

COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach & Education Grant for Texas Rural Health Clinics

FAQ

Q: How can I access the grant application?

A: Go to <https://www.torchnet.org/availablegrants.html>

Q: Who are eligible applicants for this grant funding program?

A: Current, operating Medicare Certified Rural Health Clinics in Texas with an active CCN# are eligible. The RHC may be a provider-based or an independent/freestanding clinic.

Q: Our hospital or health system operates multiple RHCs. Can each RHC apply for this opportunity?

A: Yes. Each RHC with its own CCN# can apply separately for this grant program. Each RHC must submit its own separate application.

Q: How much funding is available through Tier-1 and Tier-2?

A: Applicant may apply for up to \$70,000 for Tier-1 and up to \$180,000 for Tier-2. The minimum request for Tier-1 must be at least \$50,000 and the minimum request for Tier-2 must be at least \$100,000. Up to 94 grants may be awarded under Tier-1 and up to 35 grants may be awarded under Tier-2.

Q: Is there a match requirement?

A: No.

Q: Will we be required to spend a certain amount of funding by a certain date?

A: No. Funding is available until June 2024.

Q: Is this a cost-reimbursement grant?

A: Yes. RHCs must submit monthly invoices along with sufficient documentation to the TORCH Foundation for consideration for reimbursement. Grant funding will not include pre-award costs incurred prior to the date of contract execution.

Q: Can an RHC apply for both Tier-1 funding and Tier-2 funding?

A: No, an Applicant must select to apply for either Tier-1 funding or Tier-2 funding, but not both.

Q: Can an RHC submit more than one application?

A: No.

Q: When does this grant start and when does it end?

A: This grant starts upon the execution of the Subaward Agreement (when both TORCH Foundation and Applicant have signed). Grant funding runs through June 30, 2024, when the program ends.

Q: Who qualifies as a healthcare personnel for whom the salaries and benefits are reimbursable under this grant?

A: For the purpose of this grant, a qualified healthcare personnel is any healthcare staff who are able to primarily administer a COVID-19 vaccine.

Q: Does the healthcare personnel have to be a full-time, employed FTE of the clinic? Can a part-time staff or a contracted staff qualify for reimbursement under this grant?

A: No, the healthcare personnel does not have to be a full-time, employed FTE of the clinic. A part-time or contracted staff may qualify for reimbursement under this program.

Q: How does a clinic show or attest that assigned healthcare personnel/FTE is working on activities related to this grant?

A: The funded RHC must submit a signed timesheet (see Attachment 5 to the Subaward Agreement) monthly along with the request for reimbursement to show the time each personnel spent on activities supported by this grant.

Q: Is there a minimum of time that each healthcare personnel assigned to this grant has to spend on COVID-19 related activities to be eligible for reimbursement?

A: No – there is no minimum or maximum amount of time (or percent of FTE) that each personnel is required to devote to this grant.

Q: For Tier-1, can grant funding be used for expenses outside of personnel salaries and benefits? For example, if the RHC organizes/coordinates/hosts a community outreach, education and/or vaccination event that provides access to multiple vaccines, including COVID-19, are expenses such as venue cost, supplies, food, entertainment, and travel reimbursable?

A: Grant funds cannot pay for food or beverages at events or for any entertainment costs. Under Tier-2, funding can be used to provide venue rental or leasing costs that is required to provide the grant services. Single day travel mileage reimbursement is allowed, but food costs for one day of travel are not allowed. Supplies are allowed. Currently, COVID-19 vaccine administration supplies are included in each COVID-19 vaccine order and are not reimbursable under this grant. The purchase of ancillary supplies, including gloves, band-aids, etc. are allowed.

Q: Are clinics funded through this grant required to educate, train and/or administer only COVID-19 vaccines, or can COVID-19 funded healthcare staff provide co-administration of other vaccines?

A: If clinically appropriate, qualified healthcare staff hired and funded with COVID-19 funds may co-administer non-COVID-19 Advisory Committee Immunization Program- (ACIP-) approved child and adult vaccinations. For questions about ACIP recommendations and to see a list of recommendations, see the [ACIP Vaccine Recommendations | CDC](#).

Q: Are marketing costs, such as billboards; radio or television ads; multi-media campaign, social media campaign; or collateral development, production, language translation, printing, distribution (mailing), to promote the clinic and vaccination (including but not exclusive to COVID-19) eligible for reimbursement under this grant?

A: Yes. At least 51% of any marketing costs must be for and about COVID-19. The CDC and DSHS have created materials in multiple languages and may have what the RHC needs.

Q: Can grant funds be used to pay for consultant costs?

A: No

Q: Is leasing office space allowable?

A: Yes, but only for COVID-19 related activities. Capital purchases and capital improvement projects are not allowed.

Q: For Tier-2 application, what qualifies as extended clinic hours?

A: For the purpose of this grant, extended clinic hours may be current/existing hours operated by the clinic outside of its posted hours of operations (e.g., morning hours before the clinic's posted opening time, evening or after hours after the clinic's posted closing time, or weekend hours). Extended clinic hours may also be those hours in addition to the current hours operated by the clinic. In either case, to qualify for reimbursement, the RHC must provide COVID-19 outreach, training and/or vaccination during those hours. The RHC, however, may provide other clinical services and vaccines during those hours.

Q: For Tier-2 application, is there a minimum number of extended clinic hours that a clinic must operate to be eligible for grant reimbursement?

A: No, there is not a minimum required number of hours a clinic must operate to qualify as extended clinic hours for reimbursement. The goal is to support increased access and flexibility.

Q: Is overtime an allowable expense?

A: Overtime (OT) for COVID Round 4 projects will be approved based on the need of RHC staffing working to accommodate the need to the objectives. The applicant will be required to submit a projection of overtime hours worked each month *for the entire* project. Staff OT should be broken out as a separate line item on the Budget Personnel tab and include total monthly OT hours: #of staff, total \$ cost per month and total \$ cost over the project. Contractor OT estimates should be broken out as a line item on the Contractor tab including similar details. Applicants are encouraged to have staff "FLEX" hours/shifts if known after hour events are going to occur. This aids in lowering OT hours while minimizing staff burnout.

Q: Can an RHC purchase equipment, such as computer (laptops), equipment, devices or vehicles for the mobile clinics/units?

A: No, the purchase or acquisition of capital assets, equipment, devices, computers or vehicles are not allowed through this grant. Lease-to-own agreements are also not allowed.

Q: Are travel expenses to other education events/conferences other than the 2023 TORCH/TARHC Fall Conference eligible for reimbursement under this grant?

A: No. Travel expenses under this grant applies only to those healthcare personnel allocated under this grant and for those personnel to attend the 2023 TORCH/TARHC Fall Conference only. When travel expenses are authorized, all such expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the rates set by the TORCH Travel Policies.

Q: Can a staff of an RHC that was awarded this grant but who is not involved directly in the grant funded activity attend the 2023 TORCH/TARHC Conference and have his/her travel expenses reimbursed through this grant?

A: No.

Q: Are clinics required to document and report the number of the vaccines or doses administered?

A: No minimum or maximum number of COVID-19 vaccines or doses are required to be administered. Any doses administered, however, must be tracked and reported into the Texas Immunization Registry, ImmTrac2 and on the monthly report to TORCH Foundation.