

The Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Inc., Lead Agency of the MA-506 Worcester City and County Continuum of Care, is seeking proposals from Worcester County providers of services and housing for new Permanent Supportive Housing project(s) which will serve chronically homeless households with children and/or chronically homeless households without children, and/or Rapid Rehousing project(s) that will serve homeless individuals and families, including unaccompanied youth, coming directly from the streets or emergency shelters and include persons fleeing domestic violence situations and other persons meeting the criteria of paragraph 4 of the definition of homelessness, throughout Worcester County:

Any individual or family who:

- 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, including human trafficking;
- Has no other residence; and,
- Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

The total funding that may become available for all new projects is not expected to exceed \$500,000.00. All new Permanent Housing proposals will request 1-year grant terms.

The grantee must match all grant funds, except for leasing funds, with no less than 25% of funds or in-kind contributions from other sources. Guidance regarding cash and in-kind match is at 24 CFR 578.73. Cash match must be used for the costs of activities that are eligible CoC Program costs. Grantees must leverage other services or funds for program participants with no less than 150% funds or in-kind contributions from other sources. The expectation is that the use of leveraged additional resources will enable applicants to develop a comprehensive project that meets the needs of persons assisted and ensure successful program outcomes.

Permanent Housing is community-based housing, the purpose of which is to provide housing without a designated length of stay. Grant funds may be used for leasing, rental assistance, operating costs, and supportive services; definitions and guidance is provided in the Interim Rule, which can be downloaded at

https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoCProgramInterimRule_FormattedVersion.pdf

Rapid Rehousing projects that will serve homeless individuals, homeless households with children or homeless youth, or persons fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence are eligible to apply in this competition. Grant funds may provide supportive services, and/or short-term (up to 3 months) and/or medium-term (for 3 to 24 months) tenant-based rental assistance, as necessary to help participants move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

“Chronically homeless” is defined as:

- Chronically homeless individuals are defined to mean a homeless individual with a disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, or in an institutional care facility if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility.

In order to meet the “chronically homeless” definition, the individual also must have been living as described above continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions 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.

- Chronically homeless families are families with adult heads of household who meet the definition of a chronically homeless individual. If there is no adult in the family, the family would still be considered chronically homeless if a minor head of household meets all the criteria of a chronically homeless individual. A chronically homeless family includes those whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

“Homeless” is defined as: An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

1. 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;
2. 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
3. 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.

1. For Permanent Housing (Permanent Supportive Housing or Rapid Rehousing), preference will be given to those proposals:

- That prioritize persons with the highest needs and longest histories of homelessness
- That are Low Barrier
- Use a Housing First Approach
- Serve clients throughout Worcester County
- Whose type, scale, and location of housing that fits the needs of the program participants

- Whose type and scale of the supportive services fit the needs of the program participants—this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source.
- That have a specific plan for ensuring program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible to apply meets the needs of the program participants.
- That have a specific plan for ensuring program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs.
- Where proposed program participants come from the street or other locations not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, safe havens, or fleeing domestic violence.

All entities considering applying for Permanent Housing should carefully review the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Continuum of Care Program Competition from HUD, available at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5068/fy-2016-coc-program-nofa/>

Project Sub-recipients (agencies seeking funding) must be private, not-for-profit, agencies.

Project Eligibility Threshold Requirements

To become eligible for consideration by the CoC Board and HUD, all projects must first successfully pass a review of threshold requirements. The Worcester City and County CoC will perform a threshold review of all submitted projects applications. ***Each project must meet the following minimum standards:***

- (1) The project applicant must meet the eligibility requirements of the CoC Program as described in 24 CFR part 578 and provide evidence of eligibility required in the application (e.g., nonprofit documentation).
- (2) The project applicant must demonstrate the financial and management capacity and experience to carry out the project as detailed in the project application and to administer Federal funds. Demonstrating capacity may include a description of the applicant/sub-recipient experience with similar projects and with successful administration of SHP, S+C, or CoC Program funds for renewing projects or other Federal funds.
- (3) The project applicant must submit the required certifications as specified in this NOFA.
- (4) The population to be served must meet program eligibility requirements as described in the Act.

Project Quality Threshold Requirements

- (1) To be considered as meeting project quality threshold, new Permanent Housing (Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-housing) project applications must receive at least 3 out of the 5 points available for the criteria below. New Permanent Housing project applications that do not receive at least 3 points will be rejected.
 - a. Whether the type, scale, and location of the housing fit the needs of the program participants (e.g., 2 or more bedrooms for families) (1 point);
 - b. Whether the type of the supportive services that will be offered to program participants will ensure successful retention or help to obtain permanent

housing—this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source (e.g., child care for families with children, case management, life skills, drug counseling) (1 point);

- c. Whether the specific plan for ensuring that program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible to apply meets the needs of the program participants (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, SSI, Food Stamps, local Workforce office, early childhood education) (1 point);
- d. Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs (e.g., allows the participant the mobility to access needed services, case management follow-up, additional assistance to ensure retention of permanent housing) (1 point); and,
- e. Whether at least 75 percent of the proposed program participants come from the street or other locations not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, safe havens, or fleeing domestic violence (1 point).

Eligible Costs

The following guidance indicates the costs that may be included in program budgets, to be paid for by the CoC grant or by matching funds.

Rental Assistance

Rental assistance for homeless individuals and families, including tenant-based rental assistance. Grant funds may be used for security deposits in an amount not to exceed two months of rent, as well as last month's rent.

Leasing

The costs of leasing scattered site units to provide housing to homeless persons.

Leasing: Limits on rent costs. Rents paid must be reasonable in relation to comparable space or units, and may not be more than the owner charges others for comparable units. Rents for residential units cannot exceed the HUD Fair Market Rent (FMR).

Security deposits and first and last month's rent. Grant funds may be used to pay security deposits, in an amount not to exceed two months of actual rent, as well as last month's rent.

Supportive Services

For new PH projects created through the reallocation process, there is no limitation in the NOFA regarding the percentage of the budget that can be allocated to Supportive Services. However, the level of Supportive Services should be commensurate with the needs of the participants you intend to serve and within the constraints of the overall project budget and should not exceed 30% of the budget (Leasing, Rental Assistance and/or Operating but excluding Admin;). Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the FY2016 NOFA Section V.G.2.c(1), which describes the supportive services requirements for new permanent housing (Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-housing).

Eligible supportive services costs:

- Reasonable one-time moving costs
- Case management
- Food—meals or groceries for program participants
- Housing search and counseling services
- Life skills training
- Outreach services
- Transportation
- Utility deposits (one-time fee, paid to utility companies)
- Direct provision of services: 1) costs of labor, supplies, and materials; and 2) salary and benefit packages of service delivery staff.

Ineligible costs: Any cost that is not described as an eligible cost is not an eligible cost.

Operating Costs

Grant funds may be used to pay the costs of the day-to-day operation of permanent supportive housing in a single structure or individual housing units.

Eligible operating costs:

- Maintenance and repair of housing
- Property taxes and insurance
- Building security for a structure where more than 50 percent of the units or area is paid for with grant funds
- Electricity, gas, and water
- Furniture
- Equipment

Ineligible costs: Program funds may not be used for rental assistance and operating costs in the same project. Program funds may not be used for the maintenance and repair of housing where the costs of maintaining and repairing the housing are included in the lease.

Project Administration

The maximum administrative costs are 7% of the full grant and is shared equally by the applicant and CMHA.

New project applicants must provide notice to Jim Cruickshank at jcruickshank@cmhaonline.org **no later than August 5, 2016 at 5:00 PM** of the intent to submit a new application and must include the following information:

- 1) Name of Entity
- 2) Name of Project
- 3) Whether the new project being created is:
 - a. Permanent Supportive Housing
 - b. Rapid Rehousing
- 4) Full Contact information of lead staff person who will be completing the application through eSNAPS.

Within 24 hours of notification, the new project application will be set up in eSNAPS and ready for entry of application information.

New project applicants must open the new project application, fill in application information, and upload ALL required supporting documents **no later than August 12, 2016 at 5:00 PM.**

A New Project Bidder's Conference is scheduled for **August 2, 2016 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM** at CMHA, 6 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609 and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

If you are not able to participate in this Bidder's Conference, individual Technical Assistance will be provided. Please contact Jim Cruickshank at 774-243-3834 or jcruickshank@cmhaonline.org for more information.

Inquiries regarding the RFP may be directed to Grace Carmark at the CMHA 508-752-5519 ext. 104 or by email to gcarmark@cmhaonline.org.

The FY2016 NOFA can be reviewed at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5068/fy-2016-coc-program-nofa/>