



HEART: Helping Empower Area Resources Together Grant Program

Background and General Information

Frederick County maintains a strong commitment to supporting the local nonprofits that provide much needed and valuable services and programs to vulnerable populations within the community. In continued work of mitigating the impacts of the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history, Frederick County is investing funding in the nonprofit community. The Frederick County **HEART: Helping Empower Area Resources Together Grant** Program will allocate approximately \$1,500,000 in one-time funding to provide awards to eligible nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations impacted by the federal government shutdown. The HEART program is designed to support organizations, programs and activities that provide essential needs and services to Frederick County residents.

Eligible Organizations

An organization is eligible for an award if it:

- has a physical location/address in Frederick County and serves a majority (over 51%) of Frederick County residents;
- is in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service, the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation's Personal Property Tax Division; and Frederick County Government;
- was established prior to July 1, 2022, and plans to continue operating through at least June 30, 2026.

Nonprofit organizations under an umbrella (or fiscal sponsor) are not eligible to apply.

The following types of nonprofit organizations are also ineligible: churches and religious organizations; fraternal and/or civic organizations; homeowner's associations; labor unions; private, political or public foundations; cemeteries and volunteer fire departments.

Additional Requirements

- Demonstration of the impact from the federal government shutdown such as:
 - Decreased revenue (i.e., from delayed or lost grant awards)
 - Increased costs for goods or services
 - Increased costs due to increase in demand for services
 - Capacity to weather financial hardship
 - Financial insecurity
 - Challenges covering payroll, rent or mortgage, and other operating costs
 - Downsizing of staff and/or business services
- Delivers direct services and resources to the residents of Frederick County

Award Use

HEART funding is intended to be used as an immediate source of emergency funding to support nonprofit organizations. Awarded funds will be provided as a lump sum after the grant agreements are executed.

Awardees may use funding from the HEART grant awards for:

- Demonstrated need for operational expenses resulting from revenue gaps/ shortfalls; or
- Demonstrated need for operational expenses resulting from increase in services; or
- Expansion of essential direct services to Frederick County residents.

Expenditures must be reasonable in nature and used during the grant period. Costs must be incurred and paid by the awardees and have not been paid for or reimbursed by other County, State and Federal grants or other restricted donations.

Award Amounts

The grant awards for the HEART program will be based on an organization's approved operating budget. Grant sizes will range up to 10% of the nonprofit organization's annual budget for the current fiscal year (in most cases-2026), but not greater than \$50,000.

Grant Period

Beginning with the execution of a grant agreement with Frederick County and ending no later than June 30, 2026.

Application Information

Applications will use the Foundant system, Frederick County's online grant portal.

1. The HEART application will require the following attachments: A finalized budget with actual revenue and expenditures for the last two fiscal years (for most organizations that would be 2024 and 2025), and year-to-date current fiscal year (for most organizations it will 2026).
2. A PDF or screenshot of the good standing confirmation with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation.
3. A PDF or screenshot of the IRS Nonprofit Designation Letter.
4. Financial Statements for the immediate past year.
5. Most recent IRS Form 990 or E-Postcard

Application Review Process

A team of staff from the Frederick County's Grant Management Department will evaluate applications, verify eligibility requirements, and recommend award amounts. The Review Committee will make recommendations after considering the completeness of applications, organizational need, community benefit, and organizational budget size. The Review Committee will submit award recommendations to the County Executive for final review and approval.

Frederick County reserves the right to reduce or increase individual grant amounts relative to requests if demand either exceeds or does not meet available funding. Frederick County also reserves the right to request clarification or additional information as needed during the review of applications.

Application Timeline

The County anticipates the following schedule for reviewing submitted applications and determining funding awards:

November 19, 2025	Release of HEART grant application
January 8, 2026	Deadline for HEART grant application submission
January 2026	HEART application review period, announcement of awards, grant agreement execution and release of grant funding

Awardees will complete a grant agreement with the County prior to receiving their awarded funds. The grant agreement will outline the terms of the award, the reporting requirements, and important grant dates. The grant agreement will also include the requirement that awardees retain all grant documentation on spending for a period of five (5) years and agree to a County audit if required.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees will be required to submit a financial report as of March 31, 2026, and June 30, 2026. Reporting will include a summary of how the funds were used and a copy of the general ledger.

If awardees are unable to expend the entire award amount by June 30, 2026, the awardee must notify the County of the inability to expend the funds and repay to the County the unused portion of the award amount.