

STATEWIDE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT
PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) COMMUNITY
PARTNER AWARD APPLICATION
INSTRUCTIONS



Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP)

SHIP is a program that helps people across Minnesota live healthier lives. It works in all 87 counties and 10 tribal nations. Each year, the state gives money to local health groups so they can lead projects that support better health in their communities.

SHIP focuses on preventing serious diseases like cancer, heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. It helps communities create more chances for people to be active, eat healthy foods, live without tobacco, and take care of their mental health. SHIP works with local partners to make long-lasting changes that support equity and health for everyone in Minnesota.

Anoka County SHIP Community Partner Awards

Anoka County Public Health gives out awards called SHIP Community Partner Awards to help support local health projects. These projects focus on things like staying active, eating healthy, living without tobacco, and taking care of mental health. The goal is to help these projects to be sustainable so they can serve the whole community equitably. Each project fits into one of seven types of settings and focuses on one of four main health areas chosen by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Project Settings

- Active Living in the Community
- Childcare
- Commercial Tobacco Free in the Community
- Food Access in the Community
- Healthcare
- Schools
- Workplace

Project Focus Areas

- Active Living
- Commercial Tobacco-Free
- Healthy Eating
- Mental Wellbeing

Sustainability

Projects are supported and maintained by the organization throughout the grant cycle and beyond, allowing for long-term impacts in the community.

Equity

Projects include leadership and/or meaningful participation by priority populations in our community. Equity ensures resources are distributed where they are most needed.

Priority populations identified by Anoka County Public Health include:

- People with disabilities
- Black, Indigenous, and other People Of Color (BIPOC) and American Indian/Alaska Natives individuals
- People who are identified as low income
- People who are identified as food insecure
- People who identify as LGBTQIA2S+
- People age 65 and older
- Children, teens, and young adults (ages 0-26)

Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change

All project applications must include at least one policy, system, or environmental* change to promote positive health behaviors by making healthy choices available and accessible to community members.

- **Policy** means written rules or laws that people or groups must follow.
 - *Example:* Updating a tobacco rule to include vaping.
 - **Systems** are the ways a group or community does things. Changing a system means changing how things usually work.
 - *Example:* Starting a community garden or adding regular exercise programs.
 - **Environmental*** changes affect the places where people live, work, learn, play, and pray. They can be tangible (physical structures, “the built environment”) or intangible (cultural, social, or economical dynamics)
 - *Examples:* Adding a bike share program or a water bottle filler to make healthy choices easier.
- *Note: Environmental changes must be combined with a policy or system change—they can’t stand alone.*

Focus Areas

- **Active Living** Helping people move more by improving places to walk, bike, and play.
 - *Examples:* PE and recess in schools, bike racks, sit-to-stand desks at work, Safe Routes to School.
- **Healthy Eating** Making it easier to get healthy, affordable, and culturally familiar food. This also includes support for breastfeeding.
 - *Examples:* Breastfeeding spaces at work, food shelf updates, community gardens, farmers markets, healthy school meals.
- **Commercial Tobacco-Free Living** Helping people live without tobacco by preventing youth initiation, supporting cessation, and preventing exposure to secondhand smoke.
 - *Examples:* School programs for vaping, tobacco-free work policies, Quit Partner referrals, smoke-free housing rules.
- **Mental Wellbeing** is a positive state of emotional, psychological, and social health, which can be achieved through authentic connections and safe environments.
 - *Examples:* Calming rooms in schools, links to mental health services, and wellness rooms at work.

If you have a project idea but aren’t sure if it fits these goals, Anoka County Public Health SHIP staff can help. Email: SHIP@anokacountymn.gov.

Who Can Apply

In order to apply you must be located in Anoka County, MN. Some examples of groups that can apply for funding include: schools, workplaces*, child care providers, health clinics, food shelves, and municipalities. Individuals are not eligible to apply. If you are unsure if you can apply email: SHIP@anokacountymn.gov.

Note: Workplaces must complete the [SHIP Employer Wellness Assessment \(SEWA\)](#) before applying for funding. The SEWA is an **online assessment that scores employers on how well they currently support employee wellness initiatives related to healthy eating, supporting movement throughout the day, commercial tobacco-free workplaces, and mental wellbeing. If you need to be registered for the SEWA or are unsure if your workplace has completed it, please email SHIP@anokacountymn.gov.*

Priority will be given to populations experiencing inequities, such as:

- People with disabilities
- Black, Indigenous, and other People Of Color (BIPOC), and American Indian/Alaska Native individuals
- People who are identified as low income

- People who are identified as food insecure
- LGBTQIA2S+ individuals
- People age 65 and older
- Children, teens, and young adults (ages 0–26)

If your project is funded, you'll need to:

- Share updates when asked (like your timeline, budget, and activities) within 5–10 business days.
- Collect and share data about your project. SHIP staff can help with this.
- Fill out a SHIP Survey with stories, photos, quotes, videos, or other highlights from your project.

Additional Information:

- Match and in-kind are not required for applicants. However, Anoka County asks that applicants include estimates of any in-kind or match contributions in their budget.
- If you're buying any item for a for-profit business and it costs \$500 or more, you'll need a written agreement (called a Memorandum of Understanding or MOU) about how the item will be used.
- MOUs may be required for other organizations as deemed necessary.

How Projects are Chosen for Funding

Things to consider when writing your application:

- **Focus Area:** The project must support one of SHIP's four focus areas—Active Living, Commercial Tobacco-Free, Healthy Eating, and Mental Wellbeing.
- **Setting:** The project must take place in one of these areas:
 - Active Living in the Community
 - Childcare
 - Commercial Tobacco Free in the Community
 - Food Access in the Community
 - Healthcare
 - Schools
 - Workplace
- **Sustainability:** Projects must show a plan for continued support and maintenance throughout the entire funding cycle **and into the future.**
- **PSE Change:** Projects must help change policies, systems, or environments to promote positive health behaviors by making healthy choices available and accessible to community members.
- **Equity:** Projects include leadership and/or meaningful participation by priority populations in our community. Equity ensures resources are distributed where they are most needed.

Priority populations identified by Anoka County Public Health include:

- People with disabilities
- Black, Indigenous, and other People Of Color (BIPOC) and American Indian/Alaska Natives individuals
- People who are identified as low income
- People who are identified as food insecure
- People who identify as LGBTQIA2S+
- People age 65 and older
- Children, teens, and young adults (ages 0-26)
- **Connection to CHIP:** Projects that support goals in [Anoka County's Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#)

are preferred. These goals include:

- Reducing chronic diseases
 - Fighting food insecurity
 - Improving mental health by reducing stigma and increasing access to care
- **Connection to SHIP Overall Assessment and Prioritization (SOAP):** Projects that match Anoka County SHIP's top priorities are also preferred. These include:
 - **Mental Wellbeing** – Mental health problems are rising among both teens and adults in Anoka County, with more young people feeling anxious, depressed, or lonely. To help, the community needs better access to mental health care that is equitable, timely, and respectful of different cultures.
 - **Active Living** - Many people in Anoka County, especially youth and low-income families, aren't getting enough exercise because they don't have safe or fun places to be active. Making parks and sidewalks safer and easier to use can help everyone stay healthier and more connected.
 - **Commercial Tobacco-Free** – Tobacco and vaping are still a problem for youth in Anoka County, especially with flavored products that make it easier to get addicted. Helping young people quit and making programs that respect different cultures can lead to better health and a stronger, more equitable community.
 - **Healthy Eating** – Many people in Anoka County, especially low-income and BIPOC residents, struggle to get healthy food because of rising prices, limited transportation, and few places that accept SNAP. Making food more available and easier to access can help improve health and reduce hunger in the community.
 - **Reach:** Projects that maximize impact on intended population are preferred. For example a lactation rooms may only be used by employees that are currently lactating but it is shifting the culture and will impact others over time

How Applications are Scored

When your project is reviewed, it will be scored based on the following rubric: [LINK TO RUBRIC](#)

Available Funding

Not everyone who applies will get funding. Some groups may get the full amount they ask for, but others might get less depending on how much money is available and how many projects are chosen.

Some expenses cannot be funded: check the [Community Partner Awards Financial Guidance 2025-2026 document](#) for a comprehensive list of restrictions.

Reimbursement Process

Most of the time, this grant works by reimbursement. That means your organization will buy the approved items for your project first. After you submit the required forms, Anoka County SHIP will reimburse you for those costs. In some cases, SHIP may buy the items for you.

Award Process (What Happens After You're Approved)

Once your project is approved, here's what to expect:

- You'll get an official award email.
- After that, you can start your project and buy approved items—or SHIP staff can help buy them for you.

While implementing your project:

- Keep track of your progress. SHIP staff can provide technical assistance throughout your project.
- Take pictures! Before-and-after photos are a great way to show your impact.
- Share your success! You can post on social media, talk to local news, or tell others in your community.
- Send in your final invoice.
- At the end of the year, fill out a SHIP Survey to share your results.

Application Checklist

- Completed budget and order form
- Completed W9
- Completed Application, including:
 - SMARTIE Goal
 - A plan for changing policies, systems, or environments (PSE change)
 - A list of priority populations your project will support
 - A plan to track your progress (evaluation plan)
 - A plan to keep your project going over time (sustainability plan)

If you have more questions about the Anoka County SHIP Awards, feel free to email us at SHIP@AnokaCountyMN.gov. We're happy to help!