

# WHEDA Foundation Housing Grant Program

**Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority**  
Special Needs Housing: Combating Homelessness

**HFA Staff Contact**

Brenda Marquardt

[brenda.marquardt@wheda.com](mailto:brenda.marquardt@wheda.com)

## **NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence**

### Overview: Annual Housing Grant Program Provides Housing for Wisconsin's Most Vulnerable Residents

WHEDA recognizes that there is a significant need for assistance for Wisconsin's most vulnerable populations who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk for homelessness. Established by WHEDA in 1983, the WHEDA Foundation is responsible for receiving and administering the Housing Grant Program to help combat homelessness. Grants are awarded in one of two categories: emergency/transitional housing or permanent housing.

Organizations can apply for up to a \$50,000 grant to make facility improvements for this annual grant competition. The types of entities eligible to receive a grant include nonprofit agencies, local governments, and Tribal authorities serving low-income or disadvantaged populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness, runaways, youth in out-of-home placement, individuals struggling with substance use disorder, people in need of protective services, aging and older residents, and people living with HIV, among other at-risk populations.

### Responding to an Important Need: An Increase in Homelessness in Wisconsin

Housing is critical to the health and wellness of individuals; however, it is estimated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that on any given night in Wisconsin more than 4,500 people are homeless.

Ensuring individuals have safe housing is essential to the health, wellness, and success of our kids and families, workers, and communities. WHEDA continually hears about the need for reliable, affordable housing, and the state's nonprofit housing partners have been critical to advancing housing access to our most vulnerable populations while also providing additional supportive services to sustain housing.

### Annual Housing Grant Program Provides Critical Funding for Facility Improvements

The WHEDA Foundation Housing Grant Program competition is unique in that it awards grants specifically for facility projects such as building rehabilitation, handicapped accessibility improvements, new construction, building acquisition, and conversions or additions to buildings or units.

Whether it be replacing a roof, installing a new HVAC system, or renovating an entire housing complex, The WHEDA Foundation exists to provide grant money to support facility maintenance projects such as these two organizations who provide emergency shelter, transitional residences, and extremely low-income housing for vulnerable community members facing complex needs.

### Program Upgrades and Impact

This program is the only grant resource in Wisconsin that provides funding for facility maintenance to create and sustain housing access for residents facing housing insecurity. Beginning in 2020, the grant program expanded its scope to include facility improvements to support safety upgrades as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This program expansion was essential for Wisconsin's nonprofit community to

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be able to serve homeless populations while also supporting their health and well-being during the nation's health crisis.

As a result of the continual need to support the homeless population coupled with the required health and safety upgrades post-pandemic, WHEDA sought additional funding to expand the Housing Grant Program. For the 2022 program, funding was provided from \$1 million in WHEDA reserves and an additional \$1 million in partnership with the State of Wisconsin using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) resources.

With the state's additional support in ARPA funds, 2022 represents the largest WHEDA Foundation Grant funding since its inception 38 years ago. The \$2 million in grants will create or improve 1,764 beds and housing units across the state. This investment at the community level also supports economic recovery by creating valued construction jobs.

In 2022, WHEDA received 94 applications requesting more than \$3.6 million through the housing grant process, an indication of the high demand and need in Wisconsin. The extra \$1 million enabled us to fund 20 more projects and add 899 more beds/units than we did in 2021.

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Appendix A

*Annual Housing Grant Program Resources and Information*

[WHEDA Foundation Housing Grant Program Webpage](#)

- Includes program eligibility and highlights as well as impact results for the past seven years.

WHEDA Stories Blog – Learn about the impact that the Housing Grant Program has had on housing providers and the residents they serve:

- [Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter | WHEDA](#)
- [Twin Oaks Shelter | WHEDA](#)
- [Jeffris Flats | WHEDA](#)
- [Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association | WHEDA](#)

Visual Aids



***Annual Housing Grant Recipient COTS, Inc. of Appleton, Wisconsin with WHEDA CEO and Executive Director Elmer Moore, Jr., and Governor Tony Evers***

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***Annual Housing Grant Recipient Hebron House of Waukesha, Wisconsin with WHEDA CEO and Executive Director Elmer Moore, Jr., and Governor Tony Evers.***



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*Snapshots into the lives of a few annual Housing Grant beneficiaries*

