Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Shelter and Services Program - Competitive (SSP-C) Frequently Asked Questions

This document addresses Frequently Asked Questions related to the Shelter and Services Program – Competitive (SSP-C). Applicants should refer to the SSP-C Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for full details and application requirements.

General

1. What is the purpose of FY 2024 SSP?

Congress authorized and directed SSP funding in 2024 for costs associated with providing shelter and other eligible services to noncitizen migrants who have been encountered and released by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS has committed to bolstering the capacity of non-federal entities to receive noncitizen migrants.

2. What is the difference between the two FY 2024 SSP funding opportunities, SSP-A and SSP-C?

Funding for FY 2024 SSP was included in the most recent Appropriations bill, passed on March 22, 2024. Beginning on April 12, 2024, a total of $640.9 million is available to eligible applicants through two funding opportunities: SSP-C and SSP-Allocated (SSP-A). The programmatic framework, such as objectives and priorities, allowable activities, period of performance, etc., is the same for both SSP-C and SSP-A. The only differences in the two programs are applicant eligibility and the application review and award process.

Any entity that meets the eligibility requirements outlined in the SSP-C NOFO is encouraged to apply for SSP-C. Funding for future fiscal years is determined at the discretion of Congress.

3. What legislation authorized funding for FY 2024 SSP-C?

Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2024, Pub. L. No. 118-47, Title II Security, Enforcement, and Investigations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Operations and Support.

4. How much funding is available under FY 2024 SSP-C?

The total funding available under FY 2024 SSP-C is $340.9 million.

5. Where is the FY 2024 SSP-C Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) posted?

The SSP-C NOFO is available online at www.fema.gov/grants as well as on www.grants.gov.

6. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants, as listed in the NOFO, are:

- Local governments as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.1

- Indian Tribes as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.1

- Nonprofit organizations as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.1

- The 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any agency or instrumentality thereof exclusive of local governments. (The term "state" or "state government" where used in this NOFO refers to these entities.)

Eligible applicants must demonstrate capacity, either internally or through a partnership, to carry out each SSP allowable activity they propose funding for in their application. Funding will not be provided to an applicant that charges any noncitizen migrant for services. Eligible SSP-A applicants may apply for SSP-C awards.

Subapplicants must have capacity to perform each SSP allowable activity that the applicant(s) proposes they will perform.

7. How do applicants apply?

Applying for an award is a multi-step process. Applicants are encouraged to register early in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and the FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO) system, as the registration process can take four weeks or more to complete. Registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required submission deadlines. Please refer to Section D in the FY 2024 SSP-C NOFO for detailed information and instructions.

All application materials, including FY 2024 SSP ancillary documents, will be posted on Grants.gov. Eligible applicants should submit their application through FEMA GO. For FEMA GO support, applicants should contact FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov or (877) 585-3242, Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET.

Eligible applicants must apply on FEMA's Grants Outcomes System (FEMA GO).

Completed applications must be submitted in the FEMA GO system no later than **3 p.m. ET on June 13, 2024**.

8. What is the criteria FEMA will use to review SSP-C applications?

For each eligible submission, the following criteria will be reviewed and ranked during the SSP-C application review period.

- What percent of the organization's annualized humanitarian services budget goes directly to noncitizen migrant services?

- What is the total possible capacity to serve noncitizen migrants per day?

- What type of services are being requested for funding? Applicants will only receive points if a specific primary service meets 10% or more of its submitted budget. Secondary services do not have a minimum percentage to receive points.

FEMA

- Does the organization currently (within the last 30 days) provide services to noncitizen migrants immediately (the same calendar day or no later than the following calendar day) after their release from DHS custody?

- What is the location of shelter and services facility(ies)?

Eligible applications will be awarded two bonus points for each eligible subapplicant included in the SSP-C Application Worksheet (maximum 10 possible points).

9. What are allowable costs under SSP-C?

At least one primary service is required for all eligible applications. Funds can only be used for providing services to noncitizen migrants following their release from DHS. Below are examples of allowable activities:

Primary Services

- Shelter (cots, beds, linens, shelter utilities, maintenance, housekeeping)

- Food (food items, food banks, contracted meals, storage containers, cookware, utensils)

- Transportation (e.g., transportation from DHS facility to shelter, shelter to shelter, and onward to a final destination)

- Acute medical care (basic first aid care and supplies, health screenings, over-the-counter medication)

- Personal hygiene supplies (hygiene items, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, baby wipes, diapers, etc.)

- Labor for Primary Services (inclusive of staff time not at the director/manager level or administrative)

Secondary Services

- Clothing (shirts, pants, outwear, socks, shoes, backpacks, belts)

- Renovations or modifications to existing facilities (repairs to facilities to provide services, improvements to expand capacity and services and to address safety concerns, obtaining permits and completing inspections which are necessary for specified improvements)

- Translation services (contracts and external support)

- Outreach information (communications development and distribution, contracts, printing services)

- Labor for Secondary Services (inclusive of staff time not at the director/manager level or administrative)

Management and Administration

Management and administration costs are allowable and do not count as a primary or secondary service. These may also include recordkeeping (e.g., IT assistance, contracts, and external support) and costs

associated with creating a database and/or tracking system to assist with managing SSP funds as well as cybersecurity assessments and enhancements, etc.

For a complete description of allowable activities, see the FY 2024 SSP-C NOFO on www.grants.gov.

10. What is a Period of Performance (POP) and how long is the POP for SSP-C?

The POP is the amount of time recipients have to complete proposed projects. This includes, among other requirements, that costs must be incurred, and products or services be delivered within the award's POP. For SSP-C, the POP is 36 months: October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2026.

Extensions to the POP for this program may be permitted only with prior written approval from FEMA. Recipients must request extensions prior to the expiration of the POP. Please refer to *Section H – Additional Information* of the SSP-C NOFO for more details about POP extensions.

11. What is the SSP-C application period and deadline?

The application period opened on April 12, 2024. The deadline for submission is **no later than 3 p.m. ET on June 13, 2024.** Applicants must submit their application before the application period closes.

Registering and applying for an award under this program is a multi-step process. Applicants are encouraged to register early as **the process can take <u>four or more weeks</u> to complete**. Registration should be completed in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the applicant's ability to meet the submission deadline. FEMA GO records proof of timely submissions, and no applications submitted after the deadline will be accepted unless an applicant experiencing technical problems outside of their control contacts FEMA as soon as possible and before the application deadline.

12. What should I do if I'm going to miss the application deadline?

If an application is delayed due to technical difficulties outside of your control, exigent or emergency circumstances, or statutory requirements, FEMA may extend the application deadline upon request. Applicants must contact FEMA as soon as possible and before the application deadline. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that good cause exists for the extension.

13. Is this the only time SSP-C funding will be available in FY 2024?

Yes, this is the only FY 2024 SSP-C NOFO. FEMA also released an SSP-A NOFO on April 12, 2024, and eligible applicants are encouraged to apply. Any future SSP funding is determined at the discretion of Congress.

14. What should I do to prepare before application opening?

Register your organization in SAM.gov as soon as possible. After registering, SAM.gov assigns a Unique Entity ID (UEI) to the entity, which is required for the SSP-C grant application and the entity's FEMA GO account. If your organization is already registered, verify the registration is up to date, not expired, and has the correct contact information. Expect to allow up to 30 days to receive your assigned UEI.

15. What other resources are available to address programmatic, technical, and financial questions?

- For SSP-specific questions, please e-mail FEMA-SSP@fema.dhs.gov.

- For additional technical assistance using FEMA GO, please see the [FEMA GO Startup Guide](#) and contact the FEMA GO Helpdesk at femago@fema.dhs.gov or (877) 585-3242, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.–6 p.m. ET.

- For support regarding financial matters and budgetary technical assistance, contact the Award Administration Divisions Help Desk via e-mail at [ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov.](mailto:ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov)

- SSP will be hosting a series of SSP-101 webinars for interested applicants. Please monitor [fema.gov/grants](#) for a list of webinar details and registration links.

Funding, Payments, and Reporting

16. Will the SSP-C be advanced-based funding or reimbursement?

FEMA will allow for advanced-based funding in addition to the preferred reimbursement-based funding, with the following caveats:

Reimbursement

Payment by reimbursement is the preferred method (see 2 C.F.R. Part 200.305). As a prerequisite of SSP-C approval for reimbursement requests, recipients shall include proof of purchase, in the form of a canceled check or credit card transaction, active SAM.gov registration, and a final invoice(s) in each reimbursement SSP-C payment/drawdown request. In accordance with U.S. Department of Treasury regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205, if applicable, the recipient shall maintain procedures to minimize the time between the transfer of funds and the disbursement of said funds.

Advanced Funding

Recipients may be paid in advance, provided they demonstrate the willingness and ability to maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and its disbursement by the recipient (not to exceed 30 days), and the financial management systems that meet the standards for fund control and accountability as established in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The recipient shall include invoice(s) and/or purchase orders for advance SSP-C payment/drawdown requests. In the case of advance payments, recipients submit additional documentation (e.g. A-Number Template) after the disbursement of funds. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) review requirements must be met prior to advance payments. Although advance drawdown requests are permissible, recipients remain subject to applicable federal laws in effect at the time a grant is awarded to the recipient. Governing interest requirements include the Uniform Administrative Requirements Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and the Cash Management Improvement Act (CMIA) and its implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205. Interest under CMIA will accrue from the time federal funds are credited to a recipient's account until the time the recipient pays out the funds for program purposes. For the rate to use in calculating interest, please visit Treasury Current Value rate.

17. If we are not requesting immediate reimbursement, is my organization required to provide invoices and proof of purchases at the time of application?

No. At the time of application, the SSP-C Application Worksheet (inclusive of your detailed budget) is required. Please use the SSP FY 2024 Application Worksheet – Competitive found on grants.gov when

developing your application. SSP recipients must submit proofs of purchase and additional supporting documentation when drawing down funds.

18. What is an Alien Registration Number (A-Number) Submission Template ("A-Number Template") and what role does it play in the SSP payment request process?

The SSP-C NOFO requires A-Number collection and submission to FEMA to ensure SSP-C funds are used to support noncitizen migrants encountered and released by DHS. FEMA provides an A-Number Template that recipients must use to populate A-Numbers, names, corresponding DHS release dates of the served population, and corresponding service dates of the served population. A populated A-Number Template is required when submitting a payment request.

19. How can we apply for advanced funding, and how does this affect the requirement of recording A-Numbers, as specified in the NOFO?

Applying for advanced funding will work the same way as applying for reimbursement. You must submit documentation to show what you are using the funding for and where it is going. At the time of draw down, you are required to submit proofs of purchases and any additional supporting documentation. Additional documentation (e.g., the A-Number Template) is required after submitting an advanced funding request.

20. How will you determine the amount of advanced funding an organization is eligible for?

There is no limit to how much of a recipient's award is advance funding versus reimbursement. Requests for payment will be authorized based on the requirements and eligible activities listed in the SSP-C NOFO.

21. Will a quarterly report be required, or are there additional reporting requirements?

The reporting structure is identified in the SSP-C NOFO. It includes two different reports that are due on a quarterly: the Federal Financial Report and the Performance Progress Report. When recipients submit for reimbursement, recipients must provide appropriate documentation as specified in the NOFO.

22. What if there are errors in my submitted A-Number-Template?

DHS recognizes there is a high potential for error when collecting this amount of data. As such, DHS instituted an acceptable margin of error (error rate of less than 5 percent) for A-Number reporting.

23. What happens if two SSP recipients submit A-Number Templates containing the same A-Number?

FEMA and U.S. Customs and Border Protection understand that some A-Numbers will be duplicated across SSP recipients. A-Number repetition becomes a concern when the repetition is unreasonable. For example, it is unreasonable for two recipients on opposite coasts to repeat the same A-Number for multiple overlapping service dates. However, noncitizen migrants may receive different services from different recipients on the same day.

24. Where can I access the A-Number Template and other related documents?

The A-Number Template, along with additional SSP-C documentation and resources, are located on www.grants.gov, under the related documents tab.

Allowable Activities

25. Will there be any flexibility to provide services to unprocessed migrants?

The SSP-C NOFO currently makes funds available for costs associated with providing shelter and other eligible services to only noncitizen migrants who have been encountered and released by DHS. See *Section A. 10 Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities* of the SSP-C funding notice.

26. If an entity's original budget changes due to circumstances on the ground (e.g., increased primary costs), can the recipient submit for other eligible grant expenditures?

Yes, the budget can be amended in coordination with FEMA staff.

27. How will the program handle scenarios where noncitizen migrants do not consent to providing A-Numbers?

The statute is clear that funding can only be provided for services rendered to noncitizen migrants who have been released from DHS custody. Proof of release from DHS custody is determined by forms that are provided to noncitizen migrants upon processing. Examples of these forms include the I-94, I-385, I-860 and I-862.

28. Do shelter providers need to choose between per diem reimbursements or rental expenses?

Yes, applicants will need to choose. If the building is owned by the entity, please choose per diem reimbursement. If it is rented, please choose rental expenses. If applicants are requesting funding for multiple shelters, they can choose per diem for one and rental expenses for the other.

29. Under the shelter category, what expenses are included as per diem?

The per diem rate of $12.50 covers shelter for each night of shelter provided to noncitizen migrants following their release from federal facilities. Recipients requesting per diem can also request other shelter categories as long as there is no duplication. Recipients must ensure they are not supplanting prior costs associated with the Emergency Food and Shelter Program – Humanitarian (EFSP-H) and FY 2023 SSP.

Subapplicants and Subrecipients

30. Who is considered an eligible subapplicant?

Under the FY 2024 SSP-C, eligible subapplicants may apply to and receive subawards from a non-federal entity that is applying for and receiving an SSP-C award directly from FEMA. Subapplicants must meet the criteria listed in *Section C.3 Subawards and Beneficiaries* in the funding notice to be eligible.

30. What is needed to apply for funding with subapplicants?

Applicants must submit their subapplicant's detailed budget information, along with supporting details, to be considered for SSP-C funding.

31. Are recipients required to provide funding to subrecipients?

No, there is no requirement to provide funding to subrecipients.

However, applicants are strongly encouraged to include subapplicants. Applicants will be awarded two (2) bonus points for each eligible subapplicant included in the SSP-C application worksheet (maximum 10 possible points). Upon grant award, recipients who included subapplicants as part of their SSP-C application will be required to enact that subaward.

32. Can FEMA help manage subrecipient activities?

It is the responsibility of the recipient to manage their subrecipient's spending, services provided, etc. FEMA is unable to engage in any organizational/managerial aspects of recipients' and subrecipients' working relationships with each other. Subrecipient management guidelines are established in the subaward agreement. For more information on subaward agreement requirements, please visit 2 C.F.R Part 200.