling, or housing navigation assistance to facilitate household moves to neighborhoods with high levels of economic opportunity and mobility for low-income residents, to help residents increase their economic opportunity and reduce concentrated areas of low economic opportunity
- 5.** Addressing educational disparities, including:
 - a. New, expanded, or enhanced early learning services, including pre- kindergarten, Head Start, or

partnerships between pre-kindergarten programs and local education authorities, or administration of those services

- b. Providing assistance to high-poverty school districts to advance equitable funding across districts and geographies
 - c. Evidence-based educational services and practices to address the academic needs of students, including tutoring, summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs
 - d. Evidence-based practices to address the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students
6. Promoting healthy childhood environments, including:
- a. New or expanded high-quality childcare to provide safe and supportive care for children
 - b. Home visiting programs to provide structured visits from health, parent educators, and social service professionals to pregnant women or families with young children to offer education and assistance navigating resources for economic support, health needs, or child development
 - c. Enhanced services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth to provide support and training on child development, positive parenting, coping skills, or recovery for mental health and substance use challenges

INELIGIBLE USES

1. Pension deposits: extra payment outside of normal payment timing that reduces an unfunded liability
2. May not offset reduction in net tax revenue that results from a change in law, regulation or administrative interpretation
3. Debt service, replenishing reserves/rainy day funds or paying settlements
4. Cannot be used as a match to federal programs
5. Subject to provisions in the Uniform Guidance