

Fiscal Year 2024 National School Lunch Programs
Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities
EQUIPMENT AWARD OVERVIEW (EAO)
Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, (Public Law 116-260), in Fiscal year (FY) 2024 distributed funding allocations to State Agencies (SA) to provide equipment assistance to eligible School Food Authorities (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Along with additional funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (P.L. 117-2) under section §1001 (b)(4) Hawaii has been allocated a total of **\$33,859.00** to be awarded through its SA, the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) to support schools to fulfill their vital need for food equipment necessary to provide healthy and appealing meals .

Funding Priority:

The grant process will be competitive giving priority to high need schools (i.e. schools in underserved areas, schools with limited access to other resources, and age of food service equipment) where 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced price meals. If funds still remain after prioritizing all high needs applicants, schools below the 50 percent threshold may be awarded grants.

Fiscal Requirement:

Any interested SFA applying for their respective schools should be able to procure and expend grant funds by **3/30/2026**.

The number of awards will be based on the number of site-based applications and the total cost of the equipment requested by eligible SFA's that can be accommodated with the allocated grant amount. After the priorities stated in the above "Funding Priority" have been appropriately considered, the awards will then be determined, as necessary, by the scores derived from the Application form through the Equipment Grant Scoring Tool (Application form and Scoring Tool are included in the Request For Application (RFA) packet). For more information, see "Evaluation Process" on page 4.

The SFA shall provide quotes from at least 3 vendors for each piece of equipment of the same make, model, and/or specifications. Procurement must comply with Local, State and Federal procurement guidelines, whichever is more restrictive. For more information, see "Procurement Standards" on page 4 of the "Assurance of Compliance" (Form 2) document included in the RFA. Procurement review is now included in all SFA administrative reviews.

NOTE: The requested equipment cannot be purchased until an award is granted by the SA and accepted by the SFA. The awarded SFA would then receive reimbursement for its equipment after it has been properly procured and the approved documents have been submitted to the SA.

Application Due Date:

Completed applications must be postmarked, received by email, or hand delivered no later than close of business, **4:30 p.m. Friday, May 30, 2025 to:**

Mailing Address:

Alvin Tachibana
NSLPE Program Specialist
Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs
650 Iwilei Rd, Suite 270
Honolulu, HI 96817

Email: Alvin.Tachibana@k12.hi.us

Phone: (808) 784-5550

The SFA is responsible for making sure its application is accurate, completed by the designated deadline, and verified by phone or email that the application was received and accepted by HCNP prior to the deadline.

PLEASE NOTE: If the initial SFA application is received or postmarked after the deadline, it will not be accepted and will be returned to the SFA.

Equipment Definition:

- Equipment requests may include new equipment, renovation of equipment, or replacement of equipment. Equipment costs may include taxes, shipping, handling, installation, testing, and disposal costs.
- Regulations at the last updated 2 CFR Part 200.33 defines equipment 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, or a lesser amount if authorized by the SFA.
- **NOTE: Congress has specified, that for the FY 2024 Equipment Assistance Grants, the threshold for the purchase of equipment has been lowered to \$1,000.**
- All equipment procured with Grant funds must adhere to all Federal procurement regulations at 7 CFR Part 210.21 and 2 CFR Part 200.318-326, equipment must be competitively procured **following all Federal, State, and Local procurement laws**, and equipment expenses must be necessary, reasonable, allocable and allowable.

Allowable Expenses:

- Any costs that are reasonable and required to procure new or used equipment: May include costs of delivery, installation, testing, and disposition of old equipment.
- Reasonable labor costs associated with the renovation and/or installation of equipment is acceptable, but a ceiling to any labor estimates is required.
- Equipment may be purchased for a serving line, only if the hot/cold serving line is used to serve reimbursable meals.

- POS computer, software, etc. is allowed under this grant to improve or expand participation in a Child Nutrition Program (CNP) such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Unallowable Expenses:

- Kitchen renovations are considered building construction costs which cannot be paid with award funds or the nonprofit school food service account. Such costs must be paid from the SFA or school district's General Funds, capital project funds, etc.
- Administrative or indirect costs may not be claimed for reimbursement.

Equipment Grant Requirements:

This is a competitive grant; each applying SFA/school will be competing against other SFAs, as well as the schools within the same SFA.

It is recommended that the equipment to be purchased fulfills as many of the following criteria and focus areas as possible. See the attached Evaluation Scoring Tool for a breakdown of points allotted to each area.

Criteria/Focus Areas for equipment include:

- **Age/condition of current food service equipment or lack of appropriate equipment**
- **The availability of existing State and local funding for equipment purchases**
- **Strategies for adopting lunchroom changes that provide more convenience and appeal to the student population (e.g. lighted menu displays that promote exciting choices or showcase new entrees/options)**
- **Opportunities to impact nutrition and quality of meals including supporting the implementation of updated nutrition requirements for school meals.**
- **Ability of food service equipment to increase the efficiency of SFA procurement, food storage, and distribution/service.**
- **Facilitates the service and enjoyment of meals in a school that was impacted by circumstances including the pandemic recovery, the economic downturn with high inflation, the Maui wildfires, or other challenges that faced schools.**

Evaluation Process:

Applications that can best meet the priorities and criteria covered in this Request for Applications (RFA) will receive higher consideration for awards. The HCNP review committee will score eligible applications based on the information provided in the submitted application and, as necessary, determine those schools with the highest needs to award accordingly. Please see Equipment Grant Scoring Tool for point values for the various criteria.

Documentation and Record-keeping:

- The SFA must maintain detailed records/documentation of all expenditures and allocations of the awarded funds. Records/documentation includes but not limited to: purchase orders, contracts, invoices with check numbers verifying payment, cancelled checks, etc. all of which must be available upon request.
- NSLP equipment grant funds awarded must be tracked and reported separately and must not be commingled with other program funds.
- Equipment records must be maintained that include the description of the equipment, the serial number or other identification number, the source of equipment, the title holder, the acquisition date, the cost of the equipment, the location, use, and condition of the equipment, and any ultimate disposition data including the date of disposal and the sale price of the equipment
- The SFA shall retain grant files and supporting documentation for a term of three (3) years plus the current year after the final payment or the school's board policy if it is more restrictive (longer than 3 years).

Reporting Requirements:

NOTE: Reporting requirements are subject to change. HCNP will keep all grant recipients informed. The SFA (for their selected schools/sites) shall be required to provide the following information for SA's quarterly/annual progress activity reports to USDA. SFAs will be asked to submit the following information for HCNP's quarterly and annual progress reports throughout the grant life for their selected schools/sites:

- Progress in expending funds
 - Type and cost of equipment purchased
 - Accomplishments and challenges in expenditure activities
 - Potential return of equipment (if ending participation in CNP meal programs)
- The SFA for each school/site shall make arrangements with HCNP to submit original or acceptable documents confirming order with vendor, delivery, and payment in full for the equipment in order to be reimbursed for costs through the award.

Withdrawal from National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

Only sites participating in the child nutrition programs of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to receive funding for equipment purchases through this grant. If an awarded SFA or site no longer participates in the NSLP, and the awarded equipment has not fully depreciated, the SFA/site may be required to 1) Transfer the equipment to an eligible SFA/site participating in the NSLP, or 2) Return the remaining value of the equipment to the USDA.

Guidance and References:

Read and follow the guidance memo and references to develop an equipment proposal that meets all federal regulations.

- USDA memo:
 - SP 20-2024 Fiscal Year 2024 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities
- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) – Formerly, the National Food Service Management Institute, has developed a resource entitled Equipment Purchasing and Facility Design for School Nutrition Programs. This tool can help with the decision making process for procurement of food service equipment. You can find this resource on the HCNP Website at:
<https://hcnp.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NFSMI-Equipment-Purchasing-Facility-Design-for-School-Nutrition-Programs.pdf>
- Smarter Lunchrooms Movement - Creating sustainable, research-based lunchrooms that guide smarter choices. See site below for more information.
<https://www.healthyeating.org/docs/default-source/3.0-our-cause/slm-pages/slm-guide.pdf>

Timeline:

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|------------------------------------|----------------|
| ○ Applications Distributed by: | May 12, 2025 |
| ○ Applications Due (postmarked): | May 30, 2025 |
| ○ Awards Announced (no later than) | June 16, 2025 |
| ○ Equipment purchased by SFA | March 30, 2026 |

All procurement and expenditure activities must be completed by the end of FY2026 (September 30, 2026)