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I. HIGHLIGHTS

Project Description

The Community Assistance Fund (CAF), levied by the Missoula Board of County Commissioners, supports human services and establishes a safety net or continuum of services to meet basic human needs in Missoula County. Grants awarded through CAF prioritize services that address the most fundamental needs of at-risk populations, including food, shelter, medical services, and emergency transportation.

“At-risk populations” refers broadly to individuals and groups facing temporary or ongoing circumstances that limit their ability to secure basic necessities. These circumstances may include economic instability, health challenges, disability, housing insecurity or other barriers that restrict access to essential support systems. Such at-risk populations may include but are not limited to:

- Children
- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- People who live in an institutional or group center setting
- People with chronic conditions
- People who are economically disadvantaged
- People with substance use dependency
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with limited access to transportation

Eligibility

Eligible entities are 501(c)3 nonprofit health and human service organizations or governmental agencies that provide basic needs assistance to at-risk populations in Missoula County.

Project Period

The project period begins July 1, 2026, and ends June 30, 2027. Funds may not be expended or obligated prior to July 1, 2026.

Funding

The total amount available through the Community Assistance Fund has not yet been determined. The Missoula Board of County Commissioners retains sole authority to establish the amount of funding, if any, to be allocated. Accordingly, the availability of Community Assistance Fund support for fiscal year 2027 is not guaranteed. If awarded, funds are distributed on a quarterly reimbursement basis and require submission of both a Progress Report and Financial Report to document program activities and eligible expenses.

Matching funds

No matching funds are required.

Application Deadline

The deadline for submission of a complete application is 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 8, 2026.



II. SUBMISSION PROCESS

ONLINE GRANT PORTAL

Applicants seeking Community Assistance Fund grant monies will submit their applications using an online platform. This grant portal system requires that prospective applicants create an account to access and submit their application. Here are the steps:

Create an account in the Missoula County Grant Portal:

- Try to do this as soon as possible to allow time to gain familiarity with the system.
- The link to the grant portal is <http://missoula.co/grantportal>.
- See below for an image of the landing page. Note the grey “Create New Account” button in the lower left-hand corner.
- NOTE: If you already have an account, click on the blue “Log On” button and proceed.

Watch the training video and review the information about the online system:

- The training video and accompanying information is helpful to understand how to create an account and navigate an application.
- It is recommended that you invest a few minutes of your time to watch the video and get acquainted with how to navigate the online system.
- Those resources can be found here <https://support.foundant.com/hc/en-us/articles/4479853059991>
- **NOTE:** The training sections are generic about the grant portal features and navigating the system. They are not specific to the CAF grant application. However, your experience in applying for the CAF grant will be much better if you are comfortable with moving around in the system.

Accessing your application:

- Once you have created an account, you will use the grant portal when returning to work on your application and ultimately to submit the application.
- The grant portal is where you will also submit your quarterly reports.
- Note the blue “Log On” button in the lower left-hand corner of the page.
- Consider bookmarking the grant portal page for ease of access.



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Collaborating:

- The system has a new collaborator feature that allows two users to work together on a single application.
- NOTE: Applicants should avoid working simultaneously on the same application to prevent overwriting each other's changes.
- To learn how to turn on this feature, view this tutorial:
<https://support.foundant.com/hc/en-us/articles/4523887747223-Applicant-Tutorial-Collaboration>

III. APPLICATION COMPONENTS

The following components comprise a complete application package: (A) Project Overview, (B) Project Narrative, (C) Workplan, (D) Budget Detail Worksheet, (E) Budget Narrative, and (F) Attachments.

Please read the instructions and guidelines in this NOFA and throughout the online system. Pay attention to the points associated with each component. The review committee scores applications based on these points and how well the applicant answers the questions.

NOTE: Completeness and accuracy of application, as well as grantees' past performance (e.g., reports submitted on time, high quality Financial or Progress Reports), will be taken into consideration by the review committee.

(A) PROJECT OVERVIEW *No points*

This section gathers information about the project for which CAF grant funds are being requested. Online fields include:

- **Organization**
- **Project Contact:** Who will serve as the primary point of contact for project implementation and reporting?
- **Authorized Signatory:** Who can sign a contract on behalf of your organization?
- **Project Title** (*125 characters*): Project title that is succinct and to the point.
- **Synopsis** (*250 characters*): In about 30 words, provide a summary of your county-funded project that a member of the public could understand.
 - **Make sure to include:**
 - Who is being served (e.g., seniors, youth, a specific community or population).
 - How the funds will be used (e.g., to support a staff member).
 - What project or activities will the funds support (e.g., an educational program or supportive service).
 - Example: County funding supports one Operator position to run the shuttle van services that provide transportation for individuals with disabilities who are not able to use the bus route.



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- **Basic Need** (*radio button*): Per the intent of the Community Assistance Fund, select one basic need to be addressed (food, shelter, medical services, or emergency transportation).
- **Amount Requested**: How much is the applicant requesting as a CAF grant? No decimals.
- **Board of Directors Approval**: Date the applicant's Board of Directors approved the submission of the application.

(B) PROJECT NARRATIVE 60 points total (Each sub-section has its own points)

The Project Narrative section is where you provide a narrative description of the project for which you are requesting county funding. There are six sections to be completed.

1. Executive Summary (5 points) 3,000 character limit with spaces

Summarize the project for which you are seeking county support. Be concise but make sure the content can stand on its own if separated from the rest of the application.

Include the following:

- The amount of funds you are requesting.
- The problem or need.
- How your project will meet the purpose of the Community Assistance Fund (food, shelter, medical services, or emergency transportation).
- Who will be implementing the project.
- Who will be served.
- What is to be accomplished.

2. Basic Need (10 points) 4,000 character limit with spaces

Identify the problem(s) to be addressed. Make a compelling case for the need for your project based upon the purpose of the Community Assistance Fund.

- Describe how the project fits into the mission and goals of your organization.
- Explain why your project is important and necessary.
- Identify the population your project will serve and how your project meets the specific needs of that population.
- Cite current and local statistics to support your request for funding.

3. Project Design (15 points) 5,000 character limit with spaces

Describe what you plan to do, how you plan to do it, and why.

In this section, show the reviewers that you have thoroughly vetted the idea of the project and determined what it will take to accomplish its purpose.

- Explain the basis for your project and how you determined that your approach would be successful (e.g., best practices, evidence-based).
- Address how your services are coordinated with other agencies in the community and describe how the services are not duplicative.



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- If this is a new project, ensure that what you are proposing to do and that the number of clients to be served are realistic and can be achieved.
- If this is a continuation project (one for which your agency is currently receiving Community Assistance Funds), describe what has been accomplished and number of clients served since July 1, 2025 and what improvements to the project you are planning and why.
- **Driving point:** How will a grant from the Community Assistance Fund improve the outcomes of people who live in the City of Missoula and throughout Missoula County?

4. Residents served outside city limits (5 points) 1,500 character limit with spaces

Will your proposed project physically serve county residents located outside the city limits? If so, how this will occur? An example is providing housing workshops on-site in the Seeley-Swan Valley or direct delivery of food to residents in Lolo. Be specific. If county residents who are located outside of city limits must come to your location within the city for services, does your project address barriers to access? If so, please explain.

5. Project Evaluation (15 points) 4,000 character limit with spaces

Describe your overall approach to evaluating and measuring the effectiveness and impact of your project. You will be expected to report quarterly on progress made towards your goals and objectives. Reporting includes quantitative responses and a narrative description of accomplishments and challenges.

- What specific data will you collect and how will you collect it?
- How will analysis of that data show progress, success, and areas for improvement?
- Include how you will engage participants (e.g., client interviews, pre/post surveys) to assess if your project improved the outcomes for those you serve, and how that feedback informs project changes.
- How will you ensure the funds are being maximized and meeting the purpose for which they are intended?

6. Capacity (10 points) 4,000 character limit with spaces

Describe the agency's capacity for successfully implementing the proposed project.

- Why is your agency best suited for this endeavor?
- Describe the experience and expertise of specific staff who will be responsible for implementing the project for which funding is requested.
- Does your proposal leverage additional agency or other community resources?
- What other financial or in-kind resources are you using to provide basic human services to at-risk populations?



(C) WORKPLAN 20 points

The Workplan is comprised of Goals, Objectives, and Implementation activities that your organization will follow to accomplish the project for which you are seeking county funds.

- There are two separate Goal sections in the online system. You are required to complete at least one. **If you do not have a second goal, leave those sections blank.**
- The Workplan is a major component to your application and is scored based on the quality of your goal(s) and objectives.
- Outline/Structure of online layout of fields:
 - Maximum number of goals is 2.
 - Within *each* goal, there is a maximum number of 3 objectives.
 - And, within each of the objectives, you are limited to 4 rows to describe the specific steps for implementing the objective.
- **NOTE:** If you are a successful candidate and are awarded funding, **you will report on each of the goals and objectives within four quarterly Progress Reports** throughout the contract period which is the fiscal year, July through June. The fourth report will serve as the Final Report. Reports are due 20 days after the last day of each quarter.
 - **Q1** (July 1 - September 30) report due October 20, 2026
 - **Q2** (October 1 - December 31) report due January 20, 2027
 - **Q3** (January 1 - March 31) report due April 20, 2027
 - **Q4 Final Report** (April 1 - June 30) report due July 20, 2027

IMPORTANT GUIDANCE FOR THE WORKPLAN

Goal (250 characters)

A broad statement that describes what your project is trying to achieve.

- Make your goal specific to how Community Assistance Funds will be used and how the problem(s) described in the Basic Needs section will be addressed.
- Goals are clear, achievable, realistic, and concise.
- One sentence.

Example: “Reduce food insecurity for K-5 youth in Missoula County by coordinating weekly fruit distributions at Title I elementary schools.”

Objective (125 characters)

A specific milestone that describes what you plan to do to achieve your goal.

Each objective should:

- Start with “To...”
- Be specific and measurable.
- Be realistic and achievable within the grant period.
- Include a number that is quantifiable and NOT a general percentage.

Example: “To provide 300 elementary school children across at least three Title I elementary schools with access to healthy fruit during the 2026 school year.”



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The **IMPLEMENTATION** table is where you include the action steps/activities that will take place to accomplish the objective and indicate the person responsible for ensuring it happens. Show the quarter within the fiscal year during which the activity will take place (**Q1**=July, August, September; **Q2**=October, November, December; **Q3**=January, February, March; **Q4**=April, May, June). (250 characters per cell in the table)

(D) BUDGET DETAIL WORKSHEET 5 points

How will you use Community Assistance Funding? You will use the **Budget Detail Worksheet** to enter revenue sources and project costs. This is an Excel file to complete and then upload to the grant portal.

- Project costs are direct costs associated with delivering the services for the proposed project.
- Administrative fees and general overhead/indirect costs are not eligible expenses-including the personnel time for tracking, accounting, or reporting on the grant.
- Look at the second tab at the bottom of the worksheet for guidance on Allowable-Unallowable expenses.
- Commas are acceptable. No decimals.
- Explain how you calculated these costs in the **Budget Narrative** section.

NOTE: The Budget Detail Worksheet is the basis for requests for reimbursement of expenditures which you will submit each quarter throughout the fiscal year.

Instructions:

1. Download the [Budget Detail Worksheet](#)
2. Save the file with a preferred filename structure that includes your agency's name and FY27 in the filename of the saved worksheet. Example: "FY27 Fruits-N-Kids CAF Budget Detail"
3. Upload the file using the "Upload a file" button within the application located in the grant portal.

(E) BUDGET NARRATIVE 15 points

The Budget Narrative explains in detail how you arrived at the project costs for which you are seeking CAF grant funding. **NOTE:** *It is recommended you develop the Budget Narrative before you complete the Budget Detail Worksheet.*

What you'll be including in the Budget Narrative:

- **How the costs were derived.** Show the calculations step by step for each budget line item.
- **A brief written description** that explains how the funding request will accomplish the goals and objectives of the project for each budget line item.



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- Do not make the reviewer try to determine where you got the numbers and how they pertain to your project.
- Double check your work to ensure accuracy and alignment with your Budget Detail.
- **NOTE:** The Project Costs included in the Budget Narrative are for **Community Assistance Funds only**.

Below is one example of the type of information and layout you will be expected to provide for each budget line item. Examples of the information to include are shown in the online grant application for each project cost. Review those as soon as possible so you know what information you will need to gather and calculate.

Salaries & Wages Narrative

Position title: Program Coordinator

Position FTE and equivalent hours: 1 FTE (equal to 2080 hours per year)

Hourly wage: \$20.00 per hour

FTE portion supported by CAF: .25 FTE (equal to 520 hours per year)

Amount of CAF funding for position: \$10,400 (\$20 per hour x 520 hours)

Narrative: The Fruit-N-Kids Program Coordinator is supported by multiple revenue sources and .25 FTE is needed to support activities directly related to the CAF-funded project. This position conducts outreach to recruit and coordinate volunteers responsible for picking up the fruit and distributing it to the participating elementary school. The coordinator also works closely with the school administration to organize and manage the fruit distribution to the students.

(F) ATTACHMENTS (No points)

1. **Organizational Chart.**
2. **Board of Directors list** printed on agency letterhead with each director's name, title, and period of service.
3. **Certificate of insurance** with the following included per Missoula County policy:
 - a. Minimum \$1 million general liability per occurrence,
 - b. Minimum \$2 million in the aggregate for general liability coverage plus workers compensation as required by state law,
 - c. If automobiles are used in carrying out the service provided under contract, \$500,000 in auto liability is required,
 - d. Missoula County as an Additional Insured
 - e. Missoula County as a Certificate Holder (address to use: Missoula County; 200 W. Broadway; Missoula, MT 59802)



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IV. APPLICATION REVIEW and AWARD PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed through a competitive process for completeness and responsiveness addressing the purpose of the Community Assistance Fund and other requirements as set forth in this Notice of Funding Availability. The review committee is comprised of one county commissioner, community members at-large, and is staffed by a county grants administrator.

In June 2026, county administrators will receive the preliminary recommendations for funding proposed by the review committee. During this period, adjustments to those recommendations may occur, depending upon the anticipated fiscal year budget. Applicants may be requested to submit revisions to their original application and budget. Final adoption of Missoula County’s fiscal year budget typically occurs in early September after which the process for finalizing FY27 contracts with Community Assistance Fund grant awardees will begin. The contract period will be retroactive to July 1, 2026.

Tentative Timeline

The following is a preliminary timeline of activities associated with the submission, review, and award process for the Missoula County Community Assistance Fund.

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) release date	April 1, 2026
Application deadline	11:59 p.m. May 8, 2026
Staff compilation of applications	May 11-12, 2026
Citizen’s review committee reads, evaluates, and scores applications, leading to preliminary grant funding recommendations to Board of County Commissioners for consideration during development of fiscal year 2027 budget	May & June 2026
County staff notifies applicants of tentative CAF award amounts. <i>Applicants may be requested to submit revisions.</i>	July 2026
Board of County Commissioners approves final fiscal year 2027 Missoula County budget, including Community Assistance Fund.	September 2026
Staff notifies applicants of final award and fiscal year 2027 contracting process begins.	September 2026

NOTE: *The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to award funds to projects they believe are the best use of the Community Assistance Funds for the benefit of the community, regardless of an applicant’s score.*