

Item Title: Appropriation from Fund Balance to the County's Food and Nutrition Services Program

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Appropriates \$678,928 previously committed to Fund Balance into the General Fund for the Wake County Food and Nutrition Services Program, and**
- 2. Approves a transfer of \$678,928 from the General fund to the Grants and Donations fund for the Wake County Food and Nutrition Services Program.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: In accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the Board of Commissioners must approve all amendments that increase the budget for a fund.

Background: In 2022, North Carolina received an appropriation of \$15 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to defray administrative expense. The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) allocated \$678,928 of the federal funds to Wake County's Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) program to cover workload increases of staff and food insecurities of clients experienced due to the pandemic.

Wake County will use these funds to supplement an existing allocation approved by the Board of Commissioners in November 2021, for existing time-limited staffing levels and overtime costs associated with supporting the food and nutrition assistance registration and case management.

Board Goal: This action supports Community Health and Vitality Goal 3: Support a higher quality of life for vulnerable residents and communities.

Fiscal Impact: This request appropriates a one-time allocation of \$678,928 of revenues and expenditures committed to fund balance within the County's General Fund; then transfers that allocation to the Health and Human Services Department, Grants and Donations Fund to improve client access and service delivery. The Board of Commissioners approved the FY 2023 year-end budget revision to commit funds for this purpose on June 20, 2023. There is no matching funds requirement.

Additional Information:

The increased allocation is intended to help enhance the Food and Nutrition Services program. No further action is required to receive the allocation. A portion of the county funded expenditures reported by HHS on the State reimbursement report in fiscal year 2022, were used to leverage the funds.

Guidance received from the USDA states Agencies are encouraged to direct the realized administrative funding savings provided by the Act to SNAP improvements aligned with key Administration priorities, including:

- Investment in technology to improve client access to SNAP, including online applications, benefit management tools, text messaging, and ensuring all client access is mobile enabled.
- Expand call center capacity and reduce call center wait times.
- Make investments in employees and infrastructure to provide the necessary technology and training to modernize customer service delivery.
- Explore opportunities to improve service delivery and access to vulnerable populations who have language barriers, fear of government services, and a lack of access to technology
- Improve reporting systems to ensure timely and reliable information is provided to USDA FNS, Congress, and stakeholders on program outcomes and activities, including major systems changes.

The Board of Commissioners approved the initial allotment of Federal Emergency Relief Funds supporting the enhanced Food and Nutrition Services in November 2021. Below is the current budget impact.

Current Budget (BOC Approval 11/2021)	Additional Funds	Revised Budget
\$671,668	\$678,928	\$1,350,596

The additional funds were received and deposited in the General Fund in September 2022 to be used for subsequent fiscal years. There are no reporting requirements, and no time limit to spend funds. HHS anticipates allocating the additional funds as illustrated below.

Category	Budget Amount
Personnel Costs	600,000
Equipment	78,928
Total	678,928

Attachments:

1. County Allocation Letter
2. Budget Memo – FY 2024 Grants and Donations Fund
3. Budget Memo – FY 2024 Human Services