

**City of Madison Community Development Division  
Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program  
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Date of Issuance: May 21, 2012  
Proposals Due: 4:00 p.m., June 18, 2012

**I. Background:**

The City of Madison recently received notice of an additional allocation of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for 2011. In addition, the 2012 ESG allocation was a greater amount than anticipated during the 2011-12 Summer Funding Process, leaving a balance of funds unencumbered. At the 4/5 meeting of the CDBG Committee, staff was directed to issue a request proposals for the programs that provide homeless prevention and rapid re-housing activities.

**II. Purpose:**

The purpose of this program is to affect a decrease in the number of homeless and at-risk households who need emergency shelter. The goals are to: 1) help households that are at-risk of homelessness remain in their housing while providing housing case management to increase the chance that they will remain stable; and 2) help households living in emergency shelter or in uninhabitable places to move into stable housing as quickly as possible while providing case management to increase the chance that they will remain stable.

The successful proposal will provide sufficient enough financial assistance per household to serve a range of homeless subpopulations including those who have no source of income.

**III. Funds Available:**

There is a total of \$121,645 available for this purpose. The proposed budget should include a request for both financial assistance and housing stabilization services. Housing stabilization costs shall be no more than 20% of the budget.

These funds are available on a one-time basis; agency(s) submitting proposals should not assume that this contract will be renewed. However, this activity is eligible for ESG funding that comes through the CD Division Summer Funding Process. The 2013-14 funding schedule includes: letter of intent to apply (for new agencies) due April 13<sup>th</sup>, applications available on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, and applications due on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Questions about the City's funding process should be directed to the CD Division.

**IV. Eligible Activities:**

Eligible activities include financial assistance and housing stabilization services.

Financial assistance is defined as:

- First month's rent,
- Security deposit,
- Rent in arrears, and
- Rent subsidies lasting up to 12 months.

Housing stabilization services are defined as:

- Case management to provide services related to meeting the housing needs of participants;
- Support services to help participants maintain stable housing including tenant counseling, budget counseling;
- Outreach to landlord/property owners; and
- Landlord/tenant mediation.

All proposals must be consistent with the written standards for the expenditure of ESG funding for Dane County. A copy of the written standards is attached.

**V. Eligible Participants:**

Eligible participants must meet HUD's definition of homeless and at-risk of homelessness.

Participants receiving homeless prevention activities must be:

- (1) An individual or family who:
  - i) Has an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the area, as determined by HUD;
  - ii) Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g. family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place described in paragraph (1) of the "homeless" definition of this section; and
  - iii) Meets one of the following conditions:
    - (A) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
    - (B) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
    - (C) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application or assistance;
    - (D) Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income government programs for low-income individuals;
    - (E) Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons reside per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau;
    - (F) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); or
    - (G) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the recipient's approved consolidated plan.
- (2) A child or youth who does not qualify as "homeless" under this section, but qualifies as "homeless" under section 387(3) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a(3)), section 637(11) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832(11)), section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2(6)) section 330(h)(5)(A) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)(5)(A)), section 3(m) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C.1786(b)(15)); or
- (3) A child or youth who does not qualify as "homeless" under this section, but qualifies as "homeless" under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)), and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child or youth if living with her or him.

Participants receiving rapid re-housing must be:

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
  - i) 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, camping ground;
  - ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (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

- (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
- (2) 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;
- (3) 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:
- (i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C.2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
  - (ii) 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;
  - (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
  - (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), 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;
- Or
- (4) Any individual or family who:
- (i) Is fleeing, or is 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 a 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;
  - (ii) Has no other residence; and
  - (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

## VI. Service Area:

The service area is defined as within the Madison City limits.

## VII. Proposal Submissions:

Proposal must serve a minimum of 38-42 households with City funds as part of this proposal.

- A. Proposals should address the following items: Please limit the narrative to no more than four (4) pages (excluding the flow chart and budget).
1. Describe the major components of your proposed project and the number of households to be served. Priority will be given to those proposals that indicate a comprehensive offering of services. Describe how the decisions will be made as to the amount of financial assistance and the duration of on-going rent subsidies. Describe how the decision will be made as to the frequency of housing stabilization services. Proposals are encouraged to include broad participation with other organizations serving the target population. Include how the program will comply with habitability standards (i.e. housing inspections for financial assistance provided to obtain housing) and HUD's rent reasonableness standards (i.e. Fair Market Rent). Include how the program will be marketed to eligible participants.
  2. Describe how the lead agency (if applicable) will coordinate with other participating agencies. If no lead agency, how will the participating agencies collaborate in providing services to eligible applicants. Include a flow chart that includes participating organizations/individuals and how they contribute to providing services and financial assistance. Include a timeline of program milestones: for example, signing of agreements with collaborating agencies, taking applications for services, estimated percent of funds spent at specific intervals.
  3. Describe briefly the past experience and current capacity of the lead agency and collaborating agencies in providing these services, familiarity and compliance with federal requirements, and using a client-based data collection system and analyzing data to assist in program evaluation.
  4. Program should involve mainstream agencies and programs for referral and longer term support. Indicate how participants will be screened to ensure that all mainstream resources are being captured.
  5. Indicate the procedure for assessing and determining eligibility for applicants receiving funds and how applicants will be prioritized. Describe current experience determining and documenting eligibility of households that are at risk of homelessness and homeless. Include a timeline, starting at the initial contact of the household through to decision making and follow-up housing stabilization services.
- B. Outcomes. Include proposed client outcomes. The successful applicant will be required to report on a monthly basis on quantifiable outcomes. At least two of the outcomes shall be related to the number of households that maintain stable housing at the six- month and twelve-month mark. It will be required that all client-data related to this program be entered into Wisconsin ServicePoint (WISP).
- C. Budget. Primary activities may include financial assistance to pay back rent, security deposits, on-going rent subsidies; landlord/tenant mediation; tenant education, and other supportive services to ensure that the household can maintain stable housing. The budget can be in any format, but must make distinctions between homeless prevention and rapid re-housing; and between financial assistance and housing stabilization services. See the following for an example.

	Homeless Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing	Total Budget
<b>Financial Assistance</b>			
Activity			
Activity			
Activity			
<b>Hsg Stabilization Services</b>			
Activity			
Activity			
Activity			
<b>Administration Lead Agencies Only</b>			
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$121,645</b>

### VIII. Review Process and Criteria for Selection:

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by City staff based upon the following criteria:

- Collaborative program design which includes comprehensive offering of services including financial assistance, support services and screening for mainstream resources that include broad participation of service providers. Program has method of complying with federal, state and local requirements such as property inspections to ensure habitability standards are met and rent reasonableness. – 50 points;
- Past experience of service providers and current capacity of lead agency (if applicable) and/or collaborating agencies to coordinate service delivery, collect and use client data, and knowledge and compliance with federal regulations. – 20 points;
- Ability to define clear and achievable outcomes for a reasonable number of participants. Goals include, at a minimum, the number of households that maintain stable housing at 6 and 12 months. - 15
- Clarity and reasonableness of budget for proposed program – 15 points.

Proposals may be reviewed and scored by City staff. Recommendations will be forwarded to the City of Madison CDBG Committee at its July 5, 2012 meeting. Organizations will be notified of a decision no later than end of the day on Friday, July 6, 2012.

### IX. Contract Negotiations:

The City of Madison reserves the right to negotiate the award and conditions of the proposal prior to entering into a written agreement. The beginning of the contract period will be on or near August 1, 2012 and will run through December 31, 2013.

### X. Contact Person:

Questions may be directed to Sue Wallinger, Grants Administrator at [swallinger@cityofmadison.com](mailto:swallinger@cityofmadison.com) or 261-9148.

# WRITTEN STANDARDS FOR PROVIDING EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG) FUNDED ASSISTANCE TO HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Madison, as the recipient of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds, is required to have written standards that apply to all housing and service providers and must consistently apply those standards for the benefit of all program participants. The local continuum of care is defined as Dane County. These standards do not replace policies and procedures created by homeless services providers, but rather provide an overall context for programs funded with ESG funding.

In keeping with the goals and objectives of the Dane County “Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness”, all activities provided through the agencies of the Homeless Services Consortium, whether or not they are funded with ESG-funds, should further the mission of preventing or ending homelessness for households in need.

In addition to the services provided by each ESG-funded provider, each program will play an active role in connecting participants to mainstream services - those services not specifically designated for homeless households. All Consortium agencies agree to coordinate their services with other providers for the benefit of their participants.

## **EMERGENCY SOLUTION GRANT ACTIVITIES**

### **Case Management Services**

Case management services may be provided as part of homeless prevention, outreach, moving homeless into housing (rapid re-housing services) and helping newly housed to retain housing. Case management may be provided as part of a shelter or housing program or as a stand-alone service. The frequency of services will vary based on need but initial contacts with the participant will likely be once a week with continuing contacts no less frequent than once per month. Case management services include, but are not limited to: counseling, education, referral and coordinating services, helping obtain federal, state and local benefits, monitoring participant progress, and developing with the participant an individualized housing/service plan.

A component of providing good case management is the creation with the program participant of an individualized service plan. The plan will incorporate the participants' expectations and choices and the short- and long-term goals to which the participant has agreed. Outcomes will be selected that will be used to evaluate whether objectives have been accomplished and goals have been attained. A schedule for reassessing and modifying the initial goals and plans will be part of the initial plan. The participant will sign the plan indicating they participated in the development of the plan as well as the expected actions and behaviors.

The case manager will periodically reassess the client's needs and progress in meeting the objectives to ensure the effective and timely provision of services. The timing of reassessments shall be prescribed by the program but will occur no less frequently than every three months.

### **Specialized Support Services**

Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are eligible for additional services offered through ESG-funded agencies. Examples include: tenant education workshops, job coaching, applying for SSI/SSDI. Each program accepts eligible participants usually referred by case managers on a first-come, first-serve basis. Each program determines the model for services including the information/curriculum, length and frequency of the services. All ESG-funded programs involve determining eligibility. An individualized plan is created to assist the participant in meeting the goal of housing stability – whether it is remaining housed or moving from shelter into housing.

### **Emergency Shelter**

The purpose of emergency shelter is to provide a short-term, safe, nighttime residence for homeless persons and help them find safe affordable housing outside the shelter. Short-term is generally defined as no longer than 90 days. The length of shelter days available may be contingent on participating in a program that is agreed to prior to the participant moving into shelter; the number of shelter days available to participants may also be affected by program funder(s). Shelter beds are allocated primarily on a first-come, first-serve basis to those households meeting HUD's homeless definition; the exceptions are victims of domestic abuse and households with infants which may receive priority placement.

All shelter programs are responsible for creating policies and procedures that provide a safe environment for shelter guests and staff; policies and procedures may vary depending on the shelter population served. These policies and procedures must be explained to applicants prior to moving into the shelter.

Supportive services are available to assist persons in obtaining housing either on-site or through a day-time resource center. All shelter residents are notified of the availability of support services and how to access the services. Shelter is available everyday of the year. In the instances where it is necessary to temporarily close a

shelter for rehabilitation or major maintenance work, as much notice as possible should be provided to guests and efforts should be made to find a short-term replacement facility.

All shelter guests will be treated by staff and volunteers with respect and dignity and will receive a welcoming, safe and non-intimidating environment. In return shelter guests will treat other guests, volunteers and staff with the same respect and dignity.

The age of a child under age 18 must not be used as a basis for denying any family's admission to an emergency shelter that uses ESG funding.

Each shelter will have a policy of respect for each individual's self-identified gender. Guests who request shelter services will be admitted to the shelter operated for the gender to which an individual identifies themselves. Transgender and transsexual guests will be offered the same services and resources as all other guests as long as resident safety can be maintained. While shelter staff will do their best to accommodate specific needs, it may not be possible to segregate the individual from the rest of the shelter population. Staff will not share or in any way advertize the fact that certain guests may have identified themselves as transgendered/transsexual.

There is no charge to a shelter guest for emergency shelter.

The amount of documentation required by the applicant as a condition of staying in emergency shelter shall be limited to what is needed to insure that all guests are assured of a safe environment. This applies to personal documentation related to specific household members.

Guests may be asked to leave or banned for a period of time in the event of serious infraction and only in the most severe cases such as for behavior that is deemed seriously threatening or harmful to other guests and staff. Banning a shelter guest is allowed only when all other options have been explored and a ban is necessary to protect the health and safety of staff and guests. All shelter guests will be notified of the agency's grievance policy. When it is not possible to serve a guest because of the guest's behavior, efforts will be made by shelter staff to assist the guest in finding alternatives.

### **Shelter for Families with Children**

The Salvation Army is the gatekeeper for shelter for homeless families. Shelter is provided on-site at The Salvation Army building on East Washington Avenue, at the YWCA on East Mifflin Street and at a local motel. If these options are full, homeless families will be offered a spot at the Emergency Shelter overflow program which is a night-time only shelter located at The Salvation Army shelter building as space allows. All families access the shelter system via phone to determine eligibility and availability. If a family is eligible, but there are no rooms available, the family may contact The Salvation Army between 11:00 am – 12:00 pm to access the Emergency Family Shelter (formerly known as the warming shelter) beginning at 5:00 pm for dinner.

Family Shelter is also provided through The Road Home Dane County which is not part of The Salvation Army gate-keeping function.

### **Shelter for Single Men**

Porchlight is the gatekeeper for nighttime shelter for homeless single men. The main facility of the Drop-In-Shelter (DIS) is located at Grace Church. Other downtown churches serve as a year-round overflow and a seasonal over-flow space. The Drop-In Shelter (DIS) can be accessed at the Grace

Church facility. Guests may line-up 15 minutes prior to the shelter opening which is at 5:00 p.m. in the winter and 7:30 p.m. in the summer.

### **Shelter for Single Women**

The Salvation Army is the gatekeeper for shelter for homeless single women. The Salvation Army operates a first come, first serve, nighttime-only shelter in the same building as the family shelter on East Washington Avenue. Women can access this shelter by coming to the shelter building at 5:00 pm.

### **Shelter for Unaccompanied Youth**

Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin – Briarpatch operates a phone-line to screen youth for eligibility for services. YSOSW is the access point for homeless youth. Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin recruits and trains volunteers who provide host homes for short-term stays.

### **Shelter for Persons with Immediate Safety Needs**

Individuals and families with children who have an immediate need for shelter to escape domestic violence are provided with housing and services through Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS). When shelter beds are not available, participants may be assisted through temporary placement in local motels or referred to other community resources. Eligible residents may be single men, single women or single adults with children who are experiencing intimate partner violence.

### **Medical Shelter Vouchers**

Individuals and families are eligible for emergency medical shelter if they are homeless and their present medical condition compromises their ability to safely reside in a traditional shelter setting. Participants must receive a referral by their healthcare provider. Placement in a local motel is subject to availability of funds and program eligibility including, but not limited to, fragility of condition. Medical shelter is intended for a short period of time and is not intended for people with chronic conditions.

### **Housing Mediation Services**

Housing Mediation services may be funded with ESG funds when the mediation is necessary to prevent the program participant from losing permanent housing in which they currently reside and would otherwise be homeless. Applicants must meet the definition of “at risk of homelessness”. The purpose of housing mediation is to provide guidance to tenants who have received written notice to vacate their unit to prevent homelessness. This may be accomplished through a negotiation that allows the tenant to enter into a payment plan for rent in arrears or a move- out- date that allows the tenant some time to make other housing arrangements.

### **Legal Services**

Legal services may be funded with ESG funds when the services are deemed necessary to resolve a legal problem that prohibits the program participant from obtaining permanent housing or will likely result in the program participant losing the permanent housing in which they currently reside. Applicants for services must meet the definition of homeless or at-risk-of-homelessness. Providers of legal services will help their clients take advantage of other continuum of care services so as to increase the chances that the participants will be successful in maintaining stable housing.

### **Outreach**

Outreach and engagement services may be funded with ESG funds to serve persons who are currently unsheltered (i.e. living in a place not suitable for human habitation). Eligible participants are single adults, unaccompanied youth and families with children. Agencies may further prioritize participants: for example, serving individuals with mental illness.

Activities include: engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health services, transportation and services for special populations such as homeless youth, victim services and services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Outreach activities will be targeted to the streets, local parks, campsites and other areas identified through referrals. The ability to successfully engage unsheltered homeless individuals will vary based on the agreement of the participant to accept assistance. When possible, the outreach worker will provide immediate information and referrals to homeless and mainstream services and shelter.

Outreach workers may provide case management for up to 6 months once an individual has moved to housing. Services will be provided to increase the chances that the individuals will successfully maintain stable housing. Efforts will be made by outreach workers to connect participants to on-going support services as deemed necessary.

### **Prevention of Homelessness – Financial Assistance and Housing Stabilization Services**

The primary agencies providing financial assistance to prevent homelessness are Community Action Coalition for South Central WI (CAC) and Porchlight. Households access their services through a general agency phone number or in-person at the office. Intake staff determines the nature of the problem(s), assists them in completing an intake form, and makes referrals or offers other suggestions of available services. Attention should be given to reviewing the households' eligibility for mainstream resources available for non-homeless households.

ESG-funded financial assistance is in the form of a grant and may include: a) rent in arrears, b) utility payments in arrears, and c) rent subsidies for up to 12 months to maintain housing. Decisions on the length, amount and frequency of the ESG-funded rent subsidy are determined by the City of Madison with input from the Rentable Consortium. The Rentable Consortium is made up of HSC agencies who participate with CAC in screening and referring program participants to the Rentable Program.

Other than ESG regulations, no subpopulation receives priority for financial assistance. All eligible households are assisted on a first-come, first-serve basis or chosen through a regularly scheduled drawing of all eligible applicants. Further targeting for homeless prevention funds will be based on data collected on homeless residents using emergency shelter.

To be eligible to receive financial assistance funded with ESG funds, households must:

- 1) Have an income below 30% of the area median income (if using state HPP funding, income limit is below 50% area median income); and
- 2) Not have sufficient resources or support networks to prevent them from becoming homeless; and
- 3) Meet at least one of the following conditions –
  - a) Has moved for economic reasons 2 or more times during 60 days preceding application;
  - b) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
  - c) Has been notified in writing that their housing will be terminated within 21 days after application;
  - d) Is self-paying in a motel;
  - e) Doubled up in an SRO or efficiency unit; or

- f) Exiting a publicly funded institution (health-care facility, mental health facility, foster care, correction program).

An individual or family's ability to sustain housing should not be a threshold requirement. Applicants with multiple obstacles to obtaining housing should be considered if otherwise eligible as there is no longer a requirement that the household experience a sudden and temporary loss of income which led to their non-payment of rent.

For eviction prevention financial assistance, agencies using ESG require that each household have a 5-day or 14-day eviction notice from the landlord. The landlord must agree to drop the current eviction if financial assistance is provided on behalf of the applicant. All payments are made directly to the landlord/property owner and not directly to the applicant.

Financial assistance through rent and utilities in arrears does not exceed the amount equal to one month's rent. In the event that ESG funds are not available to fully fund the rent or utilities in arrears, contributions from other charitable organizations may be used to equal the value of a month's rent. No applicant shall be referred to other HSC agencies to compile the amount. All rental units are inspected for habitability and rent reasonableness; the rent may not exceed HUD's fair market rent amount.

Housing stabilization services will be available to households receiving rent and utility payments in arrears and may include: landlord mediation, budget and credit counseling, referrals to mainstream resources. For households that received financial assistance a minimum of one case manager contact is required within 30 days of the financial assistance. The purpose of the contact is to provide assistance that increases the chances that housing stability will be achieved. For households receiving a rent subsidy, case management services must be provided no less frequently than every 30 days.

### **Rapid Re-housing Services - Financial Assistance and Housing Stabilization Services**

Two agencies that provide financial assistance to move households from homelessness to housing are Community Action Coalition for South Central WI (CAC) and Porchlight. Households access their services through a general agency phone number or in-person at the office. Intake staff will determine the nature of the problem(s), assist them in completing an intake form, and may make referrals or offer other suggestions of available services. Attention should be given to reviewing the households' eligibility for mainstream resources available for non-homeless households.

ESG-funded financial assistance is in the form of a grant and may include: a) security deposits and b) rent subsidies up to 12 months when moving from homelessness to housing. Decisions on the length and amount of rent subsidies in ESG-funded programs are determined by the City of Madison with input from the Rentable Consortium which is made up of HSC agencies who participate with CAC in referring program participants to the Rentable Program.

To be eligible to receive financial assistance funded with ESG funds, households must:

- 1) Reside on the street or in a place not meant for human habitation; or
- 2) Reside in an emergency shelter or transitional housing including a motel paid for by government or charitable organizations; or
- 3) Resided for 90 days or less in an institution and were homeless (uninhabitable place or emergency shelter) prior to entering the institution; or
- 4) Being evicted from their primary nighttime residence within 14 days and no other residence has been identified; or

5) Fleeing a domestic violence situation and lacks financial resources.

Financial assistance through security deposits may be equal to one month's rent. In the event that ESG funds are not available to fully fund the security deposit, contributions from other charitable organizations may be used to equal the value of a month's rent. No applicant shall be referred to other HSC agencies to compile the amount. All rental units are inspected for habitability and rent reasonableness; the rent may not exceed HUD's fair market rent amount.

## GENERAL STANDARDS

### Coordinated Intake and Assessment

All Homeless Services Consortium agencies that receive ESG funding must be participants in the coordinated intake and assessment system once this process has been developed. Until such time that the coordinated system is operational, an initial assessment will be completed for each individual and family who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness and seeking services. The purpose of the initial assessment will be to provide the most appropriate services to enable the household to be stably housed, whether those housing and services are available through the agency providing the initial assessment or through referral to another Homeless Services Consortium agency.

### Determining Eligibility – Defining “Homeless” and “At-Risk of Homelessness”

For each homeless individual or family who receives ESG assistance, the records must include the evidence relied upon to establish and verify that the individual is homeless. This includes documentation that the household:

1. Lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
  - a. Has a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for regular sleeping accommodations for human beings (i.e. care, park, abandoned building, bus station, camping ground); or
  - b. Is sleeping in a shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (i.e. congregate shelter, transitional housing, motels paid for by charitable organizations or government); or
  - c. Is exiting an institution where they have resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering the institution.
2. Will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
  - a. The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance; and
  - b. No subsequent resident has been identified; and
  - c. The individual or family lacks the resource of support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.
3. Is an 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:
  - a. Are defined as homeless under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Head Start Act, Violence Against Women Act, Public Health Services Act, Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, Child Nutrition Act of 1966, or McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; and

- b. Has not had a lease or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during 60 days immediately preceding the date of application; and
  - c. Has experience persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during 60 days preceding; and
  - d. Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period. (see Section 583.5 for full definition)
4. Is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that has either taken place within the primary nighttime residence or made the household afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; has no other residence; and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

For each individual or family who receives ESG homeless prevention assistance, the records must include the evidence relied upon to establish and verify that the household meets the definition of at-risk of homelessness. This includes documentation that the household:

1. Has an annual income of less than 30% of the area median income (see attached); and
2. Has insufficient financial resources and support networks available to attain housing stability; and
3. Meets at least one of the following conditions:
  - a. Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
  - b. Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
  - c. Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application or assistance;
  - d. Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income government programs for low-income individuals;
  - e. Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons reside per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau; or
  - f. Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution).

### **Documentation and Recordkeeping**

Acceptable evidence for documenting lacking fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence includes:

1. Written document from an outreach worker or shelter provider that the persons resided in an uninhabitable place or in shelter or transitional housing program.
2. Certification from the head of household seeking assistance (including a shelter sign-in sheet).
3. If discharged from an institution, discharge paperwork, a written or oral referral from case manager that includes the entry and exit dates.
4. To the extent that source documents are unobtainable, a written certification by the case manager that to the best of their knowledge the program participant meets the eligibility requirements and documents their due diligence in attempting to obtain third party documentation.

Acceptable evidence for documenting losing primary nighttime residence includes:

1. Court order resulting from an eviction notice or equivalent notice.
2. Evidence that the household lacks necessary financial resource to stay in a motel for more than 14 days.
3. Oral statement by head of household stating that the owner or renter of the residence will not allow them to stay for more than 14 days with verification by intake worker either through contact with the owner or renter or documentation of due diligence in attempting to obtain such a statement.

Acceptable evidence for documenting fleeing domestic violence includes:

1. Oral statement by the head of household seeking assistance and certified by the intake worker.

Acceptable evidence for documenting annual income includes:

1. Source documents for the income received over the most recent period (e.g. wage statement, unemployment compensation statement, public benefits statement, bank statement).
2. To the extent that source documents are unobtainable, a written statement by the relevant third party (e.g. employer, government benefits administrator) or the written certification by the case manager or the oral verification by the relevant third party of the income received.
3. To the extent that source documents and third party verification are unobtainable, the written certification by the program participant of the amount of income the program participant received for the most recent period representative of the income that the program participant is reasonably expected to receive over the 3-month period following the evaluation.

Acceptable evidence for documenting insufficient resources and support networks includes:

1. Source documents (e.g. notice of termination from employment, unemployment compensation statement, bank statement, health-care bill showing arrears, utility bill showing arrears).
2. To the extent that source documents are unobtainable, a written statement by the relevant third party (e.g. former employer, public administrator, relative) or the written certification by the case manager or the oral verification by the third party.
3. To the extent that documents and third-party verification are unobtainable, a written statement by the intake staff describing the efforts taken to obtain the required evidence and a written statement by the case manager that to the best of their knowledge the program participant meets the eligibility requirements.

## **Domestic Violence - Addressing Needs of Individuals and Families who are Fleeing Domestic Violence**

Persons who have been victims of domestic violence may be served in all housing and services agencies serving homeless at those at-risk of homelessness. For those persons who have an immediate safety risk as a result of domestic violence, Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS) provides emergency shelter. In addition to emergency shelter, DAIS offers services to a broader population of domestic abuse victims, both in

other HSC shelters and the general public. Services include crisis response, legal advocacy, children's programs, community support programs and emergency foster care for pets.

### **Security and Confidentiality Procedures for Program Participants**

All program participants are required to fill out and sign a Release of Information for Wisconsin ServicePoint (WISP) entry if receiving housing and/or services funded with ESG funds. Participants should be given options on information sharing preferences. All data entered into WISP is done in a timely way in order to comply with contractual obligations, but no less frequently than by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following service.

### **Termination and Grievance Procedures**

All agencies providing services with ESG funds shall be required to have a termination and grievance policy. Policies must allow an applicant to formally dispute an agency decision on *eligibility to receive assistance*. The policy must include the method that an application would be made aware of the agency's grievance procedure and the formal process for review and resolution of the grievance.

All agencies must have policies that allow a program participant to formally dispute an agency decision to *terminate assistance*. The policy must include the method that a written notice would be provided containing clear statement of reason(s) for termination; a review of the decision in which the program participants is given the opportunity to present information before a person other than the person who made the termination decision; and a prompt written notice of the final decision to the program participant.

**2012 Income Limit Guidelines**

	Household Size							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30% AMI Area Median Income	\$17,400	\$19,900	\$22,400	\$24,850	\$26,850	\$28,850	\$30,580	\$32,850

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