



2026 On-Site Partner Support Program Application Guidelines

Definitions, Opportunities and Goals

Connecticut Foodshare is launching the On-Site Partner Support Program to strengthen agency partner efforts in addressing food insecurity across Connecticut. This initiative involves visits at agency partner locations led by an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a federal program dedicated to fighting poverty by building capacity in public agencies and non-profit organizations.

Through this opportunity, AmeriCorps VISTAs will help build capacity at agency partners by developing systems, resources, and skills that empower Connecticut Foodshare agency partners to more effectively address hunger in their communities. Upon acceptance, selected partners will receive custom-tailored training at their locations designed to strengthen their operations and workflows in key areas, ultimately increasing food access to the neighbors they serve.

The training can support projects proposed by partners to address specific needs **in one of the following areas:**

- 1) **Fundraising and food sourcing** – Potential topics include developing a fundraising and food sourcing plan to engage donors, as well as using social media and other creative approaches to increase contributions and resource availability.
- 2) **Volunteer management** – Potential topics include effective strategies for recruiting, engaging, and retaining volunteers; using social media for outreach and involvement; and tools for volunteer management, including software solutions.
- 3) **Centering neighbors** – Potential topics include developing mission statements, defining organizational values and goals, and exploring welcoming culture strategies to enhance engagement with staff, donors, volunteers, and guests.

Please note: **AmeriCorps VISTAs do not provide direct services**, such as writing social media content or sourcing food. Instead, they will guide and coach partners by developing custom tools and plans for partners to carry out these tasks, building long-term success.

Eligibility

Applications can be submitted by Connecticut Foodshare agency partners with accounts in good standing. Applicants must designate at least one staff member or volunteer to serve as the primary point of contact (two is recommended). The primary contact must attend all On-Site Partner Support Program visits, which will take place for 3 to 5 hours a week for a period of 2 to 4 weeks. The length of time dedicated to each participating partner will vary depending on the scope of the project proposed by the partner. Finally, agency partners must ensure that they have space and necessary equipment (such as a computer and Wi-Fi) to receive the support.

Timeline

- **January 8, 2026, 8:00 AM:** Applications open
- **January 14, 2026, 1:00 PM:** Informational webinar ([register here for the webinar](#))
- **February 13, 2026, 11:59 PM:** Applications due ([application form here](#))
- **March 2, 2026:** Decisions announced
- **From March 2, 2026, to March 31, 2026:** Agreements signed outlining:
 - Site visit dates at the agency partner's location, as agreed upon with the partner
 - The area of support selected by the partner during the application process
 - The designated staff member or volunteer involved
 - Any equipment or materials needed for the visits
- **April 1, 2026:** Visits at your location begin
- **From May 1, 2026, to July 31, 2026:** Follow-up visits and distribution of certificates of completion

Selection Criteria

This is a competitive opportunity. Incomplete applications and applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Submission of a completed application does not guarantee approval. Strong proposals will demonstrate:

- A clear description of the type of support requested
- A strong reason why this support is needed

- A direct, positive impact on the agency partner's operations and processes

Additional considerations may include geographic location of the program, to ensure this opportunity is offered in diverse communities across Connecticut.

To Apply

Applications are due by February 13, 2026, 11:59 PM using one of the three options below, depending on what works best for your organization:

- **Option 1 - Online:** Complete our online application [here](#)
- **Option 2 - On Paper:** Applications can also be submitted on paper. Contact your Network Relations Representative for a paper application form or print the application form [here](#). After completing the application form, you can send it by email to Claire Cooper at ccooper@ctfoodshare.org or Fernanda Page at fpage@ctfoodshare.org
- **Option 3 – Interview:** If an interview works better for your organization, please [click here](#) to schedule a time slot. You will receive a confirmation email and reminders for the interview

For More Information

Our team is available to help! Please contact your Network Relations Representative with any questions or to brainstorm, or reach out to AmeriCorps VISTAs Claire Cooper at ccooper@ctfoodshare.org or Fernanda Page at fpage@ctfoodshare.org.