

# Request for Proposals

## **Single Adult Rapid Re-Housing October 2019**

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

# Part 1: Request for Proposals

## 1. Purpose

Community Shelter Board (CSB) is seeking proposals for a program providing rapid re-housing (RRH) services for single adults who are homeless in Columbus and Franklin County starting January 1, 2020. CSB may, at its discretion, renew funding for the program as part of the annual Gateway funding process.

RRH is an intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness, return to permanent housing in the community, and not become homeless again immediately after exiting services or in the near term. The program outlined in this RFP will serve single adults who are initially engaged while residing in a single adult emergency shelter funded by CSB.

## 2. Target Population

### a. Minimum Program Eligibility

The RRH program will serve single adults who are initially engaged and enrolled while residing in a single adult emergency shelter funded by CSB. This includes individuals who are enrolled in the RRH program and then subsequently exit shelter to either an unsheltered location or to an institution, such as a hospital or jail, for a period of 90 days or less. This means the program will continue to assist homeless single adults while they remain literally homeless and until they are permanently housed or otherwise are no longer literally homeless.

At minimum, eligible homeless individuals served by the program will be those who are unable to successfully exit homelessness on their own or through other assistance within a short period (typically within 5 days of *initially* becoming homeless) and who need focused, individualized assistance to quickly secure and stabilize in permanent housing. To be eligible for CSB Direct Client Assistance (DCA, i.e., financial assistance), individuals served must also have income below 35% of the Area Median Income (AMI) as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

### b. Priority Sub-Populations

The single adult RRH program funded through this RFP will prioritize RRH assistance for individuals entering emergency shelters who need moderate levels of financial assistance and supportive services to exit homelessness into permanent housing. This includes individuals who are not served by the single adult RRH program operated by YMCA of Central Ohio, which prioritizes RRH assistance for single adults entering shelter who have high service and assistance needs.

The RRH program funded through this RFP will assist homeless individuals in shelter who are not served by YMCA and who are unable to quickly and successfully exit to and stabilize in permanent housing. This may be because of barriers related to housing history, credit, income, and/or other factors. Specific targeting and prioritization criteria for this program will be developed by CSB, in consultation with the successful applicant. CSB will work with the successful applicant and YMCA to develop a standardized process to determine which single adult RRH program is most appropriate.

### 3. Program Specifications

The following describes program specifications the successful applicant will meet and adhere to throughout the term of the funding award.

#### a. RRH Core Components

While the program must have all three RRH core components below available, it is not required that a participant use them all.

##### **Housing Identification**

- < Recruit landlords to provide housing opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- < Address potential barriers to landlord participation such as concerns about the short-term nature of rental assistance and tenant qualifications.
- < Assist participants to find and secure appropriate rental housing that meets habitability standards.

##### **Rent and Move-In Assistance (financial assistance via CSB's DCA program)**

- < Provide assistance to cover allowable move-in costs, deposits, and the rental and/or utility assistance necessary to allow participants to move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize in permanent housing.
- < CSB's DCA program will administer the costs for the first month's rent and security deposit. The program will administer the costs for subsequent months' rent and request reimbursement from CSB for these costs.

##### **RRH Case Management and Services**

- < Help participants develop and maintain an Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan (IHSP) that includes housing search and placement goals initially and is then updated, once the participant is housed, to include housing stabilization and retention goals.
- < Help participants identify and select among various permanent housing options based on their unique needs, preferences, and financial resources.
- < Help participants address issues that may impede access to housing (such as credit history, arrears, and legal issues).
- < Help participants negotiate manageable and appropriate lease agreements with landlords.
- < Make appropriate and time-limited housing-related services and supports available to participants to allow them to stabilize quickly in permanent housing.
- < Monitor participants' housing stability and be available to resolve crises, at a minimum during the time RRH assistance is provided.
- < Provide or assist participants with connections to resources that help them stabilize in housing, improve their safety and well-being, and achieve their long-term goals. This includes providing or ensuring that the participant has access to resources related to benefits, employment and community-based services (if needed/appropriate) so that they can sustain rent payments independently when rental assistance ends.
- < Ensure that services provided are participant-directed, respectful of participants' right to self-determination, and voluntary. Participants understand that RRH assistance is premised on their active involvement with RRH case management to achieve their IHSP. RRH staff in turn actively work to engage participants in problem-solving and goal achievement, including use of evidence-based practices, such as Motivational Interviewing, when participants are not engaging in case management.

**b. RRH Program Standards**

The program will meet HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) requirements, as detailed in 24 CFR Part 576, including housing habitability standards. The program will adhere to the [RRH Program Standards](#) published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH). (NOTE: applicants should disregard the RRH performance benchmarks included in the NAEH document. CSB will establish a Program Outcomes Plan (POP) that includes applicable performance measures and goals for the program). RRH is fundamentally a Housing First intervention providing housing and voluntary services for people experiencing a housing crisis without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety). The program should use a progressive assistance approach that seeks to help households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with the least amount of financial assistance and services needed to quickly resolve the housing crisis and avoid an immediate return to homelessness.

**c. Program Staffing, Training, and Supervision**

Applicants should propose the number of case managers and housing specialists they believe can be supported with available funding, after accounting for other necessary staffing and program costs. Applicants should describe the roles and responsibilities for case managers and housing specialists. Program staffing and services will ensure a single, primary case manager is assigned to participants throughout program enrollment and that there is adequate and regular case supervision and program management.

Case managers will have an average case load size of 20-30 single adult participants who may be in various stages of being assisted to secure or stabilize in permanent housing. Applicants must have a staffing plan that will assure continuity of care, and full program active case load capacity throughout the funding term (e.g., over hiring based on expected staff turnover to assure consistent level of case management staffing).

All program staff will have appropriate education, experience and training necessary to provide high quality, effective services. Applicants must describe in the proposal the training each staff person will receive upon hire (e.g., RRH core practices, Housing First, motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, harm reduction, domestic violence, community resources, etc.), along with the timelines within which this training will be completed (e.g., within 90 days of hire).

Final decisions around program design and staffing configuration must be made in consultation with and be approved by CSB post-award and prior to January 1, 2020. See Section 6. RFP Schedule for additional information.

**d. Screening, Triage, Assessment, and Housing Plans**

The need for RRH services will be determined via a standardized screening tool and process approved by CSB and used by all system partners that accounts for program eligibility and prioritization factors.

Screening and referral to the program will occur following a brief period (typically 5 days) that first allows individuals who are newly homeless to resolve their homelessness on their own or with other assistance. Screening and referral to the RRH program will be completed by shelter staff. Screening and referral decisions will also account for additional information not collected in the standardized screening tool, such as through case conferences and referring shelter staff observations.

Following referral and program intake, case managers will conduct a housing barrier and service needs assessment using a standardized assessment tool. The assessment will focus on housing

barriers and other history, characteristics, and service needs directly relevant to quickly obtaining and stabilizing in permanent housing and will form the basis for an initial IHSP. The assessment and initial IHSP will typically be conducted where the participant is staying (e.g., in shelter) or where otherwise practical for the participant. The assessment and an initial IHSP will be completed no later than two (2) business days following program referral and intake.

CSB will support the program, as necessary, in securing private, on-site space at shelter facilities in order to meet with participants.

#### **e. Program Services**

Program participants will be actively engaged in identifying their housing barriers and other critical service needs, developing their IHSP, and deciding which housing options and services best meet their needs. The program will strive to honor participant choices while also actively engaging participants, using Motivational Interviewing and other strategies, in making choices that quickly resolve their homeless crisis. This may involve strongly encouraging or limiting housing options for which financial assistance may be provided to those that are practical, safe, and at least reasonably sustainable. In all cases, participants will be assisted with creating an IHSP upon exiting the program that addresses ongoing housing needs and potential future housing crises.

If a client returns to the shelter system (i.e., has multiple stays), the program will attempt to reassign the same case manager to a client. Staff will provide transportation or coordinate transportation for individuals with whom they are working. Staff will be scheduled to work during hours when they are most likely to contact participants, including during evening and weekends as necessary.

Staff will cultivate relationships with landlords and develop a successful process for accessing safe, sustainable housing on behalf of participants. Staff will work closely with landlords to address landlord concerns about leasing to a participant and address tenancy issues in order to avoid participant eviction and maintain landlord satisfaction. Staff will coordinate with the CSB Community Housing Manager to engage landlord partners.

Once housed, program staff will continue actively working with participants, including making in-home visits and assisting participants with understanding and meeting lease obligations. As necessary, staff will continue assisting participants, including requesting CSB DCA for rent and utility needs, until the participant is able to maintain housing without further program assistance or the maximum term of assistance is reached, whichever occurs sooner.

#### **f. Service Limitations**

All program participants will be offered a basic, initial package of assistance:

- ⟨ Housing search and placement assistance at an amount and intensity sufficient to achieve rapid placement in permanent housing and that supports overall POP achievement.
- ⟨ Financial assistance for initial, allowable move-in expenses via CSB DCA and up to an additional 3 months financial assistance for allowable housing costs determined on month-to-month basis according to documented financial need. Financial need means the participant lacks necessary financial resources to pay for housing costs and, absent assistance will immediately be subject to eviction and return to literal homelessness.
- ⟨ RRH case management and services for up to 3 months post-housing placement determined on a month-to-month basis according to documented need related to resolving housing retention barriers.

Participants may qualify for up to an additional 3 months of financial assistance, case management, and services based on documented need indicating an imminent return to literal homelessness absent assistance. Additional assistance beyond the initial basic package described above must be based on 1) an updated housing barrier and service needs assessment, and 2) may only be offered on a month-to-month basis according to financial need, needs related to resolving housing retention barriers, and program resources.

The maximum term of program assistance, from program enrollment to program exit is 9 months. However, as indicated above and per a progressive engagement approach, participants will only be provided the type, amount, and duration of assistance necessary to secure and stabilize in housing.

#### **4. Qualifications and Performance**

CSB is seeking proposals that will demonstrate the ability to create a sustainable program that will achieve all expected outcomes. The agency should have experience with providing some or all of the services described in the RRH Core Components.

CSB will work with the successful applicant to develop a POP based on the following minimum expectations:

- < 100% of individuals who complete a program intake will complete a housing barrier and service needs assessment and initial IHSP within two (2) business days of RRH program intake.
- < 100% of participants receiving program assistance will receive direct services (in-person or via phone) from their assigned case manager at least once per week until they obtain permanent housing or otherwise exit homelessness.
- < The average length of stay in shelter and/or the streets (program entry to permanent housing residential move-in date) for program participants will not exceed 35 days.
- < The total average length of program participation (program entry to program exit) will not exceed 90 days.
- < At least 60% of program participants will achieve a successful housing outcome.
- < The recidivism rate for those individuals that successfully exit to permanent housing will not exceed 10%.

#### **5. Contract Amount and Terms**

CSB will contract with the successful applicant for an initial six (6) months (January – June 2020) and then for a full year of funding for FY 2021 (July 2020 – June 2021). The estimated funding amount (pending funding award to CSB and CSB Board approval) for the program is \$360,000 annually. The annual funding includes financial assistance for participants. The successful applicant should account for the initial, allowable move-in expenses to be processed through the CSB DCA process. For example, if annual move-in expenses are estimated at \$50,000 annually, CSB will award the successful applicant \$310,000 annually. The successful applicant is required to estimate the move-in expenses CSB will retain from the available funding. The program contract should only include funding for space costs if actual additional costs are incurred. Applicants may use match funding for space costs.

## 6. RFP Schedule

Key Dates	Activities
10/2/19	Request for proposals released
10/31/19	Completed proposals due to CSB by 5 pm
11/1 - 11/29/19	Applicant one-on-one interviews
12/6/19	CSB Board approval of funding decisions
12/6/19	Award announcement
12/9/19	FY2020 contract issuance with 1/1/20 effective date
3/31/20	Program fully staffed and operational

## 7. Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed based upon the following:

- ⟨ Administrative Capacity: Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with CSB Partner Agency Standards? Does the applicant demonstrate the experience and capacity to achieve the goals and objectives described in the RFP?
- ⟨ Application Completeness: Is the RFP responsive? Is the application complete?
- ⟨ Program Design: To what extent is the project design clear, reasonable and consistent with RRH core components, RRH practice standards, and RFP requirements? Does the applicant adequately describe the project?
- ⟨ Cost Efficiency: To what extent is the requested budget reasonable? Are project costs adequately explained and reasonable? To what extent does the project leverage other community and CSB investments?

## 8. Submission Requirements

Completed and signed applications are due to Heather Notter at [hnotter@csb.org](mailto:hnotter@csb.org) no later than **5 pm on October 31, 2019**. Applications must be submitted electronically.