



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
to
Operate a Shallow Rent Program, HOME\$200
Emergency Solutions Grant – CARES (ESG-CV)

Issued by:
THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA ("City")
Office of Homeless Services
on:
September 25, 2020

Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis through
5 p.m. on December 31, 2020
Submit by 10/14/20 for first available contract term of 11/1/20

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Issued By

The City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Services

Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from non-profit organizations, including not-for-profit realtors, landlord and/or property management organizations ("provider") to supply and operate a Shallow Rent Housing program, entitled HOME\$200. The program seeks to provide a permanent housing opportunity for individuals ("participants") who are experiencing homelessness. This housing model also assists in preventing the spread of COVID-19 by offering an alternative to congregate shelter programs.

The goal of this RFP for HOME\$200 is to serve up to 100 vulnerable individuals who have low and/or limited incomes, e.g. from disability benefits, to achieve housing stability. Individuals will reside in one-bedroom apartments, studios or efficiencies, with social service supports.

Through this RFP, the City is also seeking to address racial inequities by increasing affordable housing opportunities for people of color. The City is actively seeking providers for this program who are minority operators.

Key Dates

Release Date: September 25, 2020

Submission Deadline: The City will accept rolling submissions, at any time through December 31, 2020, depending on funding availability.

Earliest Anticipated Contract Start Date: at the very earliest, November 01, 2020. If you are interested in being considered for the first round of contract awards, please submit your proposal and budget by October 16, 2020.

Contract Terms: Contract terms will be in 12-month increments. The earliest anticipated term will be November 01, 2020 through October 31, 2021. Annual renewals are dependent upon available funding.

Background

The Office of Homeless Services (OHS) in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disabilities (DBHIDS) currently funds a Shallow Rent program – called HOME\$200 – utilizing private sector landlords. Prospective tenants are required to pay a shallow rent of \$200 a month plus the cost of their utilities. OHS provides funding for the security deposit plus the remaining portion of the rental balance each month. OHS is seeking to expand the HOME\$200 Program through this RFP. Total rents shall not exceed \$650 per month, and must be reviewed for rent reasonableness by OHS.

Each participant is encouraged to utilize services, which may include, but are not limited to behavioral health services such as: Tenant Services Coordinator, Case Management, Certified Peer Specialist, and Mobile Psych Therapist; or other community based services of the individual's choosing. A Tenant Services Coordinator (TSC) offers a collaborative relationship between the tenant and the property management entity and tenant. The TSC provides budget counseling, rent payment management, maintenance request and general contact with the property management entity. Case Managers assist with everyday living functions such as unit cleaning, food shopping and neighborhood navigating. The Certified Peer Specialist and Mobile Psych Therapist are elective services for participants who have experienced behavioral health symptoms or support for prior drug and alcohol addictions. Participants are not required to participate in services.

Landlord Incentives are available under this RFP given the need to obtain housing units for people experiencing homelessness and the City's intent to provide affordable housing for people at high risk for poor outcomes if they contract the coronavirus. Eligible landlord incentive costs include: Signing bonuses equal to up to 2 months of rent; Security deposits equal to up to 3 months of rent; Paying the cost to repair damages incurred by the program participant not covered by the security deposit or that are incurred while the program participant is still residing in the unit; and, Paying the costs of extra cleaning or maintenance of a program participant's unit or appliances. These may be reflected in the submitted budget.

Concept

HOME\$200 is a permanent housing solution for men and women who presently reside in a City funded shelter, COVID-19 prevention space or are in danger of becoming homeless. The City is seeking providers who have ownership of or access to available properties consisting of one-bedroom apartments, studios or efficiencies and the ability to manage the program. All referrals for this program will come from the Office of Homeless Services.

No funding is provided through this RFP for property renovation.

Participant Eligibility and Responsibilities

- Adults who are homeless and who have low incomes, including fixed, limited income from the following sources: Social Security (SS), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI); or from employment or other sources

Responsibilities for Participants living in HOME\$200

- Pay \$200.00 a month towards rental expenses using automatic debit
- Participate in Tenant Certification Classes
- Agree to learn about types of supportive services to be offered
- Obtain utilities and pay for required unit utilities (i.e. gas and electric)

Responsibilities of the Operator

- Accept referrals from the City, exclusively
- Show one unit per participant
- Ensure housing is inspected and is habitable; provide for maintenance and repair
- Ensure all units used meet Pennsylvania and Philadelphia landlord requirements
- Ensure the collection of tenant rents
- Coordinate with participants' existing supportive services and link them with services as appropriate; the focus of the operator is on housing stability, not services.
- Participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Responsibilities of OHS

- Provide referrals and coordinate Tenant Certification Classes
- Complete rent reasonable review for all proposed units
- Provide training and support for program implementation, HMIS participation, etc.
- Monitor project to ensure compliance with funding sources

Funding Source Requirements

Projects funded through this RFP are intended to be funded through Special Emergency Solutions Grants Program funds (ESG-CV) that were allocated to Philadelphia by HUD as authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Funded projects must comply with the following requirements:

- All [HUD Emergency Solutions Program \(ESG\) regulations](#), as detailed in [24 CFR §576](#);
- Operate using a Housing First approach, which is a model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in safe, decent and affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible, thus ending their homelessness.
- Only accept participant referrals from the Coordinated Entry and Assessment-Based Housing Referral System (CEA-BHRS);
- Enter client-level data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS);
- [CoC written standards for the use of this assistance](#), which includes policies and procedures for providing rapid re-housing housing assistance
- The [Philadelphia CoC Nondiscrimination Policy](#)
- The [Philadelphia Continuum of Care Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual violence, Human Trafficking, or Stalking](#)

RFP Response

Responses must be double spaced, minimum font size 12, not to exceed 10 pages, not including attachments.

1. Organizational Overview: Provide an overview, including:

- a. General Information:
 - i. Name and address of agency
 - ii. Name, title, telephone and email of contact person
 - iii. Brief description of agency background and services
 - iv. Proposed number of housing units to be provided (minimum 20, maximum 100)
 - b. Describe your experience in similar projects. Provide concrete examples that illustrate your organization's experience and expertise. Include the following in your response:
 - i. Experience in helping participants locate, move into, and maintain housing; AND
 - ii. Experience administering rental assistance, including calculating client rental portion, maintaining client housing files, and ensuring timely rental payments to owners; AND
 - iii. Experience working with low income individuals, including those with behavioral health challenges
2. Proposed Approach: Describe the agency's proposed approach to the project including
- a. Philosophy toward assisting vulnerable individuals in a culturally competent manner
 - b. Proposed implementation timeline
 - c. How you will identify the housing units for the program. In your response, be sure to address the following:
 - i. Landlord recruitment plan and any proposed incentives.
 - ii. How you will support participants with move ins despite the limitations resulting from COVID-19 and the need for social distancing?
 - iii. How rent collection, property maintenance and operations functions will be carried out?
 - d. Plan for offering and/or linking people to support, specifically if an individual is having difficulty paying rent and/or is having behavioral health challenges.
 - e. What partnerships will you bring to the table?
 - f. How the project will address racial inequalities and housing discrimination?
3. One Year Proposed Budget. Please complete a one-year budget on the attached Budget Template.

Questions and to Submit A Proposal

If you have questions about this RFP, and to submit a proposal, please email Roberta.cancellier@phila.gov and ebonye.williams@phila.gov. Proposals will be accepted until 5 p.m. on December 31, 2020, subject to availability of funds.