



The Mayor's Office of Food Access (OFA) is seeking an intern to complete the proposed scope of work, described below, during the fall semester. The intern's work will inform expansion of the Boston Double Up Food Bucks (BDUFB) Program.

This project would be an excellent directed study for a graduate or undergraduate student interested in topics related to food access, food justice, SNAP, federal food assistance programs, healthy corner store programs, and community partnerships. This is a volunteer position and is unpaid.

Please send your resume and cover letter describing your interest and qualifications to Liz Hatzenbuehler, Boston Double Up Food Bucks Program Coordinator, Elizabeth.Hatzenbuehler2@boston.gov.

Background

The mission of the Mayor's Office of Food Access (OFA) is to improve equitable access to nutritious food with respect to:

- Affordability
- Physical Accessibility
- Cultural Appropriateness

Boston Double Up Food Bucks Program (BDUFB) Program Description

To improve equitable access to nutritious food throughout the City of Boston, the OFA, in partnership with the Fair Food Network (FFN), are working to enlist corner stores, bodegas, and non-profit grocery stores in BDUFB program. This program provides SNAP participants with a dollar-for-dollar match of up to \$10 (\$5 at two stores) per day when shopping with their EBT card for fresh fruits and vegetables at any of the participating BDUFB stores.

The overarching goals of the program are to 1) subsidize healthy foods for SNAP participants sold in locally-owned brick-and-mortar food retailers, 2) support the economic development of Boston resident-owned small food retail businesses, and 3) to support and source culturally-appropriate locally grown foods.

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Currently, four stores in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods are participating in the program, and we hope to expand our reach over the next two years.

To inform our expansion process, we want to conduct assessments of corner stores, bodegas or non-profit grocery stores in specific Boston neighborhoods to determine if they would be a good fit for the BDUFb program. We would like to know things such as, what is their interest in participating in a SNAP incentive program?, what fresh produce do they currently stock?, what is their refrigeration capacity?, where is the store located in proximity to other BDUFb stores as well as in proximity to other services, such as community health centers, DTA or WIC? We also want to develop a map of store locations with an overlay of food insecurity data, transportation hubs, like bus stations or T-stops, etc. The full scope of this project entails developing an assessment checklist, map, talking with store owners, and other details that remain to be defined.

Scope of Work

1. Develop a Corner Store Environmental Assessment Checklist. Include items such as:
 - Number of fresh fruits and vegetables stocked in the store
 - Refrigeration capacity for fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Location of fresh fruits and vegetables in the store (e.g. are they stored near the check-out counter or in the back of the store?)
 - Capacity to increase the amount or variety of fresh produce stocked
 - Is the store a SNAP-authorized retailer?
 - History of fruits and vegetable sales to SNAP participants
 - History of fruits and vegetable purchase and waste
 - Proximity to major grocery stores
 - Proximity to other community-based organizations or services such as community health centers, DTA, public transit, etc.
 - Proximity to other BDUFb stores
 - Proximity to farmers markets
2. Develop Program Acceptability Checklist/Questionnaire for store owners. Include questions such as:
 - Would you be interested in participating in the BDUFb Program?
 - What is your interest level? (high, medium, low)
 - What are your concerns about the program?

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- What, in your opinion, are some challenges to offering the BDUFB Program at your store?
 - What, in your opinion, would be the benefit(s) of offering the BDUFB Program at your store?
 - Do your customers ask for healthy foods or products to be stocked in your store? (e.g. fresh fruits and vegetables, low sugar beverages, low-sodium items, such as canned soups, or healthy snack items, like low-fat yogurt or string cheese)
 - How do you think neighborhood residents would react to having a DUFB program available at your store?
 - What concerns would residents have about the program?
 - What, in your opinion, what is resident interest level in the BDUFB Program?
 - What items would neighborhood residents like to have available through the program that currently are not?
3. Develop neighborhood maps which identifies
- Proximity to major grocery stores
 - Proximity to other community-based organizations or services such as community health centers, DTA, public transit, etc.
 - Proximity to seasonal farmers markets
 - Proximity to other BDUFB stores
 - Food insecurity rates/neighborhoods with the highest food insecurity throughout Boston