

AgeGuide Request for Proposals FY2026 Questions and Answers April 23, 2025

General Application Questions

If we submitted an LOI, do we have to apply? Can we change our mind?

You may withdraw your LOI at any time, for one or more services. You are not required to apply for every service for which you submitted an LOI. Please do notify us if you no longer intend to apply.

We would be first-time applicants and have not received a federal grant before. We can provide many recommendations from people who have given us grants, other townships, foundations, but can you give us guidance as to which funder should provide the letter of recommendation?

You may ask for a recommendation from any of your funders, and the funding does not have to be federally sourced. The letter of recommendation should attest to your agency's grant and program performance, such as your ability to submit grant reports accurately on time.

We applied for a SAM number a while ago but what do we do if we haven't received it by the application deadline?

A Unique Entity Identifier, or UEI, is required for all applicants. This number should be entered in the Organizational Profile. If you have applied but have not yet received your UEI, you may add a general note on your application in the Notes field. Tell us when you applied for the UEI number and tell us that you haven't received it yet. This way we will know that you didn't skip that question, and we can follow up with you.

Is the “Applicant Staffing Chart” a requirement with the application?

Yes, the Staffing Chart is required for all services. The entire organizational profile is a requirement. Please use the staffing chart template available on our RFP webpage.

Do we need to complete the staffing chart for everyone at our agency? Or only for those services for which we are applying?

The staffing chart is where you will list specifics about the staff who will be working on the grant. You do not need to list everyone at your agency – only those staff who you expect to be involved in the grant program. You will list name, title, years of experience, etc. Please use the template which is available on the RFP webpage. The staffing chart will be uploaded into the Organizational Profile in SmartSimple.

We want to ensure that we understand how to allocate our time. There are activities that are completed for caregivers such as case management for caregivers - such as maintaining contact with them outside of individual counseling (case management), required grantee meetings, and supervision staff. How do we approach allocating that time? Is it best practice to split that time between our supported grant deliverables (individual counseling, support, and training and education)? If that's not best practice, can you please inform on how we allocate that time appropriately within the grant?

You should have a written cost allocation plan for costs like this which can be attributed to multiple grants. Different organizations use different methods to allocate costs. For example, some may use the percent of staff time spent on particular projects. For something like attending a general meeting for AgeGuide, you could consider allocating the funds based on percent of funding for each grant source. Ultimately, you must have a written plan, and then you must follow that written plan.

How were the FY26 unit projections determined?

FY26 unit projects are based on available funding, past performance, and other factors such as meal costs for nutrition providers. The units and persons in the project description are minimums. If your agency can serve more than the projections list for your service and county, you may include those increased units and persons in your application.

I missed the TA session, was it recorded?

Yes, the session was recorded. A link to access the recording was sent out to the main contact for each applicant, according to the LOI submitted.

General Budgeting Questions

Do we have to list all part-time employees on the budget?

You can either list individuals or you can list positions. Some providers have a lot of staff so they could list 10 drivers, etc. We understand that it's hard to account for every staffing scenario but complete the budget as best as you can and then use the budget justification to break it out for us so we can fully understand your staffing needs.

I want to clarify that the document named FY26 Request for Proposals on page 6 is the Funding amounts to use in our budget?

Yes, please use the estimated allocations on page 6 to complete your budget:
<https://ageguide.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/FY26-Request-for-Proposals.pdf>

I just downloaded the budget template from the portal and all the sheets in the Excel file are password-protected. How do I edit the spreadsheet?

Only certain fields of the budget are editable. If you try to edit a protected field, you will get a notice that the sheet is protected. Please refer to the budget instructions for guidance on how to complete the budget.

Nutrition-Specific Questions

We received an email with an Approved Caterer list. Why did we receive this? What are we supposed to do with it?

All organizations who indicated that they will be applying for IIIC1 Congregate Meals or IIIC2 Home Delivered Meals should have received an Approved Caterer list for their specific county. Please reach out if you did not receive this catering list. Organizations must use an approved caterer for their RFP application. Please review the video from the Informational Session where this information was reviewed.

We are proposing a nutrition project, and will be preparing our own meals. How do we budget for staff who are working on meal prep? How do we budget for delivery?

If an organization decides to prepare their own meals, they must submit a catering application for approval from AgeGuide. You do not need to submit a catering application until your organization is approved to provide services for the Senior Nutrition Program.

Catering budgets should be developed separately from your C1/C2 budget. The caterer budget should include all the costs associated with preparing the meal, such as food cost, food preparation, including staff. From this, you can generate your proposed cost per meal. You will need to utilize the following average food costs when creating your catering proposal: home delivered meal food cost on average is \$7.00 per meal and congregate meal food cost is \$8.50 per meal.

For your C1/C2 RFP application, you will need to use your proposed cost per meal from your catering proposal on the "Food" tab. You should **not** include the staff directly involved in food preparation in your C1/C2 budget – these costs will be accounted for in your catering proposal. If there are delivery costs associated with delivering meals to participants by the C-1/C-2 provider, these costs should be included in the C1/C2 budget and explained further in the budget justification. Delivery costs to participants should be budgeted in your C1/C2 budget, not your catering proposal. You will need to maintain a separate accounting for the catering costs vs the C1/C2 program throughout the grant year.

We deliver home delivered meals ourselves. Is the cost of my agency to deliver from our hub to all the individual clients a direct cost related to the provision of service?

Yes this is a direct cost that should be included in your C2 budget. AgeGuide expects 50% of the funding received to be spent directly on food costs. This 50% does not include transportation costs related to the delivery of the food.

Is the 50% food cost 50% of AgeGuide costs, or 50% of the total budget including local cash/project income, etc.?

It is 50% of the AgeGuide grant amount, not 50% of the total budget.

For a grab and go meal program, can the space/infrastructure be smaller than the usual Congregate space, considering clients won't be dining in? Is a full-fledged

dining space is mandatory? Can we have a grab and go location with just a table for grab and go boxes, and no socializing space?

It is acceptable for the space to be smaller, however, all the same requirements of a congregate dining site must be adhered to (i.e. current Health inspection report, current fire inspection report, 504 accessibility form, etc.)

Congregate Grab-and-Go meals must offer socialization opportunities in order to be counted as Congregate dining site. If there is no option for socialization at the grab-and-go location, then meals must be logged as HDM Grab-and-Go.

Can we have a nutrition location that is 100% grab and go? Or is some percentage of dine-in mandatory?

AgeGuide has received new information from Illinois Department on Aging on 4/10/2025 that indicates that the congregate meal program regulations limit the expenditures of Grab-and-Go Meals to 25% of congregate program funding and require these meals must enhance the program and target those in greatest economic and social need. There are no similar restrictions in the home delivery program regulations for HDM Grab-and-Go meals.

Under the Title III C1 section of the application, it requires you to select either “Special Project” or “Congregate Meals.” Which should we use?

All applicants for C1 should select Congregate Meals. Do not use the Special Project category.