

FOOD PANTRY GRANT REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PAPER

GRANT TIMELINE

January 21, 2026	Request open for Concept Proposal
February 9, 2026	Concept Papers are due by email at 5 p.m. (Required-2 pages max)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Copper Shores Community Health Foundation's (CSCHF) mission is to positively influence a healthful community through enhanced philanthropy and collaboration.

Copper Shores Community Health Foundation has partnered with the Michigan Health Endowment Fund (MHEF) to help area food pantries improve access to nutritious food for individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. This request for a concept paper seeks projects ideas aligned with one or more of the following focus areas.

1. Food Supply
2. Direct Food Assistance for Under-resourced Individuals
3. Food Pantry Capacity Building (Supplies, Equipment, etc.)

CSCHF invites nonprofit food pantries serving Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties to submit a concept paper for consideration under our Food Pantry Grant Program.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

1. Food Pantry Supplies – Purchase of food (fresh, frozen, shelf-stable) to supplement inventory.
2. Direct Food Assistance – programs that directly increase access to foods for individuals and families, including:
 - a. Emergency food distribution
 - b. Programs addressing gaps when food pantry access is unavailable.
3. Food Pantry Capacity Building – initiatives that strengthen the long-term effectiveness, sustainability, including
 - a. Refrigeration, freezers, shelving, and storage equipment, packing supplies, etc.

ELIGIBILITY AND GRANT AMOUNT

ELIGIBILITY

- Operate a food pantry or provide direct food assistance;
- Be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
(Note: Applicants must be current with their IRS tax-exempt organization determination

and have a current License to Solicit Charitable Contributions as required, unless exempt under MCL 400.283)

- Be domiciled (incorporated) in Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and/or Ontonagon counties of Michigan and serve the citizens of the same;
- Have filed their most recent 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N filing;
- Have a certified financial audit or reviewed financial statements as required by state law. Note: for all nonprofits with annual gross receipts of \$250k or less, CSCHF requests CPA prepared compiled financial statements for their most recently completed fiscal year, and;
- Have adequate and demonstrated organizational capacity to successfully execute the proposed grant, including all reporting requirements.

EXCLUDED FROM FUNDING CONSIDERATION

- Local units of government
- Public institutions of education
- Repayment or securing loans;
- Activities supporting religious organizations for religious purposes;
- Activities supporting political organizations for political purposes;
- Organizations that practice exclusivity based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status;
- Proposals in which granted funds will be used to maintain the existing program(s) or solely fill in budget gaps for current services, and;
- Individuals or families and for-profit entities.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The intent of CSCHF in extending this request is to facilitate the input needed from our nonprofit and community partners on the needs that exist in order to prioritize funding support that will be required to address the identified needs.

APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP 1: CONCEPT PAPER, REQUIRED

Applicants are required to submit a concept paper, no more than two pages, for feedback prior to receiving an invitation to submit a full proposal. Competitive concept papers will receive an invitation to submit a full proposal. Non-competitive concept papers will not be invited to apply.

Please note that concept papers longer than two pages will not be accepted.

The concept paper should include the following sections:

- Organization name and mission
- Project information:
 - Title
 - Tell us what the need is and who will be served. What health outcomes will be achieved or advanced from the project?
 - List of key partners and their roles
 - Focus area(s): Supplies, Direct Food Assistance, and/or Capacity Building
 - How the project will increase access to food or strengthen pantry operations
 - Anticipated impact on community health and wellness
 - Estimated budget (no detailed breakdown is required at this time, just tell us what the budget estimate will cover and the total amount you intend to request).

Send your concept papers to grants@coppershores.org by 5:00 p.m. on February 9, 2026. Late submissions will not be considered.

STEP 2: APPLICATION, BY INVITATION ONLY

All concept paper proposals will be reviewed by the Grants Management Committee. Following completion of the review process, selected applicants will be invited to submit a Request for Funding application. Submission of an application is contingent upon confirmation of invitation from our Grants Manager.

MORE INFORMATION AND FURTHER QUESTIONS

HELPFUL HINTS

- Clearly explain your project. Be prepared to describe the who, what, where, when, and how of the initiative. Limit the use of buzzwords and jargon throughout your proposal in favor of plain language that accurately describes your intended impact.
- Collaboration is essential. The most effective programs we support often involve multiple community partners. We'll look at whether you're engaged with relevant stakeholders, and what their participation brings to the project.
- Health outcomes are key. Connect the dots and tell us how your activities will lead to better health for members of the community. Select outcomes that will help you know how your grant is doing. The outcomes you choose should be measurable.

- Impact beyond the grant. Describe how the project has the potential to achieve long-term impact by implementing effective models, supporting needed innovation, is time-limited by design, or developing programs that can be sustainably funded or implemented beyond the completion of the grant.

If you have questions, you are urged to contact us at grants@coppershores.org or by calling 906-523-5920.