**City of Cleveland- Request for Proposals**

**ESG and CDBG Homeless Services Program**

**About the Program:**

In partnership with the Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services, the City of Cleveland is coordinating homeless system investment decisions by issuing a Request for Proposals for City of Cleveland ESG and CDBG Homeless funds. The City and County seek to fund programmatic components of the Cleveland/ Cuyahoga County Continuum of Care (“CoC”). The system of care will promote streamlined access to crisis services and housing, uniform assessment of needs, prioritized access to housing and supportive services, and accelerated permanent housing outcomes for persons experiencing homelessness.

Eligible organizations must be in operation for at least two (2) years. The proposed activity must align with the goals of the [Cleveland/ Cuyahoga County Continuum of Care Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness](https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.gov/docs/default-source/homeless/homelessplan.pdf?sfvrsn=24ae3e90_3). Funded organizations must coordinate and integrate, to the maximum extent practicable, with other programs targeted to homeless people in the area covered by the Continuum of Care or area over which the services are coordinated to provide a strategic, community-wide system to prevent and end homelessness. Programs must comply with the Cleveland/ Cuyahoga Minimum Standards for CoC Programs.

**Eligible Projects:**

Grant funds can be used for any one or combination of the following Continuum of Care Program components:

* **Homelessness Prevention** to help those that are imminently homeless keep housing.
* **Street Outreach** to provide engagement and assessment services to persons experiencing unsheltered homeless (ie living outside) in unsheltered locations
* **Emergency Shelter** for persons experiencing homelessness and lacking the resources to identify safe, appropriate accommodation on their own
* **Rapid Re-Housing** rental subsidy, housing case management, and supportive services for qualifying households experiencing literal homelessness.

**Eligible Uses:**

Grant funds may be used for reasonable operating costs, including personnel, professional staff, and technical services. The provider must adhere to the Continuum of Care Standards, agree to fully participate in the Coordinated Intake and Assessment System, and enter data into HMIS.

**Grant term:**

Grants awarded through this application will cover up to twelve (12) months of service.

**Match Requirement:**

CDBG Homeless and ESG grant programs have different match requirements. ESG funded programs require a dollar-for-dollar match, which must be evidenced with each request for payment reimbursement. There is no match requirement for CDBG Homeless grants.

**Application:**

Grant funds can be used for any one or combination of the following Continuum of Care program components:

**Emergency Shelter:**
Selected applicants will operate facility-based, crisis housing services for persons experiencing homelessness and lacking the resources to identify safe, appropriate accommodation on their own. Emergency shelter services may target specific populations of persons experiencing homelessness who require specialized engagement and services focused on their unique needs. Shelter encompasses the following:

* Shelters that operate 24 hours a day, 365 days/ nights a year
* Daytime drop-in services
* Seasonal shelter
* Any combination of the above.

All shelters must operate a safe and secure shelter facility that meets State and local CoC shelter standards. The role of emergency shelters in the CoC homelessness system is to provide immediate safe shelter with few or no barriers to admission.

* Targeted to persons experiencing homelessness. Specialized emergency shelter programming and services may be directed to the following subpopulations:
	+ Single adult men;
	+ Single adult women;
	+ Single adults of any gender who are medically fragile and require recuperative care;
	+ Families (defined as one adult and at least one dependent child in the custody of the presenting adult);
	+ Persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, sex trafficking, or sexual coercion;
	+ Persons over the age of 65 who require specialized services for an aged population;
	+ Youth from the ages of 18 through 24;
* Supported by the availability of comprehensive services. The emergency shelter participant has access to services, including, but not limited to: crisis needs assessment, comprehensive housing needs assessment, linkage to available medical, mental health, substance use treatment, employment, and life skills counseling, housing search and location, and tenant advocacy. All services are voluntary;
* Managed through a working partnership that includes ongoing communication among CoC emergency shelter, supportive services, housing providers, and CoC administrators.

**Rapid Re-Housing:**

Selected applicants will provide housing case management and supportive services, comply with the Cuyahoga and City CoC standards for Rapid Re-Housing (“RRH”) and provide rental subsidy for up to twelve (12) months for persons experiencing literal homelessness. A RRH slot is defined as an affordable rental housing unit that is linked to a range of support services that enable tenants to increase income and achieve self-sufficiency. The goal of RRH is to help tenants transition to and ultimately maintain long-term housing stability and improve the quality of their lives. RRH units are:

* Targeted to households experiencing literal homelessness and who qualify for RRH using the CoC’s Coordinated Entry System;
* Affordable: Rents are subsidized and scaled so that the tenant pays no more than he/she can afford towards rent. In cases where the tenant has zero income, no tenant portion is paid. However, it is expected that the tenant will assume full rental payment at the completion of the RRH program;
* Lease-based: Tenancy is based on a legally enforceable lease or similar form of occupancy agreement. Assistance may be provided for up to 12 months. Leases do not include additional requirements for tenancy beyond the market standards (i.e., drug testing, unannounced access to unit, service participation curfews, unreasonable restrictions on visitors, and excessive inspections);
	+ Landlords who receive subsidy from Cuyahoga County HHS Levy, ESG entitlement, or CDBG entitlement funding must provide a copy of the lease and lease addendum in the language in which the lease was negotiated;
	+ In the case of eviction, owners must provide: (1) 30-day notice of termination of tenancy (except in limited cases, e.g., alleged criminal activity that threatens the safety of staff or other residents) and (2) Notice of Discussion about the termination;
* Supported by the availability of comprehensive services. The tenant has access to services, including but not limited to case management, medical, mental health, substance use treatment, employment, life skills counseling, eviction prevention programs, social and recreational events, and tenant advocacy. All services are voluntary. Neither a lease nor program participation may not be terminated solely because a tenant chooses not to participate in services;
* Managed through a working partnership that includes ongoing communication among service providers, property owners/managers, and subsidy program administrators.

RRH and housing stabilization services include a variety of activities that assist homeless persons in quickly obtaining permanent housing and achieving stability in that housing. Eligible costs include:

* Rental assistance: Rent and rental arrears
* Financial assistance: Rental application fees, security and utility deposits, utility payments, last month's rent, and moving costs;
* Services: Housing search and placement, housing stability case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, and credit repair.

**Homelessness Prevention:**
Prevention providers will serve people who are below 30% of area median income and who meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) definition of “Imminent Risk of Homelessness.” Activities must meet the Cuyahoga and City CoC Prevention Standards. Funds will be used to prevent an individual or family from becoming homeless and may also be used to help an individual or family regain stability in current housing or other permanent housing. Allowable activities include: Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services, Short-term Rental Assistance (0-3 Months), and Medium-Term Rental Assistance (4 - 12 months).

Prevention providers will assess persons at Coordinated Intake (“CI”) to determine whether literal homelessness can be prevented through case management that includes problem-solving, diversion, housing relocation, and stabilization services. Costs and activities are only eligible to the extent that the assistance is necessary to help the program participant regain stability in their current housing or move into other permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Prevention activities will be:

* Targeted to persons experiencing a housing crisis presenting at CI. Some individuals may be able to resolve their immediate crisis through the provision of diversion or problem-solving assistance administered by the CI operator. Other CI participants may require provision of emergency shelter in order to stabilize;
* Supported by the availability of comprehensive services through CI and the Prevention activity. The participant will have access to services, including, but not limited to: crisis needs assessment, comprehensive housing needs assessment, linkage to available medical, mental health, substance use treatment, employment, and life skills counseling, eviction prevention programs, and tenant advocacy. All services are voluntary;
* Managed through a working partnership that includes ongoing communication among CI, CoC emergency shelter, supportive services, housing providers, and CoC administrators.

Eligible costs include:

* Rental Assistance: rental assistance and rental arrears
* Financial assistance: rental application fees, security and utility deposits, utility payments, last month's rent, moving costs
* Services: housing search and placement, housing stability case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, credit repair

**Street Outreach:**

Selected applicants will provide engagement and assessment services to persons experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations. Street Outreach activities will follow CoC Standards for Street Outreach and will be:

* Targeted to persons experiencing homelessness and residing in places not intended for prolonged habitation (i.e., cars, tents, temporary structures on vacant land, abandoned buildings, etc.);
* Managed through a working partnership that includes ongoing communication among CI, CoC emergency shelter, supportive services, housing providers, and CoC administrators.