



Blue & You
FOUNDATION
FOR A HEALTHIER ARKANSAS
An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue & You Foundation opens \$1.7 million COVID-19 relief grant process; provides \$500,000 to fight food insecurity in Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (April 9, 2020) – As the coronavirus health crisis continues to have an impact on Arkansans, the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas is responding, donating \$500,000 in support of immediate needs around food insecurity in the state and opening the “Rapid-Response COVID Relief” grant process to award up to \$1.7 million in grants supporting nonprofit organizations that have experienced the consequences of COVID-19.

Established by Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield in 2001, the Blue & You Foundation is providing support to the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, Arkansas Food Bank, The Pack Shack and 17 United Way agencies statewide to address food insecurity directly, as well as providing \$150,000 to the Arkansas Community Foundation, which is also reaching out to Arkansas nonprofits with COVID-related grants.

“Recognizing the tremendous health, economic, and social needs created by the coronavirus pandemic and that we must act with a greater sense of urgency to help struggling communities and their citizens, the Blue & You Foundation is making funds available outside of our normal grant process,” said Patrick O’Sullivan, executive director of the Blue & You Foundation. “The ‘Rapid-Response COVID Relief’ grant process is open and accepting applications. The process has been significantly shortened and grants will be reviewed and awarded weekly for nonprofits that have been affected by the coronavirus health crises to be used for prevention and relief.”

Applications will be received online only. Applying organizations may request a grant ranging from \$5,000 to \$150,000. Applications will be reviewed and funding decisions

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made on a weekly basis. Grants not approved immediately each week will be held for consideration for funding in later weeks or months.

The purpose of the Rapid-Response COVID Relief Grants program is to help eligible organizations lessen the impact of the Covid-19 virus on the individuals, families and communities they serve. Any 501(c)(3) public charity, public school, governmental agency (city, county, state), nonprofit hospital or church in Arkansas is eligible to apply. Grants are not made to individuals.

“Whether from our own personal experiences or from what we see and hear in the news each day, it’s clear that the coronavirus pandemic has become not just a public health crisis but also an economic and social crisis that’s impacting every part of our lives,” said Curtis Barnett, Arkansas Blue Cross president and CEO. “We’re seeing businesses, especially small businesses, struggle. And as a growing number of people have a reduction in their work hours or get laid off from their job, we’re seeing even more Arkansans challenged with food insecurity and other critical social needs. As we have for more than 70 years, we’re here for Arkansans, providing critical funds for our communities. We are working closely with our customers and state agencies to monitor needs and respond.”

There is no closing date for the Rapid-Response COVID Relief Grant process. The impact of the health crisis is expected to continue for some time. If a closing date is set, it will be communicated at a later date.

The Foundation’s regular grants cycle for the year has been suspended to allow for the special Covid-related grants program.

For more information about the “Rapid-Response COVID Relief” grant process or to apply, go to blueandyoufoundationarkansas.org

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The Blue & You Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, serves the state of Arkansas and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. In its 18 years of operation, the Blue & You Foundation has awarded more than \$36 million to more than 1,900 health-improvement programs in Arkansas. Founded in 1948, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, is the largest health insurer in Arkansas. Arkansas Blue Cross and its affiliates have more than 2,900 employees. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is comprised of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 106 million members – one in three Americans.