



NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

Issued by: Northern Illinois Recovery Community Organization (NIRCO)

Funding Source: Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

Service Area: Illinois 60th House District – Lake County

Total Awards Available: Four (4)

Release Date: January 15th, 2026

Application Deadline: February 15, 2026

Notification of Award Date: March 5, 2026

Funding Period: FY26 July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027

1. PURPOSE OF FUNDING

The Northern Illinois Recovery Community Organization (NIRCO) is soliciting proposals from qualified community-based organizations to implement programs that address critical community needs related to food security, youth development, workforce readiness, and health equity within the 60th Illinois House District of Lake County. NIRCO will serve as the administrative entity for these sub-grant awards. All sub-grantee program narratives, budgets, and performance measures are subject to review and final approval by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) prior to contract execution. Funding will support culturally responsive, equity-driven programs that demonstrate measurable outcomes and sustainable community impact.

All awards made under this Notice of Funding Opportunity are subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the General Assembly. No award shall be deemed final until such funds are made available.

2. AVAILABLE FUNDING CATEGORIES & AWARD AMOUNTS

Applicants may apply for one (1) funding category only. Award amounts are fixed by category.

A. Food Pantry & Cultural Preservation Initiative

Award Amount: \$200,000

Programs must:

- Provide consistent access to nutritious food through a community-based food pantry or distribution model
- Demonstrate culturally responsive practices that preserve and celebrate Hispanic values, traditions, and family-centered engagement
- Offer wraparound community activities such as family gatherings, cultural celebrations, or seasonal support events (e.g., toy or supply drives)
- Engage community members in program design, outreach, or volunteer leadership roles
- Track and report food distribution volume, households served, and community engagement outcomes

B. After-School Program for Justice-Impacted & High-Risk Youth

Award Amount: \$275,000

Programs must:

- Serve school-age children and youth impacted by incarcerated or justice involved parents, substance use disorder, mental health challenges, or housing instability
- Provide structured after-school programming that includes academic support, social-emotional learning, and positive youth development activities
- Incorporate life skills education, financial literacy, and age-appropriate career exploration
- Utilize trauma-informed and family-aware approaches
- Establish partnerships with schools and community organizations
- Track outcomes related to attendance, academic engagement, skill development, and youth well-being

C. Job Club / Youth Workforce Training & Development Program

Award Amount: \$275,000

Programs must:

- Support youth and young adults transitioning from high school to postsecondary education, careers, or apprenticeships
- Offer structured workforce readiness activities such as resume development, interview preparation, workplace skills, and job search support
- Provide real-world exposure through employer engagement, internships, job shadowing, or career exploration
- Integrate mentoring, coaching, or peer support
- Collaborate with employers and workforce partners
- Track outcomes such as certifications earned, employment placements, internships secured, or educational enrollment

D. Mobile Health Outreach – Asthma Equity Initiative

Award Amount: \$275,000

Programs must:

- Deliver mobile or community-based health outreach services to underserved youth and families in Lake County

- Focus on reducing asthma-related health disparities
- Provide direct services such as asthma screenings, education, referrals, and care navigation
- Utilize culturally responsive and community-informed approaches
- Coordinate with healthcare providers, schools, or community partners
- Track outcomes related to screenings conducted, individuals served, and linkage to ongoing care

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must:

- Be a nonprofit organization or otherwise eligible community-based entity
- Be physically located within the 60th Illinois House District of Lake County, or demonstrate that a majority of individuals served by the program reside within the district.
- Demonstrate organizational and fiscal capacity to manage state-funded grants
- Submit a complete application, including all required narratives, budgets, and financial documents
- Agree to comply with IDHS fiscal, reporting, and monitoring requirements

4. FUNDING DETAILS & USE OF FUNDS

Total Funding Available

NIRCO anticipates making four (4) sub-grant awards, subject to IDHS approval:

- Food Pantry Initiative: \$200,000
- After-School Youth Program: \$275,000
- Job Club / Workforce Program: \$275,000
- Mobile Health Outreach Program: \$275,000

Applicants must submit a program budget that aligns exactly with the award amount for the selected category.

Allowable Use of Funds

Sub-grant funds may be used for program-related costs, including but not limited to:

- Personnel directly associated with program delivery
- Program supplies, materials, and equipment
- Outreach, engagement, and participant support costs
- Training and capacity-building related to program implementation
- Contracted services supporting program outcomes
- Administrative costs directly attributable to the funded program

All costs must be reasonable, necessary, allowable, and allocable.

Unallowable Costs

Funds may not be used for:

- Costs unrelated to the approved program scope
- Supplanting existing funding
- Lobbying or political activities
- Capital construction or major renovations
- Costs deemed unallowable by IDHS or state regulations

Administrative & Indirect Costs: Administrative and indirect costs must be clearly identified, reasonable, and compliant with IDHS cost principles. Applicants may be required to revise budgets during the IDHS approval process.

Payment Structure: Sub-grant awards will be issued on a **reimbursement basis**, unless otherwise approved by IDHS. Sub-grantees must submit required invoices and supporting documentation in accordance with NIRCO and IDHS requirements.

Reporting & Monitoring: Funded organizations will be required to submit regular programmatic and fiscal reports, track performance measures, and participate in monitoring or site visits as requested.

5. REQUIRED APPLICATION COMPONENTS

All applicants must submit the following as part of a complete application:

Programmatic Materials

- Program Narrative
- Target Population & Community Need Narrative
- Equity & Community Impact Narrative
- Measurable Outcomes & Performance Measures
- Partnerships & Collaboration Narrative
- Organizational Capacity Narrative
- Program Sustainability Narrative

Required Financial Documents

Applicants must upload all of the following:

1. Organizational Operating Budget (most recent fiscal year; board-approved if available)
2. Proposed Program Line-Item Budget (must match award amount)
3. Program Budget Narrative explaining all proposed costs
4. Most Recent Financial Statement, one of the following:
 - Audited financial statements, or
 - Reviewed financials, or
 - Internal year-end financial report (P&L and/or balance sheet)

Applicants must also provide a brief description of their financial management systems and internal controls.

6. REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

- Applications will be reviewed by NIRCO for completeness and alignment with NOFO requirements
- Funding recommendations will be submitted to IDHS for final review and approval
- Funding is contingent upon IDHS approval of program scope, budget, and performance measures

NIRCO has identified priority service areas based on community need; however, funding decisions will be made through an open and competitive process.

7. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

- **Release Date:** January 15, 2026
- **Application Deadline:** February 15, 2026
- **Review Period:** February 15–27, 2026
- **Notification of Award:** March 5, 2026
- **Funding Period:** July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027

8. COMPLIANCE & ASSURANCES

All funded organizations must comply with IDHS requirements and applicable state and federal regulations. Failure to comply may result in delayed payments, corrective action, or termination of the sub-grant agreement.