

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017



Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards Mentorship Program (Cohort 7)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS TO BECOME A MENTOR

OVERVIEW

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) invites all retail food regulatory programs¹ to submit applications to participate in a mentorship program with their peers to learn, share experiences, and acquire tools and resources related to the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards). The overall objective of the mentorship program, in its seventh year, is to match retail food regulatory program practitioners experienced in applying the Retail Program Standards with retail food regulatory programs newly or currently enrolled in the Retail Program Standards that are looking for assistance, guidance, tools and resources, and recommendations for conducting a self-assessment, making progress on a specific standard or achieving multiple standards. This opportunity will provide capacity building among retail food regulatory programs participating in the NACCHO Mentorship Program. Additionally, the program will help strengthen relationships between retail food regulatory programs and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This initiative is funded by a cooperative agreement between NACCHO and FDA.

There are two separate Requests for Applications (RFA) that can be used to apply for the Mentorship Program. Applicants interested in serving as a mentor are encouraged to respond to this request for applications to become a mentor. Applicants interested in receiving technical assistance and support from a mentor are encouraged to respond to the *Request for Applications to Receive Mentorship* (found on the [NACCHO Mentorship Program webpage](#)). Applicants are welcome to submit applications to [become a mentor](#) and to [receive mentorship](#); however, applicants will only be selected as a mentor or mentee for this cohort. For more information, visit <http://www.naccho.org/programs/environmental-health/hazards/food-safety/mentorship>.

NOTE: NACCHO and FDA staff will host two optional webinars for interested applicants on Monday, September 11 from 2:00-2:30 PM ET and Wednesday, September 27 from 1:00-1:30 PM ET. Access the webinar at <http://naccho.adobeconnect.com/nacchomentorship/> and dial 866-740-1260; Passcode: 5074221. The purpose of the call is to answer questions about this RFA. Please note that no new information will be shared during the webinar; as such, applicants need not wait for this optional call in order to begin or submit applications.

BACKGROUND

In 2011, the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law and includes the most sweeping reform of U.S. food safety laws in more than 70 years. The Act aims to ensure the U.S. food supply is safe by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to preventing it. In supporting the vision for an integrated food safety system, [The Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards](#) focuses on prevention with its ultimate goal being to reduce the occurrence of factors that cause and contribute to foodborne illness. The Retail Program Standards are designed to help retail food regulatory programs enhance the services they provide to the public and provide a means of recognition for programs that meet these standards. Program

¹ Includes all state, local, tribal, and territorial food regulatory programs

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

managers and administrators may establish additional requirements to meet individual program needs. When applied in the intended manner, the Retail Program Standards should:

- Identify program areas where an agency can have the greatest impact on retail food safety;
- Promote wider application of effective risk-factor intervention strategies;
- Assist in identifying program areas most in need of additional attention;
- Provide information needed to justify maintenance or increase in program budgets;
- Lead to innovations in program implementation and administration; and
- Improve industry and consumer confidence in food protection programs by enhancing uniformity within and between regulatory agencies.

NACCHO's Mentorship Program is part of an ongoing effort to enhance the implementation of the Retail Program Standards by retail food regulatory programs. Participants supported under the program will receive peer-to-peer assistance and intensive technical support, thereby advancing the practice of the standards among retail food regulatory programs. Through the mentorship program, participants will benefit from the experience of their peers in understanding how to best apply the Retail Program Standards to improve their retail food regulatory programs in the following areas.

- Standard No. 1 - Regulatory Foundation
- Standard No. 2 - Trained Regulatory Staff
- Standard No. 3 - Inspection Program Based on HACCP Principles
- Standard No. 4 - Uniform Inspection Program
- Standard No. 5 - Foodborne Illness and Food Defense Preparedness and Response
- Standard No. 6 - Compliance and Enforcement
- Standard No. 7 - Industry and Community Relations
- Standard No. 8 - Program Support and Resources
- Standard No. 9 - Program Assessment
- Self-Assessments

ELIGIBILITY

All retail food regulatory programs (e.g., state, local, territorial, and tribal) currently or newly enrolled in the Retail Program Standards are eligible to apply. Retail food regulatory programs interested in becoming a mentor in the Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program are encouraged to apply.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

From November 2016 through August 31, 2017, retail food regulatory programs selected as mentors will comply with the following:

- Adhere to NACCHO's [standard contract language](#) and be able to sign and return a contract to NACCHO within 30 days of receiving it. Costs incurred will be on a reimbursable basis (e.g. salary and wages, fringe benefits, supplies, consultants, printing, training). **No modifications to the terms or contract language will be made.** Agencies that cannot agree to NACCHO's contract language should not apply for this initiative. As part of the proposal, the agency will be asked to verify that it has read NACCHO's standard contract language and has provided a copy to the individual with signing authority at the agency for advanced consideration; and
- Designate one main point of contact to serve as the project coordinator. Even if this person will not be leading all project activities, the site must designate one individual with whom NACCHO will directly communicate on all matters related to this project; this person will be responsible for submitting all

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

deliverables, participating in conference calls, and completing evaluation activities. If there is more than one contact person, the designated contact is responsible to identify all staff involved and provide the team's contact information to NACCHO.

Key Activities and Dates

<u>Deadline for Completion</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Mid-November/early December 2017 (date to be determined)	Participate in kick-off call/webinar for the mentorship program
Early December	Submit Pre-Assessment Evaluation
Early December	Revisit/revise action plan and begin work with mentee(s) on objectives outlined in work plan.
Dates to be determined	Participate in sharing sessions
Date and Location to be determined by mentor and mentee(s)	Participate in at least one site visit with assigned mentor
Within two weeks of site visit	Submit travel expense forms to NACCHO for site visit
April 20, 2018	Submit 1st Invoice (All expenses incurred through March 31, 2018)
July 20, 2018	Submit 2nd Invoice: (*End of NACCHO fiscal year. All expenses incurred between April 1, 2018 and June 30, 2018. DO NOT combine expenses incurred prior June 30 with expenses incurred after June 30th for this invoice.)
Ongoing	Work with mentee to make any necessary revisions to work plan and make progress in identified standard(s) or phase(s) of the Retail Program Standards as identified in the mentee's proposed work plan
Ongoing	Participate in regular conference calls with mentee: Ongoing and frequency determined by mentor/mentee
Ongoing	Utilize FoodSHIELD to document and share lessons learned and all related tools and resources used that were helpful for all phases of the project
Ongoing	Communicate progress and any major changes to the proposed work plan to NACCHO
July or August, 2018	Participate in a face-to-face meeting in July or August 2018 (tentative)
August 31, 2018	Submit Post-Assessment Evaluation/Final Report detailing the successes, challenges, and lessons learned
September 20, 2018	Submit 3 rd invoice: (All expenses incurred between July 1, 2018 and August 31, 2018)

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

NACCHO plans to award approximately \$200,000 in total to retail food regulatory programs to participate in the mentorship program.

In addition to the awarded amount, all participating retail food regulatory programs will be eligible to receive travel stipends to participate in a site visit with their mentee(s) and to enable participation at the tentative mentorship program face-to-face meeting (up to \$1,400 per jurisdiction for each event). The travel stipend will be managed and administered by NACCHO, separate from the awarded amount to participants. Jurisdictions that choose to send multiple staff members and/or anticipate spending above the \$1,400 amount to the site visit and/or tentative face-to-face meeting should budget additional staff travel in their proposed awarded budgets.

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

The program duration will be from November 2017 through August 31, 2018. Ongoing technical assistance, beyond the one-time funding, will be available. Funding per mentor retail food regulatory program is anticipated to range from \$8,000-18,000. The amount awarded to each selected mentor will be contingent on the number of eligible applications received. NACCHO plans to announce the selected retail food regulatory programs in November 2017. Funding estimates for the overall program and for individual projects may change.

Please refer to the following breakdown for the approximate range of anticipated funding based on the number of mentee retail food regulatory programs an applicant is willing to mentor.

Mentoring one (1) retail food regulatory program: \$8,000-10,000

Mentoring two (2) retail food regulatory programs: \$11,000-13,000

Mentoring three (3) retail food regulatory programs: \$14,000-16,000

Mentoring four or more retail food regulatory programs: up to \$18,000

Mentors may request one, two, three, four or more mentees. The final number of mentees assigned to a mentor will depend on the number of applications received and the type of mentoring requested.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Through the mentorship program, the following anticipated outcomes are expected:

- Establish a growing network of retail food regulatory programs experienced in the implementation of the Retail Program Standards;
- Improve NACCHO's and FDA's understanding of the technical assistance needs of retail food regulatory programs around the Retail Program Standards;
- Identify strategies to improve implementation of the Retail Program Standards by all retail food regulatory programs;
- Provide a venue for retail food regulatory programs interested in the Retail Program Standards to share resources, experiences, and lessons;
- Strengthen relationships between retail food regulatory programs and FDA;
- Identify resource needs in implementing the Retail Program Standards; and
- Assist retail food regulatory programs in making progress towards conformance with the Retail Program Standards.

NACCHO's Mentorship Program is expected to improve the public health system in the jurisdictions of the retail food regulatory programs receiving and providing guidance and technical assistance. System-level outcomes likely will include staff trained in the Retail Program Standards, demonstrated retail food regulatory programs capacity for future work, and improved relationships among retail food regulatory programs, NACCHO, and FDA.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by NACCHO and FDA.

- Late applications will not be accepted.
- Incomplete applications, those submitted by ineligible applicants, or those received through any format other than the application materials provided will not be reviewed.
- Applicants will be notified of their selection status on or about the week of November 6, 2017 (via e-mail to the specified project coordinator).
- Applications will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

- Completeness in answering the questions and submission of all required documents;
- Agency capacity to carry out the proposed activities;
- Experience in the implementation of the Retail Program Standards;
- Appropriate staffing plan;
- Realistic and appropriate budget; and
- Demonstration of overall commitment.
- Each eligible application will be scored by multiple members of a review panel.
- Scores for each section are listed in the Application Form. The maximum score is 100. The final selection, including selecting tied participants, will be at the discretion of the project team.

RFA KEY DATES

Applicants are advised to consider the following dates.

- Request For Applications Question & Answer Sessions:
 - Monday, September 11 from 2:00-2:30 PM ET
 - Thursday, September 27 from 1:00-1:30 PM ET

Access the webinar at <http://naccho.adobeconnect.com/nacchomentorship/> and dial 866-740-1260; Passcode: 5074221

- Application deadline: October 6, 2017 at 8:00 PM ET
- Award notification: Week of November 6, 2017 (tentative)

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Review the requirements and expectations outlined in this RFA and in the [Application](#).
- Applicants are urged to carefully propose a work plan that will be both meaningful and feasible to accomplish during the project timeframe.
- Read NACCHO's [standard contract language](#) and provide a copy to the individual with signing authority at the agency for advanced consideration. Participating agencies must agree to the contract language and be able to sign and return a contract to NACCHO within 30 days of receipt. **No modifications will be made.**
- Submit the application form as a **Word document** and letter of support from health director or official (optional but strongly encouraged) as a **PDF**. The Application Form must not exceed **20 pages** (single-spaced, Times New Roman, and 12-point font). The letter of support will not count toward the page limit. Applications not in the required format and exceeding page limitations will be considered incomplete and not scored.
- Applicants may include supporting materials in a separate appendix.
- Submit the application by 8:00 PM ET by Friday, October 6, 2017. Please e-mail the application materials to foodsafetyinfo@naccho.org. NACCHO will confirm receipt of e-mailed applications. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Please note: Applicants are welcome to submit applications to become a mentor and to receive mentorship, however, may only be selected as a mentor or mentee for this cohort.
- For more detailed information, refer to the [Application Form](#).

Mentorship Program Considerations:

- Please list any considerations that you would like NACCHO to keep in mind when matching your retail food regulatory program with mentee retail food regulatory program(s) for the mentorship program (i.e.

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

size of jurisdiction, location, governance structure², type of agency (state, local, territorial, or tribal), etc.).

- Please indicate the number of retail food regulatory programs your health department is willing to mentor:

- ___ 1 retail food regulatory program (anticipated funding to be between \$8,000-10,000)
- ___ 2 retail food regulatory programs (anticipated funding to be between \$11,000-13,000)
- ___ 3 retail food regulatory programs (anticipated funding to be between \$14,000-16,000)
- ___ 4 or more retail food regulatory programs (anticipated funding up to \$18,000)

Background (25 points):

Please provide information on your agency and retail food regulatory program, addressing each of the following bulleted items:

- Organization’s mission statement;
- Brief description of your retail food regulatory program;
- Number of staff in the retail food regulatory program;
- Types of retail establishments regulated;
- Number of retail establishments regulated;
- Version of FDA Food Code adopted; and
- Where your agency derives regulatory authority from (i.e. local ordinance, state).

Qualifications (50 points):

The following questions will ask you to list and describe your agency’s expertise and experience with the Retail Program Standards.

Part I. Standard(s) in which you have expertise and experience

- a. Please list each Standard in which you have expertise and experience.
- b. Provide a description of your agency’s expertise and experience for each listed Standard.
- c. Please indicate which Standard(s) have been self-assessed and which standard(s) have been confirmed through a verification audit.

Part II. Describe your retail food regulatory program’s experience conducting a self-assessment.

Part III. Describe your retail food regulatory program’s experience conducting a Verification Audit for another agency (please indicate which standards and briefly describe your experience).

Part IV. Describe any additional work that your retail food regulatory program has done, or any work under way, related to implementation of the Retail Program Standards.

Part V. Describe any relevant experience your retail food regulatory program has in providing mentorship related to the Retail Program Standards, as well as contributions that your agency has made in assisting peer retail food regulatory programs. If you have participated as mentor of the NACCHO mentorship program, include details on which Standards you have provided guidance on and the progress the mentee(s) achieved.

² Local = All local health departments (LHDs) in state are units of local government; State = All LHDs in state are units of state government; Shared = All LHDs in state governed by both state and local authorizes; Mixed = LHDs in state have more than one governance type

Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

Part VI. Describe how participation in the mentorship program will be helpful to your retail food regulatory program, including:

- a. How your retail food regulatory program would benefit;
- b. How the staff serving as mentors would benefit (i.e. professional growth/development); and
- c. Include a brief description of your ideal mentor-mentee relationship.

Staffing Plan (25 points):

Describe the proposed staffing plan and list the following for all retail food regulatory program personnel that may participate in the mentorship program:

- Names of lead staff and staff members;
- Background information on each staff member, including experience in food safety and experience in the Retail Program Standards; and
- Each staff member's role and responsibilities for the mentorship program. Please provide detailed information about the expected role for each staff member assigned to work on this project.

Budget Request:

Funding per mentor retail food regulatory program is anticipated to range from \$8,000-18,000. Applicants must complete the attached budget narrative.

Please see the attached sample budget narrative for guidance in submitting a detailed budget narrative. Fill out the attached budget narrative form provided. The budget narrative should be consistent with the goals, objectives, and activities proposed within the application. Items that may be included in the request for funds are staff salary and fringe benefits, phone/facsimile, postage, field supplies, travel to relevant trainings or workshops, and contractual fees. Project funds can support the purchase of field supplies if the purchase meets the needs outlined in the application and will help to achieve replicable knowledge. If additional funds and/or resources will be leveraged, please describe them. *Funds cannot be used for the purchase or upkeep of office equipment. Additionally, project funds cannot be used to purchase food or beverages.*

Please note that the awards are categorized as subawards, disbursed in up to three installments upon receipt of invoices and supporting documentation. Since this is a cost-reimbursement award, participants will be required to submit receipts for their expenses throughout the project. The purpose of the budget narrative is to demonstrate that the applicant has considered appropriate funding needed to accomplish the work it has proposed.

Additionally, please note that travel expenses for staff members from participants to attend a site visit with the mentee(s) and the tentative face-to-face meeting do NOT need to be included in the budget. Costs incurred for the meetings (up to \$1,400 total per jurisdiction) will be reimbursed by NACCHO, separate from the awarded amount to selected retail food regulatory programs to participate in the mentorship program. Participants that choose to send multiple staff members and/or anticipate spending above the \$1,400 amount to the site visit and/or tentative face-to-face meeting should budget additional staff travel in their proposed awarded budgets.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Questions about the mentorship program, request for application, and application can be directed to:

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Applications due by 8:00 PM ET on Friday, October 6, 2017

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