



**FY21 Community Development Block Grant
Funding Application**

Organization	Lakewood Community Services Center
Organization Type	Not-For-Profit
Address	14230 Madison Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44107
Contact Person & Title	Trish Rooney, Executive Director
Phone	216.226.6466
Email	trish@lcsclakewood.org
Board President	Leah Gary
Federal Tax ID #	34-1446497
DUNS #	615939998
Project/Program Name	CDBG-CV Food Pantry & Delivery
Total FY21 Project Budget	\$240,465
FY21 CDBG Funding Request	\$87,000

**Lakewood Community Services Center
Food Pantry**

CDBG Eligibility Criteria

Lakewood Community Services Center's **Food Pantry** satisfies the following Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) eligibility criteria and therefore is suitable for funding consideration.

CDBG National Objective

Low-Moderate Income Limited Clientele (LMC): Activities that benefit either a specific group of persons, at least 51% of who are documented as low moderate-income or a clientele presumed by HUD to be principally low moderate-income (e.g. battered spouses, senior citizens).

CDBG-Eligible Activity Category

Public Services: The provision of public services including labor, supplies, materials, and the pro rata share of the facilities where these services are provided.

HUD-Designated Performance Objective

Create Suitable Living Environments

HUD-Designated Performance Outcomes

Availability & Accessibility

I. ABSTRACT

Emergency Food Pantry & Delivery Response to COVID-19

When the Governor's stay at home order was announced in mid-March, LCSC closed its walk-in pantry and transitioned to a drive-thru/walk-up model. As one of the only food pantries remaining open and the *only* one open every day, LCSC provided this critical service to 41 zip codes throughout the county and beyond. From mid-March through end August, the monthly numbers served increased from 1,400 to well over 3,000. Accessing emergency food in this way presented some difficulties for seniors, individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities, walkers, and those relying on public transportation. Realizing that these difficulties would be exacerbated in the cold weather, LCSC made the decision to transition to an all-delivery model in order to: ensure social distancing; keep the building closed to walk-in clients; and most importantly to efficiently serve all client families with particular attention to the health and safety of those with special needs.

With CDBG-CV support from the City of Lakewood, LCSC was able to make this significant change in the way we deliver on our mission. Additional funding from the Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund, private foundations, and the United Way of Greater Cleveland enabled LCSC to: hire a part-time route manager, a part-time coordinator, purchase a new van, and improve our pantry capacity with new freezers and electrical upgrades to run them. We announced the transition through information placed in every grocery bag beginning July 1 (translated into four languages), through building signage, extensive social media, messaging to all our community partners, and messages included in every bi-weekly newsletter sent to the families of children in Lakewood City Schools.

With personnel and equipment in place, we began scheduling clients on August 1, with a service launch date of September 1. After one month, we now have 500 Lakewood households signed up and receiving twice-monthly deliveries, with new requests coming in daily. We now understand that to efficiently manage the schedules, plan the routes, schedule new clients, use both the new van and our 10-year-old van, and continue to outreach to the community, we need a full-time manager and three, and possibly, four part-time drivers. LCSC's Operations Manager will continue to source product, manage county and private funding for food, and supervise the limited number of volunteers who pre-pack shelf-stable and fresh produce and dairy daily.

The impact of COVID-19 will continue through 2021 and beyond. The ability to safely re-open the Center using volunteer support will not be possible for the same timeframe. If we do reopen, we anticipate a hybrid system in which individuals with special needs will continue to receive delivery; those who choose to present in person will be able to do so during limited hours.

Community Need/Beneficiaries: Delivery is the only safe method of addressing food insecurity in Lakewood during the pandemic. We anticipate providing emergency food to 6,000 Lakewood residents, all of whom meet HUD's low/moderate income guidelines, with a very high percentage of extremely low- income clients.

II. PROJECT NARRATIVE

- 1. Community Needs Addressed:** LCSC provides the only emergency food service to residents of Lakewood. Added to the pandemic-related requirement for social distancing was the difficulty in getting to the Center for seniors, those with disabilities, those who rely on public transportation, and those who walked, which made the move to all delivery the best decision for low-income residents in our community.
- 2. Primary Goals & Objectives:** The overriding program goal is the provision of emergency food to individuals and families in Lakewood, Rocky River and Westlake via our new all-delivery model, which is a direct outcome of the pandemic. ***Please note: CDBG funding is used to support Lakewood residents only.*** During these exceptional times, we have made the decision to increase food distribution from once every 30 days to twice each month to every household registered for delivery. As the number of clients grows, we will need to cut back to one delivery each month, but our intention is to continue to provide six (6) days of food each month, but provided in one delivery, rather than two. LCSC has the parallel goal of providing the healthiest and most user-friendly food to our clients. We have continuing success in raising funds that enable us to purchase food that is healthier than the product we can buy at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank with our county dollars. It is especially important now and well into the foreseeable future to provide fresh fruit and vegetables, lower sodium canned products, and protein.
- 3. Program Design, Uniqueness & Innovation:** The LCSC staff had many discussions about options moving forward and we all agreed that moving to our all-delivery model was the best, if not the only way to continue seamless service to those who need it most. The drive through/walk up was difficult for seniors, those with disabilities (physical and mental), and those reliant on public transportation. It became very stressful during the summer heatwave and will be untenable when the lot is icy and there is nowhere warm for people to wait for rides or buses. And social distancing is going to be with us for the foreseeable future, which means we cannot have close interaction with hundreds of individuals each week. It is especially important to deliver to our seniors, who should pay special attention to social distancing and should avoid trips to the grocery store whenever possible. Parents who now need to stay home with their children during remote learning also cannot make a trip to LCSC while the kids are in school during the day. Individuals with pre-existing conditions or health risks such as diabetes (very prevalent in low-income population) and heart issues also need to distance as much as possible. Many of our very low income families - especially single female-headed households - have had to make the difficult decision to leave their older children at home to manage the younger kids during this period of remote learning as maintaining employment is critical to households' stability. To help support these families, we have added the goal of providing food that kids can safely prepare at home without adult supervision. We have increased the supply of cereal, milk, fresh fruit, sliced bread, sliced cheese, peanut butter, jelly, and microwaveable meals to these families, thereby eliminating the need for kids to use the stove top unsupervised. These healthy meals are made possible through funding by the Healthy Lakewood Foundation and have the additional bonus of being purchased from a Lakewood small catering business that has been seriously impacted by the virus and the cancellation of events.

4. **Target Population(s):** Lakewood residents who meet HUD's Low-Mod income guidelines are the target population for LCSC's emergency food delivery. As has been the case for the past several years, over 90% of the population served fall into HUD's Extremely Low-Income category, which equates to an annual income of \$26,200 or less for a household of four (4).
5. **Geographic Service Area:** LCSC delivers to Lakewood, Rocky River and Westlake, but this CDBG request is for the Lakewood service area only.
6. **Services Provided & Delivery Strategy:** On September 1, LCSC transitioned to an all-delivery model. To accomplish this enormous change, we have added two new staff members who manage the delivery routes and make deliveries in two shifts every Monday through Friday and a third shift on Wednesday evening. We have hired a Route Manager to meet the ever-increasing demand and to adjust/add delivery routes as necessary.

Our Operations Manager remains in charge of managing the Cuyahoga County allocation of funds for the purchase of food from the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. He is responsible for weekly trips to the GCFB Marketplace (just reopened); for weekly trips to local retailers to pick up donated food; for vendor selection for food providers outside the GCFB; for managing the Senior Delivery Program, now in its 10th year; for maintaining pantry equipment and our vehicles; and for ensuring that LCSC meets the GCFB and Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland stringent food safety requirements.

Our Volunteer Coordinator/Office Manager's responsibilities have altered due to COVID-19. With only a small subset of volunteers to recruit, her responsibilities have shifted to office management and assisting staff with the technologies we have implemented that allow us to work efficiently while working remotely. She also compiles the monthly reporting to the GCFB and the Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland.

7. **Outreach Strategy & Efforts:** LCSC reaches its clients in many ways. Any new programs and services are made known through the City of Lakewood and more specifically through the city's Human Services Division. Every Lakewood City School receives program and services updates regularly and with in-home learning, the schools' Communication Director includes all our information in her bi-weekly communications to families. Lakewood churches include our information in their bulletins and online communications as well. The subsidized senior buildings provide information to their residents monthly. The libraries distribute information on site and/or include our information in books picked up at their drive thru windows. We also include information in all our delivered grocery bags. 211 United Way's First Call for Help, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and the Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland routinely make referrals. Brochures and updates are available at every church and school, at Neighborhood Family Practice, Recovery Resources, and at the Lakewood Family Health Center Navigator's office.
8. **Community Partnerships & Stakeholders:** The City of Lakewood Department of Human Services partners with LCSC on many of our services and is a primary referral source. We have a strong network of community partners including United Way, referring agencies in Lakewood and throughout the county, churches and schools, and local retailers who regularly make donations of food, even during the pandemic. At the onset of COVID-19, local businesses that had not been involved with LCSC in the past understood the increased importance of daily food distribution to residents in need and offered significant monetary support that enabled us to meet the increased demand.

9. Staffing (add rows as necessary)

Title	Hours/Week Devoted to Program	% CDBG Funded	Qualifications & Responsibilities
Operations Manager	30	92%	Oversight of federal/county/donor funds; inventory control; equipment and vehicle maintenance; adherence to food safety requirements
Delivery Route Manager	35	92%	Route design/redesign and management; supervision of Route Coordinators; sign up and schedule new clients; outreach activities; implementation of new strategies
Route Coordinator	25	92%	Pre-pack/pack for delivery; deliver groceries; ongoing communication with clients to minimize missed deliveries
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Office Manager	10	5%	Review client data entry into Pantry Trak to ensure correct data is entered; reporting to GCFB and Hunger Network; manage donor database
Executive Director	7	0%	Overall program oversight: oversight of county/federal funds and use of foundation/donor funds; supervision of staff; fundraising

10. Projected Beneficiaries (January 1 – December 31, 2021)

	Persons	Households
Total Unduplicated Persons & Households to be Served	6,000	2,600
Unduplicated Low-Moderate Income* Persons & Households to be Served	6,000	2,600

11. Program Evaluation (data collection, outcome measurement procedures & methodology)

Data Collection Tools: LCSC has very recently switched from our proprietary client database developed in Access to Pantry Trak, the GCFB's preferred client data software program used by all their partner sites. LCSC was reluctant to switch because the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services no longer requires household income as a determinant of program eligibility and does not track the number of female heads of household, client race, ethnicity or gender - all of which are required by HUD for CDBG-funded activities. The switch to Pantry Trak was a direct result of the pandemic when the Center ceased its walk-in service, called off all volunteers and could no longer enter client data at intake. Pantry Trak can be used on a cell phone and does not require a client signature. Working with the Mid-Ohio Food Bank (the Pantry Trak developers), they have been able to port over all our Access data for past/current clients and have modified the software to allow us to capture all the demographic data that HUD requires.

Outcome Measurement Procedures/Methodology: The Greater Cleveland Food Bank scores LCSC by number of meals distributed; number of pounds distributed; price per pound (measuring how well we utilize the free USDA and Ohio Food Program product to leverage our county funding). The Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland uses our demographic information as well as the number of individuals served to adjust our county dollars based on our performance vs their other partner sites. We benchmark ourselves with quarterly client surveys and our ability to adjust based on these surveys.

12. Additional Data and/or Information Not Previously Requested That Strengthens the Organization's Case for CDBG-CV Funding Support

This year, in light of the truly monumental changes to the way we provide emergency food to Lakewood residents due to COVID-19, we are requesting funding from the City of Lakewood's CDBG COVID funds instead of the usual CDBG dollars allocated for activities that support low/mod residents. There is every reason to believe that pandemic-related shifts in service delivery for all providers will continue well through 2021 and beyond. Without any proof of a viable vaccine soon - and even less assurance that it will be widely available - every service provider continues to reassess its processes and procedures. LCSC has been able to respond very quickly to the mandates of safety and social distancing in our food delivery twice in the five and a half months since the shutdown. We have no plans to open the Center for walk-in service in 2021 and most likely well beyond for many reasons: 30%+ of our clients are seniors, who should minimize their exposure to others until there is a universal vaccine; all of our volunteers are seniors, who should remain socially distanced; until schools open full time, parents will need to be home to supervise remote learning; many of our clients have mental health issues, which make it difficult for them to adhere to distancing guidelines; and clients who rely on public transportation will chose to wait in our lobby for the hour or so between buses, adding to the risk of exposure.

It is important to note that the funds requested do not duplicate any funds awarded to LCSC through the prior CDBG-CV application or from foundation funding. Please see the detail under Budget Expenses.

III. FY21 PROGRAM BUDGET – Lakewood Costs Only

1. Expenses

Expense Category ¹	Total Project (A)	CDBG Funds(B)	CDBG % of Total (B/A)
Personnel			
Salaries*	\$88,397	\$50,000	56.6%
Fringe Benefits	26,794	12,000	44.8%
Sub-Total Personnel	\$115,191	\$62,000	53.8%
Overhead & Operations			
Rent/Lease (46% of Center space)	\$17,774	15,000	84.4%
Insurance - Property	2,700		
Insurance - Liability	2,500		
Materials/Supplies (disposables)*	4,065	2,000	49.2%
Professional Services	2,750		
Utilities/Phone	5,675	3,000	52.9%
Equipment Maintenance/Repair	1,380		
Van Maintenance, Gas, Insurance	5,495		
Cleaning (COVID-level)	1,105		
Pest Control	650		
Food Purchase at GCFB	47,840		
GCFB Delivery Charges	8,740		
Food Purchase Delivery*	9,200	5,000	54.3%
Food Purchase Seniors	14,500		
Printing/Copying	1,000		
Sub-Total Overhead & Ops	\$125,374	\$25,000	20%
Total Project Costs	\$240,565	\$87,000	36.2%

¹ All program expenses reflect 92% of actual total costs based on percentage of clients served who are Lakewood residents. Total 2021 LCSC Program Expenses exclude 2021 expenses that are already funded by CDBG-CV or foundation grants.

* Salaries

- Program Manager (new hire) - 12 months' salary
- Operations Manager - 12 months' salary
- Office Manager - 12 months' salary
- Route Coordinator 1 - 6 months' salary; 6 months in 2021 supported by previous CDBG-CV grant award
- Route Coordinator 2 - 7 months' salary; 5 months in 2021 supported by Cleveland Foundation COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund grant award

* Overhead

- Materials and Food for Delivery represent 6 months only; 6 months in 2021 are supported by previous CDBG-CV grant award

2. Funding Sources

Source	Requested	Committed	Total
Agency Funds		\$10,000	\$10,000
CDBG FY20-FY21 CDBG Carry Forward Funds (Est)			
Other (Non-CDBG) Federal			0
State			0
Local			0
County		\$56,580	\$56,580
Private (Foundations, Individuals, Other)	\$44,000	\$30,000	\$74,000
Earned Revenue/Fees			0
In-Kind/Volunteer (@ \$15/Hour) *		(11,700)	(11,700)
Other: United Way		\$11,085	\$11,085
Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland		\$1,800	\$1,800
FY21 City of Lakewood CDBG Funding Request	\$87,000		\$87,000
Total Funding Sources	\$131,000	\$109,465	\$240,465

IV. FY21 BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Describe how City of Lakewood CDBG funds would be utilized to support the proposed 131,000 program. Please Note: all funds are used in support of Lakewood residents only – 92% of total

- \$62,000 to fully support the Operations Manager salary and to provide partial support for the delivery staff
- \$15,000 for overhead support
- \$2,000 for COVID-19 required disposable materials for van drivers (masks, disposable bags as we can no longer use re-usable bags)
- \$3,000 to support new phone system that allows delivery staff to robocall clients and to received calls to main LCSC phone number directly to their cell phones
- \$5,000 to purchase healthier food options during the pandemic (fresh produce not readily available at the GCFB)

2. Describe how the proposed program would function if it does not receive full amount of requested funding.

In the event our CDBG request is not fully funded, LCSC will have to secure foundation support or use agency funds above the \$10,000 that is already committed. We depend on foundation funding to support staff time dedicated to the provision of our services as well as matching funds for our ESG requests, so seeking additional support will be a challenge. In addition, United Way of Greater Cleveland made the decision in January 2020 to cut ALL their program support to EVERY agency by 50% with guaranteed support only through September 2020 while they determine their funding priorities. LCSC has used UWGC funds for 10 years to fully support our senior food delivery.

3. Describe the agency's efforts to develop/leverage other sources of funding to support the proposed program.

As indicated in the Funding Sources table above, LCSC has or is committed to securing foundation funding in the amount of \$74,000 to support the program; is using the remaining UWGC funds and Cuyahoga County funds; and has committed \$10,000 in agency funds to support the program costs.