

reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Rebecca Gordon, Senior Staff Officer, Regionalization Evaluation Services, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606; (919) 855-7741; email: [AskRegionalization@usda.gov](mailto:AskRegionalization@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The regulations in 9 CFR part 92 subpart B, “Importation of Animals and Animal Products; Procedures for Requesting BSE Risk Status Classification With Regard To Bovines” (referred to below as the regulations), set forth the process by which the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) classifies regions for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) risk. Section 92.5 of the regulations provides that all countries of the world are considered by APHIS to be in one of three BSE risk categories: Negligible risk, controlled risk, or undetermined risk. These risk categories are defined in § 92.1. Any region that is not classified by APHIS as presenting either negligible risk or controlled risk for BSE is considered to present an undetermined risk. The list of those regions classified by APHIS as having either negligible risk or controlled risk can be accessed on the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions>. The list can also be obtained by writing to APHIS at Regionalization Evaluation Services, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Under the regulations, APHIS may classify a region for BSE in one of two ways. One way is for regions that have not received a risk classification from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) to request classification by APHIS. The other way is for APHIS to concur with the classification given to a country or region by the OIE.

If the OIE has classified a region as either BSE negligible risk or BSE controlled risk, APHIS will seek information to support concurrence with the OIE classification. This information may be publicly available information, or APHIS may request that regions supply the same information given to the OIE. APHIS will announce in the **Federal Register**, subject to public comment, its intent to concur with an OIE classification.

In accordance with this process, we are giving notice in this document that

APHIS intends to concur with the OIE risk classification of the country of Ireland as a region of negligible risk for BSE.

The OIE recommendation regarding Ireland can be viewed at <https://www.oie.int/en/disease/bovine-spongiform-encephalopathy/>. The conclusions of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, with regard to Ireland, can be viewed in the “Report of the Meeting of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, February 1–11, 2021” at <https://www.oie.int/app/uploads/2021/05/a-scad-feb2021.pdf> (page 41).

After reviewing any comments that we receive, we will announce our final determination regarding the BSE classification of Ireland in the **Federal Register**, along with a discussion of and response to pertinent issues raised by commenters. If APHIS recognizes Ireland as negligible risk for BSE, the Agency will include this country on the list of regions of negligible risk for BSE that is available to the public on the Agency’s website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions>.

*Authority:* 7 U.S.C. 1622 and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 8th day of April 2022.

**Anthony Shea,**

*Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 2022-08027 Filed 4-13-22; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-34-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food and Nutrition Service

#### **Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request—Rapid Cycle Evaluation of Operational Improvements in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training (E&T) Programs**

**AGENCY:** Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on the proposed information collection. This is a new collection for the contract Rapid Cycle Evaluation of Operational Improvements in Supplemental

Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training Programs (SNAP E&T RCE). The purpose of SNAP E&T RCE is to test small-scale interventions in SNAP E&T operations or service delivery using rapid cycle evaluation (RCE).

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before June 13, 2022.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be sent to: Mehreen Ismail, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314. Comments may also be submitted via email to [Mehreen.Ismail@usda.gov](mailto:Mehreen.Ismail@usda.gov). Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of this information collection should be directed to Mehreen Ismail at 703-305-2960.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

*Title:* Rapid Cycle Evaluation of Operational Improvements in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training Programs (SNAP E&T RCE).

*Form Number:* N/A.

*OMB Number:* 0584-NEW.

*Expiration Date:* Not Yet Determined.

*Type of Request:* New Collection.

*Abstract:* In addition to providing nutrition assistance benefits to millions of low-income individuals experiencing economic hardship, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides work supports through Employment and Training (E&T)

programs that help SNAP participants gain skills and find work. State agencies are required to operate an E&T program and have considerable flexibility to determine the services they offer and populations they serve. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) seeks to ensure the quality of the services and activities offered through SNAP E&T programs by investing resources and providing technical assistance to help States build capacity, create more robust services, and increase engagement in their programs.

The Rapid Cycle Evaluation of Operational Improvements in SNAP E&T Programs (SNAP E&T RCE) evaluation will use rapid cycle evaluation (RCE) to test small-scale interventions in SNAP E&T operations or service delivery to determine their effectiveness in improving program engagement and service take-up. RCE is an approach that involves cycles of identifying, testing, and refining small-scale, low-cost operational interventions to determine their effectiveness. SNAP E&T RCE has partnered with eight sites to identify the main challenges their SNAP E&T programs face: (1) Colorado Department of Human Services, (2) Connecticut: Community Colleges, (3) District of Columbia Department of Human Services, (4) Kansas Division of Children and Families, (5) Minnesota Department of Human Services, (6) Minnesota: Hennepin County Department of Human Services, (7) Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, and (8) Rhode Island Department of Human Services. Objectives for this study include: (a) Describing how RCE can be used to improve SNAP E&T operations, service delivery and program outcomes; (b) designing and implementing RCEs to obtain impact estimates of small-scale interventions on SNAP E&T outcomes; (c) conducting an implementation evaluation; (d) assessing the scalability of small-scale interventions to SNAP E&T operations and services delivery to other SNAP E&T programs; and (e) determining and documenting the costs associated with implementing and maintaining small-scale interventions.

The SNAP E&T RCE team is using the *Learn, Innovate, and Improve* (LI<sup>2</sup>) framework to collaborate with sites, identify the challenges they want to address, and eventually design and test the interventions. The Learn phase focuses on assessing sites' needs and readiness to make changes, which informs development of solutions or strategies—the focus of the Innovate phase. The challenges the eight sites identified through the Learn phase

generally involve recruitment and outreach or participant engagement and receipt of services. The SNAP E&T RCE team worked with each site to co-create an intervention addressing one of these challenges through the Innovate phase. Examples of interventions the sites plan to test include sending text messages and emails to participants to encourage enrollment in SNAP E&T or attendance at appointments or activities, using assessments of work readiness to improve participant referrals, or enhancing case management.

After identifying challenges in each site and designing interventions for addressing them, the SNAP E&T RCE team will work with each site to define operational plans for implementing the interventions and testing, refining, and retesting selected strategies in the Improve phase. Most interventions will be evaluated using randomized control trials in which individuals eligible for the intervention will be randomly assigned to a treatment group that receives the intervention or a control group that does not. The control group will be offered the existing approach to recruiting, outreach, and engagement, depending on the focus of intervention. Once interventions have been successfully piloted to ensure they operate smoothly for the site, the SNAP E&T RCE team will provide technical assistance to sites while they implement the intervention for a period of about three to four months.

The study will gather data from administrative records, State and local SNAP administrators, and SNAP participants to evaluate the interventions' effectiveness in improving recruitment and program engagement. Where appropriate, the study will create a system for enrollment into the evaluation and random assignment. Data collected in this system may include demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, contact information, and the collection of service use data. The study will conduct a 10-minute participant survey among a total of 4,000 participants in four of the eight sites. The participant survey will be used to collect information on barriers to engaging with services and seeking employment, program satisfaction, and reasons for engagement decisions for both individuals who engaged in the E&T program and those who either never engaged or disengaged.

The study will also collect data for the implementation evaluation across all eight sites using a combination of semi-structured interviews with administrators, focus groups with participants, and staff characteristics

questionnaires with frontline intervention staff. In addition, the study will conduct in-depth interviews with participants in four of the eight sites. Data collected from administrators and staff will be used to describe how the interventions were implemented, assess the fidelity of the implementation and costs of the intervention, and identify implications for future application of similar types of changes. Additional data collected from participants will provide context to the administrative data and survey responses related to participant decisions, satisfaction, and barriers, as well as give a voice to participant backgrounds and experiences.

*Affected Public:* Members of the public affected by the data collection include Individuals and Households and State, Local, and Tribal Governments from eight sites. Respondent groups identified include: (1) Individuals eligible for SNAP E&T participation; (2) directors and managers from State and local government agencies supporting the SNAP E&T programs; and (3) staff from State and local government agencies providing direct services to SNAP E&T participants.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* The estimated total number of respondents and nonrespondents is 91,910, including 73,566 respondents and 18,344 non-respondents. The sample includes 91,528 individuals, 135 State program staff, and 247 local program staff. As part of the site interventions, FNS will contact 91,528 SNAP participants across all eight sites, out of whom 18,306 will be non-respondents.

As part of data collection activities for the evaluation, FNS will contact approximately 4,000 SNAP participants to conduct the participant survey, 2,000 of whom will have also received the intervention offered to the treatment group and 2,000 in the control group who did not receive the intervention. We expect that 80 percent of the 4,000 individuals contacted will complete the participant survey (800 will be non-respondents). Among individuals participating in the site interventions, FNS will recontact a total of 800 individuals to participate in focus groups (160 will be focus group respondents and 640 will be considered non-respondents). Among individuals participating in the site interventions, 240 individuals will also be recontacted for in-depth-interviews (including 60 respondents and 180 non-respondents). FNS will also contact 382 SNAP program staff for administrative data requests, semi-structured interviews,

and a staff characteristics survey; of the 382 contacted, 135 will be State staff and 247 will be local staff.

**Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:** SNAP participants will be asked to participate in an intervention (which includes several possible notifications), as well as a possible in-depth interview, survey (which includes several possible notifications), and focus group for an average total of 3.40 responses across all instruments or activities. State and local program staff will respond to a semi-structured interview, administrative data request, or a brief questionnaire for a total of 1.63 responses each.

**Estimated Total Annual Responses:** 249,401.

**Estimated Time per Response:** The estimated time of response for respondents varies from 1 minute to 8 hours depending on the respondent group, with an average estimated time of 0.062 hours (3.72 minutes).

**Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:** The total estimated burden on respondents and non-respondents is 17,254 hours (1,035,235 minutes). The total burden on respondents, excluding nonrespondents, is 15,458 hours (927,458 minutes).

**Cynthia Long,**

*Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service.*

[FR Doc. 2022-08011 Filed 4-13-22; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-30-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Business-Cooperative Service

[Docket #RBS-22-CO-OP-0008]

#### Notice of Solicitation of Applications for the Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant

**AGENCY:** Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of Solicitation of Applications.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces that the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (Agency) is inviting fiscal year (FY) 2022 applications for the Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant (SDGG) program, subject to the availability of funding. This notice is being issued in order to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, prepare and submit their applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within FY 2022. The purpose of this program is to provide technical assistance to socially disadvantaged groups in rural areas. Eligible applicants include cooperatives, groups of

cooperatives, and cooperative development centers. This program supports Rural Development's (RD) mission of improving the quality of life for rural Americans and commitment to directing resources to those who most need them. Detailed information can be found on the SDGG website located at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant>. Expenses incurred in developing applications are the responsibility of the applicant. An announcement on the website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/federal-funding-opportunities> will identify the amount available in FY 2022 for SDGG applications. All applicants are responsible for any expenses incurred in developing their applications.

**DATES:** Completed applications for grants must be submitted electronically by no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time June 13, 2022, through <https://www.grants.gov> to be eligible for grant funding. Please review the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html) website at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html> for instructions on the process of registering your organization as soon as possible to ensure that you are able to meet the electronic application deadline. Applications received after the deadline are not eligible for funding under this notice and will not be evaluated.

**ADDRESSES:** You are encouraged to contact your USDA Rural Development State Office well in advance of the application deadline to discuss your project and ask any questions about the application process. Contact information for State Offices can be found at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>.

Program guidance as well as application templates may be obtained at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant> or by contacting your State Office. To submit an electronic application, follow the instructions for the SDGG funding announcement located at <https://www.grants.gov>. You are strongly encouraged to file your application early and allow sufficient time to manage any technical issues that may arise.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Arti Kshirsagar, Program Management Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mail Stop-3226, Washington, DC 20250-3226, (202) 720-1400 or by email at: [arti.kshirsagar@usda.gov](mailto:arti.kshirsagar@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### Overview

**Federal Agency Name:** USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant.

**Announcement Type:** Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA).

**Assistance Listing Number:** 10.871.

**Funding Opportunity Number:** RBCS-SDGG-2022.

**Dates:** Application Deadline. Your electronic application must be received by <https://www.grants.gov> no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, by June 13, 2022, or it will not be considered for funding.

**Administrative:** The following apply to this NOSA:

(i) **Key Priorities.** The Agency encourages applicants to consider projects that will advance the following:

- Assisting Rural communities recover economically from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly disadvantaged communities;
- Ensuring all rural residents have equitable access to RD programs and benefits from RD funded projects; and
- Reducing climate pollution and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.

(ii) **Technical Assistance.** The Application Template provides specific, detailed instructions for each item of a complete application. The Agency emphasizes the importance of including every item and strongly encourages applicants to follow the instructions carefully, using the examples and illustrations in the Application Template. Prior to official submission of applications, applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from the Agency, as long as such requests are made prior to May 16, 2022. Agency contact information can be found in section D (Application and Submission Information) of this Notice.

(iii) **Hemp Related Projects.** Please note that no assistance or funding from this grant can be provided to a hemp producer unless they have a valid license issued from an approved State, Tribal or Federal plan in accordance with Subtitle G of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1621 *et seq.*). Verification of valid hemp licenses will occur at the time of award. The purpose of this program is to provide technical assistance, so funding for the production of hemp or marketing hemp production is not eligible.

(iv) **Persistent Poverty Counties.** Section 736 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Public Law 116-260, designates funding for projects