

*Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Weymouth grant funding helps local agencies provide critical services to south shore residents

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Weymouth, MA – Weymouth was awarded \$419,319 in additional Community Development Block Grant Funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The CDBG-CV funding can be allocated to three eligible categories: micro-enterprise loans for small businesses, rental/housing assistance, and funding assistance for agencies providing public services related to COVID-19. The Town divided the CDBG-CV funding evenly amongst these categories and most recently awarded four local public service agencies funding: Bay State Community Services, Father Bill's/Mainspring, the Weymouth Food Pantry, and Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc. (QCAP).

[QCAP](#), was able to use the funding to help support their Financial REACH Center and their Southwest Community Food Center. Incorporated in 1965, QCAP serves 26,000 unduplicated individuals every year in Quincy, Weymouth, Braintree, Milton, Hull and more than 80 surrounding Norfolk County, Metro Boston & South Shore communities. QCAP's services provide a myriad of resources for individuals and families ranging from nutrition and food assistance to housing assistance, workforce development, and early education and care. Their mission as a multi-service organization allows them to address the complex and multi-faceted needs of clients across the South Shore.

Weymouth's CDBG-CV program provided \$20,145 to Financial REACH and \$25,000 toward the Food Center.

"We are very grateful to Mayor Hedlund and the Town of Weymouth for supporting QCAP's Financial REACH Center and the Southwest Community Food Center as a way of helping Weymouth residents through the COVID-19 Pandemic," **said Beth Ann Strollo, QCAP's Chief Executive Officer.** "With record unemployment, our

Financial REACH Center is equipped to help Weymouth residents reassess their budget, build their credit, and find employment. In addition, our Food Center can provide Weymouth residents with SNAP application assistance and monthly food orders. The funds through the CDBG grant make this collaboration possible and help to strengthen our community."

QCAP's [Financial REACH Center](#) provides comprehensive financial and employment coaching to help families and individuals reach financial stability. Through this program, Weymouth residents will be able to virtually meet one-on-one with a QCAP Financial/Career Coach to go over their budget, credit, saving and employment. QCAP works with these individuals to do a full financial and career assessment targeting short and long-term employment and training goals, and financial goals related to credit building, debt reduction and money management. Weymouth residents will also have an opportunity to participate in a variety of financial and career related workshops such as Credit Building 101, Budgeting during Your Job Search, Accessing Benefits to Bridge Financial Gaps, Interview Skills and Resume Writing, and more. The REACH Center also coordinates a yearly Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site, which offers free tax preparation assistance to low- and middle-income taxpayers in the region.

QCAP's [Southwest Community Food Center](#) has seen a 24% increase in Weymouth residents receiving food orders due to COVID-19, and the need for food has risen exponentially. CDBG Funding will be used to support the continued work of the Southwest Community Food Center which provides monthly food orders and SNAP application assistance and distributes over 375,000 pounds of food to nearly 1,350 households a year. The SWCFC instituted a series of safety measures to protect both clients and staff. Individuals in need of food can simply call to make an appointment, do a quick intake over the phone, make an appointment for a food pick-up. Upon arrival, individuals will pick up their orders through a no-contact take-out window.

"Our ability to provide some financial support to QCAP's Financial REACH and the Southwest Community Food Center by leveraging CDBG-CV funding to assist those most in need during the pandemic, is one example of the great partnerships we have with public service agencies across the South Shore and some of the positive work that can be done at the local level," **said Mayor Hedlund.**" We thank our partners at QCAP, Bay State Community Services, Father Bill's and the Food Pantry for their efforts to directly help Weymouth residents during this challenging time."

In addition, Weymouth provided CDBG-CV funding to three other public service agencies. [Father Bill's/Mainspring](#), a local charitable organization providing resources to prevent and end homelessness as well as assist those struggling with or at-risk of homelessness, received \$34,628 to provide additional staff support addressing the increased shelter needs during the pandemic.

[Bay State Community Services](#), a non-profit human services agency providing a continuum of social, behavioral health and substance use recovery services, received \$30,000 to distribute care packages to low-moderate income residents in need of supplies but unable to purchase them due to COVID-19. Care packages included items such as diapers, wipes, water bottles.

The [Weymouth Food Pantry](#) also received \$30,000 to fund additional staff support, PPE and food purchases. A long time partnering organization with the Town, the

Weymouth Food Pantry administers pop-up pantry locations as well as grocery delivery services to home-bound elders and people with disabilities.

"We are so grateful for the support of our Town and Mayor Hedlund," **said Pamela Denholm, Executive Director of the Food Pantry.** "We have seen an explosion of need arise in Weymouth since the beginning of COVID-19, and as we struggle with the reopening of our schools and local businesses, we expect this to continue until a vaccine is found. With this kind of support, we can be a safety net for our neighbors who are experiencing hardship."

Weymouth administered a total of \$139,773 to public service agencies. The remaining CDBG-CV funds will provide rental/housing assistance to qualifying low to moderate income applicants and micro-enterprise loans to eligible small businesses. The Town also has appropriated free cash toward these programs to provide additional assistance to Weymouth residents and small businesses. For more information on the CDBG-CV funds, visit the website at: <https://www.weymouth.ma.us/planning-community-development/pages/cdbg-program> or call the Department of Planning and Community Development at 781-340-5015.

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