



DCHHS

Dallas County Health and Human Services

*Healthy People Healthy Communities
Health and Social Equity*



DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Chronic Disease Prevention Division
Obesity Prevention Program

COMMUNITY GARDEN MINI-GRANT APPLICATION



FY2024

COMMUNITY GARDEN MINI-GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINE

Background

Community gardens can be described as a single piece of land on private or public property, managed collectively by a group of people to harvest fresh produces such as fruits, vegetables and spices.

Being overweight and obesity¹ increases a person's risk to heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and other serious medical conditions. With about 35%² prevalence, obesity is a main public health issue impacting many Dallas County citizens. Various research have shown that communities with inadequate access to healthy food are more likely to suffer from obesity and its impact. Many communities in Dallas County reside in food deserts. Food deserts are urban areas in which it is difficult to buy affordable and good quality fresh produce. In these areas, fast food is easily accessible, but there is a lack of healthy options. Community gardens can help improve access to healthy food in food deserts that are often found in low-income areas. Although, there are several community gardens located throughout Dallas County, there is still a significant unmet need. Expanding community gardens not only provides fresh produce to underserved communities but also creates stronger communities, provides educational opportunities and promotes healthier lifestyle. Therefore, through its Obesity Prevention Program, Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) is making available limited funding (mini-grant) to support community gardens in select zip codes.

Target communities were identified based on prevalence of diabetes, obesity and hypertension, access to supermarkets, and median income. Accordingly, the following zip codes have been selected as priority areas. These zip codes are: 75210, 75212, 75216, 75217, 75203, 75211, 75227, 75233, 75223, 75224, 75042, 75220, 75180, 75215, 75172, 75237, 75228, 75253, 75041, 75061, 75231, 75247, 75051, 75240, 75141, 75241, 75232, 75060, 75246, 75236, 75208, 75050, 75116, 75149, 75243, 75159, 75040, 75150, 75235, 75062, 75146, 75115, 75134, 75226, 75315, 75339 and 75371. Other zip codes may be considered based on updated identified socioeconomic needs.

¹ BMI of 30 or above

² <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/Obesity/data/>

Grant Amount

Grant amounts will be awarded based on project needs. Funds will be allocated to 16 established gardens and 5 new garden projects for an overall total of \$73,000. Therefore, each established garden applicant could potentially apply for support of up to but not exceeding \$3,000. Up to five (5) applicants looking to establish a new garden may receive up to \$5,000 each. For the purpose of this mini grant, an established garden is defined as a community garden with existing garden structures. While a new garden is an intended garden with identified plot of land (that may be fenced) without any garden structure including beds, trellis, shades, etc. Mini-grant funding shall be awarded as a one-time opportunity.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses for which awarded mini-grant funds may be used include but are not limited to: materials to build garden beds (wood, rock, etc.), garden bedding materials (organic soils, mulch, compost, etc.), garden bed covers, low-cost propagation items, path mulch, planting materials, installation and/or repair of drip irrigation on garden beds by connecting to already installed water mains, greenhouse, organic garden supplies and any reasonable maintenance or upgrades the garden may need. Grant funds may also be used to pay for Texas Master Gardener training.

Ineligible expenses for mini-grant funds include promotional items, beautification projects, infrastructure projects (water main, electricity, etc.), refreshments, uniforms, and personnel expenses including transportation. It will be the responsibility of a mini-grant recipient to confirm with DCHHS if they are unsure whether a specific expenditure is allowable or not.

Who Can Apply?

Any organization or group of residents in Dallas County meeting the following five criteria may apply for the mini grant. These criteria are:

- The applicant must have a demonstrated need to be eligible to receive funding.
- The garden or intended garden needs to be located in one of the target zip codes/food desert areas or demonstrably provides produce to communities in one of the selected target zip codes.
- The garden complies with local ordinances and operates according to applicable rules and regulations.
- The garden plans to remain in operation for at least three years after receipt of support.
- The garden plans to participate in the DCHHS/AgriLife community gardens support/volunteer program to receive technical and operational support to be provided based on the garden's need

Program Requirements

- Community garden must be conducted by a group (school, church, neighborhood, etc.)
- Completion of Pre-application Community Garden Training and other required trainings throughout the grant cycle
- **100%** of the garden must be used to grow produce (small area/bed may be used to plant flowers to attract pollinators)
- Poundage of produce from the gardens must be reported annually before the end of the grant cycle
- A minimum of 5% of produce grown in the garden must be **donated to local food banks or pantries**
- Smoking is **NOT** allowed in garden grounds
- Garden should be kept free of any illegal substances/plants
- Garden should utilize environmentally friendly products only
- Garden should agree to submit detailed expenditure report and photograph of the garden (plus photo release form) with invoice for reimbursement. Note: Handwritten expenditure reports will not be accepted.
- Garden agrees to receive the funds as reimbursements based on invoice submitted on DCHHS provided invoicing form (see attachment)

Application Instructions

The attached application form along with supporting documents must be submitted to the DCHHS Chronic Disease Prevention Division by **August 10, 2023** to be considered for the mini-grant funding. You can submit your completed application and supporting documents by email or postal mail (see below for address). Once applications are received, the following five factors will be taken into consideration when ranking each application:

- Mission and purpose of the garden (*20 points*)
- Impact and reach of the garden with communities in food desert areas (*20 points*)
- Existing and/or planned number of gardeners and volunteer resources (*10 points*)
- Community involvement (*20 points*)
- The intended budget and expenses the award would be used for (*10 points*)
- Sustainability (i.e., history, stability, and continuity of the garden) (*20 points*)

Pre-Application Community Garden Training

The Pre-Application Community Garden Training is provided in partnership with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and provides the fundamentals to establishing and maintaining a community garden. It is at no cost to mini-grant applicants and is one of the program requirements to receive support. Training dates are to be determined. Applicable trainings received within the past one year will be accepted to fulfill this requirement. Gardens, with such training (s) must submit documentation of their training (s) with this application for consideration.

How to submit your application

Applications for the mini grant could be submitted in either of the following two ways:

- 1) **On-line Submission:** Using an online form available on the DCHHS Chronic Disease Prevention Division webpage through the link below. (**Note: There is no “Save and continue later” feature available currently. That means, the online form does not allow you to save your progress and come back to it later. Therefore, applicants need to complete the form in one session and submit it**)

[Click Here to apply online.](#) (Please scroll down to see what information you would need to complete your application online)

- 2) **Email Submission:** Download application form from DCHHS Chronic Disease Prevention Division webpage (<https://www.dallascounty.org/Assets/uploads/docs/hhs/chronic-disease/DCHHS-CommunityGarden-Mini-grantApplication-2023.pdf>) and email your completed application and applicable documents to chronic.disease@dallascounty.org with “**FY2024 Community Garden Mini-grant Application**” in the subject of the email. You can also request the form by contacting the DCHHS Chronic Disease Prevention Division at chronic.disease@dallascounty.org or (214) 819-5115.

The deadline for the DCHHS Community Garden mini-grant application is **August 10, 2023**. Once you have submitted your application, we will contact you to confirm receipt. Selection of applicants will be completed by **September 8th, 2023**. Following the notice of selection, selected applicants will be contacted by CDPD staff to facilitate field visit and for establishment of MOU. Please note that final approval of grant award is executed by the Dallas County Commissioners Court and recipients can only be reimbursed for funds that are expended on and after the effective date of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) following the Court’s approval. Here are the steps in the application and approval process:

Steps	Action	Party	Remark
STEP -1	Applicants submit application through on-line form or by email	Applicant garden	Applicant may contact CDPD for assistance; virtual mini grant information session Click here to join the session
STEP -2	Application Review	CDPD staff	CDPD may request additional information
STEP -3	Site Visit and Supporting Documents	CDPD staff	Schedule in consultation with applicant garden
STEP -4	Selection by DCHHS	CDPD staff and DCHHS management	Approval by DCHHS management
STEP -5	MOU	DCHHS & Applicant garden	Applicant garden has opportunity to review final draft
STEP -6	Final decision and approval	Dallas County Commissioners Court	MOU Execution date is effective date of award
STEP -7	Reimbursement request/invoice	Recipient garden	Invoice form and back up documents
STEP -8	Impact assessment	Recipient garden & DCHHS	Impact assessment form, pictures, and media release

DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OBESITY PREVENTION PROGRAM

COMMUNITY GARDEN MINI-GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Organization Contact Information

Organization name		
Mailing Address:		
Phone		
Email Address:		
Organization Website:		
Is your organization a 501(C)3 non-profit?	Yes	No

Your Contact Information

Your Name		
Your Position/Relationship with the Organization or Group:		
Years with the organization or group		
Home Phone :	Cell Phone:	
Work Phone:		
Email Address:		

About the Garden

Name and location of the garden:		
How many plots and what size is the garden?		
Does your organization currently own the property where the garden will be grown?	Yes	No
If your organization does not own the property, please explain the arrangement that allows for gardening on the property, and the duration:		
When was your garden started?	How many individuals are involved in coordinating and maintaining the garden operations?	
What is the organizational structure of your garden? Who will be the primary gardener overseeing the operations and how many years gardening experience do they have? What types of training have they received? Complete the table below. If you need a more space, please attach additional documentation.		
Name	Years of Experience	Training Received
What do you plant in your garden? Please estimate percentage among vegetables, fruits, spices, flowers or other plants.		
Do you plan to continue at least for the next three years?		

Mission and purpose of the garden

In 150 to 300 words, provide information about the mission and purpose of your garden. Please share your goals for your garden and how this mini-grant will help you achieve these goals.

Volunteer Resources

In 150-300 words, describe how you have been involving the community or plan to get the community involved. Include any existing collaborations with other organizations and/or community groups.

Community Impact

In 150 to 300 words, describe how this garden impacted the community. Include the history of the neighborhood, any changes due to the garden, any demonstrations/educational events, etc. (How the garden benefited or impacted the community)

Community Involvement

In 150-300 words, describe how you have been involving the community or plan to get the community involved. Include any existing collaborations with other organizations and/or community groups. (How is the community and/or other organizations involved with the garden?)

Budget and Expenses

Using the attached “Mini grant budget worksheet”, outline how you would expend the funds if you were awarded the mini grant. Please list all major items that you intend to procure and corresponding cost estimates. Please enter “See completed budget worksheet” in the box below and return the worksheet with your application.

Sustainability

In 150-300 words describe the history, stability, and continuity of the garden including future plans. (What plans and resource are in place to support your garden’s operation for the next 3 to 5 years?)

Signature Page

I have completed this application and I confirm that the information contained within this application is truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____