



## Program Year 2016 Homeless Crisis Response Program Guidelines

### 1. Overview

The Homeless Crisis Response Program (HCRP) is designed to prevent individuals and families from entering homelessness, provide for emergency shelter operations and rapidly move persons from homelessness to permanent housing. HCRP consists of two components: 1) emergency shelter operations; and 2) housing stability which includes homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities.

The grant period will be two years and will start on January 1, 2017. The Office of Community Development (OCD) reserves the right to award one year grants.

Emergency shelters that received a two-year PY 2014 HCRP award or a one-year PY 2015 HCRP award are eligible to receive a renewal allocation based on their previous award amount. Those programs are eligible for renewal of 85 percent of their previous grant amount, with the remaining 15 percent of the previous grant amount available through a competitive evaluation. Current grantees are encouraged to request no more than their existing award, unless the agency has expanded or increased the capacity of its funded program.

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 not currently funded by OCD may apply competitively through the 2016 Homeless Crisis Response Program application process. However, because of the availability of homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing funds through this program, OCD does not anticipate funding many, if any, new emergency shelters or shelter expansions.

Housing Stability awards will be granted on an allocation basis to Ohio Balance of State Homeless Regions and entitlement communities that received a two-year PY 2014 HCRP award or a one-year PY 2015 HCRP award.

Housing Stability grantees may coordinate with other “partner” organizations within the Homeless Planning Region in the provision of homelessness prevention and/or rapid re-housing assistance. However, the grantee cannot enter into a sub-recipient agreement with partner agencies and the grantee will remain responsible for the administration of the grant. Grantees will be responsible for verifying client eligibility and determining the eligibility of expenses prior to the payment of HCRP funds. Therefore grantees cannot advance funds to partner agencies for the future payment of HCRP expenses.

However, grantees can reimburse partner agencies for payments made by the partner agency once the grantee verifies that those expenses are eligible. Alternatively, prior to any payments being made on behalf of clients, partner agencies can forward eligibility documentation and expense requests to the grantee for review and payment.

Housing Stability applicants are reminded that the HCRP prioritizes the provision of rapid re-housing to move persons from homelessness to permanent housing, over the provision of homelessness prevention to persons that are already housed. Applicants must maximize the amount of funds targeted to rapid re-housing with the expectation that funding targeted towards this activity be increased over the previous grant award or at least maintained at its current level.

In entitlement communities, OCD expects projects to focus solely on rapid re-housing and not provide homelessness prevention with HCRP funds. Accordingly, entitlement applicants considering applying for HCRP homelessness prevention funds should contact OCD.

OCD understands that certain Ohio Balance of State Homeless Regions may allocate a large percentage of its funds towards homelessness prevention, since they do not have many emergency shelters to provide rapid re-housing referrals. However, those regions need to ensure that funds are targeted to those most likely to become homeless such as doubled up families.

Housing Stability applicants requesting more than 30 percent of their rapid re-housing and/or homelessness prevention funds for supportive services must demonstrate that they are serving high need populations and that those services are essential for the success of the program.

**Waiver Requests:** FY 2015 Homeless Crisis Response Program award recipients that received a two-year award for emergency shelter activities are **not** eligible to apply for PY 2016 Homeless Crisis Response Program funds for emergency shelter, unless a waiver is requested and approved by the Office of Community Development. Those award recipients may request a waiver if the applicant: opened a new emergency shelter or expanded an existing the Office of Community Development-funded emergency shelter after January 1, 2016 and/or the agency is planning to open a new emergency shelter or expand an existing the Office of Community Development-funded emergency shelter prior to December 31, 2017. 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 the Office of Community Development** to the attention of Patrick Hart, Supportive Housing Specialist, at Patrick.Hart@development.ohio.gov on or before **June 3, 2016 by 5 p.m.**

**The Ohio Development Services Agency is prohibited by state law from awarding more than 20 percent of the Ohio Housing Trust Fund allocation for Supportive Services.** Consequently, Homeless Crisis Response Program applicants are strongly encouraged to keep requests for this activity to a minimum.

**The PY 2016 Homeless Crisis Response Program application submission deadline is July 1, 2016.**

## 2. Maximum Award Amounts

Funding requests must be cost effective and reasonable based on community need, historical level of funding from the Office of Community Development, cost per household served, cost per outcome, etc. For projects currently funded by the Office of Community Development, requests should be consistent with the current level of funding. Agencies requesting significantly more funds from the Office of Community Development than they received in the past must demonstrate an increased need for Homeless Crisis Response Program funds based on factors such as program expansion, increased utilization of the program, etc. Applicants for programs that have not previously been funded by the Office of Community Development should contact the Office of Community Development for guidance in determining request amounts that take competitive factors into consideration. Due to the limited amount of funding available, it is unlikely that the Office of Community Development will be able to fund any new shelters or provide any significant increases for existing shelters. **Funding requests that are not cost effective and reasonable will not score as high during the review process.** The Office of Community Development reserves the right to fund applicants for less than the requested amount.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Maximum Award</u>	<u>Grant Period</u>
Emergency Shelter:	\$350,000 per shelter	Two Years
Emergency Shelter (Youth Shelter):	\$200,000 per shelter	Two Years
Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-housing:	By formula allocation	One or Two Years

## 3. Required Match

Emergency shelter applicants must provide at least \$1 in local public or private resources for every two dollars in Homeless Crisis Response Program funds (a ratio of 1:2 other funds to Homeless Program funds). Grants or loans from the Ohio Development Services Agency cannot be used as match. No match is required for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities.

Applicants must provide at least one dollar in local public or private resources for every two dollars in Homeless Crisis Response Program funds for Emergency Shelter (except for Youth Shelters), a ratio of 1:2 other funds to Homeless Crisis Response Program funds. Please note that there is no match requirement for Youth Shelters and homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities. Grants or loans from the Ohio Development Services Agency 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.

#### **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.
- Emergency shelter and rapid re-housing activities must be targeted to households who are literally homeless and homelessness prevention activities must be targeted to households at risk of homelessness with the priority being persons who are in a doubled-up situation. Homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing programs must be targeted to households below 30 percent of area median income. Income verification and documentation is required at intake; however, income is not an eligibility factor for rapid re-housing assistance until 90 days after initial intake unless the region has a waiver from OCD in which case it is one year.
- 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:**

Proposal Design (20 points): The proposal narrative must clearly identify the problem to be addressed, population group(s) to be served and the activities to be undertaken. The proposal should demonstrate involvement in coordinated entry, effective diversion and the utilization of rapid re-housing funds. The proposal should also demonstrate consistency with program requirements and best practices.

Outcomes (35 points): Based on data entered into HMIS, applicants must demonstrate acceptable performance. Specific performance measures for emergency shelters include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Occupancy rates
- Average length of stay
- Percentage of persons exiting to a permanent destination or transitional housing
- Percentage of persons exiting with non-cash assistance

In addition, OCD will evaluate the HMIS data quality including, but not limited to null and missing values.

Collaboration (5 points): Applicants must demonstrate appropriate involvement in the planning work of their local Homeless Planning Region. OCD will review the extent to which the agency's data is included in the Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse.

Need (10 points): Extent to which the proposal demonstrates a demand for the services provided by the program based on needs surveys, point in time counts, waiting lists, program utilization and other data. For all programs, applicants must demonstrate the methods used to determine current demand for services in their community.

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.

Effectiveness (10 points): Applicants should demonstrate how the program is cost effective based on request amount and cost per service provided. Emergency shelter applicants requesting more than 105% of their previous award must base their increased request on program expansion or other significant factors.

Budget Reasonableness/Application Completeness (10 points): Extent to which the application meets all program thresholds and contains all required exhibits and budget figures are accurate, consistent and reasonable.

## 6. Definitions

**Chronically Homeless Person** Individual that is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and has been homeless and living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or a shelter continuously for at least one year OR on at least four separate occasions in the last three years, where the cumulative total of those occasions is at least one year.

**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.

**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.

**Diversion** – When intervention occurs with clients seeking shelter and alternative housing options are found so that they do not enter homelessness.

**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 (<http://www.cohio.org/pdf/OHbasicstandardsforshelters.pdf>). 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 Homeless Crisis Response Program 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: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Mahoning Montgomery, Stark and Summit counties.

**General Administration (Emergency Shelter only)** – The costs to administer the Emergency Shelter portion of the Homeless Crisis Response Program grant only. Eligible costs include activities necessary to comply with the Homeless Crisis Response 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 Crisis Response 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 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.
- 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.

**Housing First** -- a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible without preconditions and barriers to entry – and then providing voluntary supportive services as needed.

**Rental Assistance Agreement** – An agreement between the landlord and the agency where the landlord must let the agency know a client is getting kicked out of housing before doing so. This is different than lease and is only valid while assistance is given to the client. It is a protective measure for the client.

**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. **Due to the recent change in activities, Shelter Operations also includes the following: 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.**

**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 Crisis Response 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.

## **8. Submission Instructions**

Interested eligible applicants should fully and concisely complete the HCRP application through the OCEAN System and upload the required attachments. The HCRP application and instructions are available online at [ocean.ohio.gov](http://ocean.ohio.gov). The application is designed so that applicants complete most narrative portions of the application using Microsoft Word and upload them as attachments in OCEAN. Applicants must use a 10-point or larger font size to complete the application attachments. The OCEAN portion of the application includes formulas that automatically calculate and fill in budget totals and totals for program specific charts and tables. Applicants will be responsible for printing out the OCEAN application and attachments for their own records, if they so desire.

**The application must be submitted through OCEAN by the submission deadline of July 1, 2016.**