

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
MUNICIPAL HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT INITIATIVE

The Department of Housing (Department) is administering a one-time program to provide grant funding to municipalities that host new or expanded overnight shelters and winter emergency hubs. Awards are to be used to assist municipalities with public safety expenses and other municipal services that support individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Grant Types: Grants will be awarded across three categories:

(1) **New or Expanded Shelter Capacity Formula Grants:** Municipalities in which new overnight shelters have opened since May 1, 2023 and/or where existing shelters have expanded their capacity since May 1, 2023 and where the new or expanded capacity will remain in service until at least April 15, 2024 are eligible to receive two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per new shelter bed. Up to \$1.5 million in total funding is available for these awards.

(2) **New or Expanded Shelter Capacity Competitive Grants:** Municipalities in which new overnight shelters have opened since October 1, 2022 and/or where existing shelters have expanded their capacity since October 1, 2022 and where the new or expanded capacity will remain in service until at least April 15, 2024 are eligible to apply for additional grant support beyond the \$2,000/bed Formula Grant. Up to \$0.25 million in total funding is available for these awards.

(3) **Winter Emergency Hub Competitive Grants:** Awards will also be made for supporting new winter emergency hubs that open in response to severe weather protocols. Up to \$0.75 million in total funding is available for these awards.

Eligible Grantees: Please note that only municipalities within the State of Rhode Island in which new overnight shelter(s) have been opened or expanded are eligible to apply. Shelter capacity will be validated by the Department of Housing (e.g., based on registration in the Homeless Management Information System, funding by Consolidated Homeless Fund Partnership entities, etc.).

Eligible Activities: Municipalities must use grants for public safety expenses and other municipal services that support individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Grants must directly or indirectly benefit individuals and/or families served by the new or expanding overnight shelter(s). These benefits may be facilitated through partnerships with organizations and other stakeholders. Potential services may include but are not limited to:

- Emergency medical services and/or security
- Waste management and/or sanitation services
- Transportation for individuals within the shelter
- Day programs, professional development, education services
- Behavioral health services and substance use disorder services
- Public facility improvements near shelter location
- Meal programs
- Housing resource counseling
- Outreach services
- Community and business outreach
- Emergency warming/cooling center costs

Proposed services must not already be funded by the Department or another funder. The Department's goal is to provide the additional support a municipality may need while preventing duplication of funding.

Application process: All applications for funds under this solicitation must be submitted to Linda Makhoulf, Department of Housing, at linda.k.makhoulf@housing.ri.gov. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning on Monday, October 30, 2023, and until funds are fully obligated or until March 1, 2024, whichever is earlier. The Department may require the submission of additional information from municipalities and/or providers in connection with any application or the revision of an application, may consider additional information about the shelter project for projects funded through the Consolidated Homelessness Fund, and may permit the resubmission of an application rejected as being incomplete or deficient.

- A. **New or Expanded Shelter Capacity Formula Grants:** To apply, municipalities must submit the following information:
1. The name, title and contact information for the municipal employee or elected official that will serve as the point person for the Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative Grant.
 2. Location of shelter, number of new shelter beds, number of original shelter beds if applicable, and the name of the provider operating the shelter.
 3. Proposed scope of services to be supported with grant funding.
- B. **New or Expanded Shelter Capacity Competitive Grants:** To apply, municipalities must submit the following information:
1. The name, title and contact information for the municipal employee or elected official that will serve as the point person for the Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative Grant.
 2. Budget: Line-item budget for grant funded services.
 3. Information about the shelter project(s) located in the municipality:
 - a. Name of the provider operating the shelter.
 - b. Location of shelter.
 - c. Number of pre-existing and new shelter beds.
 - d. Timeline for the shelter including when operations began (or are planned to begin).
 - e. Justification: Brief description of the significance of the project, e.g.: that it fills a gap in shelter services in a geographic area or time period.
 - f. Services to be provided through the shelter project by the homeless service provider.
- C. **Winter Emergency Hub Competitive Grants:** Municipalities may seek grant support to host winter emergency warming center hubs during triggering events (e.g., when temperatures drop below thresholds established in collaboration with RIEMA). The Department will select a small number of municipalities for funding to host emergency overnight shelters for qualifying events. Applications shall contain the following information:
1. The name, title and contact information for the municipal employee or elected official that will serve as the point person for the Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative Grant.
 2. Scope: Location of emergency warming center; capacity of the emergency warming center, and the name of the provider operating the emergency warming center.
 3. Implementation Plan: Identify all entities who will be involved in opening the emergency warming center and the role for each; a schedule for starting operations of the emergency warming center when called upon; and a letter from each such entity acknowledging their respective responsibilities and the schedule.

4. Budget: Line-item budget for grant funded services to open center hubs for a minimum of 10 days. Applicants may propose per day rates for additional days.
5. Impact: Brief description of the significance of the project, e.g.: that it fills a gap in shelter services in a geographic area or time period.

Evaluation Criteria: The Department will issue awards to eligible grantee applicants according to the following criteria and subject to the continued availability of funds.

- A. **Ongoing Shelter Formula Grants:** Municipalities that submit a complete application for Formula Grants and who have expanded and/or added new shelter beds will have access to two thousand (\$2,000) per new shelter bed.
- B. **Ongoing Shelter Competitive Grants:** Municipalities may seek additional grant support. The Department aims to award grants to multiple municipalities. In determining whether to approve an award or awards, the Department shall consider the following when evaluating each applicant's need for additional grant support:

1. Strategic importance of supported shelter project **35 PTS**

This will evaluate the strategic nature of the overnight shelter project the application will support. This includes:

- a. The project's timeline/readiness to proceed (projects that could become available quickly or may become available to meet a needed timeline) 10 PTS
- b. Need for the overnight shelter project (including whether the project fills a gap such as a critical time period or geographic area). 15 PTS
- c. The specific services offered to clients are high quality, consistent with housing first principles, and directly relate to the needs of the clients being served. 10 PTS

2. Cost **30 PTS**

This will evaluate the amount of funding requested and the number and strength of applications received.

- C. **Winter Emergency Hub Competitive Grants:** Applications that are complete will be scored based on the following criteria:

1. Strategic Importance **35 Pts**

- a. Capacity (number of people served) of the Warming Center 15 Pts
- b. Fills a geographic gap in the provision of emergency warming centers 10 Pts
- c. Active collaboration or service within the municipality's region 10 Pts

2. Implementation Plan **30 Pts**

- a. Complete and achievable 20 Pts
- b. The specific services offered to clients are high quality, consistent with housing first principles, and directly relate to the needs of the clients being served. 10 Pts

3. Project Cost **30 Pts**

This will evaluate the amount of funding requested and the number and strength of applications received.