United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

SNAP Online Purchasing Participation Assistance for Farmers and Farmers' Markets – Request for Applications

Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA): 10.545

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Application Checklist

This application checklist provides a list of the required documents; however FNS expects that applicants will read the entire RFA prior to the submission of their application.

In order to apply, **at least four weeks** prior to submission, you must have:

- ☐ Obtained a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number;
- ☐ Registered the DUNS number into the System for Award Management (SAM); and,
- ☐ Registered in grants.gov.

When **preparing your application**, ensure:

- ☐ Your application format and narrative meet the requirements included in Section IV "Application and Submission Information," including page limits and priorities outlined in Section IV, and all necessary attachments.

When **preparing your budget,** ensure the following information is included:

- ☐ All key staff who are paid by this grant.
- ☐ The percentage of time the project director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents.
- ☐ Your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation.
- ☐ The type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds.
- ☐ Itemized travel expenses (including type of travel), travel justifications and basis for lodging estimates.
- ☐ Types of equipment and supplies, justifications, and estimates, ensuring that the budget is in line with the project description.
- ☐ Information for all contracts and justification for any sole-source contracts.
- ☐ Justification, description and itemized list of all consultant services.
- ☐ Indirect cost information (either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists, the basis of the indirect costs requested). If none requested, please indicate this in the budget narrative.

When **submitting** your application, ensure you have submitted the following:

- ☐ SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424A – Budget Information and Instruction Form (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.
- ☐ FNS-906 – Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire (in Appendix X)
- ☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF – Upload using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15)

When applicable, application packages are required to include the following documents:

- ☐ AD-1047 - Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters Primary Covered Transactions
- ☐ AD-1048 - Certification Regarding Department, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions
- ☐ AD-1049 - Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (Grants) Alternative I – For Grantees Other Than Individuals
- ☐ AD-3030 – Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants (fillable PDF in Grants.gov).

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Authorizing Legislation and Background

Authorized by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the cornerstone of the Nation's nutrition assistance safety net. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) authorizes and monitors retailers to participate in SNAP. Currently, more than 250,000 retailers are authorized to accept SNAP. Thousands of retailers, including farmers' markets and direct marketing farmers, apply for SNAP authorization each year. Direct marketing farmers (DMFs) are agricultural producers of staple foods (grains, meats, dairy, or produce) who sell the food items they produce directly to consumers at farmers' markets, roadside stands, or at pick-your-own operations. Farmers' markets (FMs) are physical locations at which three or more direct marketing farmers gather to sell primarily the agricultural products they produce.

Since 2012, funding has been appropriated to FNS to support the participation of FMs and DMFs in their efforts to attract more SNAP customers and to help individual FMs and DMFs that meet specific requirements, to procure low- or no-cost wireless Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) point-of-sale (POS) devices through the SNAP EBT Equipment Program.

Section 703 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 directs FNS to enter into cooperative agreement(s) with up to five non-profit organizations (eligible entities) to build out functionality, and provide assistance to DMFs and FMs to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions.

In developing this RFA, FNS hosted a listening session and facilitated follow-up discussions to solicit input from the farmers' market and farming communities. More than 70 individuals, representing more than 30 organizations, participated in the listening session.

B. Purpose / Key Objectives

FNS announces, through this Request for Applications, the availability of a maximum of $4 million in total grant funding to be used over a maximum of four (4) years for award as up to five **cooperative agreements**. This solicitation is contingent upon the availability of funds.

The primary goal of the grant is to provide greater participant access to SNAP-authorized FMs and DMFs by providing assistance to FMs and DMFs that wish to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions. The grantee will use resources from this grant to assist FMs and DMFs in becoming SNAP authorized Internet Retailers and supporting the participation of and processing of online transactions by these FMs and DMFs, including the following activities:

1. Objective 1: Assistance to SNAP-authorized FMs and DMFs in becoming authorized to participate as Internet Retailers (IRs) – this is a second authorization which is specific to the transactions conducted by the FM/DMF online.

   The grantee will assist these FMs/DMFs:

   a. In completing the letter of intent process to become an authorized IR to conduct online SNAP transactions; and
   b. By facilitating their understanding of the steps involved in becoming an IR and maintaining their presence on the eCommerce Platform (Solution), e.g., inventory and price data uploads, long term contracting and cost.

2. Objective 2: Coordinate with other FNS grantees and contracts to maximize the efficient use of funding and resources in assisting FMs/DMFs in their participation in SNAP. This coordination would include:
   a. Working with the Participation Assistance for Farmers and Markets, Mobile Application Grantee (NAFMNP and MarketLink), which provides access to a SNAP Mobile Application (The App) by FMs/DMFs free of cost, for one-year. The App, provided through the MarketLink program, enables DMFs/FMs to accept SNAP EBT payments on their own smart device;
   b. Working with the SNAP Retailer Service Center (RSC) and the Retailer Operations Branch (ROB) to ensure that the grantee provides clear, current and accurate information to FMs/DMFs regarding SNAP requirements and applying to be authorized to accept SNAP benefits; and
   c. Participating in meetings with the FNS Online Purchasing Pilot (OPP) Team when deemed necessary by FNS to ensure efficient coordination.

3. Objective 3: Development of an eCommerce Platform (the “Solution”) for use by FMs/DMFs and SNAP customers to conduct SNAP online transactions.

   Successful grant applicants will identify the Solution that will be used and describe how each requirement in *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix* will be satisfied. The proposed activities and indicators measuring success must be mapped to Program Objectives.

   > Note: Indicators are defined as any metric you anticipate will be able to be tracked during the period of performance of the grant.

   The grantee may develop the Solution or enter into a formal agreement with the Solution provider to provide access to the Solution by FMs/DMFs that have become authorized to accept SNAP benefits in online transactions. Access will be provided to the Solution at no cost to the FM/DMF for up to three-years. The Solution provider must meet requirements as specified in *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix*. The formal agreement between the grantee and Solution provider will specify all costs and terms for the participation of an FM or DMF receiving access to the Solution for up to three-years at no cost, and on-going access subsequent to the no-cost period.

   Although FNS anticipates applications that would require enhancement of an existing eCommerce Platform to enable the processing of SNAP EBT Transactions, this grant opportunity is not intended to support the development of an a new, untested eCommerce Platform (Solution). However, applications that propose the development of a new Solution for SNAP online transactions will be considered. The grantee may also collaborate or coordinate with a Solution provider to develop additional functionality for an existing Solution that would enable the processing of transactions for other Federal nutrition programs.

FMs/DMFs will provide their own labor and other resources, e.g, providing Internet access to their staff and volunteers to access the Solution for inventory management, and the processing and fulfillment of online orders of SNAP-eligible items. Under the grant, the cost of the Solution and any related fees for the Solution will be covered for participating FMs and DMFs for up to 3 (three) years from the date of sign-up by the FM or DMF as a participant under the grant.

As part of the application, the applicant must address whether the costs for the PIN solution, and other TPP services, which are normally the responsibility of each retailer, e.g., FM/DMF, will be included as part of the grant as described in *Section 1.2 PIN-Solution Provider*.

4. Objective 4: Training and technical support for FMs/DMFs in applying for SNAP authorization as an Internet Retailer and on-going participation in SNAP. The grantee will:
   a. Train FMs/DMFs in accessing (or installing, if applicable) and using the Solution, including instruction on the options that are provided to the FM/DMF in optimizing the Solution for its own use;
   b. Communicate with FMs/DMFs that are using the Solution to ensure that they are aware of any maintenance issues, planned outages, updates to the functionality of the Solution, security issues and other software development and administration issues that may arise;
   c. Troubleshoot issues, and provide technical assistance through the term of the no-cost agreement;
   d. Guide FMs/DMFs in locating SNAP training materials and information, and facilitating questions and resolutions with FNS; and
   e. Conduct testing of the grantee's proposed solution and each instance of the Solution as part of the Internet Retailer authorization process as additional FMs/DMFs are on-boarded for SNAP online transactions to ensure all requirements are met.

   Once the no-cost option expires, the grantee will assist FMs/DMFs in transitioning their agreement from no-cost to full-cost, or will provide information regarding alternate solutions should the FM or DMF wish to transition to an alternate solutions.

5. Objective 5: Monitoring progress, including achievements, milestones, and risks and issues.
   a. Among other metrics, the grantee will monitor and track the success of support activities and training, the number of participating FMs and DMFs using the Solution, and various metrics.

C. Operational System Requirements

This section provides an overview of requirements related to SNAP transactions and describes the EBT-specific functionality that the eCommerce Platform (referred to as the "Solution") must provide.

1.0 Components

1.1 Desktop Browser, Mobile App and Backend

The solution must include:

- a browser-based component that enables customers to place orders, and complete other tasks as identified in *Section A. Program Description*, *Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix*;
- a mobile app-based component that enables customers to place orders, and complete other tasks as identified in *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix*; and
- a backend, that enables FMs and DMFs to enter and manage inventory, including quantity and pricing; select from options as identified in *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix* to optimize use of the Solution for their business model; and receive, process, and track orders from the time that they are placed by a customer until the order is fulfilled.

1.2 PIN-Solution Provider

Additionally, the grantee must select and certify with a PIN-Solution Provider to integrate the PIN pad used for the eCommerce Platform (Solution) for processing SNAP EBT transactions online. Unlike commercial credit and debit, signature-based transactions are not allowed with EBT. The PIN is the only form of identification that is used by an EBT customer.

All purchase or other debits to the customer account must be accompanied by a securely entered PIN. As of May 15, 2021, FISERV PaySecure™ and FIS WorldPay (PIN-Solution Providers) are the only certified Third Party Processors (TPPs) that provide secure encrypted PIN-entry services for SNAP Online Purchasing. The grantee may contract with either of these PIN-Solution Providers (or any other certified TPP that provides secure encrypted PIN-entry services for SNAP Online Purchasing on, or before, the Application Due Date of this RFA) to integrate the secure PIN entry method with the eCommerce Platform (Solution) to route online EBT transactions to the EBT Host processors for approval. FMs/DMFs must also contract with the same secure PIN-entry provider, since the TPPs are also responsible for settling funds for all online EBT transactions to the FM/DMF. The PIN-Solution Provider is also responsible for:

a. Working with Solution through the certification process
b. Verifying that the Solution is PCI-compliant
c. Contracting with each retailer for secure PIN-entry services for all online SNAP and cash EBT transactions
d. Securely collect and process PIN data and DES encrypt results
e. Converting data submitted by website and encrypted PIN to EBT processor's specified format
f. Validating completeness of data prior to transmission
g. Routing transactions to EBT processor for authorization
h. Receiving message responses and transmitting them back to the website
i. Participating in the testing process for EBT functionality for each retailer.
j. Settling funds for all online EBT transactions to the retailer
k. Providing daily and monthly transaction and settlement reports to the retailer, and
l. Providing other contracted services negotiated with the retailers

The solution must meet the same conditions for Cash Assistance EBT account debits in States that have Cash Assistance on the card and also allow it to be used online.

As part of the application, the applicant must address how the costs for the PIN solution, and other TPP services, will be paid. For example, the applicant would indicate whether it intends to reach an agreement with a PIN-Solution Provider through which the applicant (grantee) would pay the costs per transaction processing and settlement for FMs/DMFs that participate as IRs under this grant, or if the applicant would expect each individual FM/DMF to reach an agreement with the PIN-Solution Provider for these costs. If the applicant proposes to use grant funds to pay for these costs, FNS may limit the use of grant funds to pay for these costs contingent on the availability of funds, the numbers of FMs/DMFs participating under this grant, and other factors.

2.0 Transaction Types

2.1 Online PIN Purchase

The solution must meet the same conditions for Cash Assistance EBT account debits in States who have Cash Assistance on the card and also allow it to be used online.

EBT PINs must not be stored for future use in subsequent transactions, within the solution or in any other system, maintained by the grantee, farmer or market. The PIN must always be captured and immediately encrypted by a PIN-Solution Provider for each payment transaction. The PIN-Solution Providers do not store the PIN after the transaction response is received. The PIN-Solution Providers and EBT processors do not support preauthorization as done in the credit/signature debit environment. As a result, the solution must perform SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT transactions in real time, at the time of online PIN entry, with immediate debit of funds from the cardholder's account and settlement to the FM/DMFs within two business days.

For this reason, EBT also cannot, and the solution must not, support the use of standing orders (a one-time order for specific products to be delivered at a regular interval, such as monthly) for payment with SNAP or Cash Assistance EBT.

2.1.1 Weighed Items

Many FMs/DMFs sell items by weight, e.g., produce, meats, and fish. For online purchases, purchase amounts for weighed items must be estimated; the exact weight of items could be less or more once an order is fulfilled.

The solution must be able to support the ordering of weighed items by allowing an FM/DMF to pad the amount initially debited from the customer's EBT account typically by up to 10% of the calculated purchase amount of weighed items at the time that an order is made by the customer. The solution must then support a subsequent (PINless) refund for any amount overcharged, after the final weight of the item is determined.

For example, if the total EBT order comes to $50, of which $15 is calculated for weighed meat and produce, the solution must be able to "pad" the debited amount by up to $1.50, or 10% of $15, and initially charge the customer up to $51.50. Padding must be clearly explained onscreen to the customer before the transaction is submitted for authorization.

Once the order is fulfilled, if the final purchase amount is less than the amount originally debited from the customer, the solution must provide an immediate refund of the difference back to the cardholder's EBT account.

In this example, if the weighed items resulted in a purchase amount of $15.25, the solution would provide a refund of $1.25. If the final calculated amount is more than the amount initially debited, then the retailer is liable for the difference. The solution must not charge the EBT customer for any additional amount.

2.1.2 Substituted Items

There may be instances when an item is not available at the time the order is processed/fulfilled. In these situations, the solution must provide functionality to allow FMs/DMFs to offer substitutions for similar items, which could cost more or less, or remove the item and its purchase amount from the order. The solution must also enable a customer to agree to or decline substations on an item-by-item basis.

2.1.3 Denial for Insufficient Funds

If a transaction is denied for insufficient funds, the return message will include current account balances for both the SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT accounts. The solution must provide this information onscreen to the customer so that the customer can opt to perform a transaction for a lesser purchase amount or select a different payment type.

2.2 EBT PINless Refund

This is a new EBT transaction type developed specifically for online purchasing. The solution must allow for use of the EBT PINless refund process for both SNAP and Cash Assistance. In almost all cases, refunds will be performed when the customer is offline; it will not be possible to capture the cardholder's PIN.

This transaction type will be used for all instances where funds are due back to a customer. For example, it may be used for refunds related to overestimated purchase amounts, and out of stock or returned items. The solution must enable an FM/DMF to enter the information needed for an EBT PINless refund transaction.

The full amount of any returned food item purchased with SNAP must be credited back to the customer's SNAP account. Any shipping charges due for SNAP returns must be paid through an alternate payment type. The solution must not allow shipping charges to be deducted from amounts refunded for items purchased with SNAP. Refunds for items purchased with Cash Assistance are not subject to these restrictions.

2.2.1 Refund Process – PIN-Solution Provider

All PINless refunds must flow through a PIN-Solution Provider, e.g., Fiserv PaySecure™ or WorldPay, and comply with their specifications. These transactions must contain the authorization number of the original approval so that refunds can be accurately traced.

2.2.2 Refund Process – Manually Entered

Refunds may result from customer emails or phone calls, or from the return of purchased items. In these situations, FMs/DMFs will need to securely enter refund requests manually. The solution must enable an FM/DMF to manually enter a refund. The solution must subsequently provide a transaction message that meets the specifications of the PIN-Solution Provider.

2.2.3 PINless Voids

EBT processors cannot accept PINless voids. For brick and mortar stores, these are necessary when a clerk miskeys the purchase amount; this need does not exist online. Voids are not a mandatory transaction type for online purchasing. The solution must perform a PINless refund when a sale has been processed, but must be cancelled.

2.2.4 Refund Notification

When a refund is issued, the solution must provide a notification to customers, which is a record of the transaction and provides updated account balance(s).

2.2.5 Reversals and Adjustments

The solution must handle reversals and adjustments according to the specifications of the PIN-Solution Provider. PINs are not required in reversal messages.

2.3 Transaction Types – Unsupported by the Solution

The following transaction types will not be conducted using the solution:

- SNAP Manual Voucher Authorization (signature based);
- SNAP Manual Voucher Clear;
- PIN Purchase with Cash Back;
- PIN Cash Only Withdrawal (cash received without purchase); and
- Store and Forward.

Any currently authorized FNS retailer may continue to do these types of transactions using their primary FNS authorization number(s).

3.0 Purchase Checkout Process for SNAP and Cash EBT

This section identifies EBT specific issues that must be considered and addressed once the customer has filled the “cart” or “basket” and is ready to complete a purchase.

3.1 Order Destination and Timing

FMs/DMFs can fulfill an order by:

1. Enabling the customer to pick up the order;

2. Delivering the order to the customer (within an area defined by the FM/DMF); or
3. Shipping the order to the customer via USPS or a commercial carrier.

The solution must capture a complete address —street address; unit/suite, as appropriate; city; state; and zip code— for each SNAP transaction regardless of whether the order is picked up, delivered or shipped.

The solution must allow the customer to specify the date and time that they would like to have their order delivered or ready for pickup. In most situations, this date and time must be within seven days of the transaction. Farmers and markets operating under a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model may accept SNAP benefits up to 14 days in advance of delivery or shipment to or pickup by the customer. FMs/DMFs may designate a very limited timeframe that will be available for delivery or pickup in a given area. The same options for selecting destination, method and timing must be offered to all customers.

3.1.1 Customer-Selected Options

When the customer creates an order, a fulfillment address must be provided. At a minimum, the solution must capture:

- Address Line 1 (street number and name; direction, e.g., North; street type, e.g., Street, Lane)
- Address Line 2 (apartment/unit/suite number)
- City, State and ZIP

The Address Line 1 and the ZIP code entered by the customer (or selected from their stored addresses) must be included in the transaction message submitted to the PIN-Solution Provider.

The solution must also provide the functionality that would enable a customer to select dates and times for local delivery and dates and times for pickup, based on the options provided by the FM/DMF.

3.1.2 Retailer-Designated Options

An FM/DMF can decide to offer:

- order pickup from a single location;
- order pickup from more than one location;
- order delivery within a specific geographical area;
- order shipping within a specific geographical area; or
- a combination of these options.

The solution must also provide the functionality that would enable an FM/DMF to identify dates and times for local delivery and dates and times for pick up. If the FM/DMF requires all customers to pick up their orders from one location, the address and ZIP code of that location will be the EBT delivery address for all EBT transactions submitted to the PIN-Solution Provider.

If the customer chooses from a menu or list of store locations or other distribution points, or the FM/DMF assigns a location from such a list, the address and ZIP code for that pickup location must be included in the transaction message submitted to the PIN-Solution Provider.

In addition, FNS will require the FM/DMF to provide a record of the full pickup site address to the customer (See Section 4.0 Receipts). Therefore, the location menu must be associated with a system table that also includes the complete street address and ZIP code of each location.

3.1.3 Split Orders

Some online merchants, particularly those that use commercial shipping or have multiple warehouses, allow customers to designate that different items from a single order be delivered to different addresses. Since every SNAP transaction must be associated with a fulfillment location, the entire SNAP order must be delivered/shipped to, or picked up from, the same address. The solution will not support split orders. The solution must limit a customer to entering (or selecting) one address for an order.

> NOTE: If a customer wants items to be fulfilled at different locations, the customer must create a separate order for each location. PIN-entry would be required for each SNAP transaction.

3.2 Identification of SNAP-Eligible Items

SNAP benefits can only be used to purchase:

- Foods for the household to eat, such as:
    - breads and cereals;
    - fruits and vegetables;
    - meats, fish and poultry;
    - dairy products;
    - accessory foods, such as coffee; tea; cocoa; soda; non-carbonated beverages such as sports drinks, punches, and flavored waters; candy; condiments and spices;
    - Seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat; and
    - State-mandated container deposits for eligible products (because the products cannot be sold without the containers); any deposit amount beyond that required by the State, such as a manufacturer or retailer-imposed bottle deposit, may not be paid with SNAP benefits

- SNAP benefits cannot be used to purchase:
    - Alcohol or tobacco products;
    - Any nonfood items, such as:
        - pet foods;
        - soaps, paper products, and household supplies;
        - vitamins and medicines; and
        - any product sold with a “Supplement Facts” label instead of a “Nutrition Facts” label;
    - Food that will be eaten in the store;
    - Hot foods; and
    - Live animals.
    - Fees for bags (or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers) whether or not imposed by State or local law
    - Fees of any kind, regardless of when they are charged, including those for:
        - shipping and/or handling
        - delivery
        - processing

    - membership
    - registration

FMs/DMFs may sell items that are not SNAP-eligible. Since there is no human intervention to confirm that items in an order are SNAP-eligible, it is essential that the solution's product database be able to differentiate between SNAP-eligible and ineligible items automatically.

> NOTE: The solution must also provide functionality to enable the purchase of hunting and fishing equipment by certain Alaskan natives.

3.3 Ability to Accept Split Tender

SNAP customers may need to use a separate payment type for a transaction, e.g., for ineligible items or fees. The solution must accommodate split tender— the use of more than one payment type for a single order. SNAP customers must also be allowed to choose the amount of SNAP benefits that they will use for each purchase, and pay for some or all SNAP-eligible products with a different type. Acceptable payment types include SNAP, Cash Assistance, and commercial debit/credit.

The solution must also provide functionality that enables an FM/DMF to:

1. Waive all fees for SNAP customers (see *Section 7.7, Equal Treatment*); and
2. Allow a customer to pay cash for necessary fees at the time of delivery or pickup.

3.4 Storage and Selection of Payment Type

The solution must enable a customer to store and select the following payment types for orders:

- SNAP EBT (the solution can only store one SNAP EBT card, but it can be the same card number that is used for Cash Assistance);
- Cash Assistance EBT (the solution can only store one Cash Assistance card, but it can be the same card number that is used for SNAP EBT);
- Debit (the solution must enable a customer to store a Debit card); and
- Credit (the solution must enable a customer to store a Credit card).

The solution must be able to accept and validate card numbers between 16 and 19 digits. The length of the card number varies by State and the FM/DMF may want to validate the correct length after entry. EBT cards do not have expiration dates or CVVs. The solution must not include these values in the card entry screen; SNAP customers may be confused about how to respond if prompted for these values.

3.5 Service, Container and Other Fees

The solution must provide functionality for an FM/DMF to charge for:

- container deposits,
- bags;
- convenience and handling fees; and
- other delivery, pickup, and shipping containers.

The solution must provide functionality to enable an FM/DMF to charge for the reimbursable amounts and container product types specified by State law and to allow a SNAP customer to pay these charges using SNAP benefits.

However, the solution must not allow SNAP benefits to be used to pay for:

- any other food/beverage container deposit that is imposed by a manufacturer or FM/DMF, but not deemed reimbursable under State law; or
- delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling or other fees.

Additionally, SNAP law requires that clear notification of any delivery, ordering, convenience, or other fees that are associated with a food purchase be made to SNAP customers at the time an order is placed; these fees/charges cannot be paid with SNAP benefits. If an FM/DMF charges such fees, the solution must display a notice as soon as the customer selects SNAP EBT as the payment method. The customer must also be given the opportunity to terminate the purchase or select a different payment type before the purchase is finalized.

3.6 Calculation of SNAP Payment

If a SNAP customer selects SNAP EBT as the payment type, the solution must limit the total of that transaction to the subtotal of all SNAP-eligible items. The value requested for authorization must not exceed that subtotal. However, the solution must enable a SNAP customer to enter a lower value, at their discretion, of SNAP benefits to apply to the order.

The customer may be allowed to enter a specific (lower) value, or be prompted to delete or move one or more items from the SNAP subtotal, thereby reducing the subtotal to the value identified by the customer.

See *Section 6.1.1, Sales Taxes* for further information on sales tax calculation.

3.7 Authorization of SNAP Purchase Transaction

The solution must provide the functionality that enables a customer to conduct a balance inquiry prior to a SNAP transaction.

When the SNAP purchase amount has been determined and the solution is ready to request authorization for the purchase, the transaction must be passed to the PIN-Solution Provider for PIN-entry using their message specifications.

The approval or denial response will come back to the solution from the PIN-Solution Provider. If approved, the solution would automatically require the customer to designate another payment type for the balance of the total sale including fees, if applicable.

If the customer is unable to find a payment type with sufficient funds to cover the balance, and the solution needs to cancel the original SNAP transaction, it would submit a forced reversal of the SNAP transaction through the PIN-Solution Provider.

3.8 Calculation and Authorization of Cash Assistance EBT

Cash Assistance EBT transactions are not restricted. Cash Assistance linked to the EBT card may be used for fees and virtually any SNAP-eligible or SNAP-ineligible item that is made available in the solution by an FM/DMF. These must also be passed to the PIN-Solution Provider for PIN-entry using their message specification. The response and reversal procedures are similar to SNAP.

3.9 Error Response Codes and Message Handling

If a transaction is denied, the PIN-Solution Provider will provide a response code (see Appendix I. Operational System (The Solution) Requirements – Requirement 21, Transaction Error Response Codes and Message Handling). The solution must immediately provide the EBT customer with an onscreen explanation of the denial reason to enable correction. If the denial is based on insufficient funds, the solution must also display the remaining SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT account balances that the PIN-Solution Provider returns with the denial message.

The solution should then prompt the customer to complete a new transaction for an amount up to the remaining SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT account balances. A new transaction will require reentry of the PIN.

4.0 Receipts

Federal regulations prohibit the onscreen display of balance information except for balance-only inquiry terminals. They also require a printed paper receipt to be provided at the time of the SNAP transaction. FNS will provide a waiver to all FMs/DMFs that use the solution, allowing onscreen display of certain information as described in this section in lieu of a printed receipt.

4.1 Receipts – Transaction is Approved

After a transaction has been approved, the solution must provide an itemized receipt that is displayed onscreen to the customer; the solution must enable the customer to print the receipt at the customer's discretion. The receipt must also be emailed to the customer within two hours and stored online in the customer's account.

This receipt provided by the solution must include, at a minimum:

- Company name;
- Contact information, including website URL, physical address, phone number and email for the FM/DMF;
- Date and time of transaction;
- Transaction type;
- Truncated account number (last four digits);
- Transaction amount;
- Payment type(s), and associated amount(s);
- Item quantities and prices;
- Indication of whether each individual item is SNAP-eligible or taxable;
- Indication of the items for which the customer has agreed to substitution, as needed;
- Indication of whether each individual item is weighed to determine purchase amount;

- Padding of weighed items;
- Remaining SNAP Balance;
- Remaining Cash Assistance Balance;
- Delivery/pickup/shipping address;
- Actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date
- Actual or estimated delivery/pickup time, as applicable
- Itemized fees for delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling and other fees or charges
- Itemized fees for bags or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers

4.2 Receipts – Order is Processed

After an order has been processed, the solution must email a final, itemized receipt to the customer and store the receipt in the customer's account.

This receipt provided by the solution must include the components described in Section 4.1 Receipts – Transaction is Approved, and:

- Identification of unavailable items;
- Final weights of weighed items;
- Refunds of padded amounts, as applicable; and
- Whether an item was substituted and indication of the item that it replaces.

4.3 Receipts – Refunds After Order is Fulfilled

After an order has been fulfilled (received by the customer), the customer may seek to return an item or request replacement of the item. If an item is returned, the solution should provide a receipt that meets the receipt requirements previously described in this section.

5.0 Processing Orders

The solution must enable the FM/DMF to enter and manage inventory, including quantity and pricing; select from options as identified in *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I. Appendix* to optimize use of the Solution for their business model; and receive, process, and track orders from the time that they are placed by a customer until the order is fulfilled, including making substitutions at an equal or lesser purchase amount (which would require a refund); post order modifications such as the removal of an item by a customer after payment, but prior to fulfillment (which would also require a refund); and refunds related to weighed items.

6.0 Other Provisions

6.1 Equal Treatment

SNAP customers must be treated according to the same policies established for all other customers of an FM/DMF, especially in the area of privacy, use of customer data, item returns and refunds, non-delivery, remedies for spoilage and other customer complaints. SNAP customers are subject to all of the same fees as other customers, but cannot use their SNAP benefits to pay these fees. One exception is that tax shall not be charged on eligible foods purchased with SNAP benefits. These requirements are stipulated in 7 CFR 274.7(f) and 278.2(b).

The solution must provide the functionality to enable an FM/DMF to display a library or menu of its customer-related policies.

6.1.1 Sales Taxes

State sales tax is specifically exempted by law for all items purchased with SNAP benefits. Many States do not tax food items. Some States tax certain types of items, such as soft drinks and snack foods. Other States tax all food items.

The solution must provide the functionality to enable each FM/DMF to identify:

- SNAP-eligible items and exclude those items from sales tax if purchased using SNAP benefits;
- SNAP-eligible items and allow those items to be taxed according to State or local law if SNAP benefits are not used to purchase the items; and
- SNAP-ineligible items and allow those items to be taxed according to State or local law.

For example, if all food is taxable in a certain State, the cart contains $100 in SNAP-eligible items, and the customer only has $60 remaining in their SNAP account and applies that to the order, then that $60 portion paid with SNAP benefits is not taxable. However, the remaining items with a purchase amount of $40 portion would be taxable if paid using a commercial debit card is taxable.

If this transaction occurred in a State where certain food items were taxable, then the solution would apply the customer's available SNAP benefits to any SNAP-eligible items first, ensuring that those items were not taxed. In this situation, tax would only be applied if the total purchase amount of all food items exceeded the customer's available balance of SNAP benefits. If $20 of the SNAP-eligible items were taxable, those items would be considered paid by the $60 the SNAP payment and no tax would be charged for food. However, if $70 of SNAP-eligible items were taxable, the solution would apply tax to the $10 in SNAP-eligible items because that customer would not have had SNAP benefits available to purchase that portion of the order, and would need to apply a separate payment type.

However, New Jersey tax regulation is an exception to this scenario In New Jersey, if a customer uses SNAP benefits to purchase any SNAP-eligible items in an order, then all SNAP-eligible items are non-taxable. The solution must enable FMs/DMFs to comply with such taxable and non-taxable situations. As part of its proposed solution, an applicant may decide to partner with an established tax calculation service provider. This will have an impact on how the applicant addresses the requirements of Section 2.4.2.7, Calculation of SNAP Payment.

6.1.2 Double Up Bucks and Similar Incentives

Since the EBT system is capable of applying credit to a customer's SNAP account, all incentive transactions involving a discount must be credited to the SNAP account or netted out of the sale before debiting the SNAP account.

The solution must be able to calculate a credit to the SNAP account or net the value of the discount out of the sale before debiting the SNAP account.

6.2 Security and Privacy

The chosen solution must be secure, have adequate measures to prevent fraud, comply with credit/debit card industry security standards and protect their customers' privacy.

6.2.1 PCI Certification

The solution must comply with the PCI Data Security Standard. Before a merchant can be authorized to accept MasterCard or VISA, they must be certified as PCI-compliant by their acquiring institution. This certification is performed annually and covers a wide spectrum of security and privacy issues. The solution must be PCI-certified and that certification must be maintained for the life of the grant. To be approved for this grant, the solution must be able to accept, at a minimum, MasterCard and VISA within 45 days of grant award. A PIN-Solution Provider will verify that the certification is valid and up to date.

PCI addresses the secure encryption and handling of sensitive data, such as card numbers and PINs while "at rest", i.e., being temporarily or permanently stored. Compliance is not determined based on specific mandatory requirements. The actual methods and protocols employed by any given organization to achieve compliance will vary and must be continually upgraded and improved. However, there are many recognized industry "best practices," which, when used in combination, safeguard sensitive data and customer privacy.

Applicants must identify the best practices that they will employ to achieve PCI compliance. These may include:

- Tokenization;
- Device fingerprinting – comparison of current hardware/software characteristics to user's previous usage such as physical device, browser version, IP address, app vs. browser, etc.;
- Use of secure sockets layer (SSL) technology or other strong firewall configuration;
- Minimum browser standards – version, 128-bit encryption, etc.;
- Required use of logon IDs and passwords for internal and external access to website;
- Strong policies for ID/password format/content and handling of forgotten IDs/passwords;
- Established user roles restricting update/view of PII and card data based on business need to know;
- Use of sitekeys or other customer/site authentication;
- Use of commercial security/encryption products for both data in transit and at rest;
- Trust seal certification;
- Stringent information security policies for all company and contractor personnel;
- Regular use and update of anti-virus software or programs; and
- Restricted physical access to personal data stored on the system.

6.2.2 Use of Cookies

Some websites use "cookies" to store data on the customer's personal device, which are related to access and use of the site. Many SNAP customers rely on public computers, e.g., at libraries or schools, for Internet access. To ensure optimum security for online EBT transactions, the solution should not use cookies. However, the applicant can elect to describe the purpose and use of cookies as part of the solution for consideration by FNS. Regardless, no personally-identifiable information (PII) may be recorded by the FM/DMF on any user access devices.

Applicants must identify whether they use cookies, and if so, whether they:

- Retain PII data;
- Can easily delete or allow a customer to avoid creation of cookies.

6.2.3 Security Practices and Policies

As part of the application, the applicant must provide access to the security practices and policies that have been implemented for the browser and the mobile app. These practices and policies must explain to a customer, in easily understood language, the precautions that have been taken to secure customer data and the solution's liability should there be a breach that results in customer loss. The applicant must also provide best practices and tips for the customer to follow in such areas as password selection and phishing.

FNS further expects the grantee to accept responsibility for any monetary loss or other damage to EBT customers that results from employee or subcontractor fraud, or external hacking resulting from failure to adequately secure the solution and databases under the control of the grantee or any subcontractor. FNS requires the applicant to agree that, if selected, they will replace all SNAP benefits that are stolen as a result of such breaches.

6.2.4 Privacy Practices and Policies

It is common practice among many businesses and non-profit organizations to sell or share subscription and other data to outside parties. Websites collect a substantial amount of data about demographics and purchasing behavior. Customers' personal information, e.g., name, address, or email address collected under this grant must not be compromised, sold, rented, or given away free to any third party without authorization from FNS. Websites that do share data at the individual level (e.g., with a supplier so they can send discount offers directly to a SNAP customer's email address) must obtain explicit consent from EBT customers to release such information. In other words, the EBT customer must "opt in" to allow such sharing and not have to "opt out" to prevent the sharing.

The only valid exceptions are for services directly related to the sale, such as third parties performing functions like delivering or shipping the groceries, processing EBT card payments, analyzing aggregate data, and providing customer service. These agents may not use the PII data for other purposes.

Sensitive data such as SNAP EBT card information or credit card information may never be sold, rented or given away free to third parties under any circumstances. All applicants must agree in writing, that the solution will not share any private data with third parties for any current or future application or venture without the explicit consent of the EBT customer.

Internal use of personal information for marketing purposes does not require explicit customer approval, but the customer must have the opportunity to unsubscribe or opt out of receipt of such materials in the future.

FNS expects that each applicant will publish privacy policies with a clearly identified, easy to find link from the home page of the solution. These policies must meet the aforementioned requirements and describe any exceptions for data use or sharing (which might include such reasons as fraud protection and credit risk reduction, purchase of the company and its assets, or compliance with law, e.g., by subpoena). The policies should describe exactly how the solution itself will or will not use information about individual customers, and with whom the data is and is not shared. Applicants must provide a copy of privacy practices and policies for FNS review.

The content and clarity of current policies will be considered during the selection process. If the applicant is granted an award, FNS may require revisions of the policies to conform to these requirements.

7.0 Waivers and Conditions

This section describes all of the waivers that will be given to FMs/DMFs, which participate under this grant, to facilitate their ability to participate in the Program. These waivers will remain in effect for the duration of participation in the grant by the FM/DMF.

Each waiver details what must be done in place of the regulatory requirement and comes with a set of conditions that must be met to maintain the waiver. Each FM/DMF must agree, in writing, that they will abide by these requirements and conditions. This is a prerequisite for grant participation and authorization as an IR farmer or market. FNS reserves the right to make necessary reasonable modifications to the conditions identified below before finalizing the written agreement.

Failure to comply with the conditions is grounds to rescind the waiver. If problems occur, FNS will provide written notice and give the grantee or participating FM/DMF ten business days to reestablish compliance. If not corrected within that timeframe, FNS may rescind the waiver. If that happens, the IR FM/DMF is no longer eligible to accept SNAP EBT and FNS will issue a notice of involuntary withdrawal. After that, no more SNAP online transactions will be accepted from the FM/DMF, and the grantee will be expected to comply with FNS guidance to affect the necessary changes. FNS will work with the grantee to provide a consolidated waiver packet for distribution to FMs/DMFs participating under this grant, addressing the waivers listed in this section, along with other waivers or considerations that may be deemed necessary during operation of the grant. Grantees and FMs/DMFs will be required to attest in writing to their understanding of the waivers and conditions, as well as all penalties.

7.1 PINless Refund

Federal regulations (7 CFR 274.8(a)(2)) require verification of a PIN for all transactions except manual vouchers. Since it is unlikely that a customer will be present to enter a PIN when a refund is processed, FMs/DMFs participating under this grant will need to perform refunds without PINs. This conforms to the process used by PIN-Solution Providers for handling refunds.

Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will receive a waiver from the PIN requirement for refund transactions, given the following conditions:

- The waiver will require that all PINless refund transactions go through a PIN-Solution Provider;
- The instance of the solution used by the FM/DMF must maintain a secure, controlled method for a limited number of employees authorized to enter PINless refunds;
- The solution may never deduct the cost of shipping from the refund amount; the full value of the food item returned must be credited back to the customer's SNAP account and any shipping charges must be paid through an alternative payment method;
- Refunds for returned items or other customer-initiated events must be processed within two FM/DMF operating days;
- Electronic notice must be provided or online history updated in conformance with Section 4.0 Receipts within 24 hours of refund completion;
- If FNS receives complaints about refunds taking excessive time, the grantee, farmer, or market may be put on notice that they must provide periodic reports about refund timeliness for SNAP customers; and
- If problems with timely refunds continue, and the underlying issue is attributed by FNS to the associated FM/DMF, the waiver may be rescinded from that FM/DMF.

7.2 PIN-Entry Method

Federal regulations (7 CFR 274.8(b)) require that PINs be entered only through ANSI-compliant POS devices. Additionally, regulations (7 CFR 274.8(b)(3)(ii)(C) and 274.8(b)(6)(iii)) provide that PINs must be encrypted, at a minimum, from the point of entry.

Personal computers, smartphones and tablets commonly used for online access do not meet the ANSI requirements for PIN-entry devices or enable encryption from the point of entry. Acculynk's PaySecure and WorldPay are the only FNS-approved PIN-Solution Providers for online purchasing under this grant.

However, these Providers do not strictly comply with regulations because it uses a special process to collect the PIN from a secure overlay screen. Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will receive a waiver from these sections of the regulations, given the following conditions:

- The FM/DMF must contract with an approved PIN-Solution Provider for secure PIN-entry services and carry out their responsibilities for that contract;
- The waiver will require that all PIN-enabled transactions go through an approved PIN-Solution Provider;
- The solution must conform to all PIN-entry requirements and standards identified by the PIN-Solution Provider;
- The solution must continue to maintain its PCI certification and accept industry payment cards such as Discover, MasterCard, and/or VISA; and
- The grantee and FM/DMF must continue to maintain a secure system that ensures the security and privacy of EBT customer data.

7.3 Printed Receipt

Federal regulations (7 CFR 274.8(b)(6)(i)) prohibit the onscreen display of SNAP account balance information. Additionally, regulations (7 CFR 274.8(b)(7)) require that households must be provided printed receipts at the time of transaction, with date, merchant's name and location, truncated card number, transaction type, transaction amount and remaining balance for the SNAP account. The household's name shall not appear on the receipt and no signature may be required except for manual vouchers.

Online purchasing does not generate printed receipts. The solution must comply with the requirements for receipts as described in Section 4.0 Receipts.

Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will receive a waiver from the requirements to provide printed receipts and display the store location (if not displayed for other payment type customers), given the following conditions:

- For all denials, the solution must provide an immediate screen display describing the reason the transaction was denied (e.g., invalid card number, invalid PIN, insufficient funds, etc.), and the customer shall be offered the opportunity to perform the transaction again, select a different payment type, or opt out of the sale
- In instances where the denial is for insufficient funds, the solution must also display the remaining balances for SNAP and Cash Assistance. The site may opt to:
- Use the remaining balance data that comes back in the denial message to pre-fill the amount entered for the new transaction attempt, as long as the customer is allowed to enter a lower value
- Require the customer to delete individual SNAP basket line items or move them to a non-SNAP basket for payment with another tender, until a subtotal less than or equal to the remaining SNAP balance is achieved
- For all approved purchases, the site must provide both an immediate confirmation screen that the client can print or save if desired, and within 24 hours a subsequent email or text acknowledgement. Both must include, at a minimum, transaction date and time, merchant name, merchant phone number or other appropriate contact information, delivery/pickup/shipping address, actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date (and time if known), transaction Program (SNAP or Cash Assistance EBT), total amount debited from SNAP and/or Cash Assistance EBT account for the purchase, remaining balances for SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT, and the truncated PAN. The site may also include the customer and/or delivery/shipping address names.
- In lieu of, or in addition to, a subsequent email or text message for purchases, the retailer may maintain a secure online customer order history that they (and no one else) can easily retrieve.
- All refunds require issuance of an email or text message to the customer within 24 hours, containing, at a minimum, transaction date and time, merchant name, merchant phone number or other appropriate contact information, transaction Program (SNAP or Cash Assistance EBT), total amount credited to the SNAP and/or Cash Assistance EBT account for the refund, remaining balances for SNAP and Cash Assistance EBT account, and the truncated PAN.
- In lieu of an electronic receipt for refunds provided at the completion of order fulfillment (e.g., for weight overestimates or out of stock items), the retailer may provide a paper refund receipt containing the above information with the order. This may be combined with the final itemized order listing or on a separate paper receipt.

- If site policy calls for return shipping, or original shipping costs if they were waived, to be debited from a refund amount, it may not be debited from SNAP benefits. The full value of any returned item purchased with SNAP must be refunded back to the customer's SNAP account. Sites must cover return shipment costs themselves, or ask the customer to pay those costs with an alternate form of tender. On the other hand, purchases made from the cash EBT account may have shipping or other processing fees deducted, if such fees are assessed to customers using other payment methods.
- The merchant address fields included in the transaction message submitted to the PIN-Solution Provider must be coded in the same manner as credit/commercial debit transactions (usually done by including a customer service number in the "city" field), so that this information can be appropriately displayed by the EBT system for customer use. FNS also requires a ZIP code as part of the merchant address.

The waiver will also allow the solution to display account balances and the customer name, both onscreen and in electronic receipts, and to collect a signature to confirm delivery or customer pickup.

7.4 Product Display

Federal regulations (7 CFR 278.1(b)(1)(i)(A)) requires the food products which substantiate eligibility to be offered for sale and normally displayed in a public area on a continuous basis. The intent is that ample numbers of physical, qualifying items be stocked on the retailer's shelves at all times. Display of the actual physical items is not possible in the virtual environment of online purchasing.

Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will receive a waiver from the requirements to have physical products on display, given the following conditions:

- The food products that substantiate eligibility of the FM/DMF must be displayed on the website in sufficient numbers and available stock keeping levels to meet the ample quantity, variety and perishable requirements on a continuous basis; and
- The distribution location used by the FM/DMF (e.g., warehouse or brick and mortar store where the order is filled) must also meet the ample quantity, variety, and perishable requirements on a continuous basis.

7.5 Prepayment

Federal regulations (7 CFR 278.2(e)) stipulate that retailers may not accept SNAP benefits before delivering the food, except for nonprofit food buying cooperatives.

However, the 2014 Farm Bill allows Internet Retailers, including FMs/DMFs, to accept SNAP benefits prior to the delivery of food and gives FNS the authority to establish a reasonable timeframe for advance payment. After consulting with industry experts, FNS has determined that for this grant, a reasonable timeframe is seven calendar days. Therefore, all online orders must be in the customer's hands within that timeframe.

Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will receive a waiver of the prepayment prohibition, given the following conditions:

- Prior to submitting the transaction for authorization, the solution must clearly display the seven-day policy;

- If the FM/DMF allows EBT customers to designate the date and time for local delivery/pickup, those customers will be allowed to select a date, for their own convenience, that is no more than seven days after payment;
- FMs/DMFs that do not opt to allow the customer to select their own delivery/pickup time must provide the estimated receipt date, and allow the customer to opt out before the sale is finalized;
- The FM/DMF must prohibit the use of EBT cards for standing orders;
- If by the fifth day after the transaction it is clear that the seven-day limit will be exceeded, the solution must provide the functionality to enable an FM/DMF to notify the customer by email or phone of the expected new receipt date and offer the opportunity for an immediate, full refund, and the FM/DMF must make that notification;
- Refunds that result from overestimated weighed products, substitutions, or out of stock items must be made to the customer immediately after fulfillment of the order;
- The solution must maintain statistics that document how long it normally takes between the time that the sale is finalized and the time that the customer receives the food order;
- If FNS receives frequent complaints about late deliveries, the grantee, farmer, or market may be put on notice that they must provide periodic reports about delivery timeliness for SNAP customers; and
- If problems with timely deliveries continue, and the underlying issue is attributed by FNS to the associated FM/DMF, the waiver may be rescinded from that FM/DMF.

7.6 Card Must Be Present

Policy (Policy Memo BRD/EBT 2001-1) requires that the EBT card must always be present when a customer performs a transaction, regardless of whether it is swiped, key-entered, or used with a manual voucher. In online purchasing, the customer key-enters the card number each time, or selects a card number that was key-entered at some previous time and then stored securely online. Because EBT cards do not include a CVV, it is not possible for the website to determine if customers have the card in hand at the point in time that they enter the card number.

Each FM/DMF participating under this grant will be given a waiver from the “card must be present” requirement, given the following conditions:

- Transaction messages must always be coded as “card not present” for online transactions; and
- The grantee must notify FNS whenever significant changes are made to the solution’s policies and practices regarding refunds, customer complaints, privacy and security, and provide copies of current policies and practices, in writing.

7.7 Equal Treatment

Federal regulations (7 CFR 274.7(f) and 278.2(b)) require equal treatment for SNAP customers. SNAP customers must be treated according to the same policies established for all other customers of an FM/DMF, especially in the area of privacy, use of customer data, item returns and refunds, non-delivery, remedies for spoilage and other customer complaints. SNAP customers are subject to all of the same fees as other customers, but cannot use their SNAP benefits to pay these fees. One exception is that tax shall not be charged on eligible foods purchased with SNAP benefits.

If the grantee, farmer, or market propose some additional limited preferential treatment for SNAP customers, additional waivers would be required. FNS will tailor these to the circumstances and may attach conditions for approval.

Examples of such preferential treatment include:

- Waiving or reducing fees only for SNAP customers; and
- Allowing SNAP customers to pay cash on delivery for fees.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. Type of Award

FNS will award this grant in the form of a **cooperative agreement** to enable collaboration between FNS and the grantee during project development and project execution. Examples of FNS participation include:

- Evaluation of quarterly progress reports and financial reports to monitor the grantee's project activities and ensure that the objectives, terms and conditions of the agreement are met; and
- Periodic on-site and off-site technical assistance to provide evaluation and guidance on project activities and outputs as they relate to FNS objectives, including:
    - Review of project plans and milestones;
    - Evaluation of technology improvements; and
    - Other technical assistance related to project objectives.
- Periodic collaborative meetings.

FNS will provide funding for approved grants through the Grant Award/Letter of Credit process, upon receipt of a properly executed Cooperative Agreement and subject to the availability of funds.

B. Application and Review Dates

The deadline for submitting applications may be found in Section IV. Application and Submission Information. FNS anticipates awarding grants no more than 120 days from the application deadline.

C. Award Period

The award period for the FY2021 Grant will be up to four (4) years. All grant funds must be obligated and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the close out of the grant) must be completed by the end of the award period. The close-out of the grant must occur no later than 90 days following the termination date of the agreement, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not liquidated within 90 days following the end of the award period must be returned to FNS. In addition, the final progress reports are due to FNS no later than 90 days following the end of the award period. Please see the section on Federal Award Administration Information for details on reporting requirements. A total of up to $4 million in Federal funding is available for the Grant in FY2021. FNS may use this RFA to fund grant awards in this or subsequent fiscal years, should additional funds become available.

The following information is intended to provide applicants with information to make informed decisions about proposal submissions.

Total amount of funding expected to award: $4 million
Anticipated number of awards: 1 to 5
Expected amounts of individual Federal awards: $750,000 to $4 million
Application due date: August 23, 2021
Anticipated award announcement: September 15, 2021
Anticipated start dates and period of performance: September 15, 2021 – September 14, 2025

FNS anticipates awarding the grant through a competitive process by September 15, 2021. Grantees may use grant funds for the duration of the project period. The period of performance begins on or about September 15, 2021 and will not exceed four (4) years from the start date, or September 14, 2021. FNS intends to fund up to five (5) grants under this RFA. However, the number of grants awarded will be dependent on the quality and nature of the applications received.

D. Type of Award

These projects will be awarded in the form of a Federal cooperative agreement.

E. Allowable Costs

Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, travel, and trainings.

Equipment and Supplies: Expenditures for both equipment (i.e., items of personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a cost of $5,000 or more) and supplies are allowable expenses. For purposes of this grant, FMs/DMFs will provide their own device, e.g., computer, tablet, iPad, or smartphone, as well as their own Internet services to access the solution.

Procurement Contracts: Grantees may use grant funds to procure contracts for goods and services.

Other Allowable Expenses: FNS anticipates no more than 10% of the funding for this grant project will be used for administrative expenses.

F. Unallowable Costs

Commercial Debit or Credit Transactions Online – The grantee will develop a cost structure that ensures that all fees associated with commercial debit/credit accepted by FMs/DMFs on the ecommerce platform are charged to the participating FM/DMF and are not paid for using grant funds. This grant is intended to support SNAP the ability and costs associated with FMs/DMFs accepting SNAP purchases online.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible applicants

Eligible entities are limited to nonprofit entities. A nonprofit entity is any organization or institution with IRS 501(c) status or accredited institutions of higher education, where no part of the net earnings benefit any private shareholder or individual. All applicant organizations must be domestic entities and shall be owned, operated, and located within the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Guam, or the United States Virgin Islands.

B. Cost sharing or matching considerations

Cost sharing and matching are not required to apply for grant funds, However, FNS supports collaboration among local, State, regional, or national partnerships that leverage assets to most effectively reach the goals associated with this grant. Collaboration may include sub-grants and in-kind contributions of resources by partner organizations. In-kind contributions may include donations of services, equipment, meeting space, or other resources to be used specifically for the proposed project. The value of these in-kind contributions should be calculated and noted both in the Project Narrative and the Budget Narrative. Commitments of in-kind contributions and/or cost-sharing should be demonstrated through letters of commitment and included in the application package.

C. Pre-application Screening Requirements

In reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, Federal Awarding Agencies, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.400, are required, prior to making a Federal award, to review information available through various OMB-designated repositories for eligibility qualification or financial integrity, and to have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive Federal awards. The evaluation of the information obtained from the designated repository systems and the risk assessment may result in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency (FNS) imposing special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed. The Federal repository systems FNS will review include:

1) SAM, the System for Award Management, the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of CCR/FedReg, ORCA, and EPLS;
2) FAPIIS, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, is a database that has been established to track contractor misconduct and performance;
3) Dun and Bradstreet, the system where applicants establish a DUNS number which is used by the Federal government to better identify related organizations that are receiving funding under grants and cooperative agreements, and to provide consistent name and address data for electronic grant application systems. The Federal government requires that all applicants for Federal grants and cooperative agreements with the exception of individuals other than sole proprietors have a DUNS number.
4) U.S. Department of Agriculture, AD-3030, Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants.
5) FNS Risk Assessment Questionnaire

    Applicants must complete the Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire that allows FNS to evaluate aspects of the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, and history of performance, reports and findings from audits. The questionnaire contains a number of questions that may be an indicator of potential risk.

Applications received after the deadline date will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed or considered. FNS will not accept mailed, faxed, or hand delivered applications. Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, and certification will result in a reduced panel score. Also, applications not submitted via the www.grants.gov portal will not be considered.

D. Other eligibility criteria

Each eligible applicant may only submit one (1) application in response to this grant solicitation. Suspended or debarred organizations are ineligible to submit applications in response to this grant solicitation.

1. Acknowledge USDA support: As outlined in 2 CFR 415.2, grant recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any publications written or published with grant support and, if feasible, on any publication reporting the results of, or describing, a grant-supported activity. Recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any audiovisual which is produced with grant support and which has a direct production cost of over $5,000.
    - When acknowledging USDA support, use the following language: "This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture." Grantees are asked to follow the USDA Visual Standards Guide when using the USDA logo.

Grant recipients may be asked to host USDA officials for a site visit during the course of their grant award. All costs associated with the site visit will be paid for by USDA and are not expected to be included in grant budgets.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applicants may obtain the RFA package by downloading the application from Grants.gov at www.grants.gov.

Applicants may request paper copy of this solicitation and required forms by contacting the FNS Grants Officer at:

Anna Arrowsmith, Grant Officer
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandra, VA 22314
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.gov

A. Application Format

FNS strongly encourages eligible applicants interested in applying to this program to adhere to the following applicant format:

- "8 ½" X 11" page size on white paper with at least 1 inch margins on the top and bottom;
- All pages should be single-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font size (smaller font may be used in tables, charts and graphs as long as they are clearly readable);
- The project description with relevant information (not including cover sheet, table of contents, resumes, letter of commitment(s) from app provider, budget narrative(s), appendices, and required forms) should be captured on no more than **<u>50</u> pages.** All pages, excluding the form pages, must be sequentially numbered.

B. Application Content

To be considered complete, the grant application must include all the required documents and information listed. Applications that include all OMB approved forms, listed on Grants.gov will be considered for the award. However, if other required information is not included in the submission this will result in a lower panel score.

Special Instructions:

- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, certification will not be considered.
- Applications not submitted via the Grants.gov portal will not be considered.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through the grants.gov web portal by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in subsequent fiscal years should additional funds be made available.
- Grant awards are contingent upon the availability of Federal funds.
- A Letter of Commitment from the mobile application provider is required with the application.

Cover Sheet
The cover page should include, at a minimum:
- Applicant's name and mailing address
- Primary contact's name, job title, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address
- Grant program title and subprogram title (if applicable)

Table of Content
Include relevant topic page number

Application Project Summary
The application should clearly describe the proposed project activities and anticipated outcomes that would result if the proposal is funded.

Project Narrative
The project narrative should clearly identify what the applicant is proposing and how it will address a solution, the expected results and/or benefits once the solution is achieved, and how it will meet the RFA program scope and objectives. The proposed project methodology should describe the project design, address program specific methodology needs, procedures, timetables, monitoring/oversight, and the organization's project staffing. It should also address any additional RFA specific requirements.

Activities/Indicators Tracker
Proposed Activities and indicators measuring success must be mapped to Program Objectives (as described in Section I – Program Description) in the below format (note that additional

Activities/Indicators can be added as needed). Note: Indicators are defined as any metric you anticipate will be able to be tracked during the period of performance of the grant.

Objective 1:	Assistance to SNAP-authorized FMs and DMFs in becoming authorized to participate as Internet Retailers (IR)
Proposed Activity 1:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	
Proposed Activity 2:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Objective 2:	Coordinate with other FNS grantees and contracts to maximize the efficient use of funding and resources in assisting FMs/DMFs in their participation in SNAP.
Proposed Activity 1:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	
Proposed Activity 2:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Objective 3:	Development of a web-based eCommerce Platform (Solution) for use by FMs/DMFs and SNAP customers to conduct SNAP online transactions.
Proposed Activity 1:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Proposed Activity 2:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Objective 4:	Training and technical support for FMs/DMFs in applying for SNAP authorization as an Internet Retailer and on-going participation in SNAP.
Proposed Activity 1:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	
Proposed Activity 2:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Objective 5:	Monitoring progress, including achievements, milestones, and risks and issues.
Proposed Activity 1:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	
Proposed Activity 2:	
Indicator 1:	
Indicator 2:	

Application Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should correspond with the proposed project narrative and application budget. The narrative must justify and support the bona fide needs of the budget's direct cost. If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of its most recently approved Federal indirect cost rate agreement. All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

Indirect Cost Rate: A current **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)**, negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, is to be used to charge indirect costs. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis; in this instance, the applicant must note that this is what they are requesting. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "None requested" should be stated in the budget narrative. If there are any questions related to Indirect Cost Rate, please work with the Grant Officer (see contact information provided in below section) to address.

Letter of Commitment Requirements

The eligible applicant that intends to submit an application should submit a Letter of Commitment from the mobile app provider. The letter should include the providers name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the primary point of contact. The letter should include a description of services the provider is contributing to the grantee and the role the provider would have in the project.

The applicant can send the letter via the mail or e-mail to the FNS Grants Officer identified below:

Anna Arrowsmith
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandra, VA 22314
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.gov

Required Grant Application Forms

The required grants.gov forms are located at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/forms-repository.html

(A) Non-Construction Grant Projects Forms: SF-424 Family
- Application and Instruction for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information and Instructions (SF-424A)
- Assurance-Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

(B) SF LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities)
- Indicate on your form whether your organization intends to conduct lobbying activities. If you organization does not intend to lobby, write “Not Applicable.”

(C) Additional Required Forms and Information
- DUNS number. Please see below for further information
- SAM registration. Please see below for further information.

C. Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to www.grants.gov by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard

Time (EST), on August 23, 2021.

- Late applications will not be considered.
- Applications must be submitted via the Grants.gov web portal. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted.
- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants this or subsequent fiscal years should additional funds become available.

USDA strongly encourages applicants to begin the process at least **four weeks before** the due date and to submit applications to Grants.gov at least **one week** before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot any issues, should they arise. The grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was accepted. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting an application to www.grants.gov should contact the grant support team listed in Section VII: Federal Agency Contacts.

D. Electronic Submission Details

Please be aware that the grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was accepted. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to www.grants.gov should contact the grant support team noted in Section VII: Federal Agency Contacts.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. Obtain a **DUNS** number
    - In order to obtain a DUNS number, if your organization does not have one, or if you are unsure of your organization's number, contact Dun and Bradstreet via the internet at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or by calling 1-888-814-1435, Monday thru Friday, 8am-9pm ET. There is no fee associated with obtaining a DUNS number. There is no fee associated with obtaining a DUNS number.
    - **It may take 2-3 business days to obtain a DUNS number.**
2. Register in the System for Award Management **(SAM)**
    - SAM combines Federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. For additional information regarding SAM, see the following link: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/
    - Must have organization's DUNS, entity's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on last tax return). **It may take 3-5 business days to register in SAM, however** in some instances the SAM process to complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of the entity record will require **5-7 days or more**.
    - All applicants must have current SAM status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a Federal Award in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25.
    - We strongly encourage applicants to begin the process **at least 3 weeks** before the due date of the grant solicitation.
3. *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the

organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-3-username-password.html

Electronic Signature: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as an AOR; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html

Applicant Support

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the Center with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

Grants.gov File Name Procedures

All applicants MUST follow Grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided in the Grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html**.**

File attachment names longer than approximately 50 characters can cause problems processing packages. Please limit file attachment names. Also, do not use any special characters (example: &,–,*,%,/,#', -), this includes periods (.), spacing followed by a dash in the file and for word separation, use underscore (example: Attached_File.pdf) in naming the attachments. **Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application will be rejected. FNS will not accept any application rejected from www.grants.gov portal due to incorrect naming conventions.**

F. Application Deadline and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by **11:59 PM,** Eastern Standard Time on August 23, 2021. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov.

USDA will not accept mailed, faxed, or hand-delivered applications. FNS will deem applications received after the deadline as ineligible and will not review late applications. Additionally, FNS will not review incomplete applications.

Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by FNS.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Please allow sufficient time to complete your application package and ensure the package is uploaded through the www.grants.gov web portal. If the same applicant in response to this solicitation submits multiple application packages through the Grants.gov web portal, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the application will be removed from this competition.

USDA strongly encourages applicants to begin the process at least 4 weeks before the due date and to submit applications to Grants.gov at least 1 week before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot any issues, should they arise. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting an application to www.grants.gov should contact the Grants.gov Support Center at 1-800-518-4726 or via e-mail at support@grants.gov.

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to www.grants.gov by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), August 23, 2021.

- Late applications will not be considered.
- Applications must be submitted via the Grants.gov web portal. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted.
- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in this or subsequent fiscal years should additional funds become available.

Please be aware that the grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was accepted. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to www.grants.gov should contact the agency contact noted in Section VII: Federal Agency Contacts.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

FNS will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and are in compliance with all Program regulations. If an application does not include all appropriate information, FNS will consider the application to be non-responsive and will eliminate it from further evaluation. FNS will not approve any waivers from SNAP regulations for any project submitted in response to this solicitation.

Additionally, the review committee will evaluate proposals against the criteria below. The project narrative sections include a point value to indicate the importance of each section; however, reviewers will be evaluating proposals based on all sections regardless of whether point values are provided.

A. Evaluation Factors and Criteria

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications for this RFA.

1. Project Design (35 points)
    a. The proposal describes the overall approach and the general techniques that will be used to conduct support activities for FMs and DMFs that are currently authorized to accept SNAP benefits, but not currently authorized to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions (Objective 1).
    b. The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the enabling environment for SNAP online transactions, including application by and authorization of FMs/DMFs to accept SNAP benefits; Program requirements, policies and guidance; and work occurring under contracts and other grants (Objective 2).
    c. The proposal clearly describes the current characteristics of the Solution, including but not limited to (Objective 3):
        i. its development and current functionality, and the transaction types that it can currently process;
        ii. how the Solution meets the minimum requirements for processing SNAP EBT as stated in the *Section A. Program Description, Operational System Requirements* and *Section I.Appendix;* and
        iii. formal agreement between the grantee and the Solution provider that clearly describes the relationship between the two entities and the responsibilities and obligations of each.
    d. The proposal provides evidence that the proposed approach is well-suited to meet the purposes of this grant opportunity, including a clear understanding of the EBT transaction process (Objectives 1 and 3).
    e. The proposal describes the overall approach and the general techniques that will be used to support the training of SNAP-authorized FMs and DMFs (Objective 4).
    f. The proposal clearly describes the proposed project's direct effect on the participation of FMs and DMFs as SNAP-authorized Internet Retailers. For example, proposals may demonstrate impact by measuring time savings or cost savings, or the benefit(s) that FMs and DMFs may experience while going through the Letter of Intent process (Objective 4).

2. Implementation and Monitoring (15 points)

a. The proposal includes a project timeline that outlines proposed tasks and demonstrates that sufficient time is allotted for each activity.
b. The proposal describes a well-thought-out, organized performance measurement and assessment process that will measure whether the project's objectives have been achieved and to what extent, assesses lessons learned, and describes new or enhanced approaches to improving performance. The proposal should describe:
   i. who will measure and assess the project's objectives;
   ii. how the objectives will be measured and assessed; and
   iii. when the objectives will be measured.
c. The proposal should include a communication plan for communicating internally with FNS, and externally with FMs/DMFs and project stakeholders.
d. The proposal should include sample report templates for summarizing the number of participating markets and farmers as well as the participating in training and outreach.

3. Sustainability (20 points)
   a. The proposal shows that the project is very likely to be sustained after the grant period ends. The proposal should clearly demonstrate that there is a business plan to enable the continued participation of FMs/DMFs after the no-cost period.

4. Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency (20 points)
   a. The proposal includes:
      i. A line item budget;
      ii. A narrative that demonstrates how funds will be spent, by whom and for what purpose. The narrative should provide enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the objectives of the project. There should be adequate justification for budget costs based on current industry costs/standards;
      iii. A copy of the approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement must be attached if indirect costs are shown as a budget expense to the project; and
      iv. If applicable, the budget must show how the costs are going to be allocated among the various fees for processing EBT transactions, credit/debit transactions, and other associated fees. It should demonstrate that this grant is only going to fund approved costs;
   b. The proposal should be cost effective; it must demonstrate that the anticipated results are commensurate with the cost of the project;
   c. Proposals that include hiring a consultant or contracting of work must provide the following information:
      i. Consultant's name and description of service;
      ii. Itemized list of all direct costs and fees;
      iii. Salaries must have the number of personnel including the position title;
      iv. Specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the salary;
      v. Number of estimated hours times hourly wage;
      vi. All expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project;
      vii. Applications that are required to issue a bid should provide a narrative explaining the requirements and provide a reasonable estimate of Contractual and Consultant Costs;

NOTE: Proposal submissions that omit the required budget forms, budget narratives and/or line item descriptions will not receive the full point value for this criterion. Therefore, applicants should recognize that a well-written budget narrative that justifies the proposed project expenditures assists the reviewers during the review process.

5. Staff Capability and Management (10 points)
    a. The proposal identifies the project director/manager and other key staff. The proposal includes resumes that demonstrate that the proposed staff has the appropriate technical and experiential backgrounds for their proposed roles. If the applicant is unable to identify the project director/manager or key staff, it must include, in the application package, job descriptions for the positions that must be assigned. Applicants should address their contingency or back-up plans in the event of key staff departures.
    b. The proposal outlines the amount of time and effort the project director or manager, key staff, and, if applicable, partnering organizations, will contribute to the project.
    c. The proposal demonstrates that effective and consistent oversight by qualified project managers will be implemented throughout the project, and that effective communication will exist within the applicant's organization.
    d. The proposal includes an organization chart of the proposed project.
    e. Applicants should address their contingency or back-up plans in the event of key staff departures.

6. Bonus Points (10 points)
    a. The proposal describes how the solution will fulfill optional enhancements for the solution, described as eligible for bonus points in *Section I. Appendix*.

B. Review and Selection Process

Following the initial screening process, FNS will assemble a panel group to review and determine the technical merits of each application. The panel will evaluate the proposals based on how well they address the required application components and array the applications from highest to lowest score. The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. The selecting official reserves the right to accept the panel's recommendation or to select an application for funding out of order to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, or project diversity. FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in future fiscal years should additional funds be made available.

As mentioned above, FNS is interested in funding projects that address priorities specified in Section I of this RFA. However, FNS reserves the right to award grants to several such entities, or not to award any grants to such entities if it does not receive acceptable applications.

C. Determination of Award Amounts

If an application has been selected for funding and the budget submission is realistic and well-supported, the application will be funded at the level requested. However, FNS reserves the right to fund applications out of rank order to achieve priorities identified earlier; or at a lesser amount if FNS judges that the application can be implemented with less; or if Federal funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards. This is subject to the availability of funds. FNS also reserves the right to suspend or terminate an award for materially failing to perform.

Note: If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNS will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on SF-424.

VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION (REQUIRED)

A. Federal Award Notice

Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions; any contact from a FNS grants or program officer should not be considered as a notice of a grant award. No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document.

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Only the recognized FNS authorized signature can bind the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to the expenditure of funds related to an award's approved budget.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

CONFIDENTIALITY OF AN APPLICATION

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. Any application that does not result in an award will be not released to the public. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information (National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable information, April 2010).

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information (National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable information, April 2010).

Applicants submitting applications in response to this RFA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. All federal and non-federal employees (e.g., contractors, affiliates, or partners) working for or on behalf of FNS are required to acknowledge understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for using and protecting FNS PII in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974; Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-06-15, *Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information; M-06-16,* *Protection of Sensitive Agency Information*; M-07-16, *Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information*; and the NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-122, *Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information*.

By submitting an application in response to this RFA, applicants are assuring that all data exchanges conducted throughout the application submission and pre-award process (and during the performance of the grant, if awarded) will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal laws. By submitting a grant application, applicants agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality, including the following: (1) ensuring that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained or otherwise associated with UDSA FNS funded grants is securely transmitted. Transmission of applications through Grants.gov is secure; (2) ensuring that PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, and that PII and other sensitive data is not submitted via email; and (3) Data transmitted via approved file sharing services (WatchDox, ShareFile, etc.), CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The agency requires all panel reviewers to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality form to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the application review and evaluation process. Names of applicants, including States and tribal governments, submitting an application will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of the reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Debarment and Suspension 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417

A recipient chosen for an award shall comply with the non-procurement debarment and suspension common rule implementing Executive Orders (E.O.) 12549 and 12669, "Debarment and Suspension," codified at 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. This common rule restricts sub-awards and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The approved grant recipient will be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules prior to approving a sub-grant award by checking the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.sam.gov.

Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration 2 CFR Part 25

Effective October 1, 2010, all grant applicants must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number as a universal identifier for Federal financial assistance. Active grant recipients and their direct sub-recipients of a sub-grant award also must obtain a DUNS number. To request a DUNS number visit: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

The grant recipient must also register its DUNS number in the new Systems for Award Management (SAM). If you were registered in the CCR, your company's information is already in SAM and you will just need to set up a SAM account. To register in SAM you will need your entity's DUNS and your entity's Tax ID Number (TIN) and taxpayer name (as it appears on your last tax return). Registration should take **3-5 days**. If you do not receive confirmation that your SAM registration is complete, please contact SAM at https://www.fsd.gov/app/answers/list..

FNS may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with the requirements described in 2 CFR 25 to provide a valid DUNS number and maintain an active SAM registration with current information.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252 requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government's accountability for its stewardship of public resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public.

Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates $25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current SAM registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most-highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a DUNS number prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417

Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government information system that contains specific information on the integrity and performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) was developed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting

System, information from the SAM database, and suspension and debarment information from the SAM. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The Freedom of Information ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, provides individuals with a right to access records in the possession of the Federal Government. The Government may withhold information pursuant to the nine exemptions and the three exclusions contained in the Act.

Application packages submitted in response to this grant solicitation may be subject to FOIA by requests by interested parties. In response to these requests, FNS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

FNS will forward a Business Submitter Notice to the requested applicant's point-of-contact. Applicants will need to review requested materials and submit and submit any recommendations within 10 days from the date of FNS notification. FNS will redact Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

For additional information on the Freedom of Information (FOIA) process, please contact the FNS Freedom of Information Act officer at FOIA@fns.usda.gov.

Privacy Policy

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service does not collect any personal identifiable information without explicit consent. To view the Agency's Privacy Policy, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/privacy-policy.

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

This grant will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following regulations 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subtitle A, Chapter II. Any Federal laws, regulations, or USDA directives released after this RFA is posted will be implemented as instructed.

Government-wide Regulations

- 2 CFR Part 25: "Universal Identifier and System for Award Management"
- 2 CFR Part 170: "Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information"
- 2 CFR Part 175: "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"
- 2 CFR Part 180: "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)"
- 2 CFR Part 200: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 400: USDA's implementing regulation of 2 CFR Part 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 415: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations"

- 2 CFR Part 416: USDA “General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”
- 2 CFR Part 417: USDA “Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension”
- 2 CFR Part 418 USDA “New Restrictions on Lobbying
- 2 CFR Part 421: USDA “Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)”
- 41 U.S.C. Section 22 “Interest of Member of Congress”

  Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the “Freedom of Information” regulation (5 U.S.C. 552)

General Terms and Conditions of the award may be obtained electronically. Please contact the Grants Officer at:

Anna Arrowsmith
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandra, VA 22314
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.gov

C. Reporting

FINANCIAL REPORTING

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425 (Financial Status Report) into the FNS Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) on a quarterly basis. In order to access FPRS, the grant recipient must obtain USDA e-authentication certification and access to FPRS. For additional information on FPRS, visit: www.fprs.fns.usda.gov.

PROGRESS REPORTING

The recipient will be responsible for managing and monitoring the progress of the grant project activities and performance. The grant terms and conditions will indicate the reporting schedule for submitting project performance/progress reports to FNS. Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the award terms and conditions, including results of the grant project.

Quarterly Progress Reports—Quarterly progress reports must be submitted to FNS. These progress reports must provide a description of the activities conducted during the reporting period, major accomplishments with completion dates and budget information, deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered, solutions developed to overcome difficulties, and major planned activities for the next quarter. Additional reports must be provided at FNS request.

Note: Selected Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the standardized FNS Progress Report Template appended to this package.

These reports are due 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter. More detailed specifications for the quarterly progress report content and submissions will be included in the agreement. Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the award terms and conditions, including results of the grant project.

Final Progress Report— a report of up to 25 pages must be submitted within 90 days of the expiration of the grant period. This report will be composed of a short Executive Summary and the following:

- A project description including a concise summary of the major accomplishments, the difficulties encountered, and the solutions developed to resolve the difficulties; and
- A discussion of the project results and lessons learned.

Copies of any deliverables, media or publicity releases/articles and links to materials on websites also should be included or papers resulting from the grant should be attached to the final report. All products should include an acknowledgement of the source of funding. The Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant, sub-grant, or contract under a grant or sub-grant or any rights of copyright to which a grantee, sub-grantee, or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grants Officer at:

Anna Arrowsmith
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandra, VA 22314
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Debriefing Requests

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of submitted proposals. Additional information on debriefing requests will be forwarded to non-selected applicants. The Food and Nutrition Service reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

IX. Appendix

A. Operational System (The Solution) Requirements

This appendix describes the EBT-specific functionality that the eCommerce Platform (referred to as the "Solution") must provide, and the minimum requirements that the Solution must meet. The applicant should also look at the Operational System Requirements described in *Section I. Program Description* of this RFA.

No.	Req?	Bonus	Requirement/Item	Description - Context and questions
1			**Browser and App**	
1.1	Yes		Desktop Browser	The solution must include a desktop browser version (The Browser) of the eCommerce platform, which meets the requirements described in this Appendix.
1.2	Yes		Mobile App (Smartphone Browser), or Mobile-Responsive Website	The solution must include a Mobile App version of the platform or a Mobile-Responsive Website (The App), which meets the requirements described in this Appendix. * "The App" is used throughout this list of requirements to mean either a Mobile App or a Mobile-Responsive Website.
1.2.1	Yes		Availability of Mobile App on Devices	The App must be available to both Apple and Android devices. Describe where and how the App will be available for download.
1.2.2	Yes		Functionality	Describe any differences in functionality or logic between the Browser and the App, which are not already described elsewhere in the RFA response, including: • account setup; • adding/updating payment methods; • order history; • item description and pricing; • search and selection of SNAP-eligible items; • ability to change item quantity; • checkout; • selection of delivery method, location, date and time; • payment type; • individual payment type calculation; and • notifications, including the content and frequency of information.

2			**Account Setup**	
2.1	Yes		Customer ID and Password	
2.1.1	Yes		Browser and App	The solution (both the Browser and the App) must enable a customer to create an account Customer ID and password.
2.1.2	Yes		Format	The solution must have minimum requirements for an acceptable user ID and password, which protects the confidentiality of an account. Examples of the minimum requirements for an acceptable user ID include: 6-16 characters, including most special characters except for ` ' " \ - ; () = or spaces; or use of an email address. Examples of the minimum requirements for an acceptable password include: a minimum length of 6 characters, including use of at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter, one number, and one special character. Describe how frequently the solution requires a password to be changed.
2.2	Yes		Guest Login	The solution (both the Browser and the App) may enable a customer to place an order as a “guest,” i.e., without created a Customer Account or selecting a Customer ID and password.
2.3	Yes		Customer Name	At a minimum, the solution must capture a customer's first name and a customer's last name.
2.4	Yes		Customer Address	The solution must be able to capture a customer’s home address, including: street address, unit number, city, state and zip code. The customer can complete a transaction without entering a home address.
2.5	Yes		Delivery/Fulfillment Addresses	The solution is able to capture a minimum of three delivery/fulfillment location addresses that are entered by a customer. The Browser must allow a customer to make changes to the delivery/fulfillment location addresses.
2.6	Yes		Payment Types	In a customer's account, the solution must be able to capture/store the following payment types: SNAP, Cash Assistance, Credit, and Debit. Both the Browser and the App must allow a customer to make changes to payment methods.
2.6.1	Yes		PAN	The solution does not store the PAN in the clear, i.e., encryption, tokenization, or other method is used to protect unauthorized views.
2.6.2	Yes		Tokenization	The solution must allow for a third-party processor (TPP) to do tokenization.
2.6.3	No	Yes	BIN	The solution will use a third-party BIN check function when a card first stored in a customer's account.

2.6.4	Yes		PAN Length	The solution must be able to accept and validate the PAN length (card numbers of 16 to 19 digits) used by each State.
2.6.5	Yes		CVV	The solution must allow for entry of a CVV for credit cards, or as otherwise appropriate. The CVV must be hidden from view.
2.6.6	Yes		Payment Type	The solution must assign a payment type for each card when it is initially stored, e.g., SNAP, Cash Assistance, Credit and store that payment type for future purchasing. The solution must allow the same card number to be assigned for both SNAP and Cash Assistance, as appropriate.
2.6.7	Yes		Type Validation	The solution must first validate whether the relevant State allows the use of SNAP EBT and Cash Assistance EBT online, and whether the State uses the same EBT card for SNAP and Cash Assistance.
2.6.8	Yes		Expiration Date	The solution must allow for entry of a credit card’s expiration date, as appropriate.
2.6.9	Yes		Retain last 4 digits	The solution must identify the last 4 digits of a card for inclusion on receipts and screen display.
2.7	Yes		Account Updates - Password Reentry	The solution must require a customer to reenter the account password to change account information, e.g., address, delivery method, card number.
3			**Cookies**	
3.1	Yes		Cookies - Purpose	Describe the solution's: • use of cookies, • purpose(s) for cookies, • how and when cookies are created, • the customer information that is collected and where it is stored, • how long the cookie works, • the functions that still require entry of a user ID or password, and • any differences between the purposes for and uses of cookies between the Browser and the App.
3.2	Yes		Cookies - Usage	The solution must provide a customer with an option to decline cookies.
3.3	Yes		Cookies - Privacy	The solution must provide on-screen guidance to customers who are using public computers, e.g., those provided at libraries, schools, other government locations. Can cookies be auto-deleted after logout, when a desktop browser window is closed, etc.?
4			**System Time Out**	
4.1	Yes		System Time Out - Browser	The Browser must automatically logout a user after a period of inactivity. Describe when logout occurs, including the period of inactivity.
5			**Inventory**	
5.1	Yes		In-stock Items	The solution must identify items that are in-stock at each location operated by an FM, and update this information in real-time, i.e., as purchase transactions are completed.

5.2	No	Yes	Limited stock	The solution displays the number of items that are available in stock, or otherwise indicates that volume is low.
6			**SNAP-eligible purchases**	
6.1	Yes		Display of SNAP-Eligible Items	The solution must identify SNAP-eligible items. Describe how SNAP-eligible items are identified.
6.2	Yes		Calculation of SNAP-Eligible Items	The solution must accurately identify, total, and display the purchase amount of SNAP-eligible items at checkout.
7			**Cash Assistance**	
7.1	Yes		Restrictions	The solution must enable an FM/DMF to restrict the use of Cash Assistance for certain items depending on a State's restrictions, e.g., alcohol, tobacco products, and gaming.
7.2	Yes		Acceptance	The solution must allow for the use of Cash Assistance as a payment method.
8			**Online History**	
8.1	No	Yes	Online History	Does the solution provide online order history? Describe how this information is accessed by a customer.
8.1.1	No	Yes	Content	What information is retained in the online order history? For example, does the online order history include: • items/pricing as ordered; • adjustments to final purchase for weighted items; • final weights of items; • out of stock items; • back ordered items; • substituted items; • refunds; or • other elements?
8.1.2	No	Yes	Retention	For what period of time is information in the online order history displayed, e.g., number of past orders, or the period of time that is displayed? Is older information archived, but still available?
9			**Fulfillment - Pickup, Delivery, Shipping**	
9.1	Yes		Fulfillment	The solution must enable a customer to select from options for pickup, delivery and commercial shipping, as applicable.
9.2	Yes		Pickup Location	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to create a table of pickup locations without limiting the number of locations. The solution must capture the street address, unit number, city, state, zip code, and phone number for each pickup location.

9.2.1	Yes		Unique ID	The solution must assign a unique ID to each pickup location.
9.2.2	Yes		Hours of Operation	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to indicate the days and hours of operation for each pickup location, i.e., when orders will be available for pickup.
9.2.3	Yes		Availability	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to indicate and manually update inventory that is available at each pickup location.
9.2.4	Yes		Selecting Pickup Date and Time	The solution must allow a customer to select the day and hour of operation when an order will be picked up.
9.2.5	Yes		Order Not Picked Up	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to cancel an order that is not picked up. The solution must send a notification to the customer regarding the order
9.3	Yes		Delivery	The solution must allow a customer to enter the street address, unit number, city, state, zip code, and phone number for the delivery of an order.
9.3.1	Yes		Availability	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to indicate the routes and locations where delivery is available, including the days and hours of operation when deliveries occur. The FM/DMF must be able to update this information daily.
9.3.2	Yes		Delivery Fees	The solution must capture and display shipping and other fees associated with each delivery, and each purchase transaction.
9.3.3	Yes		Selecting Delivery Date and Time	The solution must capture and display available dates and times for delivery. The customer must be able to select from the available dates and times prior to completion of a transaction.
9.3.4	Yes		Communication of Delays	The solution must notify a customer if an order cannot be delivered on the date selected, and give the customer an option of canceling the order.
9.4	Yes		Commercial Shipping	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to create a table of commercial shipping options without limiting the number of options. The solution must capture the company name, street address, unit number, city, state, zip code, and phone number for each shipping option.
9.4.1	Yes		Availability	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to indicate the areas to which shipping is available.
9.4.2	Yes		Shipping Fees	The solution must capture and display shipping and other fees associated with each commercial shipping option, and each purchase transaction.
9.4.3	Yes		Product Availability	The solution must be able to identify products that cannot be shipped and delivered within seven days, and provide an onscreen notification to the customer.
9.4.4	Yes		Customer Response	If an item cannot be included in a shipping order, the solution must allow a customer to delete that item from the cart.
9.4.5	Yes		Selecting Shipping Date and Time	The solution must capture and display estimated dates and times for shipping options. The customer must be able to select from the available dates and times prior to completion of a transaction.

9.4.6	Yes		Communication of Delays	The solution must be able to notify a customer if an order cannot be delivered on the date selected, and give the customer an option of canceling the order.
9.5	Yes		Reporting Pickup, Delivery or Shipping Location	For each method, the solution must identify and report, in the transaction message, the location where an order is picked up, delivered or shipped
10			**Pricing, Weighted Items, Out of Stock**	
10.1	Yes		Item pricing	The solution must be able to capture and display pricing for items for each fulfillment type (pickup, delivery, shipping) and each pickup location.
10.2.1	Yes		Weighed Items	The solution must display pricing for weighed items in pounds or ounces, as appropriate.
10.2.2	Yes		Padding Process	To enable pre-purchase calculation of payment(s) amount(s), the solution must be able to estimate the purchase amount of an individual, weighed item by "padding" the amount by as much as 10%. The final purchase amount cannot exceed the padded amount.
10.3	Yes		Advance explanation to customer	The solution must provide an onscreen notification that the purchase amount for weighed items are estimated until final weights are determined.
11			**Coupons, Promos, Discounts**	
11.1	Yes		SNAP or Cash Assistance EBT Customers	The solution must accommodate adjustments to pricing (e.g., alternate pricing, coupons, discounts) for items purchased using SNAP EBT or Cash EBT payments, i.e., purchases by SNAP customers and Cash Assistance customers, .
11.2	Yes		Loyalty Programs, Coupons, Promotions, and Other Discounts	The solution must process alternate pricing (including any sales tax implications) for other promotions, coupons, and discounts, and loyalty programs.
12			**Incentives**	
12.1	No	Yes	Incentive Programs	The solution provides functionality that enables a DMF/FM to participate in a nutrition incentive program, e.g., Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program.
13			**Deposits**	
13.1	Yes		State Mandated Deposits	The solution must identify State-mandated deposits (currently in CA, CT, HI, IA, MA, ME, MI, NY, OR, and VT) for SNAP-eligible items as SNAP-eligible fees, but only up to the State-mandated amount (typically $0.05 or $0.10).
13.2	Yes		All Other Deposits	The solution must identify deposits, which are not State-mandated deposits, for SNAP-eligible items as SNAP-ineligible fees. These fees may be mandated by a manufacturer, distributer or retailer, but are not required by State law. The solution must require payment of these fees using an alternate payment method, e.g., credit, debit, Cash Assistance.

14			**Bag Fees**	
14.1	Yes		Bag Fees Charged by FM/DMF	The solution must identify fees charged by the FM/DMF (regardless of whether mandated by State law) for paper or plastic bags, or any other individual delivery/pickup container. The solution must require payment of these fees using an alternate payment method, e.g., credit, debit, cash assistance.
14.2	Yes		Estimating Fees	The solution must estimate the number of bags/containers, or the estimated amount of bag/container fees for the order prior to transaction.
14.3	No	Yes	Final Amount	The solution displays the final number of bags/containers, or the final amount of bag/container fees for the order prior to transaction.
14.4	Yes		Display	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to identify the final number of bags/containers, or the final amount of bag/container fees, and display this information to the customer during the final transaction.
15			**Sales Tax**	
15.1	Yes		Tax Rates	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to identify the tax rates (including State and local tax) for individual items, and calculate tax for each item as appropriate.
15.2	Yes		SNAP-Eligible Items	SNAP-eligible items purchased with SNAP benefits are not subject to tax. The solution must calculate the purchase amount of SNAP-eligible items.
15.3	Yes		Applying Tax	The solution must calculate the appropriate tax for each item in the order. SNAP-eligible items purchased with SNAP benefits, and those purchased in part with SNAP benefits, are not subject to tax. In NJ, if any part of the order is paid with SNAP benefits, all SNAP-eligible products are tax-free regardless of payment method.
15.3.1	Yes		Multiple Payment Methods for an Order	If a customer uses SNAP benefits and another payment method, the solution must maximize the tax exemption of SNAP-eligible items by counting all (or as many as possible) of the those items to payment using available SNAP benefits. Tax would only be charged for the remaining taxable items.
15.3.2	Yes		Manufacturer's and Store Coupons	The solution must debit the amount of an accepted coupon from the pre-purchase amount (e.g., subtotal or net purchase amount), and identify any tax implications for the customer. For example, some States require collection of sales tax on the discounted value of the coupon, even if the product was purchase with SNAP benefits. This sales tax must not be paid using SNAP benefits.
15.4	No	Yes	Tax Calculation Service Providers	The solution can interface with customizable, off-the-shelf solutions for tax calculation. This interface would enable DMFs/FM to collect taxes given specific scenarios such as: for States where they have a store or fulfillment/ distribution center, or where the customer lives or where the order is delivered.
16			**Service Fees**	

16.1	Yes		Online Service Fees	Under this grant, fees cannot be charged to FMs/DMFs for use of the eCommerce Platform or to customers for the placement of orders for pickup. If an FM/DMF charges fees for the delivery or shipping of an order, the solution must display those fees to the customer for each order prior to transaction.
16.1.1	No	Yes	Monthly, Seasonal or Annual Fees	The solution captures payment of a monthly, seasonal or annual fee for delivery or shipping.
16.1.2	Yes		Payment of Delivery or Shipping Fees	SNAP benefits can not be used to pay for delivery or shipping fees. The solution must accept an alternate payment method, i.e., not SNAP EBT benefit card, for payment of delivery and shipping fees.
16.1.3	Yes		Fee Waivers	The solution must enable an FM/DMF to waive delivery and shipping fees for SNAP customers.
16.2	Yes		Special Containers	An FM/DMF might charge for special containers, cooling devices or other items that are designed to maintain freshness of perishable foods. The solution must capture and display these special charges to the customer prior to the transaction.
17			**Payment Types (and sequence used)**	
17.1	Yes		Payment Types	The solution must accept SNAP, Cash Assistance, Credit, and Debit methods of payment.
17.1.1	No	Yes	Contactless Types	The solution accepts other commercial online payment types, e.g., PayPal, Venmo.
17.1.2	Yes		Payment Type Order	The solution will default first to the SNAP EBT payment type, second to the Cash Assistance EBT payment type, then to Credit, Debit and other payment types.
17.1.3	Yes		Payment Type Selection	The solution allows a customer to select the payment type(s) to be used for a transaction.
17.1.4	Yes		Payment Type Amount - Limit	The solution allows a customer to identify the amount of available SNAP benefits to be applied to an order.
17.2	Yes		Card entry	The solution must allow a customer to enter payment type information or select a stored payment type.
17.2.1	Yes		CVV and Expiration Date	The solution must enable entry of CVV and expiration date for payment types, as appropriate, that are entered by a customer, i.e., not previously stored in a customer account. Discuss how this will look to all customers.
17.2.2	Yes		BIN	The solution will use a third-party BIN check function when a payment type (card) is used.
17.2.3	Yes		SNAP EBT Card - Limit to One Card	The solution will only allow the storage of a single (only one) SNAP EBT card at any one time.
18			**Split Tender (Use of Multiple Payment Types)**	

18.1	Yes		Split Tender	The solution must allow a customer to use multiple payment types for the same order.
18.1.1	Yes		Method	At a minimum, and as provided elsewhere in this document, the solution must group SNAP eligible items and SNAP-ineligible items to enable a customer to determine which payment types to apply to an order and in what amounts.
18.1.2	Yes		How Used	The solution will first ask the customer for the amount of SNAP EBT benefits that should be applied to SNAP eligible items in the order. Second, the solution will ask the customer for the amount of Cash Assistance EBT benefits that should be applied to the order. Then, the solution will ask for any balance to the customer to use an alternate payment type for any remaining balance.
18.1.3	Yes		Communication	The solution will provide notification to the customer regarding the use of split tender, the method and how it is processed.
19			**Calculation of Total (Pre-payment verification)**	
19.1	Yes		Pre-Payment Calculation of SNAP and Other Totals	The solution provides and displays a pre-payment calculation of the order total, including the amounts for SNAP-eligible items, bag fees, delivery fees, container fees, and other service fees.
19.1.1	Yes		Communication	The solution must provide an on-screen notification that the customer can determine the amount of available SNAP benefits to be applied to an order.
19.1.2	Yes		SNAP Account Balance	The solution must require the customer to conduct a SNAP balance inquiry through PIN entry to verify the amount of available SNAP benefits.
19.1.3	Yes		Amount of Available SNAP Benefits Used	The solution allows a customer to determine the amount of available SNAP benefits to be applied to an order.
19.2	Yes		Pre-Payment Order Verification	The solution must display final order verification for review by the customer.
19.2.1	Yes		Content	The solution must display a full, detailed (itemized) list of items including quantities, prices, and indicators of whether each item is SNAP-eligible or taxable; fees associated with the order; and, identification of padding amounts added for weighed items.
19.2.2	Yes		Back-Out Option	The solution must allow the customer to delete individual items from the order.
19.3	Yes		Transaction Authorization	The solution must request PIN entry and identify the correct benefit type (SNAP/Cash Assistance) for each transaction.
19.4	Yes		Approved Transactions	The solution must store the unique transaction ID with the transaction.
19.5	Yes		Denied Transactions	The solution must notify the customer of denial reasons and display instructions for next steps.

19.5.1	Yes		Bad PIN	Upon receiving a Bad PIN (55) message, the solution must allow re-entry of the PIN up to two times. If the Bad PIN (55) message is received three times, the solution must allow the customer to use an alternate payment type.
19.5.2	Yes		Insufficient Funds	The solution must provide the customer with a) an option to use an alternate payment type for all or part of the purchase amount for SNAP-eligible items; and b) an option to remove items from the order.
20			**Transaction - Authorization**	
20.1	Yes		PIN Purchase	The solution must interface with a secure PIN-Solution Provider to process each transaction. The customer must conduct a successful PIN entry to authorize the transaction (this is a separate requirement from the SNAP Account balance requirement during Pre-purchase verification).
20.2	Yes		Confirmation Screen	After the transaction has been conducted, the solution must provide a confirmation pop-up screen indicating that the transaction has been approved, the total purchase/refund amount, the last four digits of the card and the remaining balance in the account.
20.3	Yes		PINless Refunds	The solution must allow PINless refunds for the amount of unused padded amounts for weighed items.
20.3.1	Yes		Method	The solution must conform to the third party processor refund request specification.
21			**Transaction Error Response Codes and Message Handling**	
21.1	Yes		Messages	The solution must be able to translate any error response codes received from the TPP into messaging displayed to and understandable by the customer, including: Purchase (or Balance Inquiry) Errors • Invalid PIN • PIN Attempts Exceeded • Insufficient Fund • Invalid Card/Account • Other EBT Processor Hard Denial (e.g., lost/stolen card, general denial) • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP) Error • Credit/Debit-only Denial • Credit/Debit Denial After EBT Approved • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP) Does Not Respond • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP)/EBT Processor Does Not Respond to Authorization Request

				• Credit/Debit Processor (or Card Issuer) Does Not Respond to Preauthorization (after EBT Payment(s) Made) • Credit/Debit Processor (or Card Issuer) Does Not Respond to Final Authorization while Fulfilling Order Refund Errors • Refund Exceeds 90 Day Limit for EBT • Refund Amount Exceeds Original Purchase • Return Exceeds Benefit Authorization • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP)/EBT Processor Does Not Respond to Refund Request when Changing Order • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP)/EBT Processor Does Not Respond to Refund Request while Fulfilling Order • PIN-Solution Provider (TPP)/EBT Processor Does Not Respond to Post-Delivery Refund Request Internal Errors or Time Out • Before Order Processing/PIN Entry Begins • Between PIN Entry and EBT Transaction Response • Between SNAP Approval and Cash EBT Approval • Between EBT Approval(s) and Credit/Debit Pre-Authorization • After All Payments Approved but before Order Confirmation • During Order Fulfillment
22			**Order Fulfillment (Processing)**	
22.1	Yes		Substitutions	The customer must be allowed to indicate, on an item-by-item basis, when substitutions will be accepted, e.g., by checking a box next to each item to indicate "Yes, the FM/DMF can substitute with a similar item."
22.2	Yes		Order Fulfillment	The solution must be able to provide a report of each order, which includes the elements needed to fulfill an order. At a minimum, the report must include: customer ID, order number, fulfillment type (pickup, delivery, shipping), item, quantity, weight requested, price, whether substitutions are acceptable.
22.2.1	No	Yes	Interface with POS System	The solution interfaces with the FM/DMF's POS system.
22.3	Yes		Notification of completion	The solution provides notification to the customer when an order has been completed, i.e., processed and packaged by the FM/DMF and ready for final fulfillment.

22.3.1	Yes		Itemized receipt	The solution must provide an itemized receipt that is displayed onscreen to the customer. This receipt provided by the solution must include, at a minimum: • Company name; • Contact information, including website URL, physical address, phone number and email for the FM/DMF; • Date and time of transaction; • Transaction type; • Truncated account number (last four digits); • Transaction amount; • Payment type(s), and associated amount(s); • Item quantities and prices; • Indication of whether each individual item is SNAP-eligible or taxable; • Indication of the items for which the customer has agreed to substitution, as needed; • Indication of whether each individual item is weighed to determine purchase amount; • Padding of weighed items; • Remaining SNAP Balance; • Remaining Cash Assistance Balance; • Delivery/pickup/shipping address; • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup time, as applicable • Itemized fees for delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling and other fees or charges • Itemized fees for bags or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers
23			**Transactions - Voids, Refunds, Mods, Cancellations**	
23.1	Yes		Customer Voids	The solution must allow for voids by a customer of an order that has not yet processed.
23.2	Yes		Retailer Voids	The solution must allow an FM/DMF to decline an order that includes fees, but the customer does not provide an alternate payment type.
23.3			Order Modifications	
23.3.1	Yes		Cancellation	The solution must enable a customer to cancel an entire order before it is processed. The solution must enable an FM/DMF to identify when an order can no longer be modified.
23.3.2	Yes		Add item(s)	The solution must enable a customer to add an item, including SNAP-eligible items paid with SNAP benefits and any item paid with an alternate payment type, to an existing order before it is processed.

23.3.3	Yes		Remove item(s)	The solution must enable a customer to remove an item from an order before it is processed.
23.3.4	Yes		Refund Notification and content	The solution must provide an itemized receipt that is displayed onscreen to the customer. This receipt provided by the solution must include, at a minimum: • Company name; • Contact information, including website URL, physical address, phone number and email for the FM/DMF; • Date and time of transaction; • Transaction type; • Truncated account number (last four digits); • Transaction amount; • Payment type(s), and associated amount(s); • Item quantities and prices; • Indication of whether each individual item is SNAP-eligible or taxable; • Indication of the items for which the customer has agreed to substitution, as needed; • Indication of whether each individual item is weighed to determine purchase amount; • Padding of weighed items; • Remaining SNAP Balance; • Remaining Cash Assistance Balance; • Delivery/pickup/shipping address; • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup time, as applicable • Itemized fees for delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling and other fees or charges • Itemized fees for bags or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers
23.3.5	Yes		Online Order History	The solution must retain modified orders in the online order history.
24			**Refunds and returns**	
24.1	Yes		Refund at Completion of Order	The solution must be able to provide refunds, as appropriate.
24.1.1	Yes		Process	The solution must store a customer’s order history. That order history must identify final items, weights, quantities, and prices of the items in the fulfilled order.
24.1.2	Yes		Method	The solution must conform to the Third Party Processor Refund Request Specification.

24.1.3	Yes		Receipt	The solution must provide an itemized receipt that is displayed onscreen to the customer. This receipt provided by the solution must include, at a minimum: • Company name; • Contact information, including website URL, physical address, phone number and email for the FM/DMF; • Date and time of transaction; • Transaction type; • Truncated account number (last four digits); • Transaction amount; • Payment type(s), and associated amount(s); • Item quantities and prices; • Indication of whether each individual item is SNAP-eligible or taxable; • Indication of the items for which the customer has agreed to substitution, as needed; • Indication of whether each individual item is weighed to determine purchase amount; • Padding of weighed items; • Remaining SNAP Balance; • Remaining Cash Assistance Balance; • Delivery/pickup/shipping address; • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup time, as applicable • Itemized fees for delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling and other fees or charges • Itemized fees for bags or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers
25			**Other**	
25.1	Yes		Retailer Policies - Browser	The Solution must provide a menu where policies for returns, privacy, security, etc. can be accessed by a customer.
26			**Notifications**	

26.1	Yes		Purchase Notifications	The solution must provide a purchase notification to the customer, including: • Company name • Contact Information (physical address optional if not currently provided for other customers) • Date of transaction • Time of transaction if included for other customers • Transaction Type (SNAP/Cash) • Truncated Account Number • Transaction Amount • Remaining SNAP Balance • Remaining Cash Assistance Balance • Delivery/pickup/shipping address • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup/shipping date • Actual or estimated delivery/pickup time if appropriate • Itemized fees for delivery/pickup/shipping, ordering, convenience, handling or other fees or charges • Other itemized SNAP-ineligible fees for container deposits, bags or other delivery/pickup/shipping containers
26.1.1	Yes		Online Order History	The solution must retain modified orders in the online order history.

B. RFA Budget Narrative Checklist

This checklist will assist you in completing the budget narrative portion of the application. Please review the checklist to ensure the items below are addressed in the budget narrative.

NOTE: The budget and budget narrative, as well as forms SF-424 and SF-424A must be in line with the proposal project description (statement of work) bona fide need. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

	YES	NO
Cost Structure		
How will you ensure that all fees associated with commercial debit/credit accepted by FMs/DMFs through the solution are charged to the participating FM/DMF and are not paid using grant funds? (This grant is intended to support SNAP the ability and costs associated with FMs/DMFs accepting SNAP purchases online.)		
Will the costs for the PIN solution and other TPP services, which are normally the responsibility of each retailer, e.g., FM/DMF, be included as part of the grant? (If the applicant proposes to use grant funds to pay for these costs, FNS may limit the use of grant funds to pay for these costs contingent on the availability of funds, the numbers of FMs/DMFs participating under this grant, and other factors.)		
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant’s organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTE)?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization’s fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		

Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Equipment		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual awards and associated costs after the contract is awarded.)		
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown on the budget?		
A justification for all Sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		

Consultant Services. – Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget. The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant's name and an itemized list of all direct cost and fees, number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the costs), Number of estimated hours X hourly wages, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project.		
For all other line items listed under the "Other" heading. - List all items to be covered under this heading along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		
Indirect Costs		
Has the applicant obtained a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from an Federal Agency? If yes, a copy of the most resent and signed negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		
If no negotiated agreement exists, the basis and the details of the indirect costs to be requested should also be reflected in the budget.		

C. Purpose

Recipients of Federal funds must maintain adequate accounting systems that meet the criteria outlined in 2 CFR §200.302 Standards for Financial and Program Management. The responses to this questionnaire are used to assist in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds. Failure to comply with the criteria outlined in the regulations above may preclude your organization from receiving an award. This form applies to FNS' competitive and noncompetitive grant programs. Please return this questionnaire with your application package to us.

D. Organization Information

Legal Organization Name:

D-U-Ns Number: