



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Retailer Policy and Management Division,
SNAP Notice 2019-01

Park Office
Center

DATE: 11/29/2018

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

SUBJECT: State Flexibilities for Promoting FINI Grant Projects

TO: FNS Regional Offices, FINI grantees and SNAP State Agencies

Summary

This notice provides clarification regarding State flexibilities to partner with Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grantees to promote the grant program. FNS Regional Offices should share this guidance with SNAP State Agencies.

Background

The FINI grant program was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 to incentivize the purchase of fruits and vegetables by SNAP recipients. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and FNS collaboratively administer the FINI grant program. NIFA awards FINI grants to organizations that partner with SNAP-authorized retail food stores and markets to deliver fruit and vegetable incentives to SNAP recipients. However, some grantees have had difficulty finding allowable and cost-effective ways of promoting their grant projects directly to SNAP recipients.

State Flexibilities for Promoting FINI Grants

State SNAP Agencies may assist FINI grantees with promoting grant incentives to SNAP households as long as the promotional activities present factual statements intended to inform, not to persuade. For example, FINI promotional material may inform SNAP recipients on how FINI works, the location of participating retailers, and where to get additional information. The FINI promotional material may not, however, encourage SNAP households to apply for SNAP or to purchase certain product brands.

While a State Agency's partnering with a FINI grantee is encouraged, any cooperative efforts undertaken are entirely voluntary, at the discretion of the State Agency. A State Agency may opt to partner with FINI grantees formally through a written agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Examples of allowable promotional activities include:

- Making FINI grant promotional materials available at local SNAP offices;
- Allowing promotional videos to be played at local SNAP offices; or
- The State Agency sending grantees' promotional materials through direct mail to area SNAP recipients. However, State Agencies **may not** provide FINI grantees with a list of SNAP recipients' mailing addresses, even under a MOU.

Please direct any questions regarding this notice to FINI@fns.usda.gov or to Daniel Cline at Daniel.Cline@fns.usda.gov / (703)-605-4388.

Sincerely,

/s/

Andrea Gold
Director
Retailer Policy & Management Division