

2022 Equipment Grant Processing
Texas Dept of Agriculture (TDA)–Food & Nutrition Division

- I. Texas has an award amount of \$10,380,781. TDA intends to have the equipment grant awards announced by December 2022.
- II. TDA will use an internally designed on-line application within the Texas Department of Agriculture’s (TDA) agency website for grant applications. An invitation to apply for the grants will be emailed to all district Superintendents and Child Nutrition Directors of eligible School Food Authorities (SFA). The Word document “Application Design” is a mock-up of the grant application flow for applicants.
- III. TDA will process grant payments through its CAPPs Financial system after the School Food Authority (SFA) has completed the purchase and installation of approved equipment. To request reimbursement, SFAs will provide the following forms and information to TDA:
 - a. TDA Claim Cover sheet & the purchasing invoice.
 - b. Form 74-176 “Vendor Direct Deposit Authorization,” for TDA.
 - c. An active Unique Entity ID (UEI) issued by SAM.gov. To register with SAM.gov, the CE must go to <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.
- IV. Memo SP 14-2022 dated July 8, 2022, from USDA defines the minimum threshold for the purchase of equipment at \$1,000¹, as specified by Congress. Based on this memo, equipment requests with a “per unit value” of less than \$1,000 will be ineligible.
- V. TDA will not limit the award amount to any single SFA. The initial selection will be based on the evaluation score and a \$100,000 award limit. TDA may adjust the \$100,000 threshold based on equipment necessity.
- VI. Based on guidance from USDA’s Southwest Regional Office (SWRO), TDA will only award 2022 equipment grants to SFAs that have not received one in a prior year.
- VII. Per the USDA guidance regarding the Equipment Grants, TDA will score requests based on the following criteria:
 - a. TDA will provide additional points to schools with limited access to other financial resources. SFAs will be required to provide TDA their 2021-2022 fund balance as of August 31, 2022. SFAs with more than a 3-month average fund balance will be ineligible.
 - b. TDA will provide additional points for higher free and reduced-price percentages/CEP claiming. TDA will preload this information based on the September 2022 NSLP and SBP claim data into its application data base.
 - c. TDA will prioritize awards to school sites (not SFAs) that have not yet received a grant award.
 - d. TDA has pre-scored all eligible equipment to allow expedited application processing. The attached scoring spreadsheet demonstrates how applications and eligible equipment meet USDA requirements to:
 - 1) Improve the safety of the food served in school’s meals
 - 2) Improve overall nutrition and food quality
 - 3) Improve or expand participation in NSLP/SBP
 - 4) Improve availability of healthier food choices
 - 5) Improve overall student convenience and appeal

¹ Equipment is defined as tangible, nonexpendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. For the FY 2021 Equipment Assistance Grants, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment has been lowered to \$1,000.

- e. TDA will require SFAs to report the age of the existing equipment to be replaced with the grant funds. Priority will be provided for older or non-existent equipment.
 - f. SFAs must indicate whether the equipment requested will be used to expand the SBP.
- VIII. Scoring would be based upon a possible total of 100 points. See spreadsheet for the specific scoring criteria.
- IX. Tie-breaker process: TDA will use the following tiebreaker schematic if needed:
- a. If a site is already receiving one or more awards from the current award process (as in they submitted a request for multiple items and their 2nd, 3rd, or more requests is in the tie breaker)—the request(s) that fell into the tie breaker list would be excluded.
 - b. If a tiebreaker remains after the first process, TDA will rank requests in order of free and reduced percentages / CEP claiming percentage. The highest percentage wins.
 - c. If a tiebreaker remains after the second process, TDA will rank the SFAs on the ratio of available funds. A lower ratio indicates a lower fund balance available. The lowest available funds ratio wins.
 - d. If a tiebreaker exists after the third process, TDA will use equipment age. The oldest or non-existent equipment would be awarded.
 - e. For ties within a single CE, the CE's chosen priority would dictate the winner. If the CE has not specified a priority, TDA will award to the site with the highest enrollment so that more students may benefit from the grant award.
- X. For grant year 2022, SFAs operating Seamless Summer Option in school year 2021 – 2022 are eligible to apply.
- XI. TDA Compliance will assess equipment awards use during the Administrative Review process.
- XII. Other Requirements:
- 1. Quarterly and Final FNS-425 financial report for the grant – 30 days after the end of each quarter and 120 days after the period of performance end date.
 - 2. Monthly FFATA reporting
 - 3. Quarterly FNS-908 Performance Progress Report will be submitted to USDA.
 - 4. An annual progress report will be filed with the SWRO in October of 2022 and 2023.
 - 5. Preliminary Timeline:
 - a. 09/06/22 – USDA approval Scoring Methodology
 - b. 10/27/22– Announce upcoming grants application to SFAs.
 - c. 11/01/22 – Open application process for SFAs to submit requests.
 - d. 11/30/22 – Close application process for SFAs (11:59pm)
 - e. 12/01/22 – 12/15/22 – Scoring of application and preparing award letters and documents.
 - f. 12/21/22 – Announce Awards