



## Human Services Grant Program: 2026 Guidelines

Community Foundation for MetroWest (CFMW) envisions a region that provides equitable access to critical and life-enhancing resources to improve the quality of life for all neighbors. Our mission for the 2026 Human Services Grant Program is to invest in local nonprofit organizations whose primary mission is to deliver basic needs and wrap-around social services to individuals and households in MetroWest that address identified community challenges.

This year, the Foundation for MetroWest seeks to award **one-time general operating grants of up to \$20,000\*** to support human services organizations in MetroWest. The Foundation has a strong interest in supporting organizations focused on prevention-based models. Grant decisions and amounts will be determined based on a variety of factors, including:

- Organization size – understanding the impact of a grant of this size for your organization
- Location(s) of impact – demonstrating commitment to MetroWest and role in the region's social services ecosystem, including strong collaboration and partnership in the region
- Organization impact and reach – including population served, type(s) of programming offered, etc.
- Organization's leadership and financial health
- Alignment with the Foundation's priorities outlined below

\*Maximum grant size will be 10% of the organization's annual operating budget or \$20,000, whichever is less. Average grant size in 2025 was \$12,000.00.

In 2026, the Foundation will be prioritizing organizations that demonstrate a commitment to and strong mission alignment with addressing the needs of under-resourced or underrepresented individuals and households through services that meet one or more of the following:

- Economic opportunity and security
- Safety and wellbeing
- Mental and behavioral health

*Please note: We will not be considering hunger relief or youth-serving efforts through this grant program.*

The Foundation also values organizations that demonstrate:

- the ability to address identified community needs through sustainable client-informed and client-focused solutions
- practices that foster collaboration across communities and sectors to benefit & improve the entire social service system

### **GRANT PROCESS**

The 2026 grant cycle is an online process and will operate based on the following timeline:

- |                                          |                                                      |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| • Monday, August 3, <b>9:00 AM</b>       | <a href="#">Applications open online</a>             |
| • Thursday, August 6, <b>9 – 10 AM</b>   | Info Session #1** ( <a href="#">register</a> )       |
| • Wednesday, August 19, <b>12 – 1 PM</b> | Info Session #2** ( <a href="#">register</a> )       |
| • Friday, September 11 <b>5:00 PM</b>    | Applications due                                     |
| • October 1 – November 6                 | Follow up conversations or site visits, as needed*** |
| • Early December                         | Applicants notified of decisions via email           |

\*\*We will provide the same presentation and information at both Info Sessions. Attendance at one is sufficient. A recording will also be made available on our website following the last session.

\*\*\*Please note that we are unable to visit every applicant due to limited capacity. If you are not chosen to receive a site visit, this in no way serves as a reflection of your organization or your likelihood of receiving funding.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants must:

- Have 501(c)(3) tax status as a registered nonprofit organization OR have an eligible fiscal sponsor
- Not discriminate in the hiring of staff or the provision of services on the basis of race, religion, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability
- Serve one or more of the following MetroWest cities/towns: Acton, Ashland, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Dedham, Dover, Framingham, Harvard, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Needham, Sherborn, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Waltham, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston, Westwood

Ineligible organizations or requests include:

- City/town agencies, including libraries
- Individuals
- Schools – private, public, pre-K, charter, or Chapter 766
- Healthcare or disease-specific organizations
- Organizations only seeking capital support
- ***Organizations solely focused on youth or hunger relief initiatives \*\*\*\****

\*\*\*\*Please note, the Foundation reviews youth-serving organizations through the Youth Development Grant Program and hunger relief organizations through the MetroWest Hunger Relief Grant Program. These efforts will not be considered through the Human Services Grant Program.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

1. Beginning August 3<sup>rd</sup> applicants will have access to the application form online.
2. If your organization is new to CFMW, please create an account.
  - a. [https://bit.ly/cfmw\\_foundant](https://bit.ly/cfmw_foundant)
  - b. Multiple short video tutorials are available on the righthand side of the login page.
3. If your organization has applied to CFMW in the past, please log into your existing account:
  - a. [https://bit.ly/cfmw\\_foundant](https://bit.ly/cfmw_foundant)
4. Once you are logged into your account, click on the Apply icon from the top menu bar.
5. Select **2026 Human Services Grant Program**.

## **GRANT DECISIONS**

All applications Awards will be determined in early December. All applicants will be notified by email of decisions.

## **DEADLINE TO APPLY: September 11, 2026 AT 5:00 PM**

If you have questions regarding the eligibility or suitability of your application, please send a detailed email to [grants@communityfoundationmw.org](mailto:grants@communityfoundationmw.org) as early as possible. We may provide additional guidance via email or schedule a brief call to discuss.

If you need assistance or accommodations to access this application process, please contact us at [grants@communityfoundationmw.org](mailto:grants@communityfoundationmw.org) or 508-647-2260.

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