



## **Fiscal Year 2012 Homeless Crisis Response Program Guidelines**

### **1. Overview**

The Homeless Crisis Response Program (HCRP) is designed to prevent individuals and families from entering homelessness and, where homelessness does occur, to provide for emergency shelter operations and to rapidly move persons from emergency shelter into permanent housing.

The Homeless Crisis Response Program is divided into two components: emergency shelter operations and shelter diversion activities. The emergency shelter operations and services component functions similarly to the Homeless Assistance Grant Program (HAGP) from past years while the shelter diversion and re-housing activities component includes activities similar to the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP). These programs have been redesigned to reflect changes in the federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program.

In response to HUD's increased emphasis on systems-level performance and coordinated intake processes through the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, the state has been organized into regions. Over time, these Homeless Planning Regions will allow for streamlined coordination and communication regarding Continuum of Care administrative tasks such as the annual Point in Time Count and Housing Inventory Chart processes, as well as functioning as service areas for the shelter diversion and re-housing component of funding from the Office of Community Development (OCD).

The grant period will be two years and will start on January 1, 2013 for emergency shelters and a mixture of one-year and two-year grants beginning January 1 2013 for regions.

Emergency shelters that received a two-year FY 2010 Homeless Program grant or a one-year FY 2011 Homeless Program grant are eligible to receive a renewal allocation based on their previous award amounts and capacity (households/beds/persons served). Award recipients that are significantly reducing shelter capacity, as part of a plan to transform the local homeless systems and facilitate a more long-term approach to ending homelessness, may receive less than the full amount of renewal funds for emergency shelter activities. Emergency shelters that are not eligible to receive a renewal allocation must apply on a competitive basis.

**Waiver Requests:** FY 2011 Homeless Program award recipients that received a two-year award are **not** eligible to apply for FY 2012 Homeless Program funds, unless a waiver is requested and approved. Those award recipients may request a waiver if the applicant: opened a new housing program or expanded an existing OCD-funded housing program after January 1, 2012 and/or the agency is planning to open a new housing program or expand an existing OCD-funded housing program prior to December 31, 2013. Those award recipients may also request a waiver based on other factors which place future operations in jeopardy.

**All waiver requests must be submitted in writing and received by OCD** (Michael Hiler, Deputy Chief, OCD, 77 South High Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215) on or before **August 3, 2012 by 5 p.m.** OCD will respond to waiver requests no later than **August 15, 2012.**

**ODOD is prohibited by state law from awarding more than 20 percent of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund allocation for Supportive Services** for all categories except Emergency Shelter which caps Essential Services at 30 percent. Consequently, Homeless Program applicants are strongly encouraged to keep requests for this activity to a minimum.

## 2. Maximum Award Amounts

Applicants may request Homeless Program funds for each eligible category for the two-year period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013. The maximum applicants can request per category is as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Maximum Award</u>	<u>Grant Period</u>
Emergency Shelter	\$350,000 per shelter*	Two Years

\* Youth Shelters may apply for a maximum of \$200,000 for a two-year grant period.

Funding requests must be cost effective and reasonable based on community need, historical level of funding from OCD, cost per household served, cost per outcome, etc. For projects currently funded by OCD, requests should be consistent with the current level of funding. Agencies requesting significantly more funds from OCD than they received in the past must demonstrate an increased need for Homeless Program funds based on factor such as program expansion, increased utilization of the program, etc. Applicants for programs that have not previously been funded by OCD should contact OCD for guidance in determining request amounts that take competitive factors into consideration. **Funding requests that are not cost effective and reasonable will not score as high during the review process.** OCD reserves the right to fund applicants for less than the requested amount.

## 3. Required Match

Applicants must provide at least \$1 in local public or private resources for every \$2 in Homeless Program funds for Emergency Shelter (except for Youth Shelters), a ratio of 1:2 other funds to Homeless Program funds. For Youth Shelters, there is no match requirement. Grants or loans from the Ohio Department of Development cannot be used as match. An applicant may use any of the following as match, provided the match is properly documented\*:

- Cash resources of the applicant organization;
- Cash in the form of a grant or donation from a third party, including private sector, nonprofit sector, and federal, state and local government sources;
- Rental income;
- In-kind contribution of a leasehold interest in property;
- Volunteer time, at a value of \$5.00 per hour for Emergency Shelter activities and \$10.00 per hour for all other activities. Volunteers providing professional services such as medical or legal services are valued at the reasonable and customary rate in the community. Staff support or supportive services provided on-site by other local nonprofit agencies may be valued at a cost verified in writing by the providing agency; and
- Contributed materials needed for the implementation of the program.

\*See Exhibits 10 and 11 for the type of supporting documentation needed to properly demonstrate match.

#### 4. **Threshold Requirements**

- Proposals for emergency shelter activity funds must be included in the Regional Homeless Service Coordination Plan to be considered for funding.
- Applicants must be participating in the appropriate Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and meet minimum data quality standards. If not a current OCD grantee, applicants must agree to participate if awarded funding.
- Proposals must include documentation verifying the commitment of sufficient matching funds to meet the match requirements.
- All programs must be targeted to individuals or families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness by federal definition. Shelter diversion and re-housing programs must be targeted at individuals and families below 30 percent of area median income.
- For Youth Shelters, the parent organization must be accredited by a recognized accreditation organization such as Council on Accreditation (COA), Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), or The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) or be licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to provide emergency shelter for youth.

Only complete applications, including all essential exhibits, will be reviewed.

#### 5. **Rating Criteria:** OCD will rate applications based on the following criteria:

1. **Proposal Content (25 points):** The proposal narrative must clearly identify the problem to be addressed, population group(s) to be served and the activities to be undertaken, described in detail. Applicants must include an outline of intended goals and outcomes, including the projected impact on local homeless needs. If the project is designed to serve targeted subpopulations, applicants should address how the needs of other populations are being met within the community.
2. **Outcomes (30 points):** Based on data entered into HMIS, applicants must demonstrate acceptable performance in the following indicators:
  - Reduction in average length of stay
  - Reduction in first-time homelessness
  - Reduction in recidivism
  - Self-sufficiency standards
    - Increased or maintained employment upon exit – or -
    - Increased or maintained income upon exit

For new applicants applying competitively, determinations in this category will be based on the extent to which the program design is clearly defined, built on evidence-based practice and likely to achieve stated outcomes.
3. **Collaboration (10 points):** Applicants should demonstrate strategic partnerships that would strengthen the success of the program model. Examples of partnerships could include referring agencies, supportive service providers, local government offices or mainstream service providers. Applications including letters of support from these partners will rate higher than those only providing narratives.

4. Targeting and Need (10 points): For all programs, applicants must demonstrate the method used for determining current demand for services in their community.
  - Emergency shelter operations and services applicants must describe their plan for diverting individuals and families from shelter stays where possible and appropriate.
  - Shelter diversion and re-housing applicants must describe their targeting method for determining which families and individuals are most appropriately served with this program, including self-sufficiency criteria to determine which families and individuals are likely to experience homelessness, but for intervention.
5. Capacity (10 points): Projects will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates the organization's ability to implement proposed activities. Items taken into consideration include the organization's history and descriptions of key staff involved in the project.
6. HMIS Data Quality (10 points): All applicants are required to meet minimum HMIS data quality standards to be considered for funding. To earn points in this criterion, applicants data quality must exceed minimum standards according to a point scale detailed in the funding application.

## 6. Definitions

**Chronically Homeless Person** – This would entail either: (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more; OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. To be considered chronically homeless, a person must have been on the streets or in an emergency shelter (i.e., not in supportive housing) during those stays.

**Congregate Facility** – A facility used to provide emergency shelter in which residents share common living space.

**Continuum of Care** – A planning process that helps communities plan for and provide a full range of emergency shelter, supportive housing, permanent supportive housing and supportive service resources to address the various needs of homeless persons.

**Daytime Shelter** – A freestanding facility that provides daytime only services targeted to homeless persons. These services include, but are not limited to, meals, case management, permanent housing referrals, employment and educational counseling and facilities for bathing and health care. Emergency shelters providing overnight services are ineligible for this category.

**Disabling Condition** – A diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, HIV/AIDS, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of those conditions.

**Emergency Shelter** – Any facility with the primary purpose to provide temporary accommodations and essential services for homeless individuals and/or families in general, or for specific populations of the homeless, that meet the conditions and requirements of Ohio's Basic Standards for Emergency Shelters. Emergency shelters have a maximum length of stay of 90 days or less, with the expectation that households remain in shelter for the minimum time needed to obtain permanent housing. Increased emphasis will be placed on decreasing length of shelter stay with the goal of shelter stays of 30 days or less for all households. In addition, programs are expected to provide some level of essential services designed to move persons to appropriate permanent housing. **For the purposes of this program, shelters that restrict admission to victims of domestic violence are not eligible to apply for HCRP funds.**

**Entitlement Communities** – Those cities and counties that receive McKinney-Vento Emergency Shelter Program funds directly from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Entitlement areas in Ohio include: Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lakewood, Springfield, Toledo, Youngstown, as well as Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton and Montgomery counties.

**Essential Services (Emergency Shelter only)** – Services designed to successfully move persons from emergency shelter to permanent housing. These services include, but are not limited to, assessment, limited case management/coordination, goal setting, service referrals, budgeting, and permanent housing placement.

**General Administration (Emergency Shelter only)** – The costs to administer the Emergency Shelter portion of the HCRP grant only. Eligible costs include activities necessary to comply with the Homeless Program, such as audit costs, costs of preparing reports and other necessary forms. These expenses do not include the administrative costs to operate the agency/program. **General Administration request cannot exceed 5 percent of the total Emergency Shelter portion of the Homeless Program grant award.**

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** – A computerized database that allows organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness to collect client information electronically and easily produce required reports.

**Homeless Person** – To be classified as homeless, an individual must meet one of the following four requirements:

- People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided. The only significant change from existing practice is that people will be considered homeless if they are exiting an institution where they resided for up to 90 days (it was previously 30 days), and were in shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering that institution.
- People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled-up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing. HUD had previously allowed people who were being displaced within seven days to be considered homeless. The proposed regulation also describes specific documentation requirements for this category.
- Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state. This is a new category of homelessness, and it applies to families with children or unaccompanied youth who have not had a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 60 or more days, have had two or more moves in the last 60 days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed because of disability or multiple barriers to employment.
- People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. This category is similar to the current practice regarding people who are fleeing domestic violence.

**Key People** -- those staff persons who are primarily responsible for supervising, managing or delivering the provider agency's program(s) and reaching the proposed performance targets.

**Permanent Housing** – Safe, decent, sanitary housing that provides for long-term housing stability. The definition of permanent housing varies according to the needs of the program participant and program from which the participant is exiting (see definition for positive housing outcome).

**Positive Housing Outcome** – Includes all of the following:

- Rental house or apartment (not subsidized);
- Rental house or apartment (subsidized);
- Homeownership;
- Establishment of permanent housing with family or friends (according to case plan) for participants exiting emergency shelter or supportive housing programs;
- Step-up emergency shelters for persons leaving emergency shelters;
- Supportive housing for persons exiting emergency shelters according to case plan;
- Permanent supportive housing according to case plan;
- Inpatient alcohol/drug treatment facility according to case plan;
- Psychiatric hospital; and
- Other permanent housing.

**Positive Housing Outcome *does not* include:**

- Moving in with family or friends (not according to case plan);
- Any type of emergency shelter for persons leaving supportive housing or permanent supportive housing;
- Non step-up emergency shelter for persons leaving emergency shelter;
- Jail/prison;
- Places not meant for human habitation;
- Unknown; and
- Other

**Rental Assistance** – Rent payments to support the operation of supportive housing, and permanent supportive housing projects. **Households served under this activity must be homeless and at or below 35 percent of AMI at time of entry into the program.**

Note: New permanent supportive housing projects that started after January 1, 2006 and existing permanent supportive housing programs not funded by OCD that started prior to January 1, 2006 are not eligible to apply for rental assistance funds.

**Shelter Night** – A one-night stay by each person in residence at an emergency shelter. For instance, a family of three staying one night at an emergency shelter would equal three shelter nights. For agencies funded to provide day shelter services only, a shelter unit of service would equal a person receiving services at the day shelter during a single day.

**Shelter Operations** – Costs associated with the physical operation of an emergency shelter, including but not limited to costs of maintenance, rent, equipment, insurance food, furnishings and supplies.

**Youth Shelter** – Any facility with the primary purpose to provide temporary accommodations and essential services for homeless youth ages 10 through 17 that meet the requirements of Ohio's Basic Standards for Emergency Shelters. Youth shelters must be targeted to the following populations: youth who are homeless, runaways, pushed out of their homes, and/or who have no safe place to sleep; youth for whom emergency shelter is critical for family stabilization; and youth who are not in the custodial care of the child welfare, juvenile justice and/or other public agency. Youth shelters should have a maximum length of stay of 90 days and are expected to provide some level of essential services designed to move persons to appropriate permanent housing, including family reunification.

- Youth shelters must operate in accordance with Basic Center Program Performance Standards as described by the Federal Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA).
- The parent organization must be accredited by a recognized accreditation organization such as Council on Accreditation (COA), Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), or The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), or be licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to provide emergency shelter for youth.
- The program will not use Homeless Program funds for youth placed in the shelter by court order, or placed in the shelter by other public agency who have custody of the youth or who otherwise are mandated to assume financial responsibility for the placement of the youth.
- The program may provide emergency shelter care through various means, including but not limited to congregate shelters or host homes as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families.
- Congregate shelters serving unaccompanied youth must show evidence of round the clock awake supervision to ensure the safety and protection of the youth.
- Programs must show a working relationship with their school system and must show evidence of their familiarity with the McKinney Vento Act in relation to those actions relating to education for homeless youth.

## **7. Atypical Program Designs**

OCD, in consultation with the Supportive Housing Advisory Committee, has established the three categories that comprise the Homeless Program. While this application describes the requirements for each category, OCD recognizes that a particular program design may not fit the guidelines perfectly. Programs with atypical designs are eligible for funding under the Homeless Program provided that the program serves eligible clients and is consistent with the overall intent of the Homeless Program. Agencies planning to apply for such programs should contact the OCD Supportive Housing Section staff for guidance. Applicants are responsible for demonstrating to OCD why their particular project should be eligible under the Homeless Assistance Grant Program.