



Illinois Grocery Initiative Program – Equipment Upgrade Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. I own a convenience store with a selection of fresh food. Am I eligible to apply?

No. To be eligible, a store must be *primarily* a grocery store, butcher shop, fruit and vegetable shop, or seafood shop as described in Section C.1 of the NOFO Supplement. Convenience stores or general stores offering some fresh food options do not qualify.

2. My store is waiting for approval to accept SNAP and WIC benefits as payment. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. If you are making good-faith efforts to prepare to accept SNAP and WIC, you are eligible. You should document the status of your efforts in the program application.

For help on getting started on accepting SNAP, see this link:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer>

For help on getting started on accepting WIC, see this link:

<https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=119512>

3. I am considering renovating my grocery store. Would costs of upgrading my electric service and improving insulation be eligible for reimbursement?

No. Only in-store equipment expenditures on HVAC, refrigeration or freezer units, and lighting are eligible. While installation costs for these units may be eligible for reimbursement, this does not extend to expenditures on the site's electric infrastructure or building shell.

4. Would expenditures on new concrete, walls, and ceilings be eligible for reimbursement if done in conjunction with bringing in new energy-efficient equipment?

Perhaps, but this would be closely scrutinized. Construction/rehab expenditures that are an integral component of installation may be eligible for reimbursement. But expenditures on general remodeling would not be eligible.

5. Can I request reimbursement for equipment I have already purchased?

No. The IGI Equipment Upgrade program does not allow for reimbursement of pre-award costs. In practice, this means that applicants must have a grant agreement in place before incurring eligible expenditures to be assured of recovery. Expenditures occurring before application submission is complete will not be considered for reimbursement.



- 6. I will be renting a freezer for customer use during project implementation. Can I receive reimbursement for this expense?**

No. This would be an operational expense and outside the scope of the NOFO.