



**National Migrant & Seasonal
Head Start Association**

**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NMSHSA Receives \$57.3 Million Dollar Grant for Farm and Food Workers Relief

Washington DC – The National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association (NMSHSA) is a proud recipient of a \$57.3 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program. As an association with a network that spans across the country, NMSHSA is honored to be the third largest of the 15 grants awarded by the USDA.

The grant program, as a continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic, awards qualified organizations who serve farm and food worker communities a grant to distribute \$600 payments to eligible farmworkers, meat packing workers and/or grocery store workers. Funds are intended to cover expenses resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

In the wake of the pandemic, it is apparent that the farmworker community was especially hit hard by COVID-19. Farmworkers were considered “essential” front line workers and were expected to continue working throughout adverse seasons, as well as in close proximity to other workers in factories and even tighter living arrangements. These working conditions allowed the virus to move rampantly throughout the farmworker community causing untold loss of income, medical issues and even death.

Cleofas Rodriguez, Jr., Executive Director of NMSHSA, shared that “We are beyond honored to be named one of the 15 recipients of this USDA grant program and are ready to get started providing relief funds to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) farmworker families through our network of MSHS programs and the broader farmworker community. The work and contribution farmworkers provide is essential and we applaud all efforts to extend economic relief to this critical population who keeps America fed.”

For the next 24 months NMSHSA will partner with the network of MSHS programs across the country and other community-based organizations to equitably distribute funds to farmworkers who were not eligible to receive previously distributed Federal COVID relief assistance.

NMSHSA also is working in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago to develop a cost-effective, portal to facilitate the secure electronic collection of eligibility information, verification of prospective beneficiaries, reduction of

duplicate payments, and equitable distribution of \$600 payment cards to farmworkers.

“NORC is excited to partner with NMSHSA to develop a customized, user-friendly, scalable, but highly secure data system that leverages the national network of MSHS programs, minimizes burden on prospective beneficiaries, mitigates financial risk and fraud, but still allows the efficient processing of payments to farmworkers” said Michael López, vice president in the Education & Child Development department at NORC.

Payments will be distributed in the coming months. To stay update with NMSHSA and the Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program, please visit our website, www.nmshsa.org, or follow our social media.

In union with farmworker families, the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association advocates for comprehensive, high-quality Head Start services with diverse stakeholders, paving the path for stronger communities and lifelong success of children and families.

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