

MRC COVID-19 RISE Awards Frequently Asked Questions

The [Medical Reserve Corps \(MRC\)](#) COVID-19 Respond, Innovate, Sustain, and Equip (RISE) Awards are intended to provide resources to the MRC network to support COVID-19 response efforts. This funding will prioritize building capacity for the MRC to respond, innovate to evolving requirements, sustain staffing requirements, and equip MRC units with resources needed to support their mission. This FAQ document is broken into the following four sections: [funding intent and other general questions](#), [budget questions](#), [online application questions](#), [SAM.gov questions](#), [links and Contact information](#).

Application Period: August 8, 2022, 12:00 PM PT – September 16, 2022 11:59 PM PT

Application: <https://nacchoapplication.secure-platform.com/a>

Request for Applications (RFA): <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Public-Health-Preparedness/MRC-RISE-Awards-RFA.pdf>

I. Funding Intent & Other General Questions

1. Where can I find the list of application questions?

The list of application questions can be downloaded at [this link](#).

2. What differentiates the funding tiers?

MRC units and state coordinators should choose the level of funding they can best demonstrate the capacity to effectively develop and implement a program plan that totals \$25,000 (Tier 1), \$50,000 (Tier 2), or \$75,000 (Tier 3). All three tiers are expected to include a workplan with stated goals, objectives, program timeline, detailed budget of planned expenses, and staff identified to manage the program.

Those awarded Tier 3 funding will also be expected to participate in monthly collaborative sessions facilitated by NACCHO staff. Six sessions will be conducted from February to August 2023. Tier 3 Awardees will contribute to the identification of key issues impacting the MRC network and development of strategies to address resource requirements.

3. Are applications evaluated differently for each of the funding tiers?

Yes. Proposals will be evaluated differently for each of the funding tiers based on the jurisdictional demographics and needs to the community and unit relative to the funding level.

4. Can I submit multiple award applications for one unit?

No. You can only submit **one** award application per MRC unit.

5. How many awards will be issued?

The number of awards issued will be determined based on the number of qualified applications and the total amount of funding available. NACCHO's goal is to provide as many awards as possible in each of the funding tiers to meet the needs of MRC units.

6. When will I know if I was chosen to receive an award?

Awardees will be notified the week of October 7, 2022.

7. What is the MRC Program Office reporting requirement?

MRC units must update their unit profiles on the MRC Program Office website (<https://mrc.hhs.gov/login>) prior to applying with an activity that occurred between June 1, 2022 and September 16, 2022.

MRC state coordinators should ensure their contact information on the Program Office website is correct.

8. What qualifies as an activity to be reported from June 1st through September 16th?

Any activity (or activities) that your unit reports to the MRC Program office through the MRC Program website between June 1st and September 16th will be considered to fulfill the requirement.

9. Should Round 1 awardees go ahead and complete a NACCHO RISE award for round 2 funds, by the established deadline, in the event there are unallocated funds available? Or should we wait for further direction?

It would be best to wait for further directions. Round 1 awardees are not eligible to apply for Round 2 funding. If there are unallocated funds after Round 2, they will be available for Round 1 awardees.

10. If there are unallocated funds, will there be a separate application for the Round 1 Awardees?

If there are unallocated funds, NACCHO will announce how additional funds may be distributed after Round 2 selection awards are finalized.

11. Does the application need to have specific COVID response dates/ activities or just could be used to respond to covid-19?

No specific dates necessary, however, if you do that will be great.

12. Have round 1 deliverable due dates been extended?

Round 1 dates: Deliverable 2 In-progress report is due September 30th 2022 and Deliverable 3 final report is due December 30 2022.

13. If I received a 2022 MRC ORA, can I apply and receive an MRC RISE Award?

Yes, you can.

14. Can multiple MRC units submit a combined application?

Yes, however, if multiple units submit a combined application, one unit will need to be identified to serve as fiscal agent for the award and all reporting requirements.

15. If I apply for a Tier 2 or 3 Award, is it possible I would be awarded a lower tier?

It is possible if there is not a demonstrated need for the funds. We will look at all factors included in the application to assess need, so we ask applicants to clearly describe what they have been doing, limitations because of resources, the missions they support, and the jurisdictions they support.

16. How do we complete the FFATA Data Collection Form?

Please see [the new Federal Funding Accountability And Transparency Act \(FFATA\) Data Collection Form](#), which has been simplified. If you have more questions about the form, please email mrc@naccho.org.

17. Will the presentation slides be shared with the registered attendees or posted online after the webinar?

Yes. The zoom webinar can be found [here](#) and the presentation slides can be found [here](#). Alternatively, you can visit the NACCHO [MRC funding page](#) and find the links there as well.

18. Is there a Notice of Funding Opportunity? I need to submit it to my state.

The [RFA](#) includes the Federal Funding information for NACCHO's award.

19. Do we need to submit this Round 2 application by September 16, just in case there are remaining funds from Round 2.

For first time applicants, those who did not receive an award for Round 1, the deadline is September 16th. Those who did receive an award for Round 1 and wish to apply for Round 2 funding in the event of unallocated funds will have to wait for further instructions.

20. How do we download the questions?

The questions that you can expect to see on the application can be found [here](#). It can be downloaded from the same link as well. The recording for the zoom webinar can be found [here](#) and the slides can be found [here](#).

II. Budget/Use of Funds Questions

21. Will attendance, travel and accommodations for the NACCHO Preparedness Summit be allowable with this award?

Yes! 2023 summit will be allowable.

22. Can funds be used to purchase refreshments for a recognition reception?

No, they cannot. We recommend approaching a local business about sponsoring the cost of refreshments at events like these. Additionally, federal award funds cannot be used to purchase promotional items, giveaways, gift cards, donations, or entertainment. Allowable items per [2 CFR Part 200, Chapter II, Subpart E Cost Principles](#) include:

- Conferences (200.431)
- Materials, Supplies and Computing Devices (200.453)
- Professional Services (200.459)
- Publication & Printing Costs (200.461)
- Training & Education (200.472)
- Travel (200.474)

23. Can funds be used to purchase refreshments for attendees of an in-person training event?

Sometimes. Federal award funds can only be used to purchase refreshments and/or food for in-person training events that are eight (8) hours or longer.

24. Can funds be used to compensate volunteers for their time?

No, they cannot. Please also note that the [Volunteer Protection Act](#) does not apply to *compensated* volunteer acts.

25. Can funds be used to purchase materials and supplies?

Yes. Materials and supplies can include AED pads, batteries, tents, tablecloths, office supplies, and much more.

However, per Federal grant regulations, award funds **cannot be used on equipment**, defined as tangible personal property that has a useful life of more than a year and a purchase price of \$5,000 or more per unit (CFR 200.33). Again, please see [2 CFR Part 200, Chapter II, Subpart E Cost Principles](#) for more information on allowable items.

26. Why can't funds be spent on equipment? Is there a cap on spending of equipment?

Yes, Equipment, defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000 (2 CFR § 200.33), is unallowable. Whenever possible, clearly itemize expenses to demonstrate that no single expense is \$5,000 or more per unit. Per the Federal definition above, equipment is considered anything that would be a capital expense and would be recorded as an asset and depreciate over time. These funds are intended for operational expenses. Since NACCHO is the awardee of these funds from ASPR, any equipment purchased using MRC RISE Award funding would be owned by NACCHO.

27. Can funds be used to purchase t-shirts and/or uniforms?

Items that can be issued for deployment or other MRC activities and returned for reuse are allowable. An example are safety vests, which can be customized to show the MRC logo. Non-returnable items such as **t-shirts are not considered allowable**.

28. Would providing food at a training session count as an incentive?

Food expense for training is only allowable for all day training sessions. Training must be 8 or more hours to be allowable and follow the federal per diem rates.

29. Does the round 2 RISE only cover expenses that occurred from 12/1/2022 as well as future expenses to 9/15/2022?

Yes, expenses have to occur within the period of performance between December 1, 2022, to September 15, 2023.

30. Are certificates allowable? One of our greatest needs is the ability to sustain our MRC volunteer numbers.

Certificates are allowable.

31. What specifically would fall under harm reduction supplies? Does this include Stop the Bleed kits/First Aid kits, etc?

First aid kits and stop the bleed kits are allowable under this funding.

32. We have mobile medical units that provide dental, vision and cancer screening services inside the mobile vans. Are the maintenance and fuel costs of these mobile medical units allowable?

Fuel and maintenance costs are not allowable at all.

33. Can items like pens, cups, etc. be an example of recruiting/retention?

Promotional giveaways are not allowable.

34. Can funds be used on indirect costs?

Yes, per [Appendix F of the RFA](#), indirect costs 10% or lower can be included in the budget and do not require additional justification. If you have budgeted for indirect costs using a rate that is higher than 10%, you must provide documentation/proof of your organization's approved indirect cost rate or calculation. Please see the RFA for more information.

When adding indirect costs into the [budget template](#), enter the organization's indirect cost rate into the formula in cell B43. For example, if the rate is 7%, the formula in the cell will be =ROUND(B42*7%,2).

35. Can a substantial amount of an award be used for contractors of the unit (e.g., advertising)?

This is not allowable. Per Federal regulations, the direct and primary recipient (i.e., the MRC unit/state coordinator) must perform a substantial role in carrying out project objectives and not merely serve as a conduit for an award to another party or provider.

36. When do funds need to be expended by?

As the intention of this award is to meet immediate needs, funds should be spent by September 15, 2023.

37. We were contemplating hiring a contractor to write up a Volunteer Reception Center plan to detail and explain how we will be managing our MRC volunteers and conducting JIT training. Is the cost for this contractor service an allowable expense?

Yes, but please provide estimates and a scope of work for all contractual services with as much detail as possible, including estimated number of hours and the hourly rate for services.

38. Can multiple items of the same type be combined if each individual item falls below \$5,000?

You are allowed to have multiples units of the same supply, but each unit must not exceed \$5,000 and supplies items that are part of a system, i.e. tenting systems, etc. should not exceed a total of \$5,000.

39. Technology software?

The approved list of IT related equipment including technology software can be found on page 24 of the RFA.

III. Online Application Questions

40. Will I be able to save my application and continue later?

Yes. Your application progress will be saved periodically. To save your progress and return later, simply click “Save” at the bottom of your screen. You can see your in progress (“incomplete”) and completed applications by signing into your MyNACCHO account and clicking on “My Applications” on the left-hand side of the screen. From there you can view/print applications you have submitted or “Edit” applications you have not submitted yet.

After you have completed all portions of your application, you will be asked to “Save” or “Save and Finalize” your application. After you have reviewed your answers and are ready to submit, you can select “Save and Finalize” to fully submit your application.

41. How can I confirm that my application was submitted?

Following the instructions listed in the previous question, you can verify that your application was submitted if you will see the word “Complete” in the status column.

42. Can I edit my application after I’ve clicked “Save and Finalize”?

If you need to make changes to a submitted application before September 16, 2022 at 11:59 PM PT, please email mrc@naccho.org.

43. What if I my application responses are longer than the specified word limit?

Please ensure that your application responses stay within the response word limit. NACCHO strongly recommends that you compile your application responses in Microsoft Word first and then copy/paste it into the online application.

44. What unit number should state coordinators enter into the MRC unit number field of the application?

State coordinators should enter “0000” into the MRC unit number field.

45. How do we find our MRC unit code?

You can find that on the [MRC website](#) or check with your Regional Liaison.

46. Our agency has gone to Google Workplace and Microsoft Office is no longer available. Are we able to upload the templates provided with Google Docs instead of Word?

Yes. You can copy the templates into a google doc and upload it with your application.

47. What if I have more questions?

If you have more questions after reviewing this document, please contact NACCHO’s MRC team at mrc@naccho.org.

IV. SAM.gov Questions

48. If we are in a health dept. Do we need to do the SAM.gov?

All awardees, including health departments, are required to have an active DUNS number on the SAM.gov website. We recommend contacting your business office.

49. I am having administrative issues with my SAM.gov account (log in, permissions, etc.), can NACCHO help?

Unfortunately, we cannot. Please review the [“Help” section on SAM.gov](#) for answers to many common questions or reach out to SAM.gov help agents by signing into your account and selecting “Create an Incident” or “Live Chat.” Please notify NACCHO at mrc@naccho.org if you have reached out to SAM.gov staff for help and your issue is ongoing or may not be resolved by September 16, 2022.

50. Can an MRC unit apply for this grant if their housing unit does not have a DUNS number?

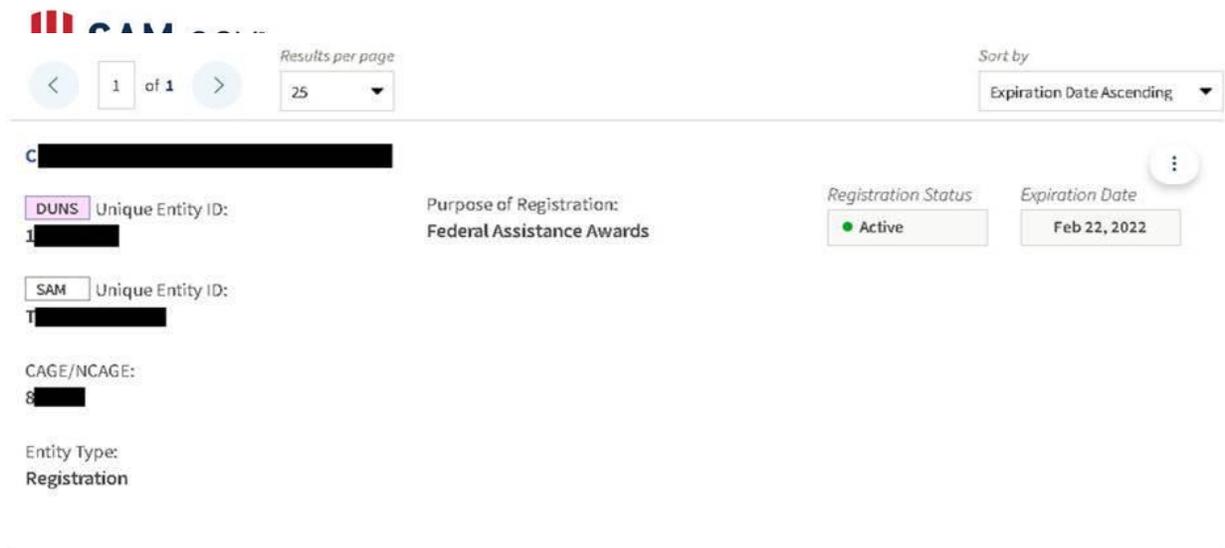
Unfortunately, they cannot. In order to accept federal funds, recipients/ their sponsoring agencies must have a DUNS number and an active SAM.gov profile.

51. What is acceptable proof of active SAM.gov registration?

Two acceptable examples are pictured below, though other formats that feature the same information can also suffice. Please ensure that “Registration Status” is “Active” and the “DUNS Unique Entity ID” and “Expiration Date” are clearly visible.

Once you have registered on SAM.gov, it may take a few weeks for the status to change to “Active,” so please refrain from submitting an application until that time. If your sponsoring agency has not yet begun the process of registering on SAM.gov, please do so ASAP to allow enough time for the status to be active by September 16, 2022.

Organizations registering for the first time on SAM.gov may consult the [SAM.gov help site](#) for assistance setting up a new SAM account. Organizations that have previously set up an account may benefit from reviewing [this FAQ](#) for assistance checking the status of their entity and updating their account. Organizations must update their SAM information at least every 12 months to maintain an active account.



The screenshot shows a search result for a SAM.gov registration. At the top, there are navigation controls: a left arrow, '1 of 1', a right arrow, 'Results per page' set to 25, and 'Sort by' set to 'Expiration Date Ascending'. Below this is a table with one row of data. The table has columns for 'DUNS Unique Entity ID', 'Purpose of Registration', 'Registration Status', and 'Expiration Date'. The 'DUNS Unique Entity ID' is partially redacted with a black box. The 'Purpose of Registration' is 'Federal Assistance Awards'. The 'Registration Status' is 'Active' with a green dot icon. The 'Expiration Date' is 'Feb 22, 2022'. Below the table, there are additional fields: 'SAM Unique Entity ID' (partially redacted), 'CAGE/NCAGE:' (partially redacted), and 'Entity Type: Registration'.

DUNS Unique Entity ID	Purpose of Registration	Registration Status	Expiration Date
1 [REDACTED]	Federal Assistance Awards	Active	Feb 22, 2022

SAM Unique Entity ID: 1 [REDACTED]

CAGE/NCAGE: 8 [REDACTED]

Entity Type: Registration

V. Links and Contact Information:

- RFA: <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Public-Health-Preparedness/MRC-RISE-Awards-RFA.pdf>
- Profile can be updated via this link: <https://mrc.hhs.gov/login>
- SAM link: <https://sam.gov/content/help>
- Application link: <https://nacchoapplication.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home>
- Application overview link: <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Public-Health-Preparedness/MRC-RISE-Awards-Application-Questions.pdf>
- Workplan and Timeline Template link:
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.naccho.org%2Fuploads%2Fdownloadable-resources%2FPrograms%2FPublic-Health-Preparedness%2FMRC-RISE-Award-Deliverable-1-R2.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>
- Budget Template link:
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.naccho.org%2Fuploads%2Fdownloadable-resources%2FPrograms%2FPublic-Health-Preparedness%2FMRC-RISE-Awards-Budget-Template-and-Instructions.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>
- NACCHO Awards Homepage: <https://nacchoapplication.secure-platform.com/a>
- Webinar: August 22:
<https://naccho.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEIfuiqDksEtY3sP2WUmuUtt8E5FJt-kvz>
- Webinar September 8th:
<https://naccho.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkduysqj4pGdBPSNR9OGIRNKN41IZUIAbX>
- Approved Equipment: Please refer to page 24 of the [RFA](#) for this information.
- NACCHO Email Address: mrc@naccho.org