

Food Provision Scheme for Young Children during the Covid-19 Crisis – Information for Grantees

What is the Food Provision Scheme?

The Children's Rights Alliance, with €50,000 funding from the Bank of Ireland, have established a direct food provision scheme to support the nutritional needs for children under the age of 6 years experiencing poverty and deprivation during the Covid-19 crisis.

The initiative will target young children that are not already benefiting from sufficient direct food provision through another organisation or programme, or where their current provider is struggling to address need, 7 days a week for 4 weeks.

Ideally, the programme should focus on the provision of **hot meals** where possible as this is what young children prefer. However, we recognise that local arrangements may differ depending on supply and distribution arrangements and so the programme will have flexibility to supply food parcels where necessary.

Who can apply?

Any early year's provider or community/voluntary service that meets the criteria below may apply.

- There must be a child under 6 living in the household you intend to provide food to.
- There must be support and endorsement by local Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) – this is to avoid duplication and ensure local need is met.
- Children/families who are not already in receipt of enough food provision supports will be prioritised for support through this programme.
- Emphasis must be placed on reaching the families that may be otherwise missed by other programmes and this should be demonstrated through the application form.

How do I apply?

Applications are available on the Children's Rights Alliance website and through your local [CYPSC](#).

Applicants must fill out the application form and then contact their local CYPSC to seek endorsement for their application. A list of local coordinators is available [here](#).

Following endorsement of local CYPSC, the application must be submitted by **Friday 1st May** to mary@childrensrights.ie.

Applications will be reviewed and processed by the Children's Rights Alliance Grant Group and successful applicants will be notified by **Friday May 8th**.

What if the organisation is already in receipt of funding to supply food?

Ideally, this grant is directed at services/organisations who are not already in receipt of funding but exceptions may be made where organisations demonstrate they are struggling to meet ongoing demands due to financial constraints.

What are the guidelines in relation to supplying hot meals?

Where there are onsite facilities to provide hot meals, all the usual health and safety guidelines must be followed as per normal operations. In addition, measures in response to COVID19 outlined by the [Food Safety Authority](#) must be followed.

What if a service cannot supply hot meals?

Services may use existing contractors who prepare food off site and deliver to the location. Again, relevant guidelines in relation to food storage and distribution must be adhered to.

If you are supplying food parcels, guidelines are available from [Healthy Ireland](#) in terms of healthy eating for young children and these guidelines should be used to inform contents of parcels provided.

Ideally non-perishable food could be used if hot meals are not possible. Food providers could be asked to consider this and to arrange for a Food Hamper for each child / participating family / participating household.

Considerations must also be made for cultural variances required in terms of the food provided. This will be discussed with the provider in receipt of the grant.

Nappies and other essential baby products may also be included. These are considered additional essential items.

[Food in Schools Policy Network](#) can help providers/organisations to connect you with a local food business.

How should food be distributed?

In terms of the distribution of food, providers can consider which mechanism will work best within the parameters set out for them in relation to distributing food but could include the following:

- Delivery of food to central site (*e.g. Childcare setting, Community Centre*)
- Childcare settings may have already participated in food delivery schemes and should contact their food suppliers to see if this is an option.
- Food could then be distributed from this central location directly to recipient's home addresses by staff.
- Centra and the GAA are also providing local delivery as are very many other local initiatives.
- It is also possible to purchase food from a wholesaler or local supermarket and deliver directly to families.

How will the grant be administered?

The grant will be administered once the application has been successful in order to ensure organisations can meet the needs of families immediately.

Receipts for all costs must be retained and submitted with the final report.

Funds are to be used for the provision of food only – administration costs are not covered.

The value of food provided will be dependent on need/numbers in the family (excluding the allocation of nappies and baby products) and should be agreed locally, ensuring 100 children are supported. However, it is expected that there will be €30 available, per child per week.

Grantees will receive confirmation of exact funds awarded to their organisation once the successful application has been processed.

What are the reporting guidelines?

Grantees are required to fill out an interim report template midway through the scheme. A final report template is to be submitted (including receipts) and the date will be confirmed after the grant has been awarded.