

2018, 2019, 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant Program GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICATIONS

The Emergency Solutions Grant Program

The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act), enacted into law on May 20, 2009, revised the Emergency Shelter Grants program established under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 and renamed it as the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program (Exhibit I). The HEARTH Act formalized the Continuum of Care process in ESG programming and planning, emphasizing greater coordination between service providers in responding to the needs of the homeless population. In 2011, HUD released the Interim Rule for the ESG program which set forth regulations on eligible activities and program requirements.

The ESG Program is designed to be one step in a continuum of assistance to enable homeless individuals and families to move toward independent living, as well as to prevent homelessness. It is designed to maintain operations and improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless and to help people to obtain and maintain permanent stable housing after experiencing a potential housing crisis and/or actual homelessness.

The County of York is an entitlement community whose annual allocation is calculated on a formula basis. The amount of the annual ESG grant varies, but it is anticipated that the allocation from HUD for 2018 will be approximately \$175,000.00. The County is limited to spending no more than 60% of the annual allocation for emergency shelter activities.

10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, Written Standards, Consolidated Plan, Three Year Project Plan, and Annual Action Plans

In accordance with the HEARTH Act, and implementing HUD regulations, the County and the York City and York County Continuum of Care (CoC) committee have prepared and adopted a “*10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*”. The Plan creates an outline for the work necessary to prevent and eliminate homelessness in York County, given the needs and resources available. It serves as a strategic plan for funding decisions, priorities, and the work needed to ensure that everyone has a safe, stable place to call home.

Also, in accordance with the HUD Interim Rule for the ESG Program (24 CFR 576), *Written Standards for Providing ESG Assistance* have been prepared and adopted by the CoC. The *Standards* establish the term, types, and duration of assistance.

The *Consolidated Plan* is prepared every five years. It covers HUD-funded programs administered by the York County Planning Commission (YCPC): Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME); Continuum of Care (CoC); and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). The *Plan* is currently in place covers the years 2015 - 2019. Each year the County prepares an *Annual Action Plan* that lists specific projects/activities that will be undertaken to address priority needs and accomplish the community goals established in the Consolidated Plan.

The *2018, 2019, and 2020 Three Year Project Plan* for CDBG and ESG funded projects will provide the list of projects for the Annual Action Plans. The Three Year Project plan is being developed by the Community Development (CD) Division of the YCPC. Non-profit organizations are being invited to submit applications for ESG projects and programs that they would like to undertake in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

The activities that are selected for each of the ESG program years will become part of Annual Action Plan for ESG assistance for that year. However, the number of activities actually carried out will depend upon the amount of grant funds the County receives from HUD.

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Application Process

- March, 2017* A "Notice of Availability of Application Forms, York County Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG) 20158, 2019, and 2020 Three Year Project Plan" is emailed to presently funded Non-Profit Organizations and members of the York City and County Continuum of Care Committee. Additional application forms are available from www.ycpc.org :
- Forms & Fees (see banner at top of home page)
 - Forms
 - Emergency Solutions Grant Application
 - General Information
 - Application - PDF
 - Exhibit I - Interim Rule (Emergency Solution Grant Regulations)
 - Exhibit II - 2014 Written Standards
 - Hearth Act
- And from:
Community Development Division
York County Planning Commission
28 East Market Street, York PA 17401
Telephone (717) 771-9870 FAX (717) 771-9511.
www.ycpc.org.
- March 30, 2017* Application workshop.
- June 9, 2017* Complete applications are due at the YCPC no later than 4:00 P.M., June 9, 2017. This means one original and two copies with authorizing resolution and attachments.
- June & July, 2017* Applications are reviewed by CD staff and the CoC's Review and Ranking Subcommittee. A recommendation of the activities to be funded is prepared and presented to the full CoC committee.
- August, 2017* The activities selected for funding are compiled into the Three Year Project Plan. The Three Year Project plan is reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee before being forwarded the County Commissioners for review and approval.
- April 1, 2018* The start date for the 2018 ESG program year.
- May, 2018* A public meeting to present the 2018 Annual Action Plan and hear public comment is held.

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Preparing an Application

All of the following provisions must be met in order for a project or activity to be considered for York County ESG program funding:

A. Eligible Activities At this time, the County is only accepting applications for “Emergency Shelter” activities.

Further information regarding eligible emergency shelter activities is available in HUD Interim Rule (attached as Exhibit I).

B. Meet HUD ESG Program Requirements: 24 CFR Part 576, Subparts B, C & E, detail ESG program requirements

1. Document availability of matching funds for each activity for each year of funding requested. Only matching funds used for an eligible ESG activity are applicable.
2. Demonstrate commitment to maintain the shelter for period of funding; and
3. Demonstrate use of County centralized/coordinated assessment system *and* commitment to data entry in County HMIS. Victim service providers may choose not to use the County centralized/ coordinated assessment system and may select another data collection system that is comparable to the County HMIS (Section 576.400).

C. Demonstrate consistency with the York County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness five Guiding Principles developed to help the County to achieve the goal of preventing and ending homelessness:

1. Every homeless person who needs housing and services can easily access them.
2. The system identifies and addresses the full range of housing and service needs of each homeless family and individual.
3. The time a person is homeless is minimized.
4. Every homeless person is treated with dignity and respect.
5. All County agencies maximize efforts to prevent homelessness

D. Demonstrate consistency with the Written Standards for Providing ESG and CoC Assistance (Exhibit II) developed for the provision and prioritization of ESG funding:

1. The County of York, in consultation with the CoC, has developed *Written Standards* in accordance with the HUD Interim Rule. These standards serve to outline the specific guidelines and priorities that have been established by the CoC and the County as guidelines for the conduct of activities funded with County ESG funds.
2. County ESG funds are limited to the following types of activities:
 - A) “Emergency Shelter” Payment for shelter operations: maintenance (including minor or

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- routine repairs), minor improvements for ADA compliance, rent, security, fuel for heating and cooking, equipment, insurance, utilities (does not include cable TV), food, furnishings, and supplies limited to those necessary for the operation of the emergency shelter.
3. Standard Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Individual and Family Eligibility for Assistance under ESG Rental Assistance programs: Eligible individuals must meet the following conditions:
- The individual or family must either reside within the County of York, be residing in a homeless shelter within the County, or be relocating from an outside shelter into the County of York.
 - Program participants must meet the definition of homeless or at-risk of homelessness as set forth out in 24 CFR 576.2
 - Income guidelines: as noted in the definitions referenced above, clients who are at-risk of homelessness must have an income at or below 30% of the area median income to qualify for ESG homeless prevention assistance. Income for clients who are literally homeless must also be documented in case files.
 - An individual or family must have at least an initial consultation with a case manager or other authorized representative who can determine the appropriate type of assistance to meet their needs. At this initial consultation, long-term strategies for ensuring stable housing should be covered with the client. HUD encourages ineligible persons be referred to appropriate resources or service providers that can assist them.
 - HMIS participation is a mandatory requirement for organization participating in the programs. All clients receiving ESG and CoC assistance must be reported in an approved HMIS system, unless provisions of the Violence Against Women Act or the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act preclude it. In those cases, a comparable system must be in place and used by the organization to document client information.
 - All clients receiving ESG assistance must be re-certified as eligible in accordance with relevant program regulations.
4. Policies and Procedures for Admission, Diversion, Referral, and Discharge by Emergency Shelters Assisted Under ESG, Including Standards Regarding Length of Stay, if any, and Safeguards to Meet the Safety and Shelter Needs of Special Populations, e.g., Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking; and Individuals and Families who Have the Highest Barriers to Housing and Are Likely to be Homeless the Longest
- Policies and procedures for the admission, diversion, referral, and discharge of individuals in emergency shelters assisted under ESG shall be in accordance with established standards in place in subrecipient emergency shelters for all shelter residents. Safety and shelter needs of special populations shall be in accordance with established standards in place in subrecipient emergency shelters for these populations. However, in no case shall a child under the age of 18 be used as a basis for denying any family's admission into an emergency shelter that uses ESG funding.

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5. Policies and Procedures for Coordination among Emergency Shelter Providers, Essential Service Providers, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Service Providers, Other Homelessness Assistance Providers, and Mainstream Service and Housing Providers The County requires ESG Program subrecipient agencies to participate in the CoC Committee in order to facilitate collaboration.
6. Policies and Procedures for Determining and Prioritizing which Eligible Families and Individuals will Receive Homelessness Prevention Assistance and which Eligible Families and Individuals will Receive Rapid Re-Housing Assistance
 - Homeless prevention assistance will be directed to individuals and families meeting the definition of at-risk-of-homelessness as set forth in 24 CFR 576.2 Definitions *At Risk of Homelessness*, and with incomes not exceeding current 30% of median income.
 - Rapid Re-Housing Assistance will be directed to individuals and families meeting the definition of homeless as set forth in 24 CFR 576.104, 576.2 and 578.3 *Homeless* subsections 1. and 4.
 - The following populations shall be given priority for homeless prevention and rapid re-housing assistance:
 - a. Families with children should be prioritized to the maximum extent possible.
 - b. Due to the limited amount of funding available, all other requests for assistance shall be treated as first-come, first-served among eligible participants.
7. Standards for Determining the Share of Rent and Utilities Costs that Each Program Participant Must Pay, if any
 - Homelessness Prevention Component includes provision of tenant-based rental assistance necessary to prevent an individual or family from moving into an emergency shelter or another place described in paragraph (1) of the *Homeless* definition given in 24 CFR 576.2. Tenant-based rental assistance is available only as a one-time rent payment of \$1,000 for families and \$750 for individuals. Therefore, each participant must pay any portion of rent that exceeds the payment limit, and the full share of any utilities.
 - Rapid Re-housing Component includes case management services and move-in costs including 1st month's rent and one month security deposit. Thereafter, continued case management services and amount of rental assistance paid by the ESG program and the portion of rent paid by the tenant will be determined by the caseworker on a case-by-case basis according to the tenant's need for assistance and ability to pay.
8. Standards for Determining How Long a Particular Program Participant will be provided with Financial Assistance, and Whether and How the Amount of that Assistance will be Adjusted Over Time
 - Homelessness Prevention Component is available only as a one-time rent payment of \$1,000 for families and \$750 for individuals. Therefore, financial assistance is not extended beyond the initial payment and consultation and the amount of assistance is not adjusted over time.

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- Rapid Re-housing Component is limited to rental assistance for up to 6 months duration, not to exceed 24 months of assistance within any 3 year period. After the first 3 months, continuation of rental assistance will be provided based on the client's caseworker's determination of the client's ability to pay, and may be provided on a declining scale over the duration of the provision of assistance.
9. Standards for Determining the Type, Amount, and Duration of Housing Stabilization and/or Housing Relocation Services to Provide a Program Participant
- Homelessness Prevention Component. Housing relocation and stabilization services are limited to case management for clients receiving rental assistance that consists of an initial evaluation for eligibility and needs, and where appropriate, referral to supportive services. Case management also includes development of a plan that assists the program recipient in retaining permanent housing after ESG assistance ends.
 - Rapid Re-housing Component. Housing relocation and stabilization services are limited to case management for clients receiving rental assistance that consists of an initial evaluation for eligibility and needs, and where appropriate, referral to supportive services. Case management also includes development of a plan to assist the program recipient to obtain and maintain permanent housing after assistance ends. Monthly visits with a case manager are required for the duration of assistance.
10. Standards for All Other ESG and CoC Program Policies and Procedures
All program standards, policies, and procedures not specifically discussed in Sections A through I above will be conducted in accordance with requirements as put forth in 24 CFR Part 576 "Emergency Solutions Grant Program" and HUD guidance.

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Review of Applications

The County typically receives requests for funding far in excess of the amount of ESG funds provided by HUD each year. Accordingly, the application process is very competitive.

In addition, only 60% of the annual ESG funding may be used for emergency shelter activities. Each application is reviewed as follows:

Completeness First, the CD staff will review each application, checking for signatures, required documentation and attachments, and completion of all pages.

Eligible Activities Second, the CD staff will review each proposed activity to see if it is an eligible activity according to HUD regulations and County ESG program, and that all eligibility provisions are addressed by the activity's policies and procedures.

Meet HUD ESG Program Requirements Third, CD staff will review each proposed activity to see how it is consistent with the match requirements, commitment to maintain the shelter for period of funding, use of centralized/coordinated assessment system, and commitment to data entry in County HMIS. (Victim service providers may choose not to use the centralized/coordinated assessment system. Victim service providers must disclose the data collection system they are using.)

York County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness Fourth, CD staff will review each proposed activity to see how it is consistent with the Guiding Principles set forth in the *York County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*.

York County Written Standards for Providing ESG Assistance Fifth, CD staff will review each proposed activity to see how it is consistent with "Written Standards".

Priority Rating Sixth, all applications will be submitted to the Review and Ranking Subcommittee of the CoC Committee for review, scoring, and ranking. CoC Committee will consider the following elements:

Projected match, with greater consideration given to activities that leverage more than the HUD required dollar-for-dollar match;

Cost effectiveness of the activity (reasonableness of cost elements and total costs) with greater consideration given to activities that demonstrate greater cost efficiencies;

Quality of proposed project including (*this element carries the greatest weight in the scoring system*):

- incorporation of outside support services that are identified and coordinated by the agency in order to help people obtain and maintain stable permanent housing,

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Review of Applications (con't)

- inclusion of elements in the activity, provided by the agency itself, that help people to obtain and maintain stable permanent housing,
- inclusion of a plan to serve the needs of people with disabilities, based on the agency's assessment of needs, and
- how effectively the activity adheres to the HUD Interim Rule, County 10 Year Plan, and County Written Standards.

Applicant capacity including: experience with other activities with similar population and track record with previous ESG and/or Continuum of Care grant programs such as Supportive Housing.

Supplemental considerations:

- does the activity include methods to increase consumer employment
- does the activity include methods to help people to live independently
- does the activity serve families with children
- does the activity include methods to ensure that children are enrolled in school and are connected to appropriate services
- does the activity include procedures to provide York County HMIS with acceptable data quality

Finally, The Committee will score each activity, determine a rating for each, and rank the applications according to the rating. After ranking, recommendations for funding will be made to the full CoC, which will then forward recommendations to the York County Commissioners.

Questions? Need more information? Contact:

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