



Amended and Restated Notice of Funding Availability

Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV) Round 2

COMMBUYS Document Number: DHCD2020-30

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Description

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is pleased to announce the availability of an additional \$22M in special Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV) Round Two funding, as authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136.

Through this amended ESG-CV Round 2 NOFA, DHCD seeks to provide medium-term measures to address homelessness.¹ DHCD is utilizing this NOFA to:

1. Temporarily provide funding to help individual shelters restore some of their pre-COVID-19 pandemic shelter capacity in new settings to allow for appropriate social/physical distancing
2. Provide flexible rapid rehousing funding to exit individuals from temporary and permanent shelter locations into stable housing.

Through these interventions, DHCD is seeking to reduce unsheltered homelessness rates, rehouse several hundred individuals experiencing homelessness, and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

It is expected that applicants will communicate and coordinate with local municipalities, CoCs, and peer organizations. Because funding is limited, DHCD may not fund all requests and/or ask applicants to pursue alternative funding sources for their projects. The NOFA will remain open until the first to occur of (a) award of all funds available under the ESG-CV grant or (b) the end of the Federal ESG-CV grant period (grant end day to be issued by HUD.) Per the CARES Act, all ESG-CV funding must be spent by September 30th, 2022 and used to engage in HUD-approved activities. DHCD expects to issue contracts aligned with the state fiscal year. As further defined in the application, proposed budgets should align with the following periods:

- July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 (FY21)
- July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (FY22)

Awarded subrecipients must:

- Demonstrate local need for additional shelter capacity and/or rapid rehousing resources
- Invoice DHCD monthly and include a reasonable amount of back-up documentation describing the use of funding.
- Regularly submit reports to DHCD on the number of people served and the services provided.
- Enter data into your local Continuum of Care's HMIS or a comparable database in accordance with HUD data collection standards.

¹ DHCD will be issuing a separate procurement to make \$10M available for permanent supportive housing (\$5M in FY21 and \$5M in FY22), and continue to identify approaches to increase permanent supportive housing throughout the Commonwealth.

Through a separate amendment to this NOFA, DHCD has also added \$5M from its ESG-CV Round 2 HUD allocation to address COVID-related costs from providers who submitted responses under the ESG-CV Round 1 NOFA. The Round 1 NOFA is not accepting additional responses at this time, as it is expected that all funds, including the additional \$5M, will be exhausted based on the proposals received to date.

- Produce a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to DHCD annually that accurately captures the total number of people served.
- Coordinate with the local Continuum of Care to match individuals with the most appropriate resource, including rapid rehousing resources funded through this NOFA and other local, state, and federally funded programs.
- Communicate regularly with DHCD regarding federal updates to the Emergency Solutions Grant program.

Eligible Applicants (Subrecipients)

Eligible subrecipients include units of general-purpose local government in Massachusetts, including entitlement communities which receive ESG funds directly from HUD, and private nonprofit organizations with a recent history of providing emergency shelter and/or rapid rehousing services who demonstrate capacity to deliver services effectively and efficiently.

DHCD is currently prohibited from issuing ESG funding to a Public or Local Housing Authority (PHA/LHA).

Applicants that applied under Round 1 may submit an additional proposal under this NOFA; for an applicant funded under Round 1, any such additional proposal must be for additional shelter bed capacity and/or rapid rehousing services beyond those proposed in the applicant's original proposal. Please see the application instructions for guidance on which forms must be resubmitted.

Note:

- Applicants who propose to utilize funding for services that require people experiencing homelessness to receive treatment or perform any other prerequisite activities as a condition for receiving shelter, housing, or other services will not be funded.
- Applicants who are not able to demonstrate an existing ability to comply with ESG HMIS requirements and generate the HUD required Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) will not be funded. (Organizations who are exempt from HUD HMIS requirements must demonstrate an existing ability to utilize a comparable database approved by their CoC which can generate a report that complies with HUD CAPER requirements.)

Eligible Activities and Costs

DHCD seeks to fund two distinct activities to address the immediate and medium-term needs posed by the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Temporarily fund ~500 beds of individual shelter capacity

To make up for shelter capacity now unusable due to COVID-19 depopulation/social distancing efforts, this NOFA seeks to temporarily fund approximately 500 beds statewide for 12-18 months. These beds must be:

- Low-threshold congregate or non-congregate overnight shelter capacity for homeless individuals in a new facility that adheres to DPH guidelines for social distancing.

- Replacing shelter capacity in a region where there is a demonstrated need for additional shelter due to depopulation, new shelter demand, or both.
- Be housing-focused, meaning actively working to connect guests with housing resources, including but not limited to the RRH resources funded in this NOFA

Respondents are required to consider current local needs in their region based on clearly defined data on shelter demand/unsheltered population and/or shelter capacity reduction, as well as facility availability, to determine an appropriate estimated start date. Regions with low bed availability and/or high numbers of unsheltered homeless individuals are encouraged to include a reasonable timeline for making beds available as soon as possible. Shelter beds funded through this NOFA must be available no later than November 15, 2020.

Recognizing that the goal of this funding is to replace shelter capacity across the Commonwealth, DHCD also acknowledges that behavioral health (BH) is an important component of serving individuals without homes, especially in light of the extreme stress, post-traumatic stress and other adverse mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Experience, expertise, or current capacity to address behavioral health needs will not qualify or disqualify a respondent from receiving funds. However, applicants should carefully respond to service-related questions in the project application so that DHCD can evaluate gaps in services, and how to coordinate with state agency partners in filling those gaps. Additionally, through a new partnership with MassHealth, respondents may be able to access MassHealth funding to provide specialized Community Support Program (CSP)² services to eligible MassHealth members residing in shelters procured through this NOFA. More information about this resource will be issued by MassHealth.

Eligible shelter costs may only include expenses related to replacing low-threshold overnight shelter capacity for homeless individuals, as permitted by ESG-CV regulations. These costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Shelter facility expenses
 - o Rent
 - o Minor repairs and maintenance
- Shelter operations
 - o Food
 - o Utilities
 - o Other reasonable supplies
- Shelter staffing

² CSP is an array of services delivered by a community-based, mobile, multi-disciplinary team of professionals and paraprofessionals. These programs provide essential services to MassHealth managed care enrollees with a long-standing history of psychiatric or substance use disorder and to their families, or to managed care enrollees at varying degrees of medical risk, or to children/adolescents enrolled in managed care who have behavioral health issues challenging their optimal level of functioning in the home/community setting. Services include outreach and supportive services, delivered in a community setting, which will vary with respect to hours, type and intensity of services depending on the changing needs of the enrollee.

- Shelter staff
- Case manager(s)
- Supervisor(s)
- Manager

Per HUD restrictions, these funds *may not* be used for building acquisition. If respondents wish to use *other* funds to acquire a building then operate it as a shelter using these ESG-CV Round Two funds, they may do so, provided that the shelter beds can be brought online by November 15.

2. Fund flexible rapid rehousing (RRH) resources for individuals³

This NOFA provides funds for housing relocation and stabilization services and/or short- or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to help individuals living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation⁴ move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

These interventions may include:

- **Rental Assistance:** rental assistance and rental arrears, up to 24 months
- **Financial Assistance:** rental application fees, security and utility deposits, utility payments, last month's rent, moving costs
- **Services:** housing search and placement, housing stability case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, credit repair

Respondents must demonstrate a plan to deploy these funds flexibly to a clearly defined targeted sub-population in their response based on demonstrable analysis of available HMIS, CoC, and Coordinated Entry data. Proposed assistance must use a client-centered approach to meet each person's unique needs, whether that is a light-touch triage/diversion approach with no financial assistance, an intensive up to 24 months of rental assistance, or something in between. Respondents must demonstrate that their proposed RRH intervention has been coordinated with their CoC and are encouraged to utilize tools made available by HUD and the National Alliance for developing a local coordinated RRH response.

DHCD will give first priority to respondents proposing both shelter *and* rapid rehousing. If funds remain available 90 days after posting, DHCD will then consider rapid-rehousing-only proposals.

ESG-CV Round Two RRH funds may be used to provide housing relocation and stabilization services and/or short-medium-term rental assistance as necessary to help individuals or EA/HomeBASE-*ineligible* families living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation (as described in paragraph (1) of the "homeless" definition in [CFR 24 Part 576.2](#)) move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. It is incumbent upon providers to work with their CoCs to target these limited funds based on need.

³ EA/HomeBASE ineligible families living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation may also be served with these funds.

⁴ Or EA/HomeBASE ineligible family.

Applicants and subrecipients are expected to familiarize themselves with ESG rules, requirements, and program information available at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/>.

Application Instructions, Threshold Eligibility Criteria and Deadline

All interested subrecipients, regardless of prior communications with the Department, must respond to this posting by submitting a completed application by clicking here. Applicants are encouraged to prepare their application responses BEFORE beginning the online application. The application does not permit applicants to save their work.

In addition to completing the online application, the documents listed below and posted in COMMBUYS **must** be submitted by email to DHCDEmergencySolutionsGrant@Mass.gov with the subject line “ESG-CV Round Two: Additional Documents”. Documents 1-3 should be prepared for submission BEFORE beginning your application.

1. Attachment A – Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form (CASL)
 - a. The file must be saved as a “[Applicant Name] – CASL”
 - b. Applicants who applied in ESG-CV Round 1 do not need to resubmit the CASL.
2. Attachment B - Budget
 - a. Note: the Excel workbook contains TWO tabs - July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 and July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022; information must be inserted into the budget template on both tabs.
 - b. Attachment B – Budget must be saved as “[Applicant Name] - Attachment B - Budget” in Excel.
3. Program Policies & Procedures
 - a. Applicants who did not apply in Round 1 MUST send DHCD a copy of their program policies & procedures or other document(s) that guide staff and inform how the program is operated. Applicants who did apply in Round 1 do not need to resubmit program policies if they will remain the same.
 - b. If the application is requesting funding for multiple programs, applicants must submit policies & procedures that govern each program.
 - c. If an application proposes to fund temporary shelter established in response to COVID-19 and policies & procedures have not been created, you may indicate so in the body of your email to DHCD.
4. Letter of endorsement from the local board of health and municipal leadership where the proposed shelter site is located, by the time of contract execution (not required with NOFA submission).

As described in the application & required documents, applicants must describe their experience delivering emergency shelter and/or RRH services; identify the anticipated number of emergency shelter beds to be put up and the anticipated number of persons served; clearly describe what activities, costs, and services will be directly funded by this proposal; clearly articulate how those services are related to COVID-19; describe how the amount of the request was determined; identify if the applicant is working in partnership with a municipality to provide emergency shelter and specify the total estimated cost of that response or other offsets.

To be funded, an application must be complete and meet the following threshold criteria:

- A. Eligible Subrecipient: Local government or non-profit with a recent history of providing emergency shelter services and demonstrate an existing capacity to deliver such services effectively and efficiently
- B. Proposed Use:
 - 1. Provide new, temporary emergency capacity for individuals experiencing homelessness AND
 - 2. Provide rapid rehousing services to place an individual⁵ into permanent housing
- C. Services are not conditional (i.e. participants are not required to receive treatment or perform any other prerequisite activities as a condition for receiving services.)
- D. Budget: Demonstrates reasonable and justifiable costs that, if requested, can be supported with evidence of actual costs and directly relate to COVID-19; pursues all available complementary funding sources to cover costs, including the new MassHealth benefit. Administrative costs may not exceed 10%.
- E. HMIS: The applicant has the capacity to provide all HUD required deliverables in an accurate and timely manner

For responses that meet the threshold criteria, DHCD will review proposals every 2-3 weeks, or until funds are exhausted. For the purposes of scoring, proposals received every 2-3 weeks will be reviewed jointly and be treated as having been received at the same time. DHCD will accept proposals, conditionally accept proposals subject to rate/service negotiation, or reject proposals considering:

- **Statewide need** for shelter beds, ensuring beds are distributed geographically
- **Cost**, comparing rates between respondents and current Commonwealth vendors in similarly priced regions
- **Service quality** and proposal, including the respondent's responses to application questions and demonstrated commitment/ability to move individuals into housing.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and may be submitted at any time until funds are exhausted. However, DHCD encourages applicants to submit their application as soon as possible as funds are extremely limited. DHCD will notify each applicant of the outcome of their request within 4-6 weeks of the application receipt date.

While DHCD will initially only consider proposals for RRH and shelter, if funds remain available after 90 days, DHCD will consider proposals for rapid rehousing only (without shelter). If funds still remain available after another 90 days, DHCD reserves the right to further amend the NOFA to deploy these funds to otherwise prevent and respond to COVID-19.

DHCD reserves the right to negotiate with subrecipients regarding award amounts based on consideration of other funding sources and the evolving needs of the Commonwealth.

⁵ Or EA/HomeBASE ineligible family.

Estimated Calendar of Events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Announcement & Release of Posting	June 29, 2020
Virtual Bidders Conference	DHCD will host a virtual bidders conference on July 8, 2020 at 11 a.m. Please register here: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8303306612213020943 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
Close date for Posting and Responses	9/30/2022 @ 12:00 PM (prevailing Eastern Time)
DHCD Response Review	Applications will be considered in the order that they are received.
DHCD Announcement of Results and Determination	Applicants will be notified of award approval or denial within 4-6 weeks of receipt of application.

Questions

- All questions must be directed in writing to DHCDEmergencySolutionsGrant@Mass.gov with "Question: ESG-CV Round Two" in the subject line. No other methods – including phone calls, emails, or other forms of inquiries to DHCD staff – may be used.
- Questions may be submitted at any time.
- DHCD will update COMMBUYS with responses to submitted questions approximately every two weeks.

Additional Terms Required for Doing Business with the Commonwealth

Names of Standard Forms	Instructions
RFR - Required Specifications	Read and agree prior to submitting a Response.
Standard Contract Form and Instructions	Read and agree. Sign and submit original with wet signature upon Award, if any.

Exhibit 1: Shelter Scope of Services

Overnight Shelter Capacity

The Contractor shall notify the Department of any changes in the capacity prior to the change. If capacity is reduced due to circumstances beyond the contractor's control, the Department should be notified within one (1) Department business day after the reduction.

Meals

The Contractor shall provide or arrange for, at minimum, two (2) meals per day for its guests onsite.

Facility Location

The facility shall be either accessible to public transportation, provide access to public transportation, or in areas where there is no public transportation, provide transportation. The proposed use of the facility must be an allowed use under applicable zoning.

Restrictions on Eligibility

No restrictions on eligibility may be made for any of the following reasons

- Community of Origin
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Religion or creed
- Ancestry
- Gender, excepting gender specific facilities
- Gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Age, excepting persons under 18 years of age
- Physical or mental disability
- Use of a service animal
- History of Substance Use Disorder
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Immediate referrals to other systems of care are appropriate for persons in medical distress as a result of their intoxication.
- Veteran status
- Citizenship
- Use of prescribed medication, including, but not limited opiates, oxygen and benzodiazepines
- Refusal to take prescribed medications.
- Criminal history
- Behavioral issues occurring away from the shelter.
- Affiliation with any persons described in the list above
- Number of nights already served by the shelter.

Program Outputs / Outcomes

- The Contractor shall provide or arrange for, at minimum, 2 meals per day for its guests onsite.
- The Contractor shall monitor its shelter program and report its performance on at least monthly basis in the following ways, or others as required by DHCD:
 - Occupancy rates
 - Number of persons served per night
 - Number of vacant beds (if any) each night
 - Number of unique persons served each month
 - Number of meals served
 - Number of referrals to mainstream benefits, social services and health services
 - # of persons whose shelter stays were terminated and reasons for those terminations
 - # of persons leaving shelter each month for permanent housing situations
 - % of persons served each month that left for permanent housing situations

Performance Monitoring

- The Department will review the Contractor's invoices and accompanying reports each month (or as appropriate) to verify billing information.
- The Contractor shall maintain on site the following items:
 - a log of quarterly fire drills which shall include the date and time that each fire drill was held;
 - a log of serious incidents/problems
- The Contractor shall maintain on site, and provide to the Department in the first month of operation, the following items:
 - a copy of the rules governing the behavior of guests;
 - a copy of the rules governing the behavior of staff;
 - a copy of the grievance procedures;
 - a copy of the city/town occupancy permit, health inspection certificate and fire inspection certificate as required by law;
 - written personnel policies and procedures;
 - a copy of the job description for each staff position;
 - a copy of the resumes for the Executive Director and Program Director, or their equivalents;

Resources

The minimum resource requirements of this contract are described below.

- Staffing
 - The Contractor shall adequately staff the shelter facility / program during all hours of operation including, at a minimum, assigning one female staff member to be on duty at all times a female guest is at the shelter. The staffing shall be sufficient to perform all the Contractor's obligations stated in this contract.
 - Staffing able to be supported by other state resources will not be funded under this NOFA.
 - There must be at least one staff person who is certified in first aid, naloxone administration, and CPR on duty at all times.
 - The Contractor shall notify the Department when its Shelter Director will be leaving the shelter for more than five days and who is acting in his or her place.

- The Contractor shall designate a member of its staff to perform the activities of the Shelter Guest Rights Officer.
- Facility: The Contractor's shelter facility must meet all health and safety codes and all state and local licensing and occupancy requirements, as well as COVID-19 related local, state, and federal directives. The facility must provide personal hygiene spaces including bathrooms and showering facilities
- Sleeping Arrangements: Each guest must have a separate bed or cot made available to them and adequate space around each facility to assure social distancing protocols are met. Shelters serving both male and female guests must assure that the sleeping arrangements are separate for these two populations. Any person's gender is self-identified by the person and their sleeping arrangements shall be made accordingly.
- Bedding and Linens
 - Each bed and cot must be supplied with blankets sufficient to maintain personal comfort. Blankets must be cleaned at least once a month, and more often if needed, and must be replaced if worn. Blankets must be laundered or replaced between guests
 - Each guest must be supplied with a pillow, a pillow case, and one (1) towel. Two (2) clean sheets must be provided for each bed and cot. This linen must be laundered by the Contractor at least weekly and between guests. Towels should be laundered after each use.
 - Each bed must be supplied with a clean, fire retardant mattress. Each mattress or cot must be covered with a material which is easily cleaned.
- Evacuation Plan: Each facility must have a written evacuation plan clearly posted on each floor. The plan must include a list of emergency telephone numbers such as police, fire, ambulance, etc. Emergency exits must be clearly marked.
- Fire Drills: Facilities must have an unscheduled fire drill at least quarterly. Each facility must keep a log which indicates the day and time that each drill was held. Guests must be informed of the fire drill procedures.
- First Aid Kits: A fully equipped first aid kit must be available and accessible in case of an emergency.
- Medicines: Each facility must determine whether it intends to offer guests storage for their medicines. If storage is offered, then medicines must be stored in a safe and secure area separate and apart from cleaning fluids and toxic substances. All medicines must be available to guests to meet the prescribed timetable for taking the medicine.
- Each facility shall have naloxone on premises.

Cleanliness and disease control:

- Common areas and sleeping areas must be cleaned daily. "High Touch" areas must be disinfected every two hours.
- Shelters must follow local, state, and federal public health guidelines regarding facility cleaning and disease control.
- Toiletries: The Contractor shall provide sufficient toiletries to fulfill the needs of all individual guests in its shelter.
- Pets: For health and safety reasons, no guests will be permitted to keep pets in any facility. Service Animals shall be accepted.

Exhibit 2: Rapid Rehousing Scope of Services

Capacity

The Contractor shall notify the Department of any changes in the expected number of persons to be provided rapid Rehousing services and financial assistance. If expected capacity is reduced due to circumstances beyond the contractor's control, the Department should be notified immediately.

Facility Location

Rapid rehousing services should be provided in the shelter facility. The facility shall either be accessible to public transportation, provide access to public transportation, or in areas where there is no public transportation, provide transportation.

Restrictions on Eligibility

No restrictions on eligibility may be made for any of the following reasons

- Community of Origin
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Religion or creed
- Ancestry
- Gender, excepting gender specific facilities
- Gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Age, excepting persons under 18 years of age
- Physical or mental disability
- Use of a service animal
- History of Substance Use Disorder
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Immediate referrals to other systems of care are appropriate for persons in medical distress as a result of their intoxication.
- Veteran status
- Citizenship
- Use of prescribed medication, including, but not limited opiates, oxygen and benzodiazepines
- Refusal to take prescribed medications.
- Criminal history
- Behavioral issues occurring away from the shelter.
- Affiliation with any persons described in the list above
- Number of nights already served by the shelter.

Program Outputs / Outcomes

- The Contractor shall monitor its Rapid Rehousing program and report its performance on at least quarterly basis using HMIS data and the CAPER in the following ways:
 - Occupancy rates
 - Number of persons rapidly rehoused
 - Number of persons leaving the shelter with and without permanent housing
 - Amount of funds utilized for financial assistance

Performance Monitoring

- The Department will review the Contractor's invoices and accompanying reports each month (or as appropriate) to verify billing information.
- The Contractor shall maintain on site, and provide to the Department in the first month of operation, the following items:
 - a copy of the rules governing the behavior of guests;
 - a copy of the rules governing the behavior of staff;
 - a copy of the grievance procedures;
 - written personnel policies and procedures;
 - a copy of the job description for each staff position;
 - a copy of the resumes for the Executive Director and Program Director, or their equivalents;

Resources

The minimum resource requirements of this contract are described below.

- Staffing
 - The Contractor shall adequately staff the rapid rehousing component of the program including housing search staff.
 - The Contractor shall designate a member of its staff to perform the activities of the Guest Rights Officer. This may be the same person as the Shelter Guest Right's officer