

SFY25 Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)

Overview of Funding Announcement & Application



DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Agency of Human Services

Amount & Source of Funds

- Emergency Solutions Grant (HUD): **\$645,454**
- General State Fund appropriation: **\$25,747,402**
- Global Commitment: **\$202,488**
- CoC Supportive Services (HUD): **\$785,306**
- Total: **\$27,380,650**

The availability of funds in SFY 2025 is contingent on final award notification from HUD and final appropriation by the State legislature.

Timeline

- **Simplified Renewal Applications due:** 4:00 PM, Monday May 13, 2024
 - Existing Grantees only
- **Full Applications due:** 4:00 PM, Monday, May 20, 2024
 - New Applicants & Existing Grantees
- Award Notifications as close to June 1 as possible
- Program Start Date: July 1, 2024
 - Start Date for New Applicants may be later than July 1
- Program Period: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
 - Program Period for New Applicants may begin after July 1

Simplified Renewal Option

Eligibility for Simplified Renewal:

- Current recipient of Housing Opportunity Grant Program funds
- No outstanding issues from programmatic, habitability, or financial monitoring, or have actions in progress according to a plan approved by OEO
- Proposing no significant programmatic or financial changes
 - Note: COLAs and inflationary increases are not considered significant financial changes

Applicants intending to submit a simplified renewal application are encouraged to confirm their eligibility with the Office of Economic Opportunity prior to submission.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Emergency Shelter

- **Operations** of an emergency shelter project
- **Essential Services** for homeless individuals and families in emergency shelter or publicly funded motels
- **Diversion & Rapid Exit Financial Assistance** to divert a household from an immediate shelter need or support their rapid exit from shelter to permanent housing.

Emergency Shelter means any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness in general or for a specific population of people experiencing homelessness, **AND** which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

This includes temporary seasonal/warming shelters, motel stays, day shelters and apartments owned or leased by the grantee and intended for short-term stay only.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Transitional Housing

- **Operations** of a transitional housing project
- **Essential Services** for homeless individuals and families in transitional housing

Transitional Housing refers to time-limited housing leased or owned by the grantee, where participants are not tenants but instead are enrolled in a project designated for serving the homeless in general or for a specific population of people experiencing homelessness.

Only renewal projects for Transitional Housing will be accepted. Renewal projects are not required to be Simplified Renewals.

Note: Short-term “transitional” housing whose primary function is crisis housing through the use of scattered-site housing, is considered an emergency shelter project.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Rapid Re-Housing

- **Housing Navigation** to help people receiving rental assistance to find and secure housing
- **Housing Retention** to help people keep housing
- **Medium-term Rental Assistance** which is tenant-based and available for 4- 24 months

Rapid Re-Housing is used to help individuals or families living in shelters, publicly-funded motels, or places not meant for human habitation, to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

Rapid Re-housing projects will only be funded when rental assistance is provided to participants, either through the Housing Opportunity Grant Program or another clearly identified source.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Homelessness Prevention

- **Housing Navigation** to help people find and regain security in housing
- **Housing Retention** to help people keep housing

Homelessness Prevention may be used to prevent an individual or family that is experiencing a housing crisis from becoming homeless (including avoiding moving into emergency shelter, the streets, a publicly funded motel, or a place not meant for human habitation) or to help an individual or family regain stability in current housing or other permanent housing.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Coordinated Entry

- **Assessment** to help people access the Coordinated Entry system
- **Housing Navigation** to help people find and secure housing while in the Coordinated Entry system

Coordinated Entry streamlines access to homeless assistance services and programs by conducting initial eligibility screening of applicants for these and other programs using a consistent and well-coordinated approach, assessing their needs to determine which interventions are the best fit, and prioritizing applicants for services.

Coordinated Entry is implemented by the whole continuum (not just at a program or organization level) and is based on the policies and processes adopted by either the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance or the Balance of State CoC.

Funding for Coordinated Entry Assessment Services will be prioritized for organizations identified as Lead Agencies.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Financial Assistance

- **Flexible Client-Based Financial Assistance** to help individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- **Fund Administration** for project administration costs

Short-term or one-time financial help designed to be flexible in order to allow for client-centered problem solving to aid quick, safe diversion or exit from homelessness. All financial assistance must be tied to a housing stability plan.

Financial Assistance will be limited to one project within each local Continuum of Care/Housing Coalition. The Local Fund Administrator will ensure access to funding for all eligible participants served throughout the community.

Up to 5% of the total financial assistance budget can be used for fund administration.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Innovation

Grantees may apply for funds to support activities that clearly work to meet the Housing Opportunity Grant Program goals and serve individuals and/or families that meet the definitions of at risk of homelessness or homeless but are not otherwise an allowable activity as outlined in this section or the chart below.

To be considered for innovation funds, projects must be based on a documented community need, strong theory of change, and promising or evidence-informed practices. Examples include but are not limited to: tenant rights and responsibilities education, money management/credit repair services, and Landlord Liaison work.

LANDLORD LIAISON –Core components of a Landlord Liaison project include outreach, recruitment, informal mediation of conflicts, incentives for landlords such as risk pools, and support to ensure strong relationships. Grantees awarded funds for a Landlord Liaison Project will be required to follow the Practice Framework in APPENDIX H.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

HMIS

With few exceptions, funding for HMIS will be **limited to the Administrators** of the HMIS and Comparable Database for Victim Service Providers. Eligible costs include: software licenses or HMIS participation fees; technical support or training; salaries for administering HMIS.

Eligible Project Types & Activities

Administration

Grantee may use HOP funds to pay for the costs of administering the project, even if these costs are not otherwise directly attributable to a project type listed above.

If an organization has a federally approved indirect cost rate consistent with uniform guidance, these costs may be allocated to eligible activities.

Alternatively, grantees may use a de minimus indirect rate of 10% of modified total direct costs.

In no cases may administration exceed 10% of the overall grant award.

HOP PROJECT TYPES & ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES CHART

	EMERGENCY SHELTER	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	COORDINATED ENTRY	HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION	RAPID RE-HOUSING	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
ELIGIBILITY	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under categories 1-4	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under categories 1-4	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under categories 1-4 Individuals and Families who are defined as At Risk of Homelessness	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under categories 2-4 Individuals and Families who are defined as At Risk of Homelessness	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under Category 1	Individuals and Families defined as Homeless under category 1 Individuals and Families with an annual income below 50% AMI and are defined as Homeless under categories 2-4 or defined as At Risk of Homelessness
ACTIVITIES	SHELTER OPERATIONS Maintenance (incl routine repairs), Rent, Security, Fuel, Utilities, Equipment, Insurance, Food, Furnishings, Supplies necessary for shelter operation Where no appropriate emergency shelter available, or for health/safety reasons: Hotel or Motel voucher	OPERATIONS Maintenance (incl routine repairs), Rent, Security, Fuel, Utilities, Equipment, Insurance, Food, Furnishings, Supplies necessary for transitional housing operation	ASSESSMENT SERVICES Coordinated entry assessment and referral services for households in Coordinated Entry	HOUSING RETENTION SERVICES Ongoing, individualized support and coordination for households once stabilized in permanent housing	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE If tied to a housing plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term rental assistance • Security deposits or last month's rent • Moving costs (incl truck rental) • Utility deposits • Rental arrears • Home furnishings/essential goods • Debt reduction • Program fees • Host family costs • Transportation costs • Other activities 	
	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE Limited to Diversion or Rapid Exit activities		HOUSING NAVIGATION SERVICES Logistical and housing support to households preparing to move into permanent housing			FUND ADMINISTRATION Up to 5% of total project costs to support outreach and application review.
	ESSENTIAL SERVICES¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Management • Education Services (e.g. ESL, literacy, GED) • Outpatient health services • Mental health services • Onsite childcare • Legal services • Employment assistance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse services • Transportation • Specialized services (HIV/AIDS, DV, youth) • Life skills training (e.g. conflict resolution, financial or household management, parenting, food/nutrition) 	RENTAL ASSISTANCE Medium Term Tenant-based rental assistance up to 24 months		

Application Packets

New Applicants

- For those organizations not receiving HOP funding in SFY24

Existing Grantees

- For organizations receiving HOP funding in SFY24
- Used for both Simplified Renewals and Full Applications

Application Sections

A. Cover Sheet – all applicants

- A2 Cover Sheet – Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing projects
- A3 Cover Sheet – Financial Assistance projects (***Existing Grantees only***)

B. Background Narrative – New Applicants only

C. Program Narrative – Full Applications (New Applicants & Existing Grantees) only

A2 – Existing Grantees & New Applicants

A2) COVER SHEET SECTION 2 FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER & TRANSITIONAL HOUSING APPLICANTS

For each project or facility, please include the following:

- a) Name of Shelter Project:
- b) Shelter Address (domestic violence shelters may use a building # or town):
- c) Shelter Contact Person, Job Title, Telephone & Email:
- d) # of Weeks per Year in Operation:
- e) Capacity Chart:

	SFY24 (Current)	SFY25 (Proposed)
# of emergency shelter beds:		
# of emergency shelter bedrooms:		
# of emergency apartments and bedrooms:		
# of transitional housing apartments and bedrooms:		

Please note overflow capacity separately. Pack-and-play capacity should not be included.

A3 – Existing Grantees only

A3) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- 1) Local Fund Administrators must offer financial assistance for the following eligible expenses: short-term rental assistance (up to 3 months), security deposits (including last month's rent), rental arrears, utility deposits, recovery housing/non-traditional housing program fees, transportation costs.

Do you agree to offer financial assistance for all the above eligible expenses?

Yes

No

- 2) Local Fund Administrators may offer financial assistance for other eligible expenses. Please indicate which of the following eligible expenses you would offer financial assistance for. Check all that apply:

Moving costs (including truck rental)

Home furnishings/essential goods

Debt reduction

Host family costs

Other activities tied to a housing plan

Application Sections

D. Budget & Justification – all applicants

- Project budget on excel template (different templates for New Applicants and Existing Grantees)
- Budget justification (on template or other format)
- Federally-approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

E. Attachments – all applicants

- Job descriptions for all positions supported by HOP funds
- Current organization budget (including department/ program budget if multi-service organization)
- Organizational Chart
- CoC/Housing Coalition Review Form (Appendix C)
- Certificate of Government Approval (Appendix E, if applicable)
- Signed Assurances (Appendix F)
- Optional & Required Attachments from Narrative Section
- Questions & Attachments for Faith-based/Religious Organizations

CoC/Housing Coalition Review Form (Appendix C)

APPENDIX C. CONTINUUM OF CARE/HOUSING COALITION REVIEW FORM HOUSING OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM (HOP)

Local Continua of Care (CoC)/Housing Coalitions do not need to vote to approve a project application or to prioritize multiple projects within a local CoC/coalition. The purpose of this form is to demonstrate coordination and communication with the local CoC/coalition.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HOP APPLICANT

HOP Applicant Agency: _____ Fiscal Agent (if applicable): _____

Total HOP Funding Request: _____

Project	\$ Amt of Request	Project Type (from drop down)	New Request or Renewal?
Click here to enter text.		Choose an item.	Choose one.
Click here to enter text.		Choose an item.	Choose one.
Click here to enter text.		Choose an item.	Choose one.
Click here to enter text.		Choose an item.	Choose one.
Click here to enter text.		Choose an item.	Choose one.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LOCAL CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC)/HOUSING COALITION

Name of Local CoC/Coalition:²¹ _____

Local CoC/Coalition Chair(s): _____ Email(s): _____

Date of Local CoC/Coalition Review of HOP Requests for Funding: _____

RENEWAL REQUESTS: Did the Grantee report on the outcomes achieved by the HOP-funded project(s)?

Yes No Not a Renewal Request

Dates: _____

FOR ALL REQUESTS: Does the project fill an identified need within the local Continuum of Care/Housing Coalition?

Yes No

Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

FOR ALL REQUESTS: If the local CoC/coalition has a strategic plan (not required), does the project meet a local priority?

Yes No Not applicable (no strategic plan)

Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUESTS: Did the agency applying to be a Local Fund Administrator discuss the process by which eligible households will be able to access financial assistance?

Yes No

Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

Additional Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature of Local CoC/Coalition Chair
(or delegate)

Printed Name

Date

Certificate of Government Approval (Appendix E)

APPENDIX E. CERTIFICATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

CERTIFICATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

RECEIVING HOUSING OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS FROM STATE OF VERMONT

I, _____ (*name and title*) duly authorized to act on behalf of the _____ (*name of jurisdiction*) hereby approve the following project(s) proposed by _____ (*name of nonprofit*) which is (are) to be located in _____ (*name(s) of jurisdiction(s)*):

By: _____
Signature and Date

Typed Name of Signatory Local Official

Title

Required for new or relocated shelter projects only.

Other Appendices & Attachments

- Definition of Homelessness (Appendix A)
- Definition of At Risk of Homelessness (Appendix B)
- HOP Standards for Provision of Assistance (Appendix D)
- Recordkeeping Requirements (Appendix G)
- Landlord Liaison Framework (Appendix H)
- Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants (Attachment C)
- Agency of Human Services' Customary Contract/Grant Provisions (Attachment F)