Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Program

Guidelines

Program Purpose

To supplement local Homelessness Prevention and Rapid-Rehousing efforts to help slow the transmission of COVID-19 and to prevent evictions and/or housing loss due to non-payment of rent caused by COVID-19 related decline in income, wage reduction, job loss, health challenges, or similar circumstances.

Eligible Grantees

OHFA will distribute these funds to Ohio's HUD-approved Continua of Care, including the eight large Continua and the Balance of State Continuum of Care. CoCs may designate an affiliated entity as a recipient on its behalf.

Grantee Responsibilities

In accordance with existing protocols, grantees will assess individual recipients, validate individual eligibility for funding, make payments to landlords for rent, etc. Grantees will administer and account for expenditures of grant funds and will maintain and submit regular reports on an ongoing basis on individual attributes, expenditure amounts, and outcomes to OHFA.

Eligible Uses of Funds

Homelessness Prevention Rapid Rehousing (HPRR)

1. HPRR Grants will be distributed based on a formula corresponding to the number of extremely low-income and very low-income residents in CoC service areas.

   - Eligible uses of HPRR funds may include rental assistance payments, security deposits, landlord verification services, housing case management, etc.

   - Eligible individuals to include people and households identified through the CoC's centralized intake process. Priority should be given to individuals at greater risk of contracting COVID-19, e.g., seniors aged 60 and older and individuals with underlying health conditions.

   - The types of financial assistance that may be provided to eligible individuals with HPRR funds are as follows: (1) Rental Assistance (including arrears); (2)

Security Deposits; and (3) Moving Cost Assistance. Grantee will determine how much rental assistance will be provided and the length of assistance, based on the individualized assessment of the recipient and potential negotiations with the landlord. No more than 6 months of rental assistance may be provided, including arrears.

- o *On a limited basis, funds may be used for hotel or motel stays for high risk individuals. Eligible individuals include seniors aged 60 and older, individuals with underlying pre-existing conditions and pregnant women. The length of assistance may not to exceed 30 days. Individuals receiving such assistance must be prioritized for more permanent housing options to limit length of stay.*

Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA)

2. Emergency Rental Assistance grants will similarly be distributed based on a formula corresponding to the number of extremely low-income and very low-income residents in CoC service areas.

- Eligible uses of funds include rental assistance payments, landlord verification services, housing case management, etc.

  Eligible individuals will include those who are unable to pay their rent and are at imminent risk of eviction. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who have experienced a decline in income, weekly wage reduction, job loss or other financial challenges stemming from COVID-19 related matters.

- The types of financial assistance that may be provided to eligible individuals with ERA funds are as follows: (1) Rental Assistance (including arrears) and (2) Security Deposits. Grantee will determine how much rental assistance will be provided and the length of assistance, based on the individualized assessment of the recipient and potential negotiations with the landlord. No more than 6 months of rental assistance may be provided, including arrears.

At a minimum, eligibility for either the HPRR or ERA Program is limited to individuals with incomes at or below 50% AMGI, with priority given to households with incomes at or below 30% AMGI.

Rental payments must not exceed 120% of the HUD Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the CoC service area, unless approved by OHFA.

HUD Fair Market Rents (FMR) are available here:
https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2020_code/select_Geography.odn

Available Funds

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) Board of Directors has authorized the use of unrestricted Agency General Reserve Funds in an amount not to exceed $5 million for this program.

Funds will be distributed to the CoC Service Areas as follows:

Balance of State	$ 2,006,273
Cuyahoga	$ 785,654
Franklin	$ 651,962
Hamilton	$ 534,622
Lucas	$ 251,013
Mahoning	$ 104,943
Montgomery	$ 277,191
Stark	$ 139,141
Summit	$ 249,202

Administrative Costs: Up to 8% of funds can be utilized by the grantee to cover administrative expenses associated with the program.

Reporting Requirements

Grantee must provide reports from Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data, including information about recipients, i.e., date of birth, age, race, ethnicity, income, geographic origination information, family-status, members in household, etc. Data should be anonymized and de-identified prior to reporting through the use of a hashing process which will be provided to the CoC. The hashing process will provide a Unique Identifier in lieu of Personally Identifying Information (First name, last name, date of birth, social security number).

Reporting must also include details of the assistance provided, included hardship category, amount of assistance provided, date of contact, date of payment, form of assistance (i.e. rent payment, security deposit), and any outcomes related to payment.

Recipients of assistance must be identifiable as receiving this assistance, differentiated from other forms of assistance provided by each CoC.

Reporting should occur on a regular basis, whereby a CoC provides updated records on a monthly basis, starting one month after receipt of funding. Reporting should continue until the month following the exhaustion of funds.

Grant Terms

Grant agreements will begin on April 1, 2020 and will expire on December 31, 2020.