

**2014 Entry Form**  
**(Complete one for each entry.)**

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

**Entry Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**HFA** \_\_\_\_\_

**Submission Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

Qualified Entries must be received by **Tuesday, July 1, 2014.**

For more information about Qualified Entries, [click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules.](#)

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Name \_\_\_\_\_

| Communications  | Homeownership   | Rental Housing   | Special Needs Housing  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters<br><input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers<br><input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness<br><input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs |
| Legislative Advocacy  | Management Innovation   | Special Achievement  | Are you providing visual aids?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy<br><input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources<br><input type="checkbox"/> Operations<br><input type="checkbox"/> Technology          | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES<br><input type="checkbox"/> NO  |

## **Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund Combating Homelessness**

### **Introduction**

There are few resources available to address capital needs in shelters or to provide financial support for shelter agency operations. Without these critical funds, and the improvements and operating activities they support, homeless individuals would be turned away from shelters due to a lack of space, of funding and services.

The **Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund** provides funding to conduct physical improvements to existing homeless facilities to substantially improve the delivery of supportive services for residents and to provide assistance for current year operating deficits. Developed in 2001, the program provided \$3 million in capital improvements to shelters throughout the state. The program was greatly expanded within the last year in response to both the need for upgrades to aging shelter environments and the significant reductions in federal funding for providing shelter and services to homeless individuals and families.

### **Need**

Homeless shelters and transitional shelter housing developments in Rhode Island are in need of significant upgrades to insure that residents are housed in a safe and healthy environment. These facilities need to be upgraded in order to meet current health and safety standards, provide accessibility, make capital improvements and address physical deterioration due to wear and tear. In addition, many organizations are struggling with operating deficits and require emergency funding to ensure that services are available to individuals and families served by these organizations. Agencies that serve Rhode Island's homeless operate in obsolete buildings with annual increased expense and no increase in grant funds and in buildings that lack space to adequately serve individuals and families. Without these critical funds, residents and the shelters themselves are at risk.

### **Response to Need**

The Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund was developed as a direct response to the needs of our shelter partners and the 3,403 homeless individuals and families in Rhode Island that required shelter in 2013. The purpose of the program is to provide grant funding for facilities serving homeless single adults and homeless families and to provide emergency funding for a current fiscal year operating deficit.

### **Program Details and Requirements**

*Eligible Applicants:* any Rhode Island based organization exempt from state and federal income taxation which has as one of its organizational purposes the provision of providing housing to homeless adults and families and/or supportive services for homeless adults and families.

*Homeless Facility:* emergency housing provided for a short-term period, generally expected to not exceed 6 months. Homeless Facilities may provide night-to-night or full-time residence, may be congregate or apartment-based, may provide supportive services for homeless adults and families but cannot be intended as transitional or permanent housing for the individuals or families.

*Eligible uses of the funds include:*

- Rehabilitation or new construction to meet health and safety needs or to substantially improve the delivery of supportive services;
- Improvements to ensure a lead safe environment for families and/or visiting children;
- Upgrades to comply with occupancy, maintenance and fire codes;

- Address deferred maintenance;
- Retrofit interior or exterior space to meet program needs;
- Make the facility accessible to disabled persons;
- Modernization of obsolete facilities;
- Purchase of equipment and furnishings to serve existing residents; and
- Emergency operating payments to cover a deficit in current fiscal years operations.

*Program funding may not be used for:*

- Acquisition /new construction of transitional, permanent supportive housing or shelter sleeping facilities.

*Minimum Standards for Rehabilitation:* eligible applicants must include in their proposal all repairs required to bring the Homeless Facility into compliance with all relevant health, safety and housing codes, including lead safe certification for shelters serving children.

### **Funding Priority**

A Committee of Rhode Island Housing staff reviewed applications and ranked according to funding priority for proposals that:

- Address problems affecting the health or safety of residents;
- Bring to lead safe certification standards Shelters serving children and families, or;
- Bring a facility into compliance with occupancy, maintenance or fire codes;
- Substantially improve the delivery of supportive services to homeless individuals and families.

### **Program Timeline**

At its March 20, 2014 meeting, the Rhode Island Housing Board of Commissioners approved program guidelines and proposed amended regulations for the Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund Program. On May 15, 2014 the Board of Commissioners provided final approval of the Program regulations. In March, staff issued a Request for Proposals based upon the approved program guidelines.

A total of 14 applications requesting more than \$1.9 million from the program were submitted on May 2, 2014. Staff reviewed all applications for eligibility and additional information was requested as necessary. Eligible applications were submitted to a staff review committee. The committee convened on May 20, 2014 and recommended commitment of Homeless Facility Improvement funding of \$1,254,316 for 10 facilities and \$433,513 in Operating Deficit funding for 6 agencies for a total recommendation of \$1,687,829 in program funding.

### **Results**

At the June 2014 meeting of our Board of Commissioners, a total of 7 organizations were selected to receive assistance for a variety of uses, ranging from small loans to buy beds for a shelter in Peace Dale, to build a handicapped ramp for a shelter in Westerly and a new bathroom for a shelter that provides homes for survivors of domestic violence. In addition, Amos House, a Providence-based organization that provides a variety of housing, educational, vocational and nutritional services to the homeless, will receive one million dollars in financing to support the construction of a new community center that will provide a new, healthy and supportive environment for the hundreds of people they serve every day.

### **How the program responds to the judging criteria:**

*Innovative:* In this competitive funding environment, established projects often are unable to get necessary funding to sustain a successful program. The need to be new and different often trumps the successful program. This fund provides an influx of difficult money to secure (capital funds for deferred maintenance and operating funds), giving the agency the time to engage in the necessary activities to create a sustainable budget. Oftentimes the amount is small but crucial.

*Replicable:* Careful analysis of the current operating budgets is critical to the success of this program. Knowing when and what types of funds are necessary to sustain the agency is critical. However given the many underwriting tasks performed at Housing Finance Agencies, this task neatly fits into a superior skill set, making replicability possible in any State.

*Responds to an important state housing need:* Given the national and local focus to end homelessness there are few resources available to address capital needs in shelters or to provide financial support for shelter agency operations. There is increasing pressure for homeless providers to house homeless individuals and families and to provide the critical and often emergency services they need to move from shelter to permanent housing. Providing decent, safe and affordable housing for homeless households in permanent housing or shelter is critical. The Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund provides resources to ensure homeless Rhode Islanders do not have to be turned away from a shelter due to lack of space or funding and to ensure they receive services to move them to permanent housing. Prior to the 2014 awards, \$1,074,834 had previously been distributed to 15 projects throughout the State.

*Has a proven track record of success:* The program was created in 2001 and has provided assistance to numerous shelters coping with cuts in funding and contributions. Only one shelter organization requested additional funds throughout the first four years.

*Provides benefits that outweigh costs:* Ensuring that homeless individuals and families have a safe place to sleep at night rather than on the street or in an automobile is critical. Although shelter at best is a temporary solution to a larger problem of the lack of affordable permanent housing it provides a stopgap measure in ensuring families and individuals are safe. In addition, ensuring that a high level of services can be offered by homeless service providers is key in moving homeless households to permanent housing.

*Demonstrates effective use of resources:* In 2013, more than 3,403 people resided in shelters in Rhode Island. An additional 1,000 people resided in transitional housing. Funds provided under the homeless facility improvement program allow for the purchase of beds and mattresses, reduce lead hazards in shelters serving families with young children, upgrading of service space to increase service delivery for more individuals and families and in the expansion of services to include job training, education and financial literacy. The funding provides for safe and decent shelter and temporary housing with a focus on strengthening the financial condition of our homeless service providers so that they may move more households to permanent housing.

*Effectively employs partnerships:* The shelter system in Rhode Island depends on the close collaboration of all the varying programs and partners. This funding ensures the continuum is not broken. The agency that provides support services to families can ensure that families can be sheltered and still utilize their services. Job training classes vary between agencies and all 'guests' are able to engage regardless of where they stayed the night before. Community rooms that serve as an overflow shelter can remain empty, allowing services to be available first thing in the morning. Ensuring the shelters and the spaces that provide services are safe and decent keeps the ratio of shelter/service constant.

*Achieves strategic objectives:* A strategic objective of the program is to ensure that all Rhode Islanders have safe and decent housing whether in permanent housing or within the state's shelter system. The program ensures that individuals and families in the shelter system occupy safe and decent buildings. In addition, the program ensures that agencies providing services to move homeless households to permanent housing have the resources necessary to accomplish their goals.

## Homeless Facility Improvement Funding Recipients

| Agency               | Facility Address                                    | Funding Amount     | Description  |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| Amos House           | 418 Friendship St.<br>56 Somerset St.<br>Providence | \$20,000           | Replace roof and paint exterior.   |
| Amos House           | 415 Friendship St.<br>Providence                    | \$1,000,000        | New construction of offices, training and service space.                     |
| House of Hope<br>CDC | 65 Shippen Ave.<br>Warwick                          | \$100,000          | Replace windows, upgrade sprinkler system and heating conversion.            |
| WARM                 | 56 Spruce St.<br>Westerly                           | \$25,000           | Handicapped accessibility and energy improvements                            |
| Welcome House        | 8 North Rd.<br>Peace Dale                           | \$7,000            | Purchase of 17 beds and mattresses.  |
| Women's Center       | Safe House<br>Providence                            | \$8,218            | Bath renovation  |
| Family Resources     | 184 Sayles St.<br>Woonsocket                        | \$17,500           | Kitchen and bath renovation, heating and a/c upgrade and playground repairs. |
| Crossroads           | 160 Broad St.<br>754 Broad St.<br>Providence        | \$76,598           | IT upgrades, flooring installation, furnishings and replace hot water tank.  |
|                      | <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$1,254,316</b> |  |

## Operating Deficit Fund Recipients

| Agency           | Facility                   | Funding Amount   |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| WARM             | 56 Spruce St., Westerly    | \$20,000         |
| Welcome House    | 8 North Rd., Peace Dale    | \$74,707         |
| Women's Center   | Safe House, Providence     | \$67,696         |
| Family Resources | 184 Sayles St., Woonsocket | \$33,000         |
| Crossroads       | 160 Broad St., Providence  | \$238,110        |
|                  | <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$433,513</b> |

## Homeless Facility Improvement and Operating Deficit Fund Program

|                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Homeless Facility Improvements | \$1,254,316        |
| Operating Deficit Fund         | \$433,513          |
| <b>Total Funding</b>           | <b>\$1,687,829</b> |