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**THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2008**  
**REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS AND**  
**TRAINING FUND GRANTS**

*States are required to use this solicitation to apply for Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants, to be used to provide training and conduct additional administrative reviews of local educational agencies that have demonstrated a high level of or a high risk for administrative error.*

**APPLICATION DUE DATE: MARCH 12, 2008**

OMB CONTROL NUMBER – 0584-0512  
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## ATTACHMENTS

**Attachment A** - I. Application Cover Page; II. Project Description (Narrative Statement) and SFA Information, i.e., name, location, schools, etc.

**Attachment B** – State Agency Project Activity and Timeline

**Checklist for the Application Package**

**Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance Instructions**

**Form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs with Instructions**

**Form SF-424B, Assurances - Non Construction Programs with Instructions**

**Certification/Disclosure Requirements Related to Lobbying with Instructions**

# **REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS AND TRAINING FUND GRANTS**

## **PURPOSE**

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, P.L. 108-265, authorizes FNS to award \$4,000,000 in grant funds beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2005 and for each of the following fiscal years thereafter to State Agencies (SAs) for administrative reviews and training of selected local educational agencies. The term “selected local educational agencies” refers to educational agencies that have demonstrated a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error. Specifically, the funds must be used for:

- Additional Administrative Reviews of local educational agencies identified by SAs as demonstrating a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error. These Administrative Reviews should be focused on those School Food Authorities (SFAs) where problems have been identified or are likely to occur and/or;
- Training to local educational agencies and SFA administrative personnel to include training in application, certification, verification, meal counting and meal claiming procedures.

This solicitation seeks proposals that identify local educational agencies that have had or are likely to experience administrative errors, and a plan for reviews or training that would be conducted to address these errors. The proposals should include specific activities focused primarily on administrative reviews that would be carried out with the funds. The proposal can incorporate other activities and training as long as they are directly related to the areas specified in the statute.

The purpose of this funding is to decrease administrative errors in those SFAs and schools identified by SAs as having problems or where problems are likely to arise. Funds authorized cannot be used to replace or augment funding allocated for existing review requirements. In addition, pursuant to Section 7(g) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, funds authorized cannot be used to replace or augment funding allocated for training in administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures) which is required to occur at a minimum of once a year.

**NOTE:** FNS is interested in serving as many SAs as possible with the limited funds available for this grant program. We encourage SAs applying for funds to structure their proposals to clearly identify a specific target number of error-prone SFAs and educational agencies. FNS will make every effort to award funding for the full amount requested by SAs that are chosen for award, but reserves the right to partially fund requests.

## **DATES**

Applications must be received **on or before 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, March 12, 2008. Applications received after this date and time will not be considered for funding.**

### **I. What are Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants?**

#### **Background**

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-265) authorizes FNS to award \$4,000,000 in grant funds beginning in FY 2005 and for each of the following FYs thereafter, to SAs for administrative reviews and training of selected local educational agencies.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of these grants is to improve program integrity and administrative accuracy by decreasing administrative errors in those local educational agencies identified by States as having problems or where problems are likely to arise.

#### **Authority**

Public Law 108-265 authorizes funding for Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants. To be eligible, SAs must identify SFAs or schools that are experiencing or are likely to experience administrative errors.

### **II. Who May Apply?**

Eligible applicants include all SAs that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP); however, priority will be given to those SAs that did not receive a grant previously. In this instance, the term SA means (a) the State educational agency and; (b) any other agency of the State which has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by the Department of Agriculture to administer the Program in schools. In instances where there are two agencies within a State, such as in the case where the public and private agencies are different, separate applications are acceptable. However, in all instances, in order to be considered, an application/proposal should be submitted by the SA(s) in response to this solicitation.

### **III. Available Grant Funds and Deadlines**

A total of \$4,000,000 is available for Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants in FY 2008. Available funds will be awarded to SAs in the form of grants; however, the submission of a request for funds does not guarantee funding.

The same amount, \$4,000,000, will be available every FY. SAs that do not meet the requirements to apply for funds this FY can apply during any of the subsequent years when the application period is open. However, competition for funds made available in subsequent years will require a new and separate proposal. SAs may reapply for funding during any or all of the years funding is available. Funds will be awarded to SAs based on the number of local educational agencies that have demonstrated a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error as determined by the SAs. However, FNS may adjust the amounts requested in the application to ensure that funds are made available at appropriate levels.

The award period for the Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants received during FY 2008 will extend through September 30, 2010. All grant funds must be obligated and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the close out of the grant) must be completed by September 30, 2010. The close out of the grant must occur 90 days later, by December 31, 2010, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not liquidated by December 31, 2010 must be returned to FNS. The final reports are due to FNS no later than December 31, 2010. Please see section IV for additional reporting requirements.

#### **IV. Administrative Requirements and Terms and Conditions**

A. Administrative Requirements. The grant program will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following Federal regulations. These include but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 3015: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements implementing OMB directives (OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments now codified at 2 CFR Part 225; OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions now codified at 2 CFR parts 215 and 220; and OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations now codified at 2 CFR Part 230);

7 CFR Part 3016: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments;

7 CFR Part 3017: Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement);

7 CFR Part 3021: Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance);

7 CFR Part 3018: Restrictions on Lobbying;

7 CFR Part 3052: (OMB Circular A-133) Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

- B. Terms and conditions. In addition to the administrative requirements mentioned above, the provisions below will also be a part of the agreement between FNS and the SA.
1. Funds authorized cannot be used to replace or augment funding allocated for existing administrative reviews and training requirements.
  2. Current expenditures of State and local funds for the review and training of local educational agencies shall not be diminished as a result of receipt of Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants.
  3. Only eligible SAs may receive funds; that is, SAs that identify local educational agencies that have demonstrated a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error.
  4. Funds authorized cannot be used for reviews or training activities that are currently carried out using State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds.
  5. Funds cannot be used to shift existing staff from their normal duties paid with SAE funds to address problem areas identified by the SA unless the staff who are reassigned to the Administrative Reviews and Training activities are replaced with additional staff in the positions that are vacant.
  6. Funds cannot be used for local level expenses associated with administrative reviews or training activities.
  7. Funds must be expended in accordance with the budget estimate submitted with the proposal, except with prior FNS approval or FNS revision. No more than ten percent of the funds budgeted by the SAs can be shifted from one cost category to another without prior approval from FNS.
  8. FNS reserves a royalty-free copyright of any materials developed with Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants. However, this does not necessarily imply any endorsement or approval of the material contents.
  9. Any change to a project that is outside the scope of an approved proposal requires prior approval by FNS.
  10. Funding for approved proposals will be provided through the Letter of Credit process in the same manner as other funds. However, SAs will be required to separately track and report these funds via a SF-269(A) Financial Status Report.
  11. FNS will obtain assurance that applicants are neither suspended nor debarred prior to making an award. If chosen, the applicant must also agree to make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to (A) maintain a drug-free workplace (including taking specific actions described at 7 CFR Sec. 3021.200 through

3021.230); and (B) identify all workplace locations where work under Federal award will be performed (7 CFR Sec. 3021.200). Since Federal entities will no longer collect a paper certification, this may include the following:

- a) Notifying all sub-grantees and contractors of the Drug Free Workplace rules,
- b) Making conforming changes to your internal procedures, directives, training materials, etc., and
- c) Incorporating the new rules into your sub-grantee monitoring practices.

12. Applicants chosen for award will also be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspensions and debarment rules found at 7 CFR Sec. 3017.300 by doing any **one** of the following:

- a) Checking the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) found at [www.epls.gov](http://www.epls.gov)
- b) Collecting a certification that the entity is neither excluded nor disqualified.  
Since a Federal certification form is no longer available, the grantee or sub-grantee electing this method must devise its own.
- c) Including a clause to this effect in the sub-grant agreement and in any procurement contract expected to equal or exceed \$25,000 awarded by the grantee or a sub-grantee under its grant or sub-grant.

13. All SAs receiving FY 2008 Administrative Reviews and Training Fund Grants are required to submit the following reports in accordance with the deadlines noted:

- a. Semiannual Financial Reports. FNS is transitioning to electronic submission of SF-269 financial data. At some point during fiscal year 2008, FNS will no longer accept paper SF-269A submissions from the grantee. Grantees will be required to electronically enter the semiannual as well as the final financial status report (SF-269A) into the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). This report must be certified by the grantee's chief fiscal officer or an officer of comparable rank. If you are selected for a grant, we will provide further instructions on electronically entering your data into FPRS. The Semiannual Financial Reports (SF-269A) are due by October 31, 2008, April 30, 2009, October 31, 2009, April 30, 2010, and October 31, 2010. A Final Financial Report SF-269A must be received by December 31, 2010, 90 days after the end of the grant period. This report must also be certified by the grantee's chief fiscal officer or an officer of comparable rank.

- b. Semiannual Progress Reports. The Semiannual Progress Reports must include (**in narrative form**): 1) a brief description of the planned activities for the report period; 2) a description of major accomplishments for each activity and completion dates; 3) a description of any deviations from the approved plan—this summary should discuss difficulties encountered and solutions developed; 4) a list of key activities planned for the next reporting period; and 5) any other unique aspects that would be useful to share including the number and names of local educational agencies that were reviewed or trained using the grant funds. An **original and one copy** of the Semiannual Progress Report must be submitted no later than October 31, 2008, April 30, 2009, October 31, 2009, April 30 2010, and October 31, 2010. The final progress report should be a narrative project summary that includes lessons learned, future implications within the State, and transferability to other States. The Final Progress Report is due by December 31, 2010.

## V. How to Submit a Proposal for Funding

To be considered for funding, Applications must be received by close of business (**5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**) on **March 12, 2008**. Applications received after this date and time will not be considered for funding.

Applicants may receive the RFA package by downloading the application from the FNS website, by downloading the application from the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website or by contacting FNS and requesting a hard copy be sent by mail.

1. **Mail or Hand Delivery.** In order to ensure timely receipt of applications by the deadline, applications may be delivered or mailed directly to FNS. Please mail or deliver one (1) original and two (2) copies of your application to:

**Deborah Shore, Grants Officer  
Grants Management Division  
Food and Nutrition Service  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738  
Alexandria, Virginia 22302**

If you opt to mail your application, we strongly suggest using a mail delivery service that guarantees delivery and allows you to track delivery to FNS.

The original must bear the original signature of your authorized representative. The original must be ready for copying, i.e., single-sided, unstapled, unbound, single spaced and on 8 ½” by 11” paper in 12 point font. Your original and copies must be on white paper. We reserve the right to reject any application containing a narrative statement that is over 1 page in length for each identified problem (see explanation below in part VII). Thus, your complete proposal must consist of no more than a **1 page narrative statement for each problem identified or activity planned plus attachments that**



**include information on the names of SFAs that will be reviewed or trained, and the number of schools within those SFAs, enrollment, etc.** (see description of narrative statement below).

2. **Electronic Submission Through Grants.Gov.** Applicants may apply for this grant directly through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If you opt to submit the application via the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website, there are a number of steps in the registration process that will be required before the application may be submitted electronically. Please be aware that in order to use the grants.gov system, the user will need to register online and obtain both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number. Thus, it is very important that users of the grants.gov system familiarize themselves with the requirements for system use. **When using the grants.gov portal to apply, we strongly recommend that you submit the online application at least two weeks before the application deadline in case there are problems with the website.** If you apply through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), you must send an email to the FNS Grant Officer, advising that your proposal has been submitted through the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) portal and that you have received a confirmation notice from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) that the application was accepted by the system. This notification to the FNS Grants Officer must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on March 12, 2008.

Regardless of the delivery method you choose, please do so sufficiently in advance of the due date to ensure your application package is received before the deadline. It is your responsibility to meet the **March 12, 2008, 5:00 p.m. EST due date**. Applications will not be accepted by fax or email. FNS will not accept revisions or additions to the application once it has been received.

All questions regarding the application should be referred to **Deborah Shore** via email at [deborah.shore@usda.gov](mailto:deborah.shore@usda.gov) or by telephone at (703) 305-2184.

## **VI. What to include in the Application**

Applications must include an SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, including a Data Universal Number (DUNS) (a DUNS number can be obtained from the Dun and Bradstreet Group), a Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA number 10.579), an application cover page (see Attachment A), a Standard Form 424(A) Budget Summary, and all required assurances. In addition, the application package should include a proposal that responds to the criteria and includes all of the proposal components. Proposals should describe in detail the SA's plan to operate a project with the FY 2008 Administrative Reviews and Training funds. The proposal should contain a description of the activities in the plan and how the SA plans to achieve each goal and objective. All requests must include the names, locations and enrollments of SFAs that have been identified as having problems or where problems are likely to arise, and a description of the activities the SA will undertake to address the identified problems. This should be addressed in both the narrative statement and the supplemental activity explanation sheets. Information provided to address the evaluation criteria must be sufficiently detailed in the narrative statement and activity sheets to demonstrate the

ability to perform the proposed activities. In addition to the required Application for Federal Assistance forms, your proposal must address the following information and must be organized as follows:

### **1. Application Cover Page**

The Application Cover Page requests evidence of the basic eligibility requirements and additional information that will be used to evaluate proposals. Please see Attachment A, section I, for the information to be included on the Application Cover Page.

### **2. Project Description (Narrative Statement)**

As part of the proposal, SAs must submit a written statement identifying the problem(s) encountered in local educational agencies. The SA **must provide an explanation of how they identified the problem(s) and describe in detail the activities that would be performed to address each of the problems.** Activities could include reviews, individual training sessions and workshops. Each problem and activity must be described on no more than one page, single spaced, 12 point font (see page A-1). In addition, a list of identified SFAs, the priority in which they will be reviewed or trained, the number of schools within each SFA, and enrollment of the SFA and each school targeted for review or training should be provided as an attachment. Also, an estimated cost of performing these activities and the number of staff days that the SA anticipates it will take to complete them must be included in the attachment page for each SFA listed (see page A-2 for suggested formatting).

### **3. Project Activity and Timeline**

The proposal should include a chart of projected activities with a timeline showing key activities or tasks and their due dates. The timeline should provide adequate/realistic periods to complete the proposed activities/tasks. A sample project activity and timeline chart is provided as Attachment B.

### **4. Budget**

A one page detailed budget summary for use of funds by the SA must be submitted as part of the application and must include amounts budgeted for each SFA targeted. The detailed budget is in addition to the SF-424(B) which is also required, and must include the amount of funds projected to be used for the different activities planned. **Please indicate the amount of funds that you are requesting by line-item in narrative form that aligns with the budget line-items. Each line item should be supported by a short narrative describing how the amount was justified.** Applicants are reminded that they are liable for any costs incurred over and above the amount awarded. FNS is under no obligation to provide additional funds in such situations.

FNS will carefully consider how funds will be used since the law requires that funds be distributed to SAs to assist them in reviewing the administrative practices and providing training to local educational agencies. **Approved funds must be obligated and expended in accordance with the amounts indicated on the approved budget, except with prior FNS approval.** No more than ten percent of the funds budgeted by the SA

can be shifted from one cost category to another without prior FNS approval or FNS revision.

**5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreements (ICRA):** Applicants claiming indirect costs **must** provide a copy of an approved ICRA for all indirect costs and a written explanation for how the indirect costs were applied to the budget. If indirect costs are not being claimed, please indicate so.

**6. Record Keeping**

In addition to the items listed above, include a brief description (**not to exceed 1 page**) of the SA's record keeping system for maintaining separate records of funds received and records pertaining to other financial operations.

**VII. Evaluation Information**

**Panel Review**

All applications that meet the deadline for submission will be screened for completeness and conformity to the requirements of this solicitation. If deemed fully responsive, the request will be considered for funding. Based on the responses to the criteria discussed below, a panel of FNS staff will determine the technical merit of each request and provide a numerical score.

**Evaluation Criteria (All applications will be evaluated using the following criteria)**

**Identification and Description of the Problem (Narrative Statement) (45 Points)**

The proposal clearly identifies the local educational agencies that present problems and describes each problem to be solved. It also provides evidence that the problems are worth solving. In addition, the SA should provide an explanation of how they identified these problems, how they plan to address them, and a cost estimate of carrying out the activity(ies) planned to address the problems. Also, the applicant's plan for project operation seems feasible and reflects a thorough understanding of the purpose of the funding. Project descriptions should detail each step necessary to improve program integrity and administrative accuracy, and all related activities and project implementation tasks should be clearly described, including the reasons for the decisions made for the activities in the plan, and how each goal and objective will be achieved.

**Staffing (10 Points)**

The roles and duties of all key staff (new and existing) are thoroughly and clearly explained including identification of the person or entity responsible for project oversight and completion. The proposal should describe how additional resources will be provided while maintaining existing staff. Also, the proposal should include an explanation of how duties covered by existing staff will be funded. Please note that funds cannot be used to fund current staff whose salaries are paid with SAE funds, unless current staff is replaced with new staff.

**Project Activity Timeline and Soundness of Program Design (10 Points)**

The proposal includes a State level project activity chart with a timeline showing key activities or tasks and their due dates. The timeline provides adequate, realistic periods to start and complete the proposed activities/tasks (see sample at Attachment B).

**Budget Appropriateness and Efficiency (35 Points)**

A level of funding appropriate for the proposal is requested. The applicant's budget demonstrates a reasonable allocation of funds. Standard Form 424A, Budget Information, and a 1 page detailed budget summary that clearly explains and justifies costs must be submitted with the application.

**Additional Points (6 Points)**

The proposal outlines a plan of intensive oversight to address problems identified by the SA. These extra points are based upon a greater emphasis on increased review activity in error prone SFAs.

**Total possible points = 106**

**VIII. Awards**

Applications will be reviewed and scored by panel evaluators. The proposals will be ranked by score starting with the highest score. The panel will present their recommendations to the selecting official based on this ranking. Awards will be considered based on rank funding order until the total available funds are committed; however, the selection official reserves the right to fund out of rank order. The selecting official may consider other factors, such as past performance on FNS grants, geographic, demographic, or socioeconomic diversity, agency priorities, etc., in addition to the scores assigned by the technical review panel in making his/her final decision. FNS also reserves the right to fund successful applications at an amount less than requested if it is judged that the application can be implemented at a lower funding level or if federal funding is not sufficient to fund all successful applications fully.

At the completion of the review and awards process, FNS will provide funding for approved applications upon receipt of a properly executed agreement and subject to available funding

## ATTACHMENT A

### FY 2008 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS AND TRAINING FUND GRANTS

#### **I. APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

(Include a 1 page cover page to your application that includes the following information)

#### **APPLICANT INFORMATION**

1. Applicant (State agency name and address):
2. Official Contact for Funding Proposal (name, title, phone number and email address):
3. Total amount of funds requested: \$\_\_\_\_\_
4. Any additional information that you feel will provide clarification and/or justification for your proposal:

#### **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

(Every application must provide the following data.)

On a separate sheet of paper (not to exceed 1 page per problem identified and planned activity), provide a narrative description of the problem, how the SA identified the problem, and the activities the SA will use to address the problem (see page A-1 for an example of suggested formatting).

Following this narrative description, list local educational agencies prioritized in the order you will address them, and provide the following information for each SFA:

- a) Number of schools in each SFA and number of schools that will be targeted for administrative reviews or training
- b) Enrollment of each SFA and enrollment of targeted schools
- c) Number of staff days the SA anticipates spending on each SFA
- d) Amount budgeted for each SFA

(See page A-2 for an example of formatting to use to provide the required information)  
A separate narrative and list must be submitted for **each type of problem/activity identified**.

## Sample Format

**Narrative Description (1 page per problem identified and planned activity) of:** (a) the Problem, (b) how the SA identified the problem, and (c) the activity(ies) the SA will use to address the problem.

**Sample Format**

List Name(s) and Location(s) of SFA(s)	# Schools in SFA and # of schools that will be monitored or trained	Enrollment of SFA and enrollment of targeted schools	Staff Days	Amount Budgeted





## **Checklist for the Application Package**

### **The application package must include:**

#### **\_\_\_\_\_ The Application for Funding**

- Cover Letter – A cover letter should be the first page of the application
- Proposal that responds to the criteria and includes all of the proposal components discussed herein;
- Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
- Standard Form 424(A), Budget Information – Non Construction Programs;
- Standard Form 424(B), Assurances – Non Construction Programs;
- Anti-Lobbying Restrictions require that an applicant submit the required certification with each new submission of an application for funding.

#### **\_\_\_\_\_ The Correct Number of Copies**

- An original bearing the original signature of the authorized representative.
- Two copies of the original application.

#### **\_\_\_\_\_ The Correct Format**

- The original must be ready for copying, i.e., single-sided, unstapled, unbound, single spaced and on 8 ½ by 11 white paper;
- Font size must be 12 point;
- Margins must be at least one inch;
- Original and copies must be on white paper;

The application and attachments cannot include videotapes, brochures, binders, folders, or sleeves.