



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 2400

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

A 100% volunteer non-profit, Epic-Cure Inc. is requesting \$1.5 million to construct a 10,550 square foot Food Security Distribution Center in St. Augustine near I-95 for optimal access to rural St. Johns and Putnam counties. The cost of construction is approx. \$2,000,000. Epic-Cure will secure the additional funding (\$500,000) from private donations and grants. The land is expected to be shovel ready between March and June 2024. The facility will anchor Epic-Cure's mission in NE Florida to (1) eliminate food waste/improve the environment (mitigation of methane gas emissions from land fills) and (2) provide food security through the free distribution of rescued/donated food to the food insecure (improving health, mental health, economic, and social outcomes). We will leverage the 300+ regular volunteers to increase distributions from 23 per week (575,000 pound per month) in under served communities in Northeast Florida.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,500,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,500,000	75%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	500,000	25%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	2,000,000	100%

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?**
- a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**

b. **Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.**

10. **Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?**



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Yes

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

SAFE Act funds: Putnam County (\$40,000) and St. Johns County (\$40,000) in 2020-21.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

March 1, 2024

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

October 1, 2024

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

Epic-Cure will purchase the land where the fixed capital outlay will be used. Formed in 2018, Epic-Cure was granted 501(c)(3) status in early 2019. An all-volunteer non-profit, Epic-Cure's aims to eliminate food waste and food insecurity to improve the well being of our Northeast Florida community by diverting fresh food from land fills to the food insecure in historically disadvantaged rural and urban neighborhoods and food deserts.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construct a 10,550 sq ft commercial warehouse with significant refrigeration and logistical capacity (including bay doors, loading ramps, and equipment - forklifts, pallet jacks, etc.) and storage to ensure the safe handling and processing of food to be directed to at least 2,000 families (at least 5,800 individuals) weekly.	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,500,000

14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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Epic-Cure is both a food pantry and a food bank providing free food directly to the food insecure in Northeast Florida (food pantry) primarily on the choice model (grocery store and farmer's market style distributions) in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods (Opportunity Zones and rural food deserts) and to other food pantries and food banks (food bank) from its logistical distribution centers. Participants in Epic-Cure's food distributions report lessened food insecurity, better health outcomes, greater participation in education/schools, relief from temporary economic setbacks (including staying in homes and not choosing between food and medicine or other necessities like housing).

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Already the largest food pantry in Northeast Florida, Epic-Cure will be able to increase its output of food distributions, serving more food pantries and individuals each week, processing more food that might otherwise have gone to waste in landfills where it would emit harmful greenhouse gases (primarily, methane). The goal is to create a permanent and sustainable presence to enable this all-volunteer organization to continue improving the well being of the people of Northeast Florida while creating a healthier environment for them.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

1. Distribution of food to the food insecure.
2. Nutritional, cooking education: hands-on classes for Title-1 students and veterans suffering physical and mental health issues associated with their service to our country.
3. Engagement of senior citizens as volunteers, connecting them with purposeful activities that enrich, prolong lives.
4. Reduce health problems through education, healthy foods (produce, meat and fish, dairy), free health screenings by our health partners (Wildflower Clinic, Flagler Health Care Connect+).
5. Improve educational outcomes - student engagement is improved through better nutrition and lack of food insecurity.
6. Reduction of health conditions related to food insecurity: anemia, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, dental issues.
7. Reduced poverty: improved economic outcomes.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

Among the food insecure, we count the elderly/retirees, children under 18, veterans and active military personnel, the impoverished, those of historically disadvantaged lineage (people of color, for example), the deaf and blind, the homeless, formerly incarcerated persons, people with drug and alcohol problems, battered women and children, the working poor, single parent households, those living in rural food deserts and children in Title-1 schools. We currently serve more than 65 pounds of food (average) to more than 6,000 people weekly. We expect to increase that by more than two times with the operating leverage afforded by the permanent, expanded Food Security Distribution Center.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The stability and sustainability of the Epic-Cure program afforded by this grant and the facility it creates will reduce the number of food insecure people in Northeast Florida and thereby improve economic, social, and health outcomes throughout the community. The environment will also benefit from lower greenhouse gas emissions. The building will provide the permanent base of operations for these efforts along with space to accommodate expanded reach throughout Northeast Florida. We will measure outcomes through metrics such as the increasing number of people served, the amount of food rescued and distributed to people, the demographics of people served (seniors, military/vets, children, etc.), people reporting reduced food insecurity and gaining access to nutrition education, people that are screened for/advised about medical conditions that they might not otherwise have known about given their historical lack of access to medical professionals, and outreach.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

Standard contract penalties are sufficient.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address



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d. Phone Number (914)282-8564 Ext.

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number