



Honorable Byron W. Brown, Mayor
Department of Community Services/Office of Strategic Planning

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
COVID-19 Housing Stability Program



ISSUE DATE: Friday, May Wednesday, May 27, 2020

DUE DATE: Friday, June 19, 2020 (by 4:00 P.M.)

PROGRAM START DATE: July, 2020

Submission by mail to:

Attn: Sue Lumadue

City of Buffalo, Contract Administration Unit

1701 City Hall, Buffalo NY 14202

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

CITY OF BUFFALO ESG-CV REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

I. Organization Information (please include this information in your response)

Legal Entity	
Street Address	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Email Address	
Website Address	
Name of Authorized Contact	
Authorized Contact Position Title	
Name of Board Chair/President	
Organization Type	
Organization Founding Date	
Tax Status and CHAR Number	
Federal Identification Number	
DUNS Number	
City of Buffalo Vendor ID (if applicable)	

II. Background

The City of Buffalo has received funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as part of the CARES Act ESG-CV appropriation, and is seeking experienced 501c3 eligible nonprofit organizations to provide financial assistance and housing stability services to the homeless and those who may be at risk of homelessness as result of COVID-19.

The ESG-CV funds, totaling \$4,152,910 in the initial round, are earmarked for ESG eligible activities delivered over a no more than two-year period, beginning in March 2020 and ending September 30, 2022. Deliverables under this opportunity must be designed to prepare, prevent, respond and recover from the Coronavirus pandemic. Successful applicants must agree to enter all data in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS under the appropriate ESG-CV accounts). Access and training on HMIS will be provided to new subrecipients.

Respondent's submittals should target at least one Housing stability intervention in response to the COVID-pandemic. Desired Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing or Homelessness Prevention efforts are described below. . The City of Buffalo uses the term "Subrecipient" to refer to agencies selected for funding under this ESG-CV RFQ.

Resources:

Please note that Performance under this program will be monitored using the CoC/ESG Written standards. The written standards have been established to ensure that persons experiencing

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

homelessness who enter programs will be given similar information and support to access and maintain permanent housing. Many of these standards are based on the ESG and/or the HEARTH Interim Rules. All program and COVID related documentation is required to be collected and maintained will be required.

Please refer to these general ESG resources prior to preparing your application.

Overview of Eligible ESG Program Components:

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/EmergencySolutionsGrantsProgramFactSheet.pdf>

General ESG information: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg>

CoC Written standards can be found at: <https://wnyhomeless.org/app/uploads/Written-Standards-Feb-2019.pdf>

McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act:

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessAssistanceActAmendedbyHEARTH.pdf>

III. Funding Opportunity: Stable Housing Interventions

A. 24/7 Homeless Shelter

Social distancing requirements along with other harmful medical and economic consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic have placed significant stress on our local homeless shelter system. As a result, the availability of shelter space has decreased, the need for shelter space has increased, and the need to keep individuals safe and mitigate the spread of the disease is critical. In order to meet this need, the City of Buffalo is seeking qualified and experienced homeless services providers or collaborations of agencies willing to operate and provide 24/7 shelter and services thru August 2020. All individuals in shelter must be assigned to a Case Manager for access to services and supports, as well as maintenance of housing efforts. Shelters must have the space and capacity to maintain social distancing throughout the pandemic.

Resources:

- CFR 576.102
- <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3766/esg-minimum-habitability-standards-for-emergency-shelters-and-permanent-housing>

B. Rapid Rehousing

Shelter is often the first step to housing for most homeless individuals and families. In an effort to reduce shelter need and increase access to housing and services, the City of Buffalo is seeking providers for Rapid Rehousing efforts to secure and provide financial assistance to homeless families and individuals, who may be medically at risk and have been negatively impacted in this emergency.

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

This will be a collaborative approach, abiding by the terms of our Continuum of Care and ESG Coordinated Entry requirements. Individuals will be served based on their vulnerability, utilizing current rapid Re-housing by name list, the Youth Rapid Rehousing by name list and listing of those currently in shelter or hotel/motel placements because of COVID-19. All individuals on the list have been assessed for homelessness and vulnerability. A portion of funding is available for targeted landlord engagement, housing search and identification and complying with HUD requirements related to the rapidly rehousing homeless individuals.

i. Light Touch Rapid Rehousing

The least vulnerable and newly homeless individuals will be provided with housing search, placement, inspection, first month rent, security deposit, review and up to six months of Case Management services. Activities will be targeted to those families and individuals who have a good chance of maintaining housing after the initial assistance. This approach will get people quickly housed and connected to financial stability, employment, and housing stability case management for up to 6 months.

ii. Rapid Rehousing

Traditional Rapid Rehousing services for vulnerable individuals will provide short term rental assistance and housing stability case management services for individuals with high VI scores or determined by Coordinated Entry policies to be of high risk. As program clients are connected to increased opportunity for income and benefits, rental assistance will be decreased as clients gain self-sufficiency. Rapid Rehousing assistance will not exceed 24 months total. Case Management will be provided throughout the rental assistance period, and up to 6 months after program completion.

iii. Housing search and placement (HSP)

(Including Landlord Engagement, Inspection, FMR and RR, and lease review.

Working with landlords and property owners to increase the supply of available rental units and house the homeless will require a concerted system effort requiring a clear and consistent message with landlords. Clients eligible for Rapid Rehousing will be referred to the Housing search and placement provider for identification of housing units, connection to landlord for remote inspections, fair market rent and rent reasonableness confirmation, lease reviewed. RRH Case Managers will work closely with HSP provider to assure the housing meets need of clients, clients are able to move in quickly and have access to basic needs and benefits.

Resources

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Landlord-Engagement-Reset-Your-Communitys-Critical-Partnerships-During-COVID-Response.pdf>

https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Rapid_Re-Housing_ESG_vs_CoC.pdf

C. Homelessness Prevention

A significant number of families and individual at 50% of the median income may be at significant risk of homelessness when the New York State Moratorium on evictions is lifted. At that time, landlords will be required to provide 30-day notice of eviction to those who were not

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

able to pay rent during the economic shutdown. Some who may have paid rent and not utilities, (excluding cell phone service) may also be at risk. Eviction Prevention include Legal representation in eviction court to stay the eviction and negotiate repayment plan between the client and landlord, refer for rental assistance to cover rental or utility arrears, accompanied by up to 3 months of Case Management to assure housing stability and assess the success of the Prevention effort.

Eviction prevention clients must provide proof of eviction notice and have income at or below +` 50% of the median income. Documentation requirements are strict. and include proof that their financial situation was created due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that the client has received a 21 day eviction notice, certification they have no outside resources , savings, etc. to pay the arrears and Client household income eligibility at/or below 50% of the median income.

At this time, financial assistance is limited at this time to three months of arrears, during the time of this emergency, beginning March 27, 2020. Individuals who had arrears prior to the March date may apply for assistance under regular Prevention activities funded under ESG.

Legal Services play an important role in Homelessness Prevention. We are seeking services to includes legal representation for the low income and homeless community to include landlord/tenant matters necessary to resolve a legal problem that prohibits the participant from obtaining permanent housing or will likely result in losing current housing. This includes representation at Housing court, negotiation with landlords, arrears payments when possible and related efforts to enable clients to maintain housing and prevent eviction, utility shut off and other related items.

Resources

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessPreventionESG.pdf>

III. Responding to the RFQ

A. Request for Qualifications Format

Please respond to the following and submit one electronic and two paper copies of your response no later than June 8, 2020. Late submissions will not be accepted.

All submissions will be sent to:

Sue Lumadue
1701 City Hall
Buffalo NY 14202
slumadue@city-buffalo.com

Format = 7 required pages.

Cover Sheet – 1 page

Provide agency name, contact information phone, mailing address and email, amount of funding requested and stated intervention(s) you are proposing.

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

Program Description – 2-3 pages

Name your program and describe your approach: In no more than three pages, describe the type of service(s) you plan to provide including your efforts to meet the needs of clients and assuring eligibility under HUD guidelines. Who will you collaborate with in this project? How quickly will you begin? Include your plan for connecting clients to additional resources in support of housing stability through case management. Please indicate the frequency of in home and in office supports, including after care.

Describe your Team – 1 page

Who is your team? Briefly describe their general qualifications and the multi-disciplinary nature of the team assembled for this project, citing specific evidence of relevant experience serving low income, homeless, re-entry, similar behavioral health, vulnerable, at risk or other similar clients facing housing and other challenges. Please list key personnel who will be involved and their experience with HMIS, if any. If hiring for project, please indicate title and qualifications. Be certain to address familiarity with documentation, adhering to government regulations, contract compliance, etc.

Previous Experience – 1 page table

Create a table and identify project experience. Use the table to summarize similar projects of this nature you have previously undertaken or played a key role in. Please provide the following information in your table:

- Project name
- Current status
- Funding source
- Project budget, unspent amount
- Numbers uniquely served in this project

Proposed Budget sheet – 1 page (attached)

(There are no match requirements for the CARES ACTS ESG-CV funds)

Respondents should indicate any other funding they have or expect to receive to support this effort in the “Other “column on the Budget sheet. Please use the appropriate project ID Code to identify the components of each activity. (Shelter Services, Shelter operations, RRH services, RRH Financial assistance, etc.)

IV. Evaluation of Submittals

Those responding to this RFQ must demonstrate the following:

- Experience in delivering similar services to the eligible populations
- Strong documentation and data entry skills
- Strong outreach and collaboration skills
- Trauma informed care approach
- Low barrier entry into program
- Excellent written and oral communication.
- Experience in Grant Management and reporting
- Reasonableness of proposed plan

City of Buffalo, New York
ESG-CV Request for Qualifications

- Reasonable and customary expenses
- Prior successful performance on similar projects

In concert with the Continuum of Care Project Selection Committee (CoC-PSC), the City of Buffalo will evaluate all submittals to determine which prospective Subrecipients have the experience and qualifications that are most suited for this project and which projects are best suited to meet the needs. The City of Buffalo and CoC-PSC may request in person or remote personal interviews with the highest-ranked respondents or may request one or more prospective Subrecipients to provide additional detail. If selected, we may require additional documentation relating to agency ability to manage the finances of this grant, including most recent agency tax and charity filings.

V. Attachments

- Budget Request Detail

For questions regarding this RFP, please contact Sue Lumadue at slumadue@city-buffalo.com. Please include a phone number where you can be reached.