



Notice of Funding Availability CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund For Homeless Programs

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA) INFORMATION

NOFA No.: 20-003-Homeless-CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund

Issue Date: May 13, 2020

Applications Due Date: **First review is May 20, 2020** – continuous until funds are allocated or September 30th, 2020.

CONTACT

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Submit Application by 4:30 p.m., May 20th, 2020 to be considered for first round of funding. NOFA will be open continuously until September 30, 2020. NOFA materials can be found at the following link: <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/2779/Solicitations-and-Competitive-Bids>

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REQUESTS FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Pierce County Human Services (hereafter referred to as the “County”) will provide reasonable accommodation to allow for equal participation in the application process. To request a reasonable accommodation, please e-mail Vy Yun at vy.yun@piercecounitywa.gov or call (253)798-6109 (Voice) or 711 (Telecommunications Relay Service –TRS). This document will be provided in alternate formats, upon request.

ACCESS TO REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

This document contains active hyperlinks. Prospective applicants who are unable to access the Internet may request copies of the documents referenced in this NOFA by contacting Vy Yun at vy.yun@piercecounitywa.gov or call (253)798-6109 (Voice) or 711 (Telecommunications Relay Service –TRS). All documents will be available on Pierce County Human Services website at [Pierce County Human Services](#).

NOTICE OF SOLICITATION

In addition to providing required notification via the County’s publication of record, The News Tribune, the County will provide notification to all known interested parties and to other organizations and individuals currently on the Department’s e-mail distribution list. Any individual or organization wishing to be added to the Department’s e-mail distribution list in order to receive future notices of funding opportunities can make such a request by contacting Vy Yun at vy.yun@piercecounitywa.gov. Failure of the County to notify any interested party or parties directly regarding the availability of these funds shall not void or otherwise invalidate the NOFA process.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

The County has funding provided through the federal CARES ACT which establishes the Coronavirus Relief Fund to address the COVID-19 pandemic related to public health needs of people experiencing homelessness.

For this funding competition, the County estimates total funding of **\$6.1 million** will be available until funds are expended or need is fulfilled.

The funds will be allocated as follows:

- Emergency shelter expansion - \$3M
- Rental assistance for households at-risk of becoming homeless - \$3M
- Increased hygiene and sanitation services, including handwashing stations, dumpsters, supervision/security, and fees for shower usage - \$100,000

DESCRIPTION OF SOLICITED SERVICES

The County encourages eligible, qualified and interested organizations to submit applications to provide services in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Pierce County. These CARES Act funds will complement Pierce County’s integrated system of housing assistance that quickly re-houses households who are experiencing homelessness in accordance with U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidance.

The goal of this NOFA is to respond to emergent needs as a result of COVID-19 in Pierce County. The priority is to support public health related needs of people experiencing

homelessness and the provision of economic support for households at-risk of becoming homeless through the following activities:

- Emergency shelter expansion;
- Rental assistance for households at-risk of becoming homeless; and
- Increased hygiene and sanitation services, including handwashing stations, dumpsters, supervision/security, and fees for shower usage.

Expectations for All Funded Providers

So that this funding can most effectively mitigate the impact of COVID-19, all projects funded through this NOFA must meet the following contractual obligations:

- Follow the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019;
- Ensure staff are knowledgeable in current emerging and best practices in the field, are committed to continuous project improvement and seek opportunities to engage leadership in discussion to improve outcomes;
- Participate in data collection and outcome assessment through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and comply with the County's requirements for HMIS data quality and timeliness of data entry for participant data;
- Support an integrated system of culturally appropriate services that are equitable, easy to access and navigate, and are available in locations where the need exists; and
- Support Pierce County's vision for human service delivery that all Pierce County residents have access to the opportunities and pathways that will lead them to stable housing and prosperity.

Eligible Project Types

The following project types are eligible under this funding opportunity:

Emergency Shelter (ES): Emergency Shelter means any facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary overnight shelter for persons experiencing homelessness that does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements. Emergency Shelters provide short-term beds for households. Emergency shelters may be one of two types:

- Same-Day Shelters (SDS): These shelters manage their own wait lists for entry and are available on-demand. They may or may not accept referrals from Coordinated Entry.
- Referral Shelters (RS): These shelters do not manage a wait list and ONLY accept referrals from Coordinated Entry.

Prevention: The Homeless Crisis Response system considers households who are NOT literally homeless or fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence (as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development¹) as at-risk of homelessness. Regardless of whether such households receive housing relocation or stabilization services and/or rental assistance through diversion or rapid re-housing, the assistance shall be considered prevention.

¹ See Category 1 and Category 4:

https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf

Prevention provides housing relocation or stabilization services and/or short- and/or medium-term rental assistance necessary to prevent an individual or family from moving into an emergency shelter or a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

Hygiene and Sanitation Services: This may include handwashing stations, dumpsters, showers and any associated costs such as supervision/security or fees.

Additional Expectations by Project Type

In addition to the expectations for all providers listed above, the County has further expectations for the following project types:

Emergency Shelter: ES operators must agree to the following as a condition of funding:

- Coordinate services with the Critical Time Intervention project, as applicable;
- Ease access to housing for those with high housing barriers and who are highly vulnerable to harm by limiting eligibility criteria and following Housing First principles in which all households are presumed to be “housing ready.” Specifically, funded projects are not permitted to impose non-funder requirements to screen out participants, including:
 - Mandatory sobriety requirements or regular urinalysis tests (excluding Recovery Housing projects²);
 - Minimum income requirements or requirements that participants be “employable;”
 - Criminal background requirements (unless required by funders);
 - Project service participation requirements;
 - Geographic residency requirements (unless required by funders); and
 - Any other eligibility or screening criteria not explicitly required by a funder of the project;
- Safely accommodate the needs of the homeless household in a physically accessible location;
- Focus service delivery on helping households return to permanent housing as quickly as possible;
- Use a “navigation” approach to link households to naturally occurring support networks and mainstream resources available to meet their service needs;
- The project must facilitate access to Coordinated Entry activities on-site, including diversion and prioritization assessment; and
- The project must work collaboratively with permanent housing and Coordinated Entry providers, described below, to help shelter participants move to permanent housing as rapidly as possible.

It is the County’s expectation that all ES households will be offered a diversion conversation with a Coordinated Entry trained staff member and some ES households will receive a referral to a housing program. As such, shelter support services should seek to compliment and supplement supportive services provided by other agencies, focusing primarily on meeting basic needs and services/supports that will help participants exit to permanent housing as smoothly as possible. For any participants in shelter who are not receiving any other housing focused assistance, the

² For more information on Recovery Housing, see HUD’s Recovery Housing Brief here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4852/recovery-housing-policy-brief/>

shelter shall also provide such assistance, including housing locator assistance, which will help the participant develop a housing plan and exit to permanent housing.

Prevention: Prevention operators must agree to the following as a condition of funding:

- Focus service delivery on helping households stabilize in permanent housing as quickly as possible;
- Use a “navigation” approach to link households to naturally occurring support networks and mainstream resources available to meet their service needs.

Eligible Project Participants

A household may be either a one-person household or a multi-person household of two or more persons living together.

For Emergency Shelter and Hygiene and Sanitation Service projects, households must meet one of the two following categories of the HUD homeless definition:

- Literally Homeless: Individual or family that lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and that:
 - Has a primary residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or
 - Sleeps in a publicly or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government projects); or
 - Is exiting an institution after residing there for 90 days or less and resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.
- Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence: Any Individual or family who:
 - Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence or other like situations;
 - Has no other residence; and
 - Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

For Prevention projects, households must meet the following criteria:

- Imminent Risk of Homelessness: An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - Residence does not have the means to pay rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

Allowable Costs

Funds under this NOFA support any of the activities detailed in the categories below. Please note that the [Pierce County Human Services Homeless Project Policies and Procedures](#) provide additional detail. The County’s monitoring includes an assessment of compliance with all funding sources, thus subrecipients are expected to know all funder requirements applicable to their projects.

- Rental Assistance**
 Prevention projects may apply for eligible activities under the Rental Assistance category. These eligible expenses may differ by funding source and will be finalized during contract negotiations.

Rental Assistance Activities
Rent Payments
Rental Assistance

- Facility Support**
 Emergency Shelter projects may apply for eligible activities under the Facility Support category. These eligible expenses may differ by funding source and will be finalized during contract negotiations.

Facility Support Activities
Lease/Rent on Building
Lease/Rent on Building
Program Operations Costs and Costs Other than Leasing
Building Security/Janitorial
Building Utilities
Client Transportation (bus tokens, fuel for shelter van)
Essential Facility Equipment and Supplies (lease, buy)
Facility Specific Property Insurance
Food served in shelter
Hotel/Motel Expenses
Maintenance/Repair
Move In Costs to Permanent Housing
Off-Site and Residential Facility Management Fees

- Program Operations**
 All project types may apply for eligible activities under the Program Operations category.

Program Operations Activities
Costs Associated with Payroll
Case Management
Data Collection and Entry
Staff Issuance of Rental Assistance
Other Program Costs
General Liability Insurance
Office Internet
Office Space
Office Supplies
Office Utilities
Telephone

Staff Training/Conference/Per Diem
Staff Travel
Sanitation Supplies
Supportive Service Costs
Client Transportation
Security Services

- **Administrative Expenses**

All project types may apply for eligible activities under the Administrative Expenses category. Eligible Administrative Expenses must not exceed 10% of the total direct costs, not including Rental Assistance Activities (i.e. Program Operations and Facility Support combined).

Administrative Expense Activities
Advertising
Communications
Facilities Maintenance & Repairs
Insurance
Machinery & Equipment
Office & Operating Supplies
Personnel Salaries & Benefits
Professional Services (e.g. bookkeeping, audits)
Public Utilities

Indirect Costs:

Projects may not apply indirect costs to rental assistance activities. Project applicants with an approved federally negotiated indirect cost rate may charge Indirect Costs to the award. Project applicants must submit a copy of their federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Proposal with their application. Indirect costs are defined at 2 CFR 200.56, 200.413 and 200.414.

Project applicants that do not have an approved federally negotiated indirect cost rate may charge an Indirect Costs rate of 10% of modified total direct costs, per 2 CFR 200.414(f).

Funded agencies must ensure that a good faith effort to not incur costs reimbursable under this grant in excess of what is reasonable given market prices, balanced by the need to act promptly to procure and operate housing and provide services necessary to respond to the State of Emergency.

Reporting Requirements

Pierce County Human Services is required to report on these funds twice weekly to the Pierce County Council. The County expects to report on project outcomes, equity accountability, and expenditures. The County will work with Grantees to establish reasonable reporting mechanisms that can be fulfilled using information collected from regular expenditure accounting systems or other readily available information sources and will report to the Council.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The County requires all applicants applying for funding have experience with assisting homeless households. The County may consider organizations without prior experience in the provision of services to homeless populations provided the organization demonstrates they have project leadership and staff with the expertise and capacity in serving households coming out of or avoiding homelessness; AND demonstrates that expansion into homeless services is within the organization's mission and an identified component of the organization's goals and objectives. Applicants must be registered as a business entity with the State of Washington and possess a Washington State Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number and a Federal Tax ID number. Any non-profit organization serving residents of the County may apply to use these funds for eligible activities.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

The following anticipated timeline is subject to change, at the discretion of the County:

- May 13, 2020:** Notification of Funding Availability published in The News Tribune, the County's newspaper of record. Applications posted on the [Pierce County Human Services](#) website.
- May 20, 2020:** **First round applications are due** no later than 4:30 p.m. Application can be found at <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/2779/Solicitations-and-Competitive-Bids>. **This NOFA will remain open until funds have been expended or September 30, 2020.**
- May 25, 2020:** Application Evaluation Committee Meeting
- May 27, 2020:** **First round** funding decisions announced. Additional reviews will be completed bi-weekly beginning May 27th through the term of the NOFA.
- Sept. 30, 2020:** NOFA will remain open until September 30th, 2020, or until funds are awarded.

CONTACT

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APPLICATION DUE DATE AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTAL

Applicants must follow the instructions below. Applications which do not meet the submission requirements will not be considered. Applications will be accepted until funds are fully expended or the need to address COVID-19 pandemic no longer exists.

Applicants must complete the appropriate Project Application package located on the Human Services website at [Pierce County Human Services](#). All applications must be submitted no later than the time and date indicated in the Anticipated Timelines section. Additional attachments may be required after submission.

APPLICATION THRESHOLD REVIEW

County staff will review applications to ensure the minimum Project Eligibility requirements are met. This review will include a threshold review to ensure applications meet the minimum criteria listed below:

- The application is complete and responsive to the Description of Solicited Services;
- The applicant is an eligible entity; and
- The project proposes serving an eligible population in an eligible project type.

Applications will be considered as submitted. The County will only contact the agency for curable deficiencies. Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review the Anticipated Timelines described above.

All applications that meet the minimum threshold will be presented to the Application Evaluation Committee, which will evaluate all acceptable applications and make funding recommendations.

UNACCEPTABLE APPLICATIONS

Applications submitted that are not responsive to the requirements of the solicitation are unacceptable and shall not be considered. Unacceptable applications are those that are subject to at least one of the following shortcomings:

- Does not meet the deadline for submittal; or
- Does not meet the threshold requirements.

OWNERSHIP OF MATERIAL

Applications and other materials submitted in response to this request become the property of the County, are documents of public record, and will not be returned. By submitting an application, applicants acknowledge and agree that they and/or their organization claim no proprietary rights to the ideas or approaches contained in their applications.

APPLICATION COSTS AND PAYMENT OF CONTINGENT FEES

The County is not liable for any costs incurred by an applicant prior to the issuance of a contract. All costs incurred in response to this solicitation are the responsibility of the applicant, including travel costs to attend workshops and/or contract negotiation sessions.

In the event that the organization's application was developed with the assistance of other individuals (i.e., non-employees) and/or organizations, the applicant understands and agrees that no contingent fees will be paid under any resulting award.

EXPECTED TERM OF RESULTING AGREEMENT

The contract start date under this NOFA will be determined based on the date of application. The end date of the agreement will be December 31, 2020.

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a response to this NOFA, the applicant acknowledges and accepts all terms and conditions of this request and all County and State regulations and requirements related to the delivery of the eligible activities. If the applicant is awarded a contract, the application will become part of the contract agreement. The applicant is bound by the terms of the application unless the County agrees that specific parts of the application are not part of the agreement. The County reserves the right to introduce different or additional terms and/or conditions during final contract negotiations.

RIGHT TO REJECT OR NEGOTIATE

The County reserves the right to reject any or all applications, if such a rejection is in the County's best interest. This NOFA is a solicitation for offers and shall not be construed as an offer, a guarantee, or a promise that the solicited services will be purchased by the County. The County may withdraw this notification at any time and for any reason without liability to applicants for damages, including, but not limited to, bid preparation costs.

Additionally, the County reserves the right to negotiate with selected applicants and may request additional information or modification from an applicant. When deemed advisable, and before a contract is issued, the County reserves the right to arrange an on-site visit/review to determine the applicant's ability to meet the terms and conditions described in this NOFA.

CONTRACT AWARD AND NOTIFICATION TO SELECTED APPLICANTS

Decisions regarding contract awards for activities solicited by this announcement will be made as outlined by the requirements of this NOFA.

All applicants will be notified by U.S. mail as to the decision regarding their application. Successful applicants will work with Pierce County Human Services staff to negotiate and execute a contract.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Due to the severity of the COVID-19 crisis as well as the need to expedite contracts there is no appeal process available for this funding competition. All awards are final.

CANCELLATION OF APPLICATION

The County reserves the right, with or without cause, to cancel any contract resulting from this NOFA with a 30-calendar day written notice sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the applicant's address of record, as indicated the applicant's application to this NOFA (or last known address on file).

PIERCE COUNTY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants who are awarded a contract agree to:

- Comply with the policies of Pierce County Human Services;
- Purchase comprehensive liability insurance and bonding, as required by the County;
- Comply with federal and state laws requiring the safeguarding and disclosure of confidential information;
- Document background checks for all employees, volunteers, or interns who will or may have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults;
- Certify that the firm, association or corporation or any person in a controlling capacity or any position involving the administration of federal, state or local funds is not currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or a determination of ineligibility by any agency; has not been suspended, debarred, voluntarily excluded or determined ineligible by any agency within the past three years; does not have a proposed debarment pending; has not been indicted, convicted or has not had a civil judgment rendered against said person, firm, association or corporation by a court of competent jurisdiction in any matter involving fraud or misconduct with the past three years;
- Maintain project and financial records for audit review, and providing access to documentation upon request by the County; and
- Submit project and financial reports, as required by the County.