

Governor Phil Murphy



Governor Phil Murphy Announces \$10 Million in Funding for Phase 3 of Sustain & Serve NJ Program

11/5/2021

Additional Funding Brings Total to \$45 Million for Program on Track to Purchase 4.5 Million Meals from Over 400 Restaurants Across All NJ Counties

TRENTON, N.J.– New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy today announced an additional \$10 million in funding to support the creation of a third phase of the Sustain & Serve NJ Program, bringing the total program funding to nearly \$45 million.

Launched by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) in December 2020, Sustain & Serve NJ has provided eligible entities with grants to support the purchase of meals from New Jersey-based restaurants that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The meals have then been distributed to families in need.

“Sustain & Serve offers a creative approach to supporting both restaurants impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as those who struggle with food insecurity,” **said Governor Murphy**. “This program is truly a win-win, offering aid to restaurants to keep their doors open and retain staff while helping to get much needed meals to individuals and families struggling to put food on the table.”

Through the first two phases of the program, the NJEDA awarded more than \$34 million to 31 organizations across the state. Since February 2021, Sustain and Serve grantees have purchased two million meals from more than 400 participating restaurants across nearly 150 municipalities in all 21 counties. An additional 1.5 million meals are expected to be purchased between now and January 2022 using Phase 2 grants. Phase 3 funding is expected to support the purchase of an additional one million meals, bringing the total number of meals purchased and distributed to 4.5 million.

Phase 3 of Sustain & Serve NJ will make up to \$10 million in American Rescue Plan funding available to organizations in New Jersey. Eligible organizations will receive grants for bulk purchases of meals from New Jersey-based restaurants. The entities will then distribute the meals at no cost.

“Through Sustain & Serve NJ, we are fueling the economic recovery of our vital restaurant industry while helping to alleviate food insecurity within our state’s communities, two top priorities for Governor Murphy as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic,” **said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan**. “The Governor has often called Sustain & Serve a ‘grand slam.’ I wholeheartedly agree. With today’s announcement, we look forward to getting additional funding into the hands of organizations statewide to buy even more meals in the months ahead.”

“Sustain and Serve has become an integral part of our battle against food insecurity and I’m pleased the governor is continuing to support this effort with another \$10 million funding boost,” **said Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**. “The partnership between our state, restaurants and soup kitchens like Soup Kitchen 411 is evidence of our ongoing commitment to help put hot meals on the plates of those struggling while supporting small, often family-owned businesses. Places like Tavern on George had to rewrite the rules during the pandemic to keep business going and I’m glad we’ve found a way to support them to mutual benefit.”

Governor Murphy announced the expansion of the program during a visit to Tavern on George (<https://www.tavernongeorge.com/>) in New Brunswick, a participating restaurant working with Soup Kitchen 411 (<https://soupkitchen411.com/>). Soup Kitchen 411 has received grants totaling \$4 million through Phases 1 and 2 of the Program.

“Feedback from organizations and restaurant owners participating in Sustain & Serve NJ has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are incredibly grateful for Governor Murphy’s support of a third phase of the program,” **said Tara Colton, NJEDA Executive Vice President for Economic Security**. “The meals provided through Sustain and Serve NJ not only offer basic sustenance for families in need, but provide dignity and are responsive to the needs of New Jersey’s diverse communities. We are thrilled to expand a program that embodies Governor Murphy’s commitment to advancing a stronger and fairer state for all New Jerseyans.”

A list of current Sustain and Serve NJ grantees can be found here (https://www.njeda.com/public_information/#Activity-reports).

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