In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)
   Our main service area is in Southern Chester County – please see the attached map. For clients who are closer to Kennett Square, we work closely with Kennett Area Community Services in case each organization can supply a piece of the service puzzle the client needs. We also see clients who are outside of this service map, especially from the area surrounding Cochranville.

2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?
   Southern Chester County residents seeking assistance from NSC are experiencing situations that impact their ability to pay for their most basic needs. These situations can include the loss of employment or underemployment, an unexpected health issue, a death in the family, grandparents who are raising grandchildren because their parents are unable to, individuals who are returning to the community after serving in the military, or individuals returning to the community who have been incarcerated. Mental health and/or substance abuse issues are often factors that contribute to an individual seeking assistance from our agency.

   The majority of individuals seeking assistance are low-income families with children. Ethnically, our clients are 50% Caucasian, 42% Hispanic and 8% African American and Other. Ninety-eight percent of households receiving food are at or below 150% of the poverty level – individual income is at or below $18,090 annually, or a 5-person household qualifies with an annual income of $43,170 or below. Families with children who seek assistance are especially vulnerable. In Chester County, the share of children living in poverty is 55% higher than it was in 2008, with more than 10,000 children now living in poverty & just under half of those living in deep poverty. Nearly 13% of children under the age of six live in poverty, and the poverty rate for all children is nearly 50% higher than that of older adults. In the Oxford area, 46.4% of the Oxford Area School District’s students qualify for the federal free/reduced lunch program.

   Because so many businesses are closed at the moment, many of our clients are not working. Prior to the crisis, a large majority of clients were working several part-time jobs, none of which provided benefits such as sick leave. We are already seeing an increase in need for emergency food, and after the first of next month we expect a great increase in numbers of people who will need rental or utility assistance.

   NSC is remaining open during this crisis, although we have adjusted our procedures to keep both staff members and clients safe. The health and safety of both our employees and our clients is of great concern to NSC. We are following the guidance of both the Center for Disease Control and the County of Chester and are taking proactive steps to implement additional health safety measures in our office to best prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses. Any staff member who is sick will be asked to stay home. We will not be utilizing volunteers at this time. We will be staggering staff hours at the center, so that there will be fewer staff in the building at any one time. We will continue to have Spanish-speaking staff present each day we are open. Our center will be open from Monday through Thursday each week and closed on Fridays.
While NSC will continue to provide the community with food, rental and utility assistance, for the time being we will be accepting clients by telephone appointment only and will not be allowing any clients inside the building for the next two weeks. That includes the clients who are seen by our partner organizations. We will reevaluate at the beginning of April.

Food pantry orders will be taken over the phone, and food items will be ready for clients to pick up on our front porch at a scheduled time. Staff will load a grocery cart and place it on the front porch as we see the client arriving. Applications for rental or utility assistance will be completed over the phone, and any signatures which might be needed for paperwork will either be put off for later or handled on a case by case basis. We have installed signage on both the front and back doors in English and Spanish giving people direction on how to contact us by phone.

3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?

While we are aware that the request limit for this emergency funding is $5,000, we are asking for that amount from two different categories: $5,000 in Front Line Grant Funding and $5,000 in Collateral Damage Funding, for a total of $10,000. This is less than 2% of our annual budget of $588,852. If awarded, we expect the funds to be expended within a month after the grants have been received.

Front Line Grant Funding Request: Oxford Area Neighborhood Services Center (NSC) is a community-based nonprofit that is seeing an increased demand for services due to COVID-19. We provide services to financially vulnerable people who work in industries without sick leave &/or health care; homeless people; and health-challenged vulnerable people. We provide these services through two main programs:

A. Community Food Cupboard: Neighborhood Services Center's Food Assistance Program provides individuals and families with the safety-net service to meet their most basic need of healthy food. Eligible families and individuals can receive nutritious food on a monthly basis from our Food Cupboard which is part of the Chester County Food Bank network. NSC utilizes funding through grants and donations to purchase additional food which helps us to provide a 7 to 10-day supply of food for each family that comes to the food cupboard. Families and individuals may also receive food from our Food Cupboard on a one-time emergency basis. NSC is relaxing the "one-time" basis for emergency food supplies during this health crisis.

To qualify for ongoing and emergency food assistance, the head of household self declares that the family meets income guidelines provided by the United States Department of Agriculture. Eligible households must be at or below 150 percent of the poverty level for their household size. For example, a 1-person household qualifies if their income is at or below $18,090 annually. A 5-person household qualifies with an annual income of $43,170 or below. If a family's income does not qualify them for assistance with government provided food, and they can prove a need, NSC will assist them with food donated from community sources. NSC works with the community to distribute donated food items including extra produce dropped off by local farmers during the growing season, turkey dinner baskets at Thanksgiving, and donated items collected by local businesses, schools, churches and other community organizations.

B. Basic Needs Assistance: This program addresses the basic needs of each client that walks into or calls the NSC office. A case manager screens the client and connects them with the appropriate agencies and resources needed to address the client's needs. If a qualified client needs assistance paying for their housing, utility or health needs, NSC will directly meet the client's need by providing monetary assistance paid to local vendors on behalf of the client. Target beneficiaries are income eligible individuals and families who live in our service area. Needs addressed include basic and emergency needs of fuel, shelter, prescriptions and healthcare co-pays, utility bills, transportation.

Collateral Damage Grant Request – NSC has had to cancel our annual dinner auction in mid-May, and we fully expect to have to cancel our annual golf outing at the end of May. These two events collectively net NSC around $50,000 each year. The organization will face extreme difficulty because of the lost revenue due to these cancellations, as well as other challenges. We are asking for $5,000 in funding to help to offset this challenge. NSC is on the front lines of helping people through this heath crisis. We will not be able to help anyone if we don't have the funding to remain open.
Please email grants@chesco Cf.org

☐ This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
☐ Service Area Map
☐ Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
☐ 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.
Grants will be processed a few times monthly.
We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chesco Cf.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.