



Request for Proposal

Continuum of Care County Housing
Grant

2019

ISSUED BY

Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County

REPRESENTATIVE

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Introduction & Background

The Ithaca/Tompkins County Continuum of Care (CoC) has been provided \$50,000 from the county to expand our existing network of housing and services in Tompkins County for people who are experiencing homelessness. The CoC has prioritized this round of funding to support populations suffering from mental health and/or substance abuse disorders, improving the current rental housing stock, and supporting community outreach and engagement. If your organization would like to submit a request for all or a portion of the funds, please complete and submit the questionnaire and provide all supporting materials to the CoC Coordinator by **Monday, April 15, 2019 at 12pm**.



Project Priorities

1. Providing housing or support services to people with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders that bridges gaps in current housing or service needs.
Examples include:
 - a. Support services for independent living
 - i. Intensive case management with the purpose of ensuring renters are properly maintaining units, to avoid potential evictions
2. Improving current low-income housing stock
Examples include:
 - a. Grant program for minor repairs or cleaning for tenants
 - i. I.e bedbug or vermin removal
 - b. Grant program that would allow landlords to improve their units, as long as units remain affordable and third-party subsidies will be accepted
3. Community education and engagement

Examples include:

- c. Workshop series targeted to landlords on rental subsidy programs for low income renters
- d. rural community outreach

The Continuum of Care is open to innovative and outside-the-box project ideas, large or small. Contact the CoC Coordinator if you have any questions.



Guidelines & Requirements

The following submission guidelines & requirements apply to this Request for Proposal:

1. Any agency with prior experience or knowledge and expertise in one of the priority areas outlined above are welcome to submit proposals in response to this Request for Proposal.
2. The agency must operate within Tompkins County.
3. Accepted projects that intend to provide housing must participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and fill units using the Coordinated Assessment System (CAT).
4. Accepted projects that intend to provide direct services must participate in HMIS.
5. Accepted projects will be required to use at least 50% of their funding within the funding year.

6. Agencies that are awarded funding will be required to abide by local anti-discrimination and living wage laws.



Project Description

1. Please describe how you would utilize the funding for one of the three prioritized areas above. Include in your narrative:

- ❖ A description of the proposed project, including staffing
- ❖ How your project serves the priority populations found in the CoC Order of Priority and Vulnerability Index
- ❖ How your project supports a housing first, low barrier and/or harm reduction model
- ❖ How many clients your project plans on serving within the funding period
- ❖ The timeline for implementation of your project
- ❖ What impact your project will have on ending homelessness in Tompkins County

2. Please describe the capacity and resources your agency has to implement the project if you were to be awarded funding, including the ability to report on a regular basis.

3. Please discuss your organization's participation in the COC including how long you have been an active member, and your current participation level.

- ❖ Has your organization attended two or more CoC meetings in the last year?
- ❖ Does anyone in your organization serve on a subcommittee of the COC?

4. How do you plan to evaluate the project? What performance measures will be utilized?



Budget

- ❖ Please provide a proposed budget and budget narrative for this project. If this project requires new construction or rehab of an existing structure, please indicate if you have site control.
- ❖ If additional funding is necessary to complete the project, what are your plans to leverage additional funding, and what is the status of that funding?
- ❖ Please outline how you will sustain this project beyond the funding provided (if applicable)



Evaluation Factors

The CoC Ranking Committee will rate proposals based on the following factors:

1. Meets priority
2. Feasibility
3. Appropriateness
4. Impact
5. Leverage of other funds
6. CoC participation
7. Housing first/low barrier/harm reduction

All funding is contingent upon approval by the Tompkins County Legislature.



DEFINITIONS

HOUSING FIRST/ LOW BARRIER:

Ensures that potential program participants are not screened out based on the following items:

- ❖ Having little or no income
- ❖ Active history or current substance abuse
- ❖ Criminal records, with the exception for state-mandated restrictions
- ❖ History of domestic violence

Projects must ensure that participants are not terminated from the program for the following reasons:

- ❖ Failure to participate in supportive service plans
- ❖ Failure to make progress on service plans
- ❖ Loss of income or failure to improve income
- ❖ Being a victim of domestic violence

HARM REDUCTION

- ❖ Call for non-judgemental, non-coercive provisions of services and resources to people who use drugs and the communities in which they live in order to assist them in reducing attendant harm
- ❖ Ensures drug users and those with a history of drug use routinely have a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to serve them.
- ❖ Affirms people who use drugs as the primary agent in reducing the harms of their drug use, and seeks to empower users to share information and support each other in strategies which meet their actual conditions of use.
- ❖ Recognize that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination and other social inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm.
- ❖ Does not attempt to minimize or ignore the real and tragic harm and danger associated with licit and illicit drug use.

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Ensures that agencies and projects that receive funding through the CoC or are otherwise vested, are identifying, engaging and assessing clients uniformly. The Coordinated Assessment process prioritizes clients who are the most vulnerable for supportive, emergency or transitional housing for which they are eligible. Using a standard assessment tool, clients are assessed for vulnerability and risk factors, and are placed on a community-wide waitlist for housing based on their vulnerability score. Unless otherwise noted, accepted project applicants will be required to use the coordinated assessment system to house clients.

MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS

- ❖ Clean dwelling that is free of mold, mildew and garbage
- ❖ Extermination of vermin (e.g., roaches, bed bugs, and rodents), including in common areas
- ❖ Adequate hot, cold and potable drinking water
- ❖ Adequate heat in all living areas
- ❖ Doors with adequate working locks
- ❖ Functioning smoke detectors and CO detectors
- ❖ Exterior walls, doors and windows that are intact and reasonably insulated
- ❖ Exterior windows and doors that can be opened and closed
- ❖ Access to a clean and functioning refrigerator, stove and toilet; and
- ❖ For households with children aged 6 and under, no chipping or peeling paint in the unit or commons areas; and if there is any lead paint, full disclosure is necessary.



Order Of Priority And Service Needs/Vulnerabilities

First priority are those identified as Chronically Homeless and prioritized based on the following:

1. Chronically homeless individuals or families with the longest history of homelessness and with the most severe service needs/vulnerabilities*.
2. Chronically homeless individuals or families with the longest history of homelessness
3. Chronically homeless individuals or families with the most severe service needs
4. All other chronically homeless individuals or families with children

Second priority are those identified as Literally Homeless, or categorized as Homeless based on the criteria on pages 4-5 and are prioritized based on the following criteria:

1. Homeless individuals or families where a household member has a disability with the most severe service needs
2. Homeless individuals or families where a household member has a disability with a long period of continuous or episodic homelessness
3. Homeless individuals or families where a household member has a disability coming from places not meant for human habitation, safe havens or emergency shelter
4. Homeless individuals or families where a household member has a disability coming from transitional housing

SERVICE NEEDS/VULNERABILITIES

- ❖ Low or no income
- ❖ Veteran
- ❖ Current/past substance abuse
- ❖ Criminal record

- ❖ Victim of domestic violence
- ❖ LGBTQAI+ status
- ❖ Resistance to receiving services
- ❖ Significant health or behavioral health challenges or functional impairments which require a significant level of support in order to maintain permanent housing
- ❖ High utilization of crisis or emergency services, including emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities to meet basic needs
- ❖ Coming from the streets or other unsheltered situations, particularly youth and children
- ❖ Vulnerability to illness or death
- ❖ Vulnerability to victimization including physical assault, trafficking or sex work

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition, or an adult member of a homeless family (where the whole family will be designated as Chronically Homeless) who has a disabling condition, who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR has had at least four (4) occasions of homelessness in the past 3 years, where all combined occasions has to total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven. The term “homeless,” in this case, means a person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets), in an emergency homeless shelter, or in a Safe Haven as defined by HUD.

DISABLING CONDITION:

A disabling condition is defined as: (1) a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act; (2) a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration, substantially impedes an individual’s ability to live independently, and of such a nature that the disability could be improved by more suitable conditions; (3) a developmental disability as defined in Section 102 of the Developmental

Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act; (4) the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiological agent for acquired immune deficiency syndrome; or (5) a diagnosable substance abuse disorder. A disabling condition limits an individual's ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living.

HOMELESS:

The New Homeless Definition (effective 1/4/2012 under the HEARTH act) has four categories:

Category 1 –(Homeless) Literally Homeless: An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;

(i) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or

(ii) An individual who is exiting an institution (e.g., jail, hospital)

a. where he or she resided for 90 days or less **AND**

b. resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering the institution

Category 2 – (Homeless) Within 14 days of losing home: An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

(i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

(ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**

(iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

Category 3 – (Homeless) Youth/Children: Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

(iv) Meet the homeless definition under another federal statute; **AND**

(v) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance; **AND**

(vi) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the sixty day period immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance; **AND**

(vii) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, OR chronic physical health or mental health conditions, OR substance addiction, OR histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), OR the presence of a child or youth with a disability, OR two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment

Category 4 – (Homeless) Fleeing Domestic Violence: Any individual or family who:

- Is fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;

- Has no other residence; **AND**

- Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.



ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

The accepted agency will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment for any of the following: race, creed, color, ethnicity, military service, marital status, disability, sexual preference, perceived gender, national origin, or status as an ex-offender, and will take affirmative action to insure that they are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination. Such action shall be taken with reference, but not be limited, to: recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training or retraining, including apprenticeship and on-the-job training.



LIVABLE WAGE POLICY

By policy, Tompkins County must “consider the wage levels and benefits, particularly health care, provided by contractors when awarding bids or negotiating contracts, and to encourage the payment of livable wages whenever practical and reasonable.”

Paying the living wage rate to all employees directly involved in providing the contracted County service is not mandatory. However, the attainment of a broadly-applied living wage is a County goal and is therefore an important consideration applied by the County when reviewing contract proposals.

The Current Living Wage: The Living Wage in Tompkins County is computed by the Alternatives Federal Credit Union and is currently \$13.90 per hour if the employer contributes at least half the cost of an employee’s health insurance/benefit cost and \$15.11 per hour if the employer does not make such a contribution.

Requirement of All Contractors: As a part of its proposal or contract representations, a prospective service contractor must advise the County whether it will pay the AFCU livable wage rate to all Covered Employees directly involved in the provision of the contracted service, including employees of any subcontractor engaged to assist in providing the service.

Additionally, contractors are asked to estimate the number of employees who will be directly involved in the provision of the contracted service. If not all employees are going to be paid the Living Wage, contractors are asked to estimate how many full-time, and how many part-time, covered employees will NOT be paid the living wage.

Covered Employees include all full- and part-time employees, other than those Excluded Employees described below, who are directly involved in the provision of the contracted service, including employees of sub-contractors engaged to assist in providing the service.

Excluded Employees are:

- Employees under the age of 18
- Seasonal or temporary employees (90 days or less)
- Employees in a probationary status (90 days or less)
- Those employed in a sheltered or supported work environment
- Employees participating in a limited-duration (90 day) job training program
- Employees participating in an academic work-study or academic internship program
- Volunteers
- Employees participating in mandated welfare-to-work programs
- Employees paid pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement