



Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Winter Warming Centers August 2025

Part 1: GUIDELINES

Community Shelter Board
355 E. Campus View Blvd,
Suite 250 Columbus, OH
43235



1. PURPOSE

Community Shelter Board (CSB) leads a coordinated, community effort to make sure everyone has a place to call home in Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio.

Community Shelter Board (CSB) is seeking qualifications for service providers and building operators for at least four (4) Winter Warming Centers for the Columbus and Franklin County area for the timeframe of 12/01/25 – 03/31/26, geographically distributed in the north, east, south, and west side of Columbus.

The goals of the Winter Warming Centers are to provide a safe, trauma-informed, and client-centered environment while at the same time providing access to rehousing support and other appropriate services (access to mental and physical healthcare services, treatment, and benefit needs, etc.).

Measures of Success:

1. Keep people safe from hypothermia by giving them a place to stay inside.
2. Record all clients in the Homeless Management Information System (“HMIS”).
3. Record total number of clients obtaining documentation and uploading them in HMIS.
4. Ensure all who access the Warming Centers have a safety plan. (Service Providers)
5. Ensure all who access the Warming Centers have a housing plan. (Service Providers)

Applicants can apply to provide one or multiple components of the Winter Warming Center program, and either 24/7 or a specific period (i.e., nighttime only services):

1. Winter Warming Center operations
2. Winter Warming Center services

CSB will award funds to multiple partners for the implementation of the Winter Warming Center program.

2. TARGET POPULATION

The Winter Warming Center program will serve individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness who are hesitant to access traditional shelters, not able to access traditional shelters, or it is determined that they would benefit from accessing services in a Warming Center. The facilities may also serve as drop-in centers during the day for those that do not need overnight accommodations.

3. EXPECTATIONS

CSB is looking for organizations that can work together to run these centers. They should have experience helping homeless and marginalized people. CSB will give training and support to chosen organizations. It should be noted that all organizations who will be awarded the Winter Warming Center funds will be provided with specific training opportunities that will include de-escalation and crisis intervention, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, harm reduction, customer engagement, intake, homeless management information system training (required for operators), direct client assistance (rent assistance) training, permanent supportive housing (PSH) training and others. Existing and prior training or experience in these areas is an asset.



Minimum Qualifications for Partnership

A prospective partner must have the following qualifications:

1. Non-profit, faith-based, private, and/or public organization licensed to operate in the State of Ohio.
2. Capacity to be fully staffed upon contract start date and trained before winter warming center opening.
3. Agency or agency satellite site located within Columbus.
4. Ability to provide or obtain office space and equipment necessary to fulfill program requirements.

As part of the initial application:

1. Applicant certifies that all statements herein are true, accurate, and complete.
2. Applicant is an eligible recipient of funds based on requirements per the Application.
3. Applicant will not permit any discrimination based on gender, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability in connection with its participation in the program.
4. Applicant agrees to fully utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and comply with all applicable training, rules, and regulations.

Prior to awarding contracts, CSB will request copies of the following documents if they are not already on file. Agencies will have five (5) business days from the date of written request to provide the requested documents to grants@csb.org:

1. Current verification of nonprofit status or faith-based, private, or public organization. Your agency must have a federal tax identification number/employer identification number.
2. List of Board of Trustees of other governing body of the organization.
3. CSB review of applicant's most recent audit (management letter, signed response, and action, if applicable)
4. Proof of federally approved indirect rate, if applicable.
5. Current 990, FAPIIS review, and proof of federal System for Award Management (SAM) registration in good standing, if applicable, for non-profit agencies.
6. Completion of CSB's partner and vendor leadership demographic form.
7. W9 and confirmation of ACH capabilities.

If awarded funding, awardee must agree to the following post award requirements and certifications:

1. Applicant will ensure expenditures of funds are for eligible uses under the program.
2. Applicant must have a point of contact to submit CSB's Excel invoice document electronically, monthly at a minimum. Invoices must be submitted timely and accurately each month.
3. Applicant will maintain records in connection with administration of the program for at least five years after the date of termination of the Professional Services Agreement(s).
4. Applicant will comply with the terms and conditions of the program.



5. Should the Applicant be awarded funds under this RFQ, the Applicant will comply with all requirements, as set forth in the Professional Services Agreement and any other document evidencing or governing the Agreement.

RFQ Submission Procedures

Applications for the RFQ will only be accepted via Submittable, an online application platform. To access the online application, please click [here](#). Users may save partial application work as a draft within Submittable and return later. To be considered complete, an application will include an answer to each narrative response question and a proposed budget(s) as an uploaded attachment.

Substantive technical assistance will be provided on August 18, 2025. Register [here]. If you have questions about or difficulty operating the Submittable online application platform, please send an email to grants@csb.org. Interested parties need to submit questions by August 22, 2025. Responses will be posted at [csb.org](https://www.csb.org) by August 25, 2025.

For projects selected for funding, organizations will work with CSB to further develop their budgets based on the funding availability.

Interested agencies must respond to this RFQ by September 15, 2025, by 5:00pm EST. CSB will let agencies know whether they have been awarded funding by September 29, 2025. In the interim, CSB may request more information or clarification from prospective awardees.

4. PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

a. Winter Warming Center Services. CSB is seeking proposals with the following specifications:

1. Engage individuals experiencing homelessness throughout their stay to link them to housing or resources that will facilitate their housing. Additional linkages in the community, including street outreach, are critical and CSB can assist in this planning.
2. Implement services that demonstrate cultural humility to a diverse array of people who may also have physical, mental, or emotional conditions that impact their current homeless crisis. Services will be grounded in a harm reduction and trauma informed approach. Past experience working with clients in active addiction or experiencing a mental health crisis a plus.
3. Maintain and secure client documentation.
4. Provide necessary supplies including computer, phones, and secure storage (copier, scanner, file cabinets, etc.). needed determine and implement engagement incentives, if available.
5. Consider use of peer supports and/or employ people with lived experience of homelessness in the program, however applicants should refrain from staffing that includes individuals who are actively in a homeless crisis; applicants should also be able to show how people with lived experience of homelessness, addiction, physical or mental healthcare needs or recovery provided input into the services components of the application.

6. The staffing plan will ensure continuity of care throughout the funding term and that there is adequate and regular case supervision and program management.
7. Commit program staff with appropriate education, experience (work or lived), and training necessary to provide effective, housing focused services. Training will incorporate motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, harm reduction, domestic violence, community resources, etc. Training will be completed pre-program start date and CSB will work collaboratively with partner on training needs. Service providers are responsible for on-going training and onboarding throughout the program.
8. Provide point person for communication with operations provider and CSB for updates or concerns, as needed.
9. Participate in weekly system communication/check-ins.
10. Participate in weekly case conferences and maintain case notes on all clients.

b. Winter Warming Center Operations. CSB is seeking proposals with the following specifications:

1. Provide individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness throughout their stay with 24/7, low barrier, harm reduction-based, and trauma-informed shelter. The facility is safe, secure, and provides dignified overnight shelter accommodations.
2. Shelter operations are supported by policies and procedures that have been developed in collaboration with and approved by CSB to ensure a minimum standard of care.
3. Provide access to the facility during the day to individuals that do not need overnight accommodation, as a drop-in center, if applicable.
4. Implement culturally competent operations to a diverse array of people who may also have physical, mental, or emotional conditions that impact their current homeless crisis.
5. Consider use of peer supports and/or employ people with lived experience of homelessness in the program, however applicants should refrain from staffing that includes individuals who are actively in a homeless crisis; applicants should also be able to show how people with lived experience of homelessness, addiction, physical or mental healthcare needs or recovery provided input into the operational components of the application.
6. Commit operations staff with appropriate education, experience (work or lived), and training necessary to provide effective, safe, trauma informed shelter accommodations. Training will incorporate motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, harm reduction, domestic violence, crisis de-escalation, etc. Training will be completed pre-program start date and CSB will work collaboratively with partner on training needs. Operators are responsible for on-going training and onboarding throughout the program.
 - a. The staffing plan will ensure appropriate 24/7 staff coverage throughout the funding term with adequate supervision and program management. The staffing plan will be supported by security staff, who will also be trained in crisis de-escalation. Involuntary participant exits are done only in instances where the individual is threatening the safety of themselves or others. Applicant must provide the client with a grievance and appeal process prior to exit from the warming center. Operations staff will work closely with security to ensure the health and safety of all guests.



7. Maintain a daily roster and case notes. Collectively work with CSB and the Homeless Hotline to achieve agreed upon additional data collection. Commit to collecting data in HMIS on program participants and collaboratively work with CSB, the Homeless Hotline and participants and have staff trained in HMIS data collection to achieve comprehensive data collection. CSB is committed to implementing new and innovative data collection approaches as it relates to client engagement, the use of the Hotline and data entry. The goal is to have an equitable system that provides comprehensive program needs to the individual while at the same time capturing the data needed to show the scope and impacts of the Warming Centers alongside community gaps and needs.
8. Work with CSB to develop a plan for food provision for program participants.
9. Establish a cleaning schedule and protocol (including pest control, sanitizing, trash pickup inside and outside of the facility). Encourage involvement of participants in keeping the facility clean and safe.
10. Maintain and secure client documentation.
11. Provide pet management, if applicable (designated pet area and cages).
12. Designate and post location of an outdoor smoking area.
13. Ensure clean bedding/laundry, daily or as applicable.
14. Coordinate on-site community providers and volunteers.
15. Provide extended hours of operation for individuals with health or disability limitations, as needed.
16. Implement infectious disease protocol.
 - a. Follow Columbus Public Health guidelines with regard to isolation, social distancing, use of masks, and other public health measures.
17. Provide access to interpretation services (CSB will provide information to its own service to be used).
18. Provide storage for client's personal belongings and coordinates the handling of personal items as clients leave the program.
19. Provide and maintain warming station supplies.
20. Arrange client transportation as needed (CSB supplied bus passes, taxi).
21. Participate in weekly system communication/ check-ins.

5. CONTRACT AMOUNT AND TERMS

The total amount of available funding is not known and is dependent on the funding requested by the applicants and is non-renewable.

Applicants should apply for the amount of funding that can reasonably be spent through 3/31/2026. Applicants should account for the initial, staff hiring and training costs, pre-opening of the Winter Warming Center, estimated to be two weeks prior to the 12/1/2025 opening day. We are projecting a contract effective date of 11/15/2025.

6. SCHEDULE

Dates	Activities
8/11/2025	Request for qualifications released
8/18/2025	Information Session
8/22/2025	All questions on the RFQ due, emailed to: grants@csb.org
8/25/2025	Responses to RFQ questions submitted posted here .
9/15/2025	Completed proposals due to CSB by 5 pm, emailed to: grants@csb.org
09/15/2025 - 09/22/2025	Application review and selection process with applicants; community work on facilities selection
9/29/2025	Providers selection and announcement
10/15/2025	Contracts issuance, with an 11/15/25 effective date Staffing advertising and selection
11/1/2025 - 11/29/2025	Staff hiring
11/15/2025 - 11/29/2025	Staff training
12/1/2025	Program fully staffed and operational

7. REVIEW CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed based on the following:

- **Applicant Capacity:** Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the [Homeless Crisis Response System Policies and Procedures](#), within the flexibility allowed by CSB, given the limited timeframe of the program?
- Does the applicant demonstrate the capacity to implement the Winter Warming Center component selected as described in the RFQ, collaboratively working with CSB and in partnership with other providers? Special consideration is given for applications that demonstrate a multi-partner approach toward safe overnight programs and rehousing support.
- Does the applicant demonstrate the capacity and expertise to engage a specific population that does not traditionally utilize emergency shelter (i.e., transitional age youth, LGBTQI individuals, couples, individuals with pets, survivors, and victims of human trafficking, etc.)
- **Application Completeness:** Is the RFQ responsive? Is the application complete? Does the applicant adequately describe the component selected for implementation?
- **Cost Efficiency:** Is the requested budget reasonable? Are costs adequately explained and reasonable?



8. QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please direct any questions to grants@csb.org by August 22, 2025. Responses to all questions submitted will be posted to CSB's website at this link: [Applying for Funds: Providers: Community Shelter Board \(csb.org\)](#) on August 25, 2025.

Completed applications are due electronically no later than 5:00 pm on September 15, 2025 in Submittable. A complete application consists of the Winter Warming Centers Part 2 Application and Budget form(s) completed.