



Entry Form 2018 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Deadline: Friday, June 15, 2018, Midnight ET

Each entry must include a completed entry form. Please complete a form for each entry your HFA is submitting. The completed entry form will become the first page of your entry.

This form is a fillable PDF. Type your information into the entry form and save it as a PDF. Please do not write on or scan the entry form. **Questions: Call 202-624-7710 or email awards@ncsha.org.**

Entry Title: Enter your entry's title exactly as you wish it to be published on the NCSHA website and in the awards program.

Category:

Subcategory:

Entry Summary: A 15-word (max) summary of the program, project, or practice you are entering.

HFA:

HFA Staff Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Visual Aids:

Are you mailing to NCSHA 10 copies of any visual aids that cannot be included in your entry PDF? Yes No

Payment:

My HFA is mailing a check to NCSHA.
My HFA is emailing the credit card authorization form to awards@ncsha.org.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
New Futures Bridge Subsidy Program
Special Needs Housing / Housing for Persons with Special Needs

Program Background

The New Futures Bridge Subsidy program (NFBS) is a medium-term rental subsidy program that provides twelve months of rental subsidy to **youth aging out of foster care** and **survivors of sex crime** including sex trafficking, intimate violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault. The objective of the NFBS is to provide a housing opportunity for two vulnerable populations whose experiences with trauma have created challenges and barriers to identifying safe and affordable housing. The NFBS program started operation in March 2017.

The NFBS program represents a unique partnership of multiple State agencies to address a clear crisis in the State of Maryland. Using \$5 Million in federal Victims of Crime Act funds from the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP), the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) created a partnership with the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) and local agencies that provide referrals to the NFBS and specialize in serving the complex case management needs of survivors of sex crimes. DHR, the state agency with oversight over local Departments of Social Services (DSS), provides referrals and case management for youth aging out of foster care. These partnerships are important because physical health, mental health, and positive development are fundamental to a young person's ability to maintain stable housing, secure a job, and form healthy relationships and for survivors of sex crimes, a lack of access to safe, affordable housing creates an additional barrier to safety for survivors.

The need for this innovative program is tremendous. Nationally, up to 50% of former foster youth become homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation and more than 90% percent of homeless women experience severe physical or sexual abuse at some point in their lives with 63% being victims of domestic or sexual violence. Survivors face barriers to housing that can be exacerbated by housing systems that do not address their specific needs.

NFBS pays application fees, security deposits, and 12 months of rental subsidy up to the payment standard for the county in which the unit is located. The program employs a Program Administrator and three Housing Navigators. The Program Administrator manages program funds, program concerns and challenges, and supports Housing Navigators in their role. The Housing Navigators work directly with the referred individuals/families. Navigators assist with identifying housing that will accommodate the household's needs, negotiating rents, provides training to participants on how to be a good tenant and neighbor, and works with case managers to assist with successful transition of participants from the NFBS program.

Initially, the program staff anticipated housing 188 people at an average cost of \$17,195 per household. The program referral registry opened on March 24, 2017 and by June 2017, nearly 300 referrals were submitted. As of June 2018, just under 200 households have been housed. Due to additional funding, the NFBS is expected to house an additional 75 referrals.

Success Story

Lolita was a youth aging out of foster care in Baltimore City. The local Department of Social Services was seeking a housing opportunity for Lolita and Lolita's two-year old daughter. Though employed, Lolita had a poor credit and rental history. Through the New Futures Bridge Subsidy program, the Housing Navigator

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identified a beautiful unit and Lolita was only responsible for paying 30% of her monthly income towards the rent. Even with program support, there were still challenges. Lolita lost her job unexpectedly and became pregnant with her second child whose father became incarcerated during the pregnancy. After the pregnancy, Lolita suffered from postpartum depression. Thankfully, due to the wraparound services provided by the NFBS, Lolita was able to get assistance with identifying her challenges and corresponding solutions. She took advantage of mental health care services, obtained childcare vouchers, and temporary cash assistance. She began working on improving her credit by creating a payment plan with the previous landlord to whom she owed money. In addition, Lolita learned new life skills, including personal responsibility and setting goals. At the end of her subsidy, NFBS had helped her transition from the foster care system to full self-sufficiency. Lolita secured full-time employment as a security guard at a local hospital, identified affordable housing for her family, and developed life management skills that she may not have otherwise had the opportunity to develop.