



AFDO-Managed Retail Program  
Standards

# Grant Program

[www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards](http://www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards)

Additional Funding Opportunity for  
CY 2021  
August 2-31, 2021

## GRANT GUIDANCE

CALENDAR YEAR 2021 AWARDS

APPLICATION PERIOD: AUGUST 2 – AUGUST 31, 2021

*Additional Funding Opportunity for CY 2021 - Advancing conformance with the FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.*

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## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR CY 2021 AUGUST 2-31, 2021 APPLICATION PERIOD**

More funding is available enabling jurisdictions additional opportunities for advancing conformance with the FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards). This opportunity is in addition to previous CY 2021 grants.

**Jurisdictions who received CY 2021 AFDO Subawards are eligible to apply for this additional CY 2021 funding opportunity.**

### **GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), with funding provided by the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Regulatory Affairs, Office of Partnerships (FDA, ORA, OP), is pleased to announce the availability of additional funds for **inspection equipment needs** to enhance conformance with the Retail Program Standards. Knowing resources are limited for all food protection partners, AFDO and FDA have worked diligently to design application, funding, and reporting systems that are streamlined and simple. Applicants to this program can expect a simple application process with streamlined reporting requirements.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information or technical support, please contact the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grants Management Team at (717) 814-9873 or [retailstandards@afdo.org](mailto:retailstandards@afdo.org).

#### **AFDO-MANAGED RETAIL PROGRAM STANDARDS GRANTS GOALS**

The following are the goals for the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards funding:

1. Supporting innovative strategies to reduce the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors,
2. Promoting uniformity and a national Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS), and
3. Sharing successful strategies among jurisdictions at all levels.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

Funding is available to Retail food safety organizations or agencies currently enrolled in the Retail Program Standards. For more information, or to enroll in the Retail Program Standards, please visit <http://afdo.org/retailstandards/enroll>. Enrollment is generally accomplished within one to three days.

Please note that enrollment in the Retail Program Standards is different and separate from enrolling for an account or applying for the *AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program*. The information hereafter applies to the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program.

## MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GRANT APPLICATIONS PER ELIGIBLE JURISDICTION

Jurisdictions having received grant funding in CY 2021 of the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program are eligible to apply to this additional portal opening.

### Category 2 - Inspection Equipment Needs

For this funding announcement in the Calendar Year 2021 grant cycle, jurisdictions can apply for one (1) project from this category.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All applications must be made through the online portal, <https://retailstandards.fluxx.io>, which will open the morning of Monday, August 2, 2021. All applications must be completed and successfully submitted through the portal by Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 7:59 PM Eastern Time.

## FUNDING CATEGORY & APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF GRANTS

The grant portal will open for Inspection Equipment Applications only. Recipients of previous 2021 awards are eligible to apply for this additional opportunity. Applicants will complete a Category 2- Inspection Equipment Needs application.

### CATEGORY 2 –INSPECTION EQUIPMENT NEEDS

The goal for this category is to help jurisdictions build capacity and help further conformance with the Retail Program Standards. Applicants must be enrolled in the Retail Program Standards and have conducted a Self-Assessment within the last five years (i.e. January 1, 2016 or later).

Equipment requests must provide a rationale for how the equipment or supplies will help them conform to the Retail Standards. Jurisdictions stating Standard 8 must link the equipment purchase to the other Standards as well. If request includes software, include a plan for support and maintenance of the software after grant funding ends. Jurisdictions must provide information regarding the equipment needs including:

- 1) Describe the equipment, its purpose, and how it will be used by the program.
- 2) Explain how the purchase of this equipment will help advance the program's conformance with the Retail Program Standards.
- 3) Describe which program standard(s) will be met and how the program standards will be advanced by this equipment.
- 4) Describe how this equipment will be used by the retail program and to what percent it will be used for retail. If dedicated 100% to the retail program, provide a statement to that effect. If not dedicated 100% to the retail program, indicate what percentage will be used to support the retail program.

## PROJECT IDEAS

This portal opening is limited to Inspection Equipment Needs. Examples of eligible equipment include but are not limited to:

- Head Covers, Thermocouples, Flashlights, Sanitation test kits, Heat sensitive tapes, Maximum registering thermometers, Computers, Software, Cameras, Black lights, Light meters, pH meters, Foodborne illness investigation kits, Sample collection kits, Data loggers.

### PROJECT IDEAS ONLINE

For additional project ideas, visit our Project Ideas page at <http://afdo.org/retailstandards/ideas> to view project titles that have been previously awarded using AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program funds.

## PROGRAM RULES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS

### PROJECT PERIOD

**The Project Period for this special funding opportunity is dependent on the award date but will begin in September 2021. All projects will end on or before March 31, 2022. Final Reports are due by May 15, 2022.**

**Project extensions will not be permitted. All projects must be completed by the project end date stated in the grant application.**

### ALLOWABLE COSTS

- Allowable costs include the equipment listed in Standard 8

### NON-ALLOWABLE COSTS

Certain expenses and costs are not allowable under the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program. Please note the following restrictions:

- **Cellphones**
- **Furniture**
- **Clothing**
- **Staffing/personnel costs**
- **Vehicles:** Costs associated with procurement of vehicles, vehicle parts/service are not allowed.
- **Construction:** Costs for construction and/or remodeling of physical structures are not allowed.
- **Food:** Expenses for food, snacks, meals, and catering are not permitted for any grant.
- **Other Agreements, Grants, & Funding Sources:** Any expenses reimbursed under other cooperative agreements, grants, contracts, and/or other funding mechanisms must remain distinct and separate from any award of the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program.
- **Promotional items and costs** are generally prohibited unless they provide a direct food safety benefit. Examples of prohibited items: gift bags, logo items (pens, notepads, shirts, hats), gift

cards, etc.

- **Purchasing of equipment and supplies for industry** is generally prohibited.
- **Liability insurance, maintenance/service agreements, etc.**
- **Insufficient Justification:** Other costs may not be funded upon reviewer evaluation. All costs should clearly support Project Outcomes, with sufficient justification provided.

### PROGRAM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

The following rules and requirements apply to the program:

1. Funding is available for State, local, tribal, and territorial retail food regulatory programs, and can be used for activities that allow the programs to purchase inspection equipment.
2. Jurisdictions must be enrolled in the Retail Program Standards to apply. To enroll in the Retail Program Standards, visit <http://afdo.org/grants/retailstandards/enroll>. Enrollment can generally be accomplished within one to three days but must be completed and verified by the FDA by June 30, 2021 to qualify for this special portal opening.
3. Jurisdictions that applied for funding and/or were awarded funding during previous grant cycles, including CY2021, are eligible to apply in this special portal opening.
4. Applications from a single jurisdiction may be made by a single Point of Contact (POC), or multiple POCs.
5. Category Specific Program Rules: Applicants for Category 2 Inspection Equipment Needs Project grants must have conducted a Self-Assessment of all nine Program Standards within the previous five years (i.e. January 1, 2016 or later).
6. For equipment purchases of single items that cost more than \$5,000 and with a useful life of more than one year, acquisitions must be made in accordance with 2 CFR 200, which has requirements for purchasing (2 CFR 200.317-320) and for record-keeping, management, and disposition (2 CFR 200.313).
7. For reasons of security and functionality, jurisdictions are required to complete all grant applications online using a modern, up-to-date browser. Users may access links to download these browsers from <https://afdo.org/grants/browsers/>
8. When completing the online application, any character count restrictions include spaces.
9. All applications must be made through the online portal, <https://retailstandards.fluxx.io>, by August 31, 2021 at 7:59 PM Eastern Time. All required fields in each application (including POC, organization, and proposal information) must be clear and complete.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By applying, your agency has made an assurance that it will comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect during the grant period, including applicable parts of 45 CFR Parts 74 and 92. Awards will be based upon the submitted and approved project applications, and are subject to the following conditions:

- The grantee **must** complete the full scope of work and all tasks outlined in the approved grant application by the Project End Date entered on the grant application. Project extensions will **not** be permitted. All projects must be completed by the project end date stated in the grant application.
- **All** changes to the scope, tasks, deliverables, or expenses of this project must be approved in advance and in writing by the AFDO Programmatic Point of Contact prior to work being modified or completed.
- **To Request a Change, complete an Amendment Request in the grant portal.** Responses to the questions are necessary:
  - 1) Explain Project Outcome changes as listed in your approved subaward application. If outcomes do not change (which makes for the strongest ask and easiest approval), make that clear.
  - 2) Explain why changes are needed, and how the changes will support the original intent of the subaward.
  - 3) Explain changes (if any) in the Amount Requested (can be lowered, but not raised). If there is no change, state that fact.
  - 4) Submit a Revised Budget.

#### PROJECT PERIOD AND EXTENSION REQUESTS

- **The Project Period for this special funding opportunity is expected to begin in September. All projects will end on or before March 31, 2022. Final Reports are due by May 15, 2022. No extensions to the project period will be allowed. Grants will be canceled if not completed by the project end date.**
- A Final Project Report must be submitted through the online grant management portal no more than 45 days after the Project End Date. As part of the Final Report, the grantee must provide a full accounting of all expenditures made with funds from this grant award (except for fixed-reimbursement projects), accompanied by the documentation specified in the *Reporting Requirements* section of this document.



## PROPOSAL SCORING

### 1. Notification

Applicants will receive an automated email notification upon each successful submittal of an application. If you do not receive an automated email upon submission, please check your Spam email folders. If you cannot find the automated email, please contact the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grants Management Team at (717) 814-9873 or [retailstandards@afdo.org](mailto:retailstandards@afdo.org) before the application deadline.

- a. Applications received by the deadline will undergo an administrative review.
- b. Applications that pass the administrative review will move to the proposal-scoring phase.
- c. Applications which are not in compliance with the Program Rules and Requirements will not move forward.
- d. For applications requiring minor administrative clarification, applicants will be notified and given the opportunity to provide clarifying information within five (5) business days after the notification.

### 2. Category 2-Inspection Equipment Needs Projects, eligible applications will be scored by three (3) reviewers, and the top-scoring eligible proposals will be funded.

#### a. Scoring Scale

Proposals for Category 2 projects will be scored using eight (8) review questions, with each question receiving a maximum of five (5) points. Projects will receive a maximum of forty (40) points, based on the following scale:

- Five (5) representing answers that show the project (or training) will clearly advance the goals of the Retail Program Standards, are well organized, and contain all the requested information.
- Four (4) representing answers that show the project (or training) will clearly advance the goals of the Retail Program Standards, but some information is unclear or missing.
- Three (3) representing answers that show the project (or training) will clearly advance the goals of the Retail Program Standards, but a significant amount of information is unclear and/or missing.
- Two (2) representing answers that show the project (or training) partially advances the goals of the Retail Program Standards, but some aspects of the project are not in alignment with the goals of the program.
- One (1) representing answers that show the project (or training) is not in alignment with the goals of the Retail Program Standards.

#### b. Scoring Criteria

Category 2 Inspection Equipment Needs Projects will be scored using the following review questions:

1. Is the project's plan, objectives, and Standards and Elements selected aligned with the goals of the Retail Program Standards, and are they realistically achievable within the funding period?
2. Does the project plan include a timeline that clearly identifies the specific

activities to be completed as part of the overall project, expected completion dates for each activity, responsible personnel, and resources needed?

3. Does the application describe the equipment, its purpose, and how it will be used by the program and explain how the purchase of this equipment will help advance the program's conformance with the Retail Program Standards?
  4. Does the application describe which program standard(s) will be met and how the program standards will be advanced by this project?
  5. Does the application describe how this equipment will be used by the retail program and to what percent it will be used for retail?
  6. Are the project outcomes measurable, achievable and clearly identified and likely to achieve greater conformance with the Retail Program Standards?
  7. Is the requested equipment realistic and necessary for successful completion of the project, and are costs reasonable and appropriate?
  8. Looking at all fields from the application, how likely is this project to succeed and advance the goals of the Retail Program Standards?
3. The FDA Joint Advisory Group has discretion when making award decisions and can approve changes to number of reviewers or reviews, funding amount, priority, project period, and other aspects of subawards to ensure this funding program meets the FDA's intended goals. Final Award decisions are made by the FDA Project Officer for the FDA Cooperative Agreement that funds this program.
4. Applications not awarded will be notified via email.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

As with applications, an online process is used for project reporting to keep the reporting burden low. Grantees must submit their reports through the online grants management portal at <https://retailstandards.fluxx.io>. Funds are generally awarded on a reimbursement basis after a Final Report is submitted and approved, but exceptions may be made based on the needs of the jurisdiction (determined on a case-by-case basis). Please visit <https://www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards/guidance/>

for complete Reporting and Reimbursement Instructions.

**Primary Point of Contact and Authorizing Official:** Update all contact changes via the online grants management portal system or submit changes to [retailstandards@afdo.org](mailto:retailstandards@afdo.org).

### FINAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS

A Final Report is required and should document completion of all project deliverables. The Final Report is due no later than 45 days after the end of the project period listed in your application, **by May 15, 2022**.

If the final budget is not as originally projected, list all variances from the original budget and provide a brief explanation for each variance. All changes to the project budget must be submitted in advance of the actual expense via email to [retailstandards@afdo.org](mailto:retailstandards@afdo.org). Note that changes to the original budget submitted with your application are not approved until you receive confirmation via email from the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Program POC.

### PROJECT PERIOD

**The Project Period for this special funding opportunity will begin in September 2021. All projects will end on or before March 31, 2022. Final Reports are due by May 15, 2022. No extensions to the project period will be allowed. Grants will be canceled if not completed by the project end date.**

## HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

1. Carefully review the details of this Grant Guidance document.
2. Verify that you are enrolled in the Voluntary National Retail Program Standards by checking the following list: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/ProgramStandards/UCM434742.xlsx>. Your jurisdiction should be listed, including the date of your most recent Self-Assessment. Your Self-Assessment must have been completed on January 1, 2016, or later. If the FDA-posted list has any errors or omissions, please contact the FDA Regional Food Specialist assigned to your geographic area at: <https://www.fda.gov/food/voluntary-national-retail-food->

[regulatory-program-standards/directory-fda-retail-food-specialists](#).

3. Gather the required information necessary to answer the questions listed in the *Step-by-Step Application Guidance* (below).
4. Confirm that your computer meets the minimum browser requirements to ensure security and functionality with the system. We recommend Google Chrome or any of the other current browsers listed at <https://afdo.org/grants/browsers/>.
5. Complete an online application using the grants management portal at <https://retailstandards.fluxx.io>.
6. All applications must be submitted by the August 31, 2021 7:59 PM Eastern Time deadline. Awards will be granted in approximately 30 days from application date.

## STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION GUIDANCE

### BEST PRACTICES

The following are a few best practices:

- Use your existing username and password, and proceed directly to *STEP 4 – APPLY FOR A GRANT* below if you have applied for or have been awarded a grant in previous cycles (since February 2014). Your contact information, including email address, must have remained the same to proceed to Step 4. Please contact the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Team at (717) 814-9873 if your phone number or email address has changed, or if you cannot find your username. Your password can be reset from the login page of the grant portal.
- Many applicants find it helpful to gather the required information into a word processing document, and then cut and paste that information into the grant portal. This may be especially helpful if you have Internet connection issues or have limited time to access the portal.
- Once you begin to type (or copy and paste) information into the portal, be sure to periodically click the “**Save**” button at the bottom of the screen. After clicking the “**Save**” button, you may log out of the system if necessary, without losing your information. Saved applications may be viewed by clicking “**Draft Applications**” under the “Applications” heading in the menu on the left panel of your dashboard.
- Your application cannot be submitted until you complete all required fields. Once you have completed all required fields, you should click the “**Submit**” button at the bottom of the screen. Do not click the “**Submit**” button until your application is complete.

### STEP 1 – ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

From <http://retailstandards.fluxx.io>, select the button “**New User Registration**” and take the Eligibility Quiz (as described in *Best Practices* above, users with an existing username can skip to *STEP 4 – APPLY FOR A GRANT* below).

### STEP 2 – LETTER OF INTENT/ACCOUNT REGISTRATION

Register as a Point of Contact (POC) for your jurisdiction through the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards grant portal. This step only appears if all answers to the Eligibility Quiz in Step 1 are answered as “Yes.”

### STEP 3 – RECEIVE YOUR USERNAME AND PASSWORD

Within two (2) business days of registration (but normally sooner, often within 30 minutes) you will receive an email with your username and a password. This email will come to the POC email address you entered during registration. Once you receive these credentials, you may log into the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards grants management portal and begin working on your application(s).

Be sure to save your username and password, as these credentials will be used after you submit to check the status of your application(s). IN RARE CASES, SOME EMAILS ARE FILTERED OUT OR SENT TO JUNK FOLDERS. IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE AN EMAIL WITH YOUR USERNAME AND PASSWORD WITHIN TWO (2) DAYS OF REGISTRATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE AFDO-MANAGED RETAIL PROGRAM STANDARDS GRANTS MANAGEMENT TEAM.

### STEP 4 – APPLY FOR A GRANT

Complete your grant application(s) by using your username and password to log into the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grant Portal at <https://retailstandards.fluxx.io>. Multiple POCs from a single jurisdiction may register and apply for grants through this program but they should coordinate to ensure they do not apply for more than one (1) grant in Category 2.

Once you log into your user dashboard, click “Apply Now” from the menu on the left side of the screen. Then select Category 2-Inspection Equipment Needs to begin the application:

After selecting a grant category, you may begin entering all required information.

### STEP 5 – SAVE AND SUBMIT

Once you have entered all the required information in Steps 3 and 4, carefully review the information you have entered. Click the blue “**Save**” button at the bottom right corner of your screen (we recommend that you save often during the application process to ensure your work is captured). Note: Saved applications may be viewed by clicking “**Draft Applications**” under the “Applications” heading in the menu on the left panel of your dashboard.

Your application cannot be submitted until you complete all required fields. To make changes to a saved application, click the “**Edit**” button at the top right corner of your screen. Before the grant program deadline, once you have reviewed your application and are confident the information entered into all fields is correct, clear, and complete, click the green “**Submit**” button in the bottom right corner of your screen to submit your application. A “Note for Submit” box will appear, but it is not required to enter any notes. Click “**OK**”.

Before leaving the Application Portal, allow your screen to refresh (you may have to click on one or more “Update Available” pop-ups), and assure your application moves from the “Draft Applications” section of the Portal to the “Submitted for Review” section. You should also receive a system generated email confirming the submittal of each application, shortly after it is submitted (if you do not receive a confirming email, please check your email SPAM folder).

If you do not receive confirmation of your submission, please contact the AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grants Management Team at (717) 814-9873 or [retailstandards@afdo.org](mailto:retailstandards@afdo.org), before the end date of the open application period.

## APPENDIX A - IMPORTANT WEB LINKS

AFDO-MANAGED RETAIL STANDARDS GRANTS HOMEPAGE –

<https://www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards/>

All the information for this grant program, including the latest information and program updates, and access to the grant portal, can be found at this site.

FDA RETAIL PROGRAM STANDARDS INFORMATION –

<https://www.fda.gov/food/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards-november-2019>

This is a link to the official FDA site, with comprehensive information regarding the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards [the Retail Program Standards].

ENROLLING IN THE RETAIL PROGRAM STANDARDS –

<https://www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards/enroll/>

If your jurisdiction is not already registered, visit this site to register your jurisdiction in the FDA Retail Program Standards. Registration is required to be eligible for this grant program.

FDA RETAIL FOOD SPECIALISTS – <https://www.fda.gov/food/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards/directory-fda-retail-food-specialists>

Find the name and contact information for the FDA Retail Food Specialist assigned to your geographic area. This person can assist your jurisdiction with registration and guidance as you pursue conformance with the Retail Program Standards.

AFDO-MANAGED RETAIL STANDARDS GRANT PORTAL

[https://retailstandards.fluxx.io/user\\_sessions/new](https://retailstandards.fluxx.io/user_sessions/new)

This link leads directly to the grant portal where you can register and apply for grants for this FDA-funded opportunity. The portal will be open for new applications from May 17, 2021 until 7:59 PM ET on June 4, 2021. This portal can also be reached through the FDA & AFDO-Managed Retail Program Standards Grants homepage.

DOWNLOAD A MODERN BROWSER – <https://www.afdo.org/grants/browsers/>The grants management portal has minimum requirements for security and functionality reasons. Utilize this link to access and download a modern browser that is compatible with the system. Contact your jurisdiction's information technology office for assistance.

PROJECT IDEAS – <https://www.afdo.org/grants/retailstandards/ideas/>

This page provides additional project ideas based on funded projects from previous years.