

OFFICE OF HOUSING
1600 E. Columbus Ave.
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103
(413) 787-6500



SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF HOUSING

Request for Proposals

**EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG)
PROGRAM FUNDS**

2017 Second Funding Round

FOR PROGRAM YEAR: JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018

RELEASED: NOVEMBER 22, 2017

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2017
NOON

EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT PROGRAM

Application Information

Introduction

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program funds received by the City of Springfield from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will support programs aligned with the Springfield-Hampden County Continuum of Care (CoC) strategic plan during the program year running from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. While the City has already made initial awards totaling \$284,406, the City is now seeking proposals for an additional \$40,825.16 to be spent in the current program year.¹

The City seeks to fund two project types in order to address gaps in the existing system: 1) homelessness prevention for tenants with disabilities; and 2) rapid rehousing for youth age 18-24.

The City of Springfield's ESG Program Priorities

Springfield's FY17 ESG priorities include:

- Prevention/diversion for households at *imminent* risk of homelessness;
- Rapid rehousing services for homeless households;
- Outreach for the purpose of identifying chronically homeless individuals eligible for existing permanent supportive housing opportunities; and
- Operating support for established emergency shelter programs.

The City of Springfield uses legislative and HUD guidance governing the ESG program as well as the City of Springfield's priorities for homeless programs and initiatives. In evaluating program proposals and the program performance of funded projects, the City will collaborate with the Hampden County CoC. The City will exercise final decision-making authority regarding all proposals submitted for consideration under this RFP.

HUD guidance makes clear that ESG entitlement funds are to be used to benefit people who live in the entitlement community. Therefore, please note that these funds must be used to assist households that have a connection to Springfield, which may include:

- Currently homeless in Springfield;
- Employed in Springfield; or
- Using rapid rehousing funds to move into housing located in Springfield.

Eligible Applicants

Private nonprofit organizations, in accordance with 42 U.S.C. §11373(c).

¹ These additional funds are made up of carryover of \$3,238.46 from FY2011, carryover of \$7,586.70 from FY2016 and \$30,000 unallocated funds from FY2017.

Applicants must demonstrate the financial management and programmatic expertise to successfully develop, design, implement and monitor the proposed activities. Applicants must be able to meet other requirements relative to the ESG program, including those specified in Appendix A to this RFP.

Faith-based organizations, like all organizations receiving HUD funds, must serve all eligible beneficiaries without regard to religion.

Eligible Categories of Funding

Eligible ESG activities that the City of Springfield will fund in this round are as follows:

1. **Rental Assistance.** Provision of rental assistance to provide short-term or medium-term housing to homeless individuals or families (*rapid rehousing*). Such rental assistance may include tenant-based or project-based rental assistance. **For this round, the City seeks rapid rehousing projects that will serve youth age 18-24.**

2. **Housing Stabilization Services** for homeless individuals or families or individuals or families at imminent risk of homelessness, including housing search, mediation or outreach to property owners, providing security or utility deposits, utility payments, rental assistance for final month at a location, assistance with moving costs, or other activities that are effective at stabilizing individuals and families in their current housing (*homelessness prevention*). **For this round, the City seeks stabilization services for individuals or families with a disabled member who are at imminent risk of homelessness.**

Summary of Eligible Activities

Homelessness Prevention Activities	
Direct Financial Assistance	Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent arrearages (up to 6 months) • Utility arrearages • Short-term or medium-term rental assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing stability case management • Housing search and placement • Landlord mediation
Rapid Re-Housing Activities	
Direct Financial Assistance	Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First/last months’ rent; Security deposit • Utility deposit • Moving costs • Short-term (up to 3 months) or medium-term rental assistance (up to 24 months) • Rental application Fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing stability case management • Housing search and placement

Area-Wide System Coordination

ESG rules require that the City and its ESG grant recipients coordinate efforts. ESG subrecipients are required to participate in the Springfield- Hampden County Continuum of Care.

ESG subrecipients are required to participate in coordinated assessment. For FY17, subrecipients will only be permitted to provide rapid rehousing assistance to households that have been screened using a screening tool approved by the Springfield-Hampden County Continuum of Care.

The City will require ESG subrecipients to adhere to common written standards which are detailed below. Written standards will be reviewed by the Hampden CoC during 2017 and may be subject to amendment.

Springfield CoC Common Written Standards for ESG

a. Standard policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance.

- Eligibility must be determined using a common assessment tool.
- Must be currently homeless or at risk of homelessness as defined in 24 CFR § 576.2.²
- Case files must include a completed eligibility form and certification (which meets HUD specifications) that the household meets the eligibility criteria.

² § 576.2 Definitions.

At risk of homelessness means: (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 in 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 for 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 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. 2012(m)), or section 17(b)(15) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 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.

- For households meeting the definition of “at risk of homelessness”, case files must include all documentation required by 24 CFR § 576.500.
 - For each individual and family determined ineligible to receive ESG assistance, the record must include documentation of the reason for that determination.
 - Records must be kept for each program participant that document: the services and assistance provided to that program participant; compliance with requirements under 24 CFR §§ 576.101-106, 576.401 (a) and (b), and 576.401 (d) and (e); and, where applicable, compliance with the termination of assistance requirement in § 576.402.
 - **Eligible Uses of Funds:** Funds may be used for security deposit, last months’ rent, utility payments/deposits, moving cost assistance, and short-term or medium-term rental assistance (including first months’ rent). Funds may not be used to pay eviction court costs, even where payment of these costs is part of an agreement to preserve a tenancy. Funds may be paid only to a third-party provider; they may not be provided directly to the person applying for assistance. Funds may be used for a Springfield-connected household to move outside of Springfield.
- b. Policies and procedures for coordination among emergency shelter providers, essential service providers, homelessness prevention and other homeless assistance providers, and mainstream service and housing providers.**
- Providers of ESG prevention/diversion and rapid rehousing assistance must:
 - a. make assistance available to all eligible Springfield households without regard to what agency provides shelter to the household;
 - b. provide clear guidance to other Springfield providers about eligibility requirements and how to access assistance; and
 - c. undertake targeted outreach to providers who serve victims of domestic violence, and create clear pathways for their clients to access assistance.
- c. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible families and individuals will receive homelessness prevention assistance and which eligible families will receive rapid re-housing assistance.**
- Assistance may be provided only to households with income at or below 30% of area median income;
 - Rapid rehousing assistance may be provided only where the CoC’s common eligibility assessment tool indicates that the household is appropriate for rapid rehousing assistance.
 - Prevention funds may be provided only where:
 - a. there is a pending eviction case filed in court;
 - b. the agreement to pay funds would be included in a court judgment which preserves the tenancy; and

- c. the landlord verifies that the tenant will be able to continue the tenancy on an ongoing basis.
- d. **Standards for determining the share of rent and utilities costs that each program participant must pay, if any, while receiving homelessness prevention or rapid rehousing assistance.**
 - Program participants must pay a minimum of 30% of adjusted income for monthly rent, with the exception of the first months' rent, for which ESG can pay up to the full amount.
- e. **Standards for determining how long a particular program participant will be provided with rental assistance and whether and how the amount of assistance will be adjusted over time.**
 - Households may receive rapid rehousing assistance for up to a 24-month period. Households may receive rapid rehousing assistance in three-month increments. A household will initially be provided an initial 3 months of assistance. A new evaluation must be conducted to determine if the household will be provided an initial three months' assistance. Each increment requires a new evaluation.
- f. **Standards for determining the type, amount and duration of housing stabilization and/or relocation services to provide a program participant, including the limits, if any, on the homelessness prevention or rapid rehousing assistance that each program participant may receive, such as maximum amount of assistance, maximum number of months the program participant receives assistance; or the maximum number of times the program participant may receive assistance.**
 - The ESG program will not pay more than a total of 24 months rental assistance for any program participant, and will not pay for more than 6 months of arrears.
 - Program participants may not receive assistance more than one in any 12-month period.

Match Requirement

ESG funds have a mandatory dollar for dollar match requirement. When completing the budget, the ESG request may not exceed 50% of total project cost. The match must be a non-ESG source, and the budget must list the sources and amounts of match funds.

Applicants chosen for funding will be required to certify its compliance with the match requirement.

Participation of Homeless Individuals

Recipients of ESG funds must, to the maximum extent possible, involve, through employment, volunteer services or otherwise, homeless individuals and families in maintaining and operating facilities and in providing services.

Recipients of ESG funds must provide for participation of at least one homeless individual or former homeless individual on the board of directors or other equivalent policymaking entity of such recipient, or, if this is not possible, must explain why it is not possible and what substitute methods will be used to secure meaningful participation in policymaking for the program.

Required HMIS Participation

ESG recipients are **required** to provide client-level data to the City of Springfield's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The only exception to this requirement is for those organizations which have a primary purpose of serving victims of domestic violence. These organizations are excluded by HUD from HMIS participation. However, each such organization must provide and collect the HUD-required data elements in a system which will allow it to produce HUD-required data.

Application Process

The RFP will be available for distribution starting November 22, 2017 at the Office of Housing, 1600 E. Columbus Ave., Springfield, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Upon request to gmccafferty@springfieldcityhall.com, the application form is available electronically.

Please prepare the application neatly and concisely. Please submit 1 Original Application and 4 Copies. Program proposals must be received by the City of Springfield on or before noon on Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at the Office Housing, 1600 E. Columbus Ave., Springfield, MA.

No funding obligations shall be implied based on the information in this solicitation of ESG project proposals. The City of Springfield reserves the right to accept any proposal or reject any and all proposals on such basis as may be deemed to be in its best interest.

Please note that: 1) Deadlines are firm; 2) It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the deadlines are met; and 3) Proposals delayed for any reason including but not limited to delivery problems associated with the United States Postal Service, messenger services or overnight courier services, will be considered late and will not be accepted.

The City of Springfield reserves the right to:

- Determine which program category will be used to fund specific proposals
- Determine the source of funding to be utilized
- Negotiate and award contracts
- Reject any or all submittals
- Offer less than the requested amount

The following pages list points to be awarded in grant review.

ESG Grant Review Scoring Factor		Maximum Points
Project Design & Community Need (Maximum 40 points)		
Targeting/Population to be served. Higher points awarded for projects serving people who are actually homeless, or, if the project serves people who are imminently homeless, the applicant demonstrates it will use a method of targeting which has a high likelihood of identifying participants who will become homeless if they do not receive assistance.		5
Number of unduplicated persons served (in proportion to size of grant).		5
Degree to which program will contribute toward reduction of homelessness (especially for populations not served by other programs), or the shelter or outreach program emphasizes housing-oriented solutions to homelessness.		5
Evidence that program is providing a unique service or serving a unique population, and is not duplicative of services provided by another agency.		5
Collaborative Project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For programs providing rental assistance or housing relocation/stabilization services (including all prevention services),</i> evidence of effective collaboration with other agencies in operation of this program (for example: agency allows other organizations to determine eligibility; or one organization administers rental assistance for another organization which provides case management.) No points awarded for this section where the only ‘collaboration’ listed is referrals to other agencies. • <i>For agencies seeking funds for shelter operations or street outreach:</i> evidence that organization actively assists participants with access to permanent housing, either through its own programs or through partnerships with other organizations. Referral to other agencies, without additional engagement, will not count for points for this criteria. 		5
Evidence of the agency’s understanding of and committed to Coordinated Entry.		5
The relative need for the applicant’s proposed services as indicated by the Springfield 2016-2017 point-in-time count and gaps analysis.		10
Organizational Capacity (Maximum 30 points)		
Prior receipt of ESG or other federal funding.		3
Experience operating type of program being proposed in the application.		3
Experience managing homelessness or housing programs by key management staff. Key management staff includes the organization’s Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, and directors of homeless assistance programs.		4
Evidence of involvement by homeless persons in maintaining and		3

	operating facilities and in providing services.	
	Evidence of at least one homeless/formerly homeless individual on Board of Directors or other policy-making board.	3
	Experience using HMIS and evidence of responsible HMIS practices and high data quality (report on data quality will be provided directly to the review committee by the Continuum of Care HMIS Lead)	5
	Active participation in the Springfield- Hampden Continuum of Care and the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.	5
	Evidence that the applicant evaluates programs to measure success. For existing programs, review committee will also review HMIS data on past results.	4
Financial Capacity, Budget and Match (Maximum 30 points)		
	A detailed budget description with line items and the basis of cost for each category	10
	A detailed Match Table with a brief description and documentation of the source of match for all resources; documentation of committed match is attached	10
	No unresolved findings in agency audit.	10

APPENDIX A: OTHER AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS

OMB Circulars

The ESG regulations that list the OMB Circulars and other documents that guide ESG compliance (regarding applicability of uniform administrative requirements) may found at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1927/hearth-esg-program-and-consolidated-plan-conforming-amendments>.

The Circulars listed in this section of the ESG regulations may be accessed via the following link to the OMB website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>.

Vote of Corporation and Insurance

In addition to complying with the above rules and regulations, submitting forms and attachments required as part of the RFP, and complying with the requirements laid out in the text of the RFP, organizations entering into contracts for programs selected pursuant to this RFP will also be required to submit the following items (at the time of contracting):

- Completed Vote of Corporation Authorizing Execution of form
- Insurance Certificate

Unless the City determines otherwise, each certificate or policy shall carry the provision that the insurance shall not be canceled or reduced without the prior notice to the Office of Housing of the City of Springfield. All the insurance required by this paragraph shall be and shall remain in full force and effect for the entire year, and **THE CITY SHALL BE NAMED AS AN ADDITIONAL INSURED UNDER SUCH INSURANCE**, which shall contain a stipulation that the insurance provided shall not terminate, lapse or otherwise expire, prior to thirty (30) days written notice to that effect, given by the insurance carrier to the City, and that the insurance carrier will not invoke the defense of performance of governmental function of the provider in performing their work with the City.

The minimum limits Liability Coverage shall be as follows unless determined otherwise by the City at its sole discretion:

1. Comprehensive General Liability, including Premises and Operations, Elevator Liability, Provider's Protective Liability, Products Liability including completed Operations Coverage; and Contractual Liability for the contract: Limits \$1,000,000/\$2,000,000
2. Comprehensive Automobile Liability, including all owned Automobiles; Non-Owned automobiles; Hired Car Coverage (where applicable): Limits: \$500,000/\$1,000,000 (per occurrence/annual aggregate)
3. Workers Compensation, including Employer's Liability: Limits: Statutory; Employer's Liability: \$100,000

Before an agreement is executed pursuant to proposals submitted through this RFP, all program sponsors will also be required to demonstrate:

- An understanding and adherence to all applicable federal guidelines, all state and local guidelines, statutes and regulations, and that the organization is in good standing with HUD, the state, and the City (no unaddressed HUD findings or audit findings), and has not outstanding violations, taxes or penalties. (A completed and notarized tax payment certification form, conflict of interest form and a debarment certificate are required attachments to RFP responses).
- Provision of equal access to directly funded services for all eligible individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation, or handicap.
- Establishment and maintenance of program records in conformity with HUD and Office of Community Development requirements. All records must be available for regular monitoring by OCD or HUD and ensure the maintenance of client confidentiality through appropriate standards and practices.
- Capacity to operate their programs for a minimum of 8 weeks from July 1, 2018 until said grant reimbursement funds become available for distribution.