NC PUBLIC BENEFITS COLLECTIVE

Request for Proposals: Lead Circle Facilitator

Issued by: NC Public Benefits Collective | Circle: Food and Nutrition Supports

Background

The NC Public Benefits Collective (NCPBC) is a statewide network of community-based organizations, health and human services partners, and residents working to close the gaps people encounter when accessing public benefits in North Carolina. The Collective is governed by a Collaboration Committee and organized around Topic Circles, each focused on a specific population or issue area.

This request for proposals is for the role of Lead Circle Facilitator for the Food and Nutrition Supports Circle, one of the Collective's first three Topic Circles launching, alongside Immigrant Wellbeing and Healthcare Access.

What is a Circle?

Circles are spaces where partners with different strategies and expertise come together, including service providers, advocates, researchers, administrators, coalitions, and campaigns. In each Circle, members share their perspectives and information on a specific issue, identify barriers and opportunities, and pinpoint where partners can engage and act. Together, they build alignment and collaboration toward a defined outcome that advances the NC Public Benefits Collective's broader goals of increased access to public benefits, increased access to field information, more coordination and less duplication, decreased fragmentation, strong relationships and a shifted narrative around public benefits.

A Circle is not another committee to staff. It makes existing work more connected, more visible, and more powerful. Action happens outside the Circle. When a Circle identifies an action, partners carry it out through their own organizations, coalitions, and campaigns. They then bring findings and lessons back to the Circle.

Purpose

The NCPBC is seeking an individual or organization to serve as a Lead Facilitator for this Circle. The Lead is accountable to the Circle's own membership and is responsible for facilitating, coordinating, and stewarding the group's work as aligned with the goals of the Collective at-large.

Guiding Principles

The Facilitator grounds the Circle in the Collective's guiding principles, models them in how the Circle runs, and holds the Circle accountable to them.

- **Equity and Inclusion.** Expanding access for historically excluded communities.
- **Community Voice and Dignity.** Centering the lived experiences of benefit participants.
- **Collaboration Over Competition.** Promoting shared ownership and partnership for sustainable change.
- **Trust and Radical Transparency.** Ensuring openness and accountability across all relationships.
- **Continuous Learning and Improvement.** Operating with humility as we learn, adapt, and strengthen our processes together.
- **Systems Thinking.** Recognizing that public benefits are interconnected and require coordinated approaches.

Scope of Responsibilities

1. Model the Collective's guiding principles in all Circle activities, including its commitment to shared power and community-driven decision-making.
2. Create and maintain a landscape map of the Circle's issue area: the organizations and coalitions working on it across North Carolina, their key roles, and the meetings and spaces that already exist. Use the map to connect partners and amplify existing efforts rather than duplicate them, including checking whether an existing meeting space could evolve into the Circle.
3. Recruit and onboard new members, network to bring in new perspectives, and notice who and what is missing, with particular attention to representation from directly impacted communities.
4. Plan and facilitate Circle meetings at a rhythm (monthly, every other month, or quarterly) that fits the issue area and complements existing meeting spaces.
5. Make sure all voices are heard, with community members sharing authority rather than serving only as advisors. De-escalate conflict and help members work across different theories of change.
6. Guide the Circle in writing its decision-making process when it forms and follow that process.

7. Work with members to develop a shared agenda, priorities, and strategies that reduce fragmentation and align efforts, centering the communities most affected by the issue area. Define key outcomes at the start of each year, track follow-through on actions partners take outside the Circle, and support the annual review of the Circle's progress and member participation.
8. Keep the membership list, meeting notes, decisions, and action items current in a shared space, and use the Circle's website landing page and listserv to share updates, research, messaging, events, and resources.
9. Attend monthly Circle Lead meetings and monthly Collaboration Committee meetings. Share regular updates with the Committee, the governing body of the Collective, and elevate the Circle's findings, priorities, and any emerging needs, opportunities, or barriers to the Committee, Collective convenings, and the full Collective. Each Circle holds one voting seat on the Committee, and a Circle Lead fills it consistently.
10. Partner with Care Share Health Alliance to seek continued funding for the Circle and to request technology, communication, and technical assistance support, including but not limited to translation and interpretation needs and supports. Lean on the Collaboration Committee and Community Engagement Leads for support and collaborate with the leads of other Circles.

Application Instructions

Below you'll find information about eligibility, preferred skills and experience, application questions, the projected timeline, terms of service, compensation, and support. After you review this information, if you decide to apply, please submit a single PDF that includes:

- Cover Page
- Individual and/or organizational contact information and overview
- Answers to the Application Questions
- Compensation information and proposed budget

Who may apply?

Individuals, consulting firms, nonprofit organizations, or fiscally sponsored groups based in or working extensively within North Carolina. Direct experience with, or demonstrated trust and relationships within, the population or issue area of this Circle is preferred.

Preferred Skills and Experience

- Equity-centered facilitation that draws in every voice
- Conflict de-escalation
- Skill in managing decision-making power and process
- Strong relationships, or the ability to build them, across service providers, advocates, researchers, administrators, coalitions, and communities
- Judgment about what information people need, and at what level, to move the work
- Commitment to the Collective's guiding principles and comfort holding a range of theories of change
- Familiarity with the Circle's issue area helps. Deep policy expertise is not required. The Collective can connect Facilitators with subject-matter support.

Application Questions

Applicants should respond to all **8 questions** below:

1. Tell us about your background and what draws you to this role. You might include your connection to the Circle's issue area, whether through lived experience, community work, or professional roles, and any experience you have bringing people together, facilitating groups, or building partnerships. Formal titles and credentials aren't required, all kinds of experience count.
2. What do you see as the primary public benefit access issue/concern or opportunities facing the Food and Nutrition Supports Circle?
3. Describe your (or your organization's) connection to, and standing with, the community most affected by this Circle's focus area. What relationships or trust have you already built?
4. How do you approach centering community voice and shared decision-making, especially when your own view may differ from the group's? Please provide a concrete example or scenario.
5. How will you ensure the Circle reflects and represents the people most impacted by barriers to Food and Nutrition (e.g. SNAP, WIC, School Meals, etc.) not just organizational partners?
6. What operational capacity do you have for scheduling, note-taking, and communicating with Circle members and the Collaboration Committee between meetings?

7. Please provide an example of a time you facilitated a conversation among people with different roles and viewpoints when you didn't have a stake in the outcome. This Circle will include people working at the micro level (direct services, individual and family) and the macro level (systems and policy). How have you helped groups working at different levels understand each other and find common ground?
8. Is there anything else about your approach, values, or capacity that you'd like the selection committee to know?

Application Timeline

- RFP Released: November 16
- Applications Due: December 7
- Interviews: December & January
- Selection Announced: January 2027
- Circle Launches: February & March 2027

Terms of service

Circle Leads will be reviewed on an annual basis through the Collaboration Committee's 360-review process. For leadership roles, three years gives the best arc. Rotating terms let leadership come from the broader membership over time and helps a Circle adjust its focus within the issue area, as needed.

Compensation

The NC Public Benefits Collective is a growing collaboration, and we are continuing to secure financial resources to support Circles and the overall Collective. Do you currently have capacity to facilitate this Circle from current funding investments, or would you need additional financial support? If you need additional financial supports, please provide a brief budget overview of your needs to fulfill this role. The NCPBC currently has up to $100,000 for one year to support the Food and Nutrition Supports Circle.

Support

Each Circle Lead receives:

- Staff support from Care Share Health Alliance (CSHA), where possible
- Facilitation training as needed
- Listserv support and a website landing page for the Circle
- Access to the Collective's public benefits information clearinghouse and calendar
- Help identifying additional financial support for the continuation of the Circle
- Additional supports as needed, when available

Closing

Please submit your completed application packet to benefitscollective@careshareheath.org by **December 7, 2026.** Questions about this RFP may be directed to the same contact.