

Announcement of Funding Availability
for the
Emergency Solutions Grant Program

State of West Virginia
Department of Commerce
Office of Economic Opportunity

PY 2014

Complete original application and 1 copy due by **Thursday,
May 22, 2014 at 5 p.m.**

To:

Julie Haden, OEO Homeless Program Administrator
700 Washington Street, 4th Floor, Charleston, WV 25301

Applications are to be unbound.

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Emergency Solutions Grant Announcement of Funding Availability

Overview

The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The State of West Virginia Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) is responsible for administering the state ESG allocation for West Virginia.

Awards will be given for a grant period ending June 30, 2015.

The total funding available under this application is anticipated to be \$1,382,448.00

Expectations

OEO *prefers* Sub-grantees to be a unit of local government with non-profit community partners. The unit of local government will act as the Sub-grantee and the non-profit community partners will be project sponsors.

The Sub-grantee is responsible for ensuring compliance by their project sponsors, reporting, submission of reimbursement requests, and will be the entity that is monitored for HUD required compliance.

OEO will be working closely with the four CoC's in the State to evaluate which programs effectively meet the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness within their CoC's. The Emergency Solutions Grants program is designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable citizens of the State and will be allocating resources to those providers with the best outcomes for those they serve.

CoC's are strongly urged to develop a program in which all interested and able community partners play a role in developing and carrying out the activities of the ESG program. HUD will be expecting each CoC to utilize a CoC-wide coordinated assessment system and OEO believes funding one initiative is the first step in this process. OEO will fund one collaborative initiative in the smaller CoCs (KVC, NPCOC, and HCWCOC). Because of the large geographical area covered by the Balance of State CoC there will be no cap on the number of funded applications in those areas.

The ESG program is a reimbursement program. It is OEO's expectation that subgrantees have the cash on hand to provide services before receiving reimbursement.

Match does not have to be made activity to activity but to the entire requested amount. There is a dollar to dollar match requirement for the ESG program.

OEO will review subgrantee and project sponsor performance at least annually. OEO reserves the right to de-obligate and reallocate funds throughout the grant term based on performance.

Subgrantee Eligibility

Eligible subgrantees must:

- Be units of local government or non-profits and must be current on 990 filings. Sub-grantees with outstanding audit finding, IRS findings or other federal or state non-compliance issues, are not eligible to apply.
- Be in compliance with ESG guidelines and applicable state and federal policies and procedures, including compliance with federal and state non-discrimination laws.
- Have established accounting practices including internal controls, fiscal accounting procedures and cost allocation plans, and be able to track agency and program expense by revenue source.
- Submit, as part of this application, the subgrantee's and project sponsors' Articles of Incorporation from the State of West Virginia Secretary of State's office and IRS 501c3 determination letter.
- Be able to demonstrate prior experience serving individuals and families at-risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness.
- Certify that they will fully utilize the Statewide Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) Network/Service Point operated by their respective CoC's HMIS Lead Agency. The Subgrantee assumes full responsibility for all reporting to OEO. The projects sponsors should work with their local CoC to coordinate HMIS access and technical assistance.
- Provide the Continuum of Care Section 3 Documentation.
- Be able to meet all program requirements set forth in the ESG regulations found here: http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HEARTH_ESGInterimRule&ConPlanConformingAmendments.pdf

Program Highlights

The ultimate goal of OEO's Emergency Solutions Grant program is that no one is homeless (living on the streets, in emergency shelter or in transitional housing) for more than 30 days. This in no way means that a program participant must exit shelter to unstable housing after 30 days in the shelter.

While transitional housing programs may allow for shelter stays up to 24 months, the 30 day stay remains the goal.

Emphasis should be placed on providing adequate assessment of program participant's housing barriers using the SPDAT array of assessment tools. Project sponsors should prioritize those with mid-acuity for ESG RRH and move those sheltered to permanent housing as soon as possible. The ESG program should connect program participants with other mainstream resources to make the most impact with the least amount of ESG funds used, increasing the number of people who can be served.

All program participants receiving prevention services must have household income at or below 30 percent area median income (AMI). The 2014 AMI's can be found here:

<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il14/index.html>

No program participant may receive more than 24 months of financial assistance in a three-year period. This includes a one-time payment for up to 6 months of arrears.

Program participants receiving Rapid ReHousing must be reevaluated at least once per year.

Program participants receiving Homelessness Prevention must be reevaluated at least once every three months.

Financial assistance includes rent and utility assistance in the cases where eligible program participants:

- Cannot make the required payments due to a sudden reduction in income;
- The assistance is necessary to avoid the eviction or termination of services;
- There is a reasonable prospect that the family will be able to resume payments within a reasonable period of time (though program applicants cannot be screened out of the program for zero income);
- The assistance will not supplant funding for pre-existing homelessness prevention activities from other sources.

Eligible homeless prevention support services activities or programs are designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness, including (but not limited to):

- Mediation programs for landlord-tenant disputes;
- Legal services programs for the representation of indigent tenants in eviction proceedings;
- Case management; and
- Staff and facility costs associated with providing homelessness prevention.

Program staff costs should be limited to thirty percent (30%) of the overall program budget requested.

The following costs are not allowable for ESG funding:

- Recruitment of staff
- Depreciation
- Costs associated with the organization rather than the specific program
- Any costs associated with advertisements, pamphlets, surveys, etc.
- Staff training, entertainment, conferences, or retreats
- Public relations
- Fundraising
- Sub-grantee or project sponsor bad debts and/or late fees
- Program participant mortgage and/or debt services

For more information on allowable costs please see the OEO website for – ESG Eligible Expense Guide.

Documentation of program participant’s homeless situation (as defined under the HEARTH Act in 24 CFR section 576.2) is an essential part of ESG program compliance. ESG project sponsors are required to utilize the homelessness or at-risk status verifications provided by OEO. These can be found on the OEO website in the ESG Resources Section.

Third party documentation is the preferred method and can be gathered at the time of referral, entry, intake, or orientation to the ESG program. All documentation must be retained in the program participant's file. A webinar addressing this specific requirement can be found here:

<http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewResource&ResourceID=4628>

All facilities and housing units where program participants move must meet basic habitability standards. Documentation of this must be included in all program participants' files.

FUNDING CATEGORIES

The following categories are available:

- Street Outreach;
- Emergency Shelter;
- Rapid ReHousing;
- Homeless Prevention;
- HMIS;
- Administrative costs.

TARGET POPULATIONS

Chronically Homeless (CH)
Disabled (D)
Domestic Violence (DV)
Dual Diagnosis (DD)
Elderly (E)
Families (F)
Persons with HIV/AIDS (HIV/AIDS)
Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI)
Single Adults (S)
Substance Users (SA)
Veterans (VA)
Youth (Y)

ESG Application Evaluation Criteria

All applications received by the deadline (**Thursday, May 22, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.**) that meet minimum threshold requirements will be reviewed and ranked by a proposal review panel.

Minimum threshold criteria:

- Completed application
- Eligible Sub-grantee
- Eligible activities
- Sub-grantee received on or before deadline

All applications meeting the minimum threshold requirements will be reviewed, scored, and ranked using a panel review process based on the following criteria:

- **Need (maximum 40 points)**
 - * Does the application fill what would otherwise be a gap in homeless services in the geographic services area and use a holistic approach?
 - * Does the application support local coordinated efforts and document:
 - Coordination with other providers
 - Community planning
 - * Does the application (proposed budget) demonstrate a need for the requested funding?
 - * Is there a demand for the program in the geographical area?
 - * How critical is the need?
 - * How credible is the evidence to support the local need?
 - * Does the application include any special features that would enhance the subgrantee's ability to meet the target population's needs?
- **Approach (maximum 30 points)**
 - * How experienced is the subgrantee in working with the target population?
 - * How well is the application coordinated with other activities and funding sources in the area?
 - * Does the proposed program appear to be based on proven methods and/or is the program able to demonstrate good outcomes?
 - * Do the program costs appear reasonable?
 - * Do the program outcomes and objectives appear reasonable?
 - * Does the proposal support Federal and State goals outlined in the federal ESG guidelines and the State of WV's Substantial amendment?
 - Individuals and families experiencing homelessness access permanent housing in a timely manner
 - Reduction in the length of shelter stay
 - Prevention of homelessness
- **Capacity (maximum 30 points)**

- * How experienced is the subgrantee with providing similar services and assistance?
- * Does there appear to be a plan for appropriate program oversight?
- * Does the subgrantee demonstrate effective grant management experience?
- * Does the subgrantee demonstrate adequate capacity for data collection and reporting?
- * How many, and what kind of findings, concerns, or other compliance issue has the agency had during the 2012-2013 program year?
- * To what degree does the program leverage other resources?

Successful applications must score a minimum of 60 points in order to be eligible to receive funding through this program. Funding offers will be issued based on scores until all funds are committed. OEO reserves the rights to make adjustments to ESG requested amounts.