

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Final Rule: Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Final Rule of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF, or Fiscal Recovery Funds). The final rule is effective on April 1, 2022. Treasury intends to update this document periodically in response to questions received from stakeholders. Recipients and stakeholders should consult the [final rule](#) for additional information, as this document does not describe all relevant requirements that apply to the SLFRF program. Recipients also may find helpful the [Overview of the Final Rule](#), which provides a summary of major provisions of the final rule for informational purposes.

- For overall information about the program, including information on requesting funding, please see <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments>
- For general questions about SLFRF, please email SLFRF@treasury.gov.

Answers to frequently asked questions on distribution of funds to non-entitlement units of local government (NEUs) can be found in this [FAQ supplement](#).

Answers to frequently asked questions on the taxability and reporting of payments from SLFRF can be found in this [FAQ issued by the IRS](#).

The FAQs in this document are applicable to the final rule, although readers will notice that many have been incorporated from the FAQs that were available in connection with the interim final rule, because they remain applicable. Answers to frequently asked questions that are unique to the interim final rule remain available at [Interim Final Rule: Frequently Asked Questions](#). A categorization is provided on the following page to assist in identifying the FAQs that remain largely the same as in the FAQ document associated with the interim final rule and the FAQs that are new or have been updated in conformity with the final rule.

Throughout these FAQs, Treasury may refer readers to relevant sections of the Overview of the Final Rule. The Overview of the Final Rule provides a summary of major provisions of the final rule for informational purposes and is intended as a brief, simplified user guide to the final rule provisions. The descriptions provided in the Overview summarize key provisions of the final rule but are non-exhaustive, do not describe all terms and conditions associated with the use of SLFRF funds, and do not describe all requirements that may apply to this funding. Any SLFRF funds received are also subject to the terms and conditions of the agreement entered into by Treasury and the respective jurisdiction, which incorporate the provisions of the final rule and the guidance that implements this program.

FAQ Categorization

Category	FAQ #
<p>FAQs retained with slight modifications from the Interim Final Rule: Frequently Asked Questions document (please note that FAQ numbering has changed between the two documents)</p>	<p>#1.1 – #1.2, #1.4 – 1.7, #2.10, #2.12 – #2.13, #3.8 – #3.13, #4.3, #4.5, #6.10 – #6.11, #6.14, #8.1, #8.3, #10.1 – #10.2, #11.1 – 11.3, #11.6 – 11.12, #12.1 – 12.2</p>
<p>New or Substantially Updated FAQs</p>	<p>#1.3, #1.8, #2.1 – #2.9, #2.11, #2.14 – #2.24, #3.1 – 3.7, #3.14, #4.1 – #4.2, #4.4, #4.6, #4.7 – #4.10, #5.1 – #5.4, #6.1 – #6.9, #6.12 – #6.13, #6.15 – #6.16, #8.2, #11.4 – #11.5, Section 13</p>

1. Eligibility and Allocations

1.1. Which governments are eligible for funds?

The following governments are eligible:

- States and the District of Columbia
- Territories
- Tribal governments
- Counties
- Metropolitan cities
- Non-entitlement units, or smaller local governments

1.2. Which governments receive funds directly from Treasury?

Treasury distributes funds directly to each eligible state, territory, metropolitan city, county, or Tribal government. Smaller local governments that are classified as non-entitlement units receive funds through their applicable state government.

1.3. Are special-purpose units of government eligible to receive funds?

Special-purpose units of local government are not eligible to receive an award as a recipient under the SLFRF program; however, a state, territory, local, or Tribal government may transfer funds to a special-purpose unit of government to carry out a program or project on its behalf as a subrecipient. Special-purpose districts perform specific functions in the community, such as fire, water, sewer or mosquito abatement districts. A recipient can also provide funds to an entity that is special-purpose government for the purpose of directly benefitting the entity as a result of the entity experiencing a public health impact or negative economic impact of the pandemic.

1.4. How are funds being allocated to Tribal governments, and how will Tribal governments find out their allocation amounts?

\$20 billion of Fiscal Recovery Funds was reserved for Tribal governments. The American Rescue Plan Act specified that \$1 billion would be allocated evenly to all eligible Tribal governments. The remaining \$19 billion was to be distributed using an allocation methodology determined by Treasury, which was based on enrollment and employment.

There were two payments to Tribal governments. Each Tribal government's first payment included (i) an amount in respect of the \$1 billion allocation that was to be divided equally among eligible Tribal governments and (ii) each Tribal government's pro rata share of the Enrollment Allocation. Tribal governments were notified of their allocation amount and delivery of payment 4-5 days after completing request for funds in the Treasury Submission Portal. The deadline to make the initial request for funds was June 21, 2021.

The second payment included a Tribal government's pro rata share of the Employment Allocation. There was a \$1,000,000 minimum employment allocation for Tribal governments. In late June 2021, Tribal governments received an email notification to re-enter the Treasury Submission Portal to confirm or amend their 2019 employment numbers that were submitted to Treasury for the CARES Act's Coronavirus Relief Fund. To receive an Employment Allocation, including the minimum employment allocation, Tribal governments must have confirmed employment numbers by July 23, 2021. Treasury calculated employment allocations for those Tribal governments that confirmed or submitted amended employment numbers by the deadline. In August, Treasury communicated to Tribal governments the amount of their portion of the Employment Allocation and the anticipated date for the second payment.

1.5. My county is a unit of general local government with population under 50,000. Will my county receive funds directly from Treasury?

Yes. All counties that are units of general local government receive funds directly from Treasury and should apply via the [online portal](#). The list of county allocations is available [here](#).

1.6. My local government expected to be classified as a non-entitlement unit. Instead, it was classified as a metropolitan city. Why?

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) defines, for purposes of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF), metropolitan cities to include those that are currently metropolitan cities under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program but also those cities that relinquish or defer their status as a metropolitan city for purposes of the CDBG program. This would include, by way of example, cities that are principal cities of their metropolitan statistical area, even if their population is less than 50,000. In other words, a city that is eligible to be a metropolitan city under the CDBG program is eligible as a metropolitan city under the CLFRF, regardless of how that city has elected to participate in the CDBG program.

Unofficial allocation estimates produced by other organizations may have classified certain local governments as non-entitlement units of local government. However, based on the statutory definitions, some of these local governments should have been classified as metropolitan cities.

1.7. In order to receive and use funds, must a recipient government maintain a declaration of emergency relating to COVID-19?

No. Neither the statute establishing the SLFRF nor the final rule requires recipients to maintain a local declaration of emergency relating to COVID-19.

1.8. Can nonprofit or private organizations receive funds? If so, how?

Yes. Under section 602(c)(3) of the Social Security Act, a State, territory, or Tribal

government may transfer funds to a “private nonprofit organization . . . , a Tribal organization . . . , a public benefit corporation involved in the transportation of passengers or cargo, or a special-purpose unit of State or local government.” Similarly, section 603(c)(3) authorizes a local government to transfer funds to the same entities (other than Tribal organizations). The interim final rule clarified that the lists of transferees in sections 602(c)(3) and 603(c)(3) are not exclusive, and the final rule clarified that recipients may transfer funds to any entity to carry out, as a subrecipient, an eligible activity on behalf of the SLFRF recipient (transferor), as long as they comply with the SLFRF Award Terms and Conditions and other applicable requirements. A transferee receiving a transfer from a recipient under sections 602(c)(3) and 603(c)(3) will be considered a subrecipient and will be expected to comply with all subrecipient reporting requirements.

Additionally, a recipient can provide funds to an entity, including a nonprofit organization, for the purpose of directly benefitting the entity as a result of the entity experiencing a public health impact or negative economic impact of the pandemic. In this instance, these entities will be considered beneficiaries, not subrecipients, and will not be expected to comply with subrecipient reporting requirements. Beneficiary reporting requirements will apply.

The ARPA does not authorize Treasury to provide SLFRF funds directly to nonprofit or private organizations. Thus, a nonprofit or private organization should seek funds from SLFRF recipient(s) in their jurisdiction (e.g., a State, local, territorial, or Tribal government).

2. Eligible Uses – Responding to the Public Health Emergency / Negative Economic Impacts

2.1. If a use of funds is not explicitly permitted in the final rule as a response to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts, does that mean it is prohibited?

No. The final rule provides a non-exhaustive list of enumerated uses that respond to pandemic impacts. The final rule also presumes that some populations experienced pandemic impacts and are eligible for responsive services. Recipients also have broad flexibility to (1) identify and respond to other pandemic impacts and (2) serve other populations that experienced pandemic impacts, beyond the enumerated uses and presumed eligible populations. Recipients can also identify groups or “classes” of beneficiaries that experienced pandemic impacts and provide services to those classes.

2.2. What types of services are eligible as responses to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic?

Eligible uses to respond to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic include assistance to households and communities; assistance to small businesses and nonprofits; aid to impacted industries; and uses to support public sector capacity and workforce. For

an overview of the eligible uses within each of these subcategories, please see pages 12-13 and 16-34 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#). The eligible uses within this category include programs and services to respond to impacts of the pandemic on households and communities, such as:

- Cash assistance
- Food assistance (e.g., child nutrition programs, including school meals) & food banks
- Childcare and early learning services, home visiting programs, services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth & childcare facilities
- Programs or services to support long-term housing security, including development of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing

They also include uses to bolster public sector capacity and workforce, such as:

- Payroll and covered benefits for public safety, public health, health care, human services and similar employees of a recipient government, for the portion of the employee's time spent responding to COVID-19.
- Payroll and covered benefits for additional public sector workers up to a pre-pandemic baseline that is adjusted for historic underinvestment in the public sector, providing additional funds for employees who experienced pay cuts or were furloughed, avoiding layoffs, providing worker retention incentives, and paying for ancillary administrative costs related to hiring, support, and retention.

These tools can allow recipients not only to bring back laid-off workers, but to address critical shortages of teachers, instructional aides, transportation workers, behavioral health workers, and other key government personnel, by funding positions at competitive wages and improving job quality in these sectors (see FAQs [#2.15](#), [#2.16](#), [#2.17](#)).

Recipients also have broad flexibility to identify and respond to other pandemic impacts and serve other populations that experienced pandemic impacts, beyond the enumerated uses. For more information on identifying eligible uses beyond those enumerated, please see pages 32-34 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#).

2.3. What types of COVID-19 response, mitigation, and prevention activities are eligible?

Please see pages 12-14 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#) for a non-exhaustive list of enumerated eligible uses relating to COVID-19 mitigation and prevention, as well as information about how to design other responses that are not included in the list.

2.4. May recipients use funds to respond to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts by providing direct cash transfers to households?

Yes. Cash transfers, like all eligible uses in the public health and negative economic impacts category, must respond to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic on a household or class of households. Recipients may presume that low- and moderate-income households (as defined in the final rule), as well as households that experienced unemployment, food insecurity, or housing insecurity, experienced a negative economic impact due to the pandemic. Recipients may also identify other households or classes of households that experienced a negative economic impact of the pandemic and provide cash assistance that is reasonably proportional to, and not grossly in excess of, the amount needed to address the negative economic impact. For example, in the ARPA, Congress authorized Economic Impact Payments to households at certain income levels, identifying and responding to a negative economic impact of the pandemic on these households.

Treasury has reiterated in the final rule that responses to negative economic impacts should be reasonably proportional to the impact that they are intended to address. Uses that bear no relation or are grossly disproportionate to the type or extent of harm experienced would not be eligible uses. Reasonably proportional refers to the scale of the response compared to the scale of the harm. It also refers to the targeting of the response to beneficiaries compared to the amount of harm they experienced; for example, it may not be reasonably proportional for a cash assistance program to provide assistance in a very small amount to a group that experienced severe harm and in a much larger amount to a group that experienced relatively little harm. Please also see questions 7-10 from the [IRS-issued FAQ](#) on SLFRF relating to the taxability of cash transfers.

2.5. May recipients use funds to respond to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts by replenishing unemployment funds?

Recipients may only use SLFRF funds for contributions to unemployment insurance trust funds and repayment of the principal amount due on advances received under Title XII of the Social Security Act up to an amount equal to (i) the difference between the balance in the recipient's unemployment insurance trust fund as of January 27, 2020 and the balance of such account as of May 17, 2021, plus (ii) the principal amount outstanding as of May 17, 2021 on any advances received under Title XII of the Social Security Act between January 27, 2020 and May 17, 2021. Further, recipients may use SLFRF funds for the payment of any interest due on such Title XII advances.

Additionally, a recipient that deposits SLFRF funds into its unemployment insurance trust fund to fully restore the pre-pandemic balance may not draw down that balance and deposit more SLFRF funds, back up to the pre-pandemic balance. Through December 31, 2024, recipients that deposit SLFRF funds into an unemployment insurance trust fund, or use SLFRF funds to repay principal on Title XII advances, may not take action to reduce benefits available to unemployed workers by changing the computation method governing regular unemployment compensation in a way that results in a reduction of average weekly benefit amounts or the number of weeks of benefits

payable (i.e., maximum benefit entitlement).

2.6. May funds be used to reimburse recipients for costs incurred by state, local and Tribal governments in responding to the public health emergency and its negative economic impacts prior to passage of the American Rescue Plan?

Use of SLFRF is generally forward looking. The final rule permits funds to be used to cover costs incurred beginning on March 3, 2021.

2.7. May recipients use funds for general economic development?

Generally, no. General economic development – activities that do not respond to negative economic impacts of the pandemic but rather seek to more generally enhance the jurisdiction’s business climate – would generally not be eligible under this eligible use category.

To identify an eligible use of funds under the public health and negative economic impacts category, a recipient must identify a beneficiary or class of beneficiaries that experienced a harm or impact due to the pandemic, and eligible uses of funds must be reasonably designed to respond to the harm, benefit the beneficiaries that experienced it, and be related and reasonably proportional to that harm or impact. For example, job training and other supports – like childcare, transportation, and subsidized employment – for unemployed workers may be used to address negative economic impacts of the public health emergency and be eligible.

2.8. How can recipients use funds to assist the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries? May recipients use funds to assist impacted industries other than travel, tourism, and hospitality?

Please see pages 24-25 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#).

2.9. How does the final rule help address the disparate impact of COVID-19 on certain populations and geographies?

In recognition of the long-standing disparities in health and economic outcomes in underserved communities that have amplified and exacerbated the impacts of the pandemic, the final rule identifies certain populations as “disproportionately impacted” by the pandemic and enumerates a broad range of services and programs to address health disparities, to build stronger communities through investments in neighborhoods, to address educational disparities, to provide rental assistance vouchers or assistance relocating to areas of greater economic opportunity, and other eligible uses to respond to negative economic impacts in disproportionately impacted communities.

Specifically, Treasury will presume that certain populations were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and therefore automatically eligible to receive responsive services. See page 19 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#) for a full list of the

populations presumed disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Recipients may also provide responsive services to other populations, households, or geographic areas disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. In identifying these disproportionately impacted communities, recipients should be able to support their determination for how the pandemic disproportionately impacted the populations, households, or geographic areas to be served.

Treasury has provided a non-exhaustive list of eligible responses to serve disproportionately impacted communities on page 20 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#). Note that these are an enhanced set of responses available in addition to responses available to respond to impacts of the pandemic on households and communities (including those listed on page 18 of the Overview).

2.10. May recipients use funds to pay for vaccine incentive programs (e.g., cash or in-kind transfers, lottery programs, or other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated)?

Yes. Under the final rule, recipients may use SLFRF funds to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including expenses related to COVID-19 vaccination programs.

Programs that provide incentives reasonably expected to increase the number of people who choose to get vaccinated, or that motivate people to get vaccinated sooner than they otherwise would have, are an allowable use of funds so long as such costs are reasonably proportional to the expected public health benefit.

2.11. How can recipients use funds to support workers returning to work?

Under the final rule, recipients may use SLFRF funds under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category to provide assistance to individuals who want and are available for work, including job training, public jobs programs and fairs, support for childcare and transportation to and from a jobsite or interview, cash and other incentives for newly employed workers, subsidized employment, grants to hire underserved workers, assistance to unemployed individuals to start small businesses, and development of job and workforce training centers.

2.12. What staff are included in “public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees”? Would this include, for example, 911 operators, morgue staff, medical examiner staff, or EMS staff?

As discussed in the final rule, funds may be used for payroll and covered benefits expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees, for the portion of the employee’s time that is dedicated to responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Public safety employees would include police officers (including state police officers),

sheriffs and deputy sheriffs, firefighters, emergency medical responders, correctional and detention officers, and those who directly support such employees such as dispatchers and supervisory personnel. Public health employees would include employees involved in providing medical and other health services to patients and supervisory personnel, including medical staff assigned to schools, prisons, and other such institutions, and other support services essential for patient care (e.g., laboratory technicians, medical examiner or morgue staff) as well as employees of public health departments directly engaged in matters related to public health and related supervisory personnel. Note that this category encompasses both public health and health care employees; both are treated as public health employees for the purposes of this eligible use category. Human services staff include employees providing or administering social services; public benefits; child welfare services; and child, elder, or family care, as well as others.

2.13. May recipients use funds to establish a public jobs program?

Yes. Under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category, the final rule permits a broad range of services to unemployed or underemployed workers and other individuals that suffered negative economic impacts from the pandemic. That can include public jobs programs, subsidized employment, combined education and on-the-job training programs, or job training to accelerate rehiring or address negative economic or public health impacts experienced due to a worker's occupation or level of training. The broad range of permitted services can also include other employment supports, such as childcare assistance or assistance with transportation to and from a jobsite or interview.

2.14. Can funds be used for investments in affordable housing?

Yes. Under the final rule, "Development, repair, and operation of affordable housing and services or programs to increase long-term housing security" is an enumerated eligible use to respond to impacts of the pandemic on households and communities.

Affordable housing projects must be responsive and proportional to the harm identified. This test may be met by affordable housing development projects—which may involve large expenditures and capital investments—if the developments increase the supply of long-term affordable housing for low-income households. While there may be less costly (or non-capital) alternatives to affordable housing development, a comprehensive response to the widespread housing challenges underscored by the pandemic will require the production of additional affordable homes, and targeted affordable housing development is a cost-effective and proportional response to this need.

For purposes of this test, Treasury will presume that any projects that would be eligible for funding under either the National Housing Trust Fund (HTF) or the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) are eligible uses of SLFRF funds. Note that these programs use different income limits than the definitions of low- and moderate-income adopted by Treasury. Given the severity of the affordable housing shortage, and the ways in which the pandemic has exacerbated the need for affordable, high-quality dwelling units, Treasury has determined that the households served by these federal housing programs have been

impacted by the pandemic and its negative economic impacts and that development of affordable housing consistent with these programs is a related and reasonably proportional response to those impacts. Additionally, affordable housing projects provided by a Tribal government are eligible uses of SLFRF funds if they would be eligible for funding under the Indian Housing Block Grant program, the Indian Community Development Block Grant program, or the Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Program.

Note that other affordable housing projects, beyond those eligible under HOME and HTF, may also be eligible uses of SLFRF funds, as discussed in the final rule.

To further support sustainable and durable homeownership, recipients may consider offering down payment assistance, such as through contributions to a homeowner's equity at origination or that establish a post-closing, mortgage reserve account on behalf of the borrower that may be utilized to make a missed or partial mortgage payment at any point during the life of the loan (e.g., if the borrower faces financial stress). Homeownership assistance that would be eligible under the Community Development Block Grant (at 24 CFR 507.201(n)) is also an eligible use of SLFRF funds.

2.15. Can I use funds to raise public sector wages and hire public sector workers?

Yes. Under the increased flexibility of the final rule, SLFRF funding may be used to support a broader set of uses to restore and support public sector employment. Eligible uses include hiring up to a pre-pandemic baseline that is adjusted for historic underinvestment in the public sector, providing additional funds for employees who experienced pay cuts or were furloughed, avoiding layoffs, providing worker retention incentives, including reasonable increases in compensation, and paying for ancillary administrative costs related to hiring, support, and retention.

Under the set of eligible uses for public-sector rehiring, recipients may fill vacancies and add additional employees using SLFRF funds (see pages 4385-4387 of the final rule and pages 27-28 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#)). Recipients have two options to restore pre-pandemic employment, depending on the recipient's needs. First, if the recipient simply wants to hire back employees for pre-pandemic positions, recipients may use SLFRF funds to hire employees for the same positions that existed on January 27, 2020 but that were unfilled or eliminated as of March 3, 2021. Recipients may use SLFRF funds to cover payroll and covered benefits for such positions through the period of performance.

Second, if the recipient wants to hire above the pre-pandemic baseline and/or would like to have flexibility in positions, recipients may use SLFRF funds to pay for payroll and covered benefits associated with the recipient increasing its number of budgeted FTEs up to 7.5 percent above its pre-pandemic baseline. Filling these roles may require recipients to increase wages and improve benefits above and beyond what they currently offer, especially in roles with historically low wages and acute staffing needs. This compensation would be an eligible use of SLFRF funds.

SLFRF funds also may be used to provide worker retention incentives, including

reasonable increases in compensation to persuade employees to remain with the employer as compared to other employment options. Retention incentives must be entirely additive to an employee's regular compensation, narrowly tailored to need, and should not exceed incentives traditionally offered by the recipient or compensation that alternative employers may offer to compete for the employees. Treasury presumes that retention incentives that are less than 25 percent of the rate of base pay for an individual employee or 10 percent for a group or category of employees are reasonably proportional to the need to retain employees, as long as other requirements are met.

2.16. How can funds be used to improve job quality and address labor supply challenges in the education and childcare sectors?

SLFRF funds can pay for the full salary and benefits of many school and childcare staff, including increased wages needed to recruit and retain excellent staff, and to fund premium pay, bonuses, training, and other worker supports. Some examples of potential uses of funds related to supporting the education and childcare sectors are provided below:

- Under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category, SLFRF funds can be used broadly for re-hiring public sector staff, such as school staff, to restore the public sector, including payroll and covered benefits for new or re-hired public employees (see [FAQ #2.15](#))
 - Even where the recipient, such as the municipality, does not have budgetary authority over a school district, it may choose to sub-award SLFRF funds to districts and other government entities for these purposes (see [FAQ #2.17](#)).
- SLFRF can fund premium pay for essential workers, including school personnel and childcare providers working in person in both the public and private sector, to compensate them for their service during the pandemic (see pages 35-36 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#) and [section 5 of the FAQs](#)).
- Under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category, SLFRF can fund supports for unemployed and underemployed workers, including hiring bonuses, training, and other labor supports, regardless of sector (see [FAQ #2.11](#)).
 - Under this provision, recipients can help childcare providers and school districts by strengthening pipelines into these sectors, including by using SLFRF funds to train potential workers to fill in-demand roles in childcare and education, including as school bus drivers, school nutrition staff, paraprofessionals, and other staff.
- Childcare subsidies and other supports for childcare programs – public or private – that serve low- and moderate-income families, are broadly eligible uses of SLFRF funding under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category (see [FAQ](#)

[#2.25](#)). These subsidies can support improvements to wages and job quality that make childcare employment an attractive career.

- Recipients can also provide assistance to small businesses under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category – which many state and local governments can use to help childcare small businesses expand their business, raise wages for workers, and complete training and other technical assistance to support high-quality care, given the impacts these businesses have faced over the course of the pandemic (see pages 21-22 of the [Overview](#)).

2.17. How can recipients use funds to invest in their public sector workforce when the recipient government is not the direct employer, as is the case with some transit agencies and local educational agencies?

Under the increased flexibility of the final rule, SLFRF funds may be used to support a broader set of uses to restore and support public sector employment as a response to the pandemic and its negative economic impacts (see [FAQ #2.15](#)).

Treasury acknowledges that funding models for public sector workers vary drastically across jurisdictions, and the direct employer of a public sector worker may be an entity separate from the SLFRF recipient government, like an independent transit agency or local educational agency (LEA), rather than the recipient government itself. Recipients may still use SLFRF funds to hire workers in these sectors under such circumstances.

Using the calculation detailed on page 4386 of the final rule and pages 27-28 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#), a recipient may calculate at an entity level the actual number of FTEs for the entity and the adjusted pre-pandemic baseline for the entity. The difference between the actual number of FTEs and the adjusted pre-pandemic baseline represents the number of FTEs that can be hired using SLFRF funds.

A recipient may then transfer funds to the entity, which would act as a subrecipient and cover payroll, covered benefits, and other costs associated with hiring up to this number of FTEs. A recipient may, in addition, “transfer” the FTEs it may hire based on its own calculation to the entity. A recipient may not, however, perform the calculation on the behalf of an entity, and then “transfer” to itself, or to any other entity, any of the FTEs able to be hired by the entity.

As an illustrative example, consider a recipient county government that would like to fund the salary and benefits costs for hiring teachers in a school district.

The school district has 2000 budgeted FTEs on January 27, 2020. The school district’s pre-pandemic baseline is 2000 FTEs; its adjusted pre-pandemic baseline is $2000 * 1.075 = 2150$ FTEs. The county’s pre-pandemic baseline is 1000 FTEs; its adjusted pre-pandemic baseline is $1000 * 1.075 = 1075$ FTEs. Now, assume that on March 3, 2021, the school district had 1800 budgeted FTEs in total, and the county had 1000 budgeted FTEs.

The county would be able to transfer funds to the school district to hire up to 350 FTEs with SLFRF funds (that is, $2150 - 1800 = 350$ FTEs), and additionally, “transfer” up to 75 FTEs to the school district (that is, $1075 - 1000 = 75$ FTEs). If the county decided to “transfer” all of its 75 FTEs to the school district, then the school district could hire up to $350 + 75 = 425$ FTEs using funds from the county. However, the county may not directly hire any more than 75 FTEs under this public sector hiring provision, and may not use any of the funds for the 350 FTEs able to be hired by the school district to fund any of the county’s FTE positions.

This public sector rehiring provision is a powerful tool for addressing staffing needs and shortages across government.

2.18. Can I use SLFRF funds to provide childcare to households?

Yes. Childcare and early learning services, home visiting programs, services for child welfare involved families and foster youth are an enumerated use eligible to respond to impacts of the pandemic on households and communities. These eligible uses can include new or expanded services, increasing access to services, efforts to bolster, support, or preserve existing providers and services, and similar activities. Further, improvements to or new construction of childcare, daycare, and early learning facilities are eligible capital expenditures, subject to the other eligibility standards for capital expenditures.

2.19. How can funds be used for “installation and improvement of ventilation systems in congregate settings, health care settings, or other public facilities” like commercial buildings, office buildings, schools, nursing homes, multi-family residential buildings, and restaurants?

As a general matter, ventilation improvements, including updates to HVAC systems, improved air filtration, and increased outdoor air flow, can help reduce the concentration and risk of exposure to aerosols, and thus infection with COVID-19.¹ The [National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan](#) specifies that improving ventilation and air filtration is a key component of keeping schools and businesses safely open. Although improvements to ventilation and air cleaning cannot on their own eliminate the risk of airborne transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recommended taking steps to improve [indoor air quality](#) (IAQ) including optimizing fresh air ventilation, enhancing air filtration and cleaning, and managing the way air flows as components of a larger approach that may include individual actions and layered prevention strategies.

Under the SLFRF program, funds for installation and improvement of ventilation systems can be used for projects that respond to the pandemic’s public health impacts and provide longer-term benefits, including the inspection, testing, commissioning, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrading of HVAC systems to improve indoor air quality in

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>;
<https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/indoor-air-and-coronavirus-covid-19>.

facilities. Projects can include assessing current HVAC systems, updating HVAC systems, updating air filters, installing functional windows for improved ventilation, repairing windows and doors, installing in-room air cleaning devices, and other projects for improving indoor air quality. For a more extensive guide of how to effectively use funds for ventilation improvements, Treasury recommends reviewing EPA's [Clean Air in Buildings Challenge](#), a call to action and a set of guiding principles and best practices to assist building owners and operators with improving IAQ in buildings, as well as EPA's resource page on "[Ventilation and Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)." For a guide on federal programs and resources to support school infrastructure, including ventilation improvements, Treasury recommends consulting the "[White House Toolkit: Federal Resources for Addressing School Infrastructure Needs](#)." Further, Treasury recommends that recipients engage with public health and infection prevention professionals to develop and support an effective COVID-19 mitigation strategy. Finally, Treasury recommends that recipients ensure that the inspection, testing, commissioning, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrading of ventilation systems is performed by a skilled, trained, and certified workforce.

Recipients that undertake ventilation system investments under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category should review capital expenditure requirements in the final rule and note that capital expenditures must be related and reasonably proportional to the pandemic impact identified.

2.20. In what types of buildings can recipients use funds to install and improve of ventilation systems?

In addition to directly installing and improving ventilation systems in congregate settings, health care settings, or other public facilities, recipients may grant or loan funds to businesses, non-profits, and other entities that may benefit from COVID-19 mitigation measures.

In making these investments, Treasury recommends that recipients consult with public health and infection prevention professionals and that recipients ensure work is performed by a workforce that is skilled, trained, and certified in ventilation systems work. Many buildings would benefit from ventilation improvements, including settings where risk of infection is higher, such as when people are indoors for prolonged periods of time, are in crowded environments, or are performing activities that increase emission of respiratory fluids (such as speaking loudly, singing, or exercising).² This includes commercial buildings, office buildings, dense worksites, schools, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, multi-family residential buildings, restaurants, correctional facilities, transportation hubs, and public transit vehicles, among other locations. Recipients are encouraged to consider congregate settings and other key locations as priorities for installation and improvement of ventilation systems. Please note that use of funds is not limited to government-owned public facilities and funds may be distributed by recipients to private businesses, non-profits, and others for COVID-19 mitigation and prevention, as

² <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/indoor-air-and-coronavirus-covid-19>.

the final rule clarifies that recipients may identify the general public as the impacted population for COVID-19 prevention and mitigation services. Recipients should review capital expenditure requirements for the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category in the final rule before undertaking investments in ventilation systems.

For more information on ventilation system upgrades for school settings, Treasury recommends consulting:

- Creating Healthy Indoor Air Quality in Schools: <https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools>
- Efficient and Healthy Schools campaign: <https://efficienthealthyschools.lbl.gov/>
- Efficient and Healthy Schools website: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/efficient-and-healthy-schools>

For more information on ventilation system upgrades for office and other commercial building settings, Treasury recommends consulting:

- Enhancing Health with Indoor Air: <https://sftool.gov/learn/about/626/enhancing-health-indoor-air>
- Sustainable Response to COVID-19: <https://sftool.gov/learn/about/625/sustainable-response-covid-19>
- Better Buildings Resource Center: Building Operations during COVID-19 <https://betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov/covid19>

For more information on ventilation system upgrades for residential settings, Treasury recommends consulting:

- Improving Ventilation in Your Home: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/Improving-Ventilation-Home.html>
- Ventilation in Buildings: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>

2.21. Can SLFRF funds be used to support public school facility improvements, upgrades, and new construction – such as those that make buildings more energy efficient, increase their use of renewable energy, address capacity constraints, and respond to health and safety concerns?

Yes. There are numerous ways in which SLFRF funds may be used to support public school facility improvements and upgrades.

First, as part of the public health and negative economic impacts (PH-NEI) eligible use category, SLFRF funds may be used address educational disparities in disproportionately impacted communities,³ which may include funding improvements or new construction of schools and other educational facilities or equipment. Recipients may consider energy

³ Please see FAQ 2.9 for more on disproportionately impacted communities, and the [Overview of the Final Rule](#) (p.19) for a list of presumed disproportionately impacted communities. For services to address educational disparities, Treasury will recognize Title I eligible schools as disproportionately impacted and responsive services that support the school generally or support the whole school as eligible.

efficiency improvements as part of their facility investments, and may also use funds for pre-project development costs, such as assessment of building conditions, energy audits, feasibility studies, HVAC commissioning and testing, and lead testing, that are tied to or reasonably expected to lead to an eligible investment in school facilities to address educational disparities in disproportionately impacted communities. Recipients should review and comply with the requirements applicable to capital expenditures under the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category as outlined in the final rule.⁴

Second, as part of the PH-NEI eligible use category, recipients may use funds for adaptations to schools for the purpose of mitigating the spread of COVID-19, including for ventilation improvements. Similar to the above, recipients should ensure compliance with the capital expenditure requirements for the eligible use category.

Third, as part of the water and sewer infrastructure eligible use category, recipients may invest in certain projects to support lead remediation, including replacement of internal plumbing and faucets and fixtures in schools and childcare facilities. Recipients can also invest in certain green water infrastructure projects. Eligible water and sewer projects are generally aligned with those allowable under the EPA's Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds, and Treasury has added additional eligible projects as part of the final rule. Recipients should review and comply with the specific requirements provided for in the water and sewer infrastructure eligible use category as outlined in the final rule.

Fourth, as part of the revenue loss eligible use category, which is the broadest eligible use category that is capped by either the \$10 million standard allowance (up to a recipient's award size) or a recipient's calculated revenue loss, recipients may use SLFRF funds on government services. These government services include any service traditionally provided by a government unless Treasury has stated otherwise. Eligible government services that may be covered under the revenue loss eligible use category include maintenance, improvement, or new construction of public school facilities, including those that address over-crowding and capacity constraints, support energy efficiency, and respond to health and safety concerns, among other purposes.

Under the SLFRF program, recipients must obligate all funds by December 31, 2024 and expend funds by December 31, 2026. Recipients may transfer funds to other entities, including local educational agencies, to carry out as a subrecipient an eligible use of funds by the recipient, as long as they comply with program requirements. Recipients should note that the Davis-Bacon Act requirements (prevailing wage rates) do not apply to projects funded solely with award funds from the SLFRF program, except for certain SLFRF-funded construction projects undertaken by the District of Columbia. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) does not apply to Treasury's administration of the SLFRF program, although projects supported with SLFRF funds may still be subject to NEPA review if they are also funded by other federal financial assistance programs.

⁴ Please see the [Overview of the Final Rule](#) (p. 30-31) for a summary of capital expenditure requirements for the public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category.

2.22. Would investments in improving outdoor spaces (e.g., parks) be an eligible use of funds as a response to the public health emergency and/or its negative economic impacts?

There are multiple ways that investments in improving outdoor spaces could qualify as eligible uses; several are highlighted below, though there may be other ways that a specific investment in outdoor spaces would meet eligible use criteria.

First, in recognition of the disproportionate negative economic impacts on certain communities and populations, the final rule includes enumerated eligible uses in disproportionately impacted communities for developing neighborhood features that promote improved health and safety outcomes, such as parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, sidewalks, pedestrian safety features like crosswalks, projects that increase access to healthy foods, streetlights, neighborhood cleanup, and other projects to revitalize public spaces.

Second, recipients may provide assistance to disproportionately impacted small businesses. The final rule included rehabilitation of commercial properties, storefront improvements, and façade improvements as enumerated eligible assistance to these small businesses.

Third, recipients can assist small businesses, nonprofits, or other entities to create or enhance outdoor spaces to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., restaurant patios).

Recipients pursuing many of these uses should also note the eligibility standards for capital expenditures in the final rule, which are summarized on pages 30-31 of the [Overview of the Final Rule](#).

2.23. Would expenses to address a COVID-related backlog in court cases be an eligible use of funds as a response to the public health emergency?

Yes. The final rule maintains that SLFRF funds may be used to address administrative needs of recipient governments that were caused or exacerbated by the pandemic. Please see pages 4388-4389 of the final rule. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, many courts were unable to operate safely during the pandemic and, as a result, now face significant backlogs. Court backlogs resulting from the inability of courts to safely operate during the COVID-19 pandemic decreased the government's ability to administer services. Therefore, steps to reduce these backlogs, such as implementing COVID-19 safety measures to facilitate court operations, hiring additional court staff or attorneys to increase speed of case resolution, and other expenses to expedite case resolution are eligible uses.

2.24. Can funds be used for eviction prevention efforts or housing stability services?

Yes. Treasury provided a non-exhaustive list of eligible services in the final rule: Rent, rental arrears, utility costs or arrears (e.g., electricity, gas, water and sewer, trash removal, and energy costs, such as fuel oil), reasonable accrued late fees (if not included in rental or utility arrears), mortgage payment assistance, financial assistance to allow a homeowner to reinstate a mortgage or to pay other housing-related costs related to a period of forbearance, delinquency, or default, mortgage principal reduction, facilitating mortgage interest rate reductions, counseling to prevent foreclosure or displacement, relocation expenses following eviction or foreclosure (e.g., rental security deposits, application or screening fees).

Treasury also clarified that assistance to households for delinquent property taxes, for example to prevent tax foreclosures on homes, was permissible under the interim final rule and continues to be so under the final rule. In addition, Treasury also clarified that recipients may administer utility assistance or address arrears on behalf of households through direct or bulk payments to utility providers to facilitate utility assistance to multiple consumers at once, so long as the payments offset customer balances and therefore provide assistance to households. The public health and negative economic impacts eligible use category also includes emergency assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness, either individual-level assistance (e.g., rapid rehousing services) or assistance for groups of individuals (e.g., master leases of hotels, motels, or similar facilities to expand available shelter). Please see page 4360 of the final rule for further relevant clarifications.

3. Eligible Uses – Revenue Loss

3.1. Does a recipient need to calculate or provide proof of its revenue loss to use funds for government services?

Recipients may elect a “standard allowance” of up to \$10 million to spend on government services through the period of performance. The standard allowance is available to all recipients and offers a simple, convenient way to determine revenue loss, instead of using the full formula specified in the final rule. Recipients must make a one-time, irrevocable election to either take the standard allowance or calculate revenue loss. Recipients must indicate this choice in their Project and Expenditure Reports due April 30, 2022. Recipients who elect the standard allowance do not have to produce any further demonstration or calculation of revenue loss.

Electing the standard allowance does not increase or decrease a recipient’s total allocation. For example, a recipient with an allocation of \$6 million would be allowed to claim no more than \$6 million as revenue loss to use for government services, and a recipient with an allocation of \$12 million would be allowed to claim the full \$10 million standard allowance and use the remaining allocation towards other eligible use categories. Recipients who elect to calculate revenue loss by formula must do so as articulated in the