



CITY OF TUCSON

Request for Letters of Interest CARES Act Low Demand Shelter Projects

Responses Due: Tuesday, January 19, 12pm (Noon) Arizona Time

BACKGROUND

The City of Tucson has planned with the community to respond to the COVID-19 virus by supporting and funding efforts to provide housing and other services to persons experiencing homelessness. The City of Tucson has received supplemental funding through the CARES Act Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) program to address emergent needs related to COVID-19 and homelessness. As a result of the COVID-19 health emergency, expanded shelter capacity is needed to reduce risk of health complications to vulnerable people experiencing unsheltered homelessness including persons fleeing domestic abuse.

The City of Tucson is releasing this Request for Letters of Interest from eligible non-profit and government entities with capacity to provide low demand shelter services for people experiencing homelessness in the Tucson area. Project funding will include CDBG-CV funds and will require full compliance with applicable Federal requirements except where waivers of regulatory requirements have been obtained by the City of Tucson.

Expectations may evolve based on changes in local infrastructure, infection rates, and community response to the COVID-19 health emergency. The selected agencies will be required to work closely with community teams and adjust services as directed by the City of Tucson.

SERVICES SOLICITED UNDER THIS REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

The City of Tucson solicits letters of interest to restore and expand emergency shelter capacity to pre-pandemic levels while ensuring adherence to social distancing and health precautions aimed at maintaining the safety and health of shelter staff and residents.

Shelter projects funded under this solicitation must meet one of the following three objectives:

- 1) New Shelter Projects: Projects funded under this objective must be new shelter projects provided in congregate and/or non-congregate settings. Agencies should only apply under this category if the agency a) does not currently provide emergency shelter services or b) all existing shelter projects administered by the agency are currently operating at or above those projects' nightly operating capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2) Expanded Shelter Projects: Projects funded under this objective must expand one or more existing shelter projects' nightly capacity above those projects' nightly operating capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3) Restore Shelter Capacity to Pre-Pandemic Levels: Projects funded under this objective may only use funds to restore one or more existing shelter projects' nightly capacity to those projects' nightly operating capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. If funded under this objective, only those costs directly attributable to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on shelter operating capacity (i.e. furnishings/barriers, hotel/motel funding to isolate persons who are symptomatic and/or awaiting COVID-19 testing/results, rental unit leasing costs to reduce density in congregate environments, etc.)

To further the City of Tucson's goal of increasing emergency shelter coordination and reducing vacancy in emergency shelter beds, agencies receiving funding under this solicitation must agree to maintain real-time data regarding the utilization of all emergency shelter beds accounted for in the Homeless Management Information System by the organization including beds not funded through this solicitation. To accomplish this, agencies will be required to update shelter entry/exit records in the HMIS within not more than two hours and consent to community visibility of shelter bed availability. Bed availability will be shared publicly using the TPCSH Shelter Point platform, a function of the HMIS. This requirement does not apply to agencies designated as a victim-service provider and authorized to use a comparable database by the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness.

MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS

Agencies may submit only one application for funds not to exceed \$100,000.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include not-for-profit agencies with IRS 501(c)(3) designation. Eligible agencies must be currently registered with the U.S. System for Award Management (SAM) and not be suspended or disbarred from doing business with the Federal government.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

A total of \$300,000 is available for application. The City of Tucson anticipates making multiple awards under this solicitation including at least one award for domestic violence shelter services. Eligible applicants may apply for up to \$100,000. The City of Tucson reserves the right to increase/decrease award budgets or to make no awards under this solicitation at its discretion.

Additional funds may become available at a later date to expand or continue the project beyond the initial project period. Project services may be budgeted for the performance period stated in each component's scope of work; however, households should be exited to self-sufficiency or longer-term housing subsidies/services as soon as possible.

TIMELINE

Responses to this Request for Letters of Interest must be received in the format specified in this solicitation on or before 12:00pm (Noon) Arizona time on January 19, 2021.

Applicants will be notified of project selection on or before January 26, 2021.

Respondents must be able to provide all services included in the attached Low Demand Shelter Scope of Work and have the capacity to begin operations on or before February 15, 2021.

Agreements may be canceled or reduced with 30 days' written notice by either party if need and/or utilization of the service is reduced.

SCOPE OF WORK

Exhibit A: Low Demand Shelter Scope of Work is attached to this solicitation and incorporated herein. Recipients selected through this solicitation are required to provide all services outlined in the scope of work and will be required to adhere to all eligibility requirements and timelines defined in Exhibit A.

PAYMENT

Funds awarded through this solicitation will be in the form of a cost-reimbursement subaward of Federal funds. Agencies selected through this solicitation will be required to submit monthly invoices for reimbursement of

eligible costs to the City of Tucson within 15 days following each month of service. Eligible costs as identified in the approved budget will be reimbursed within 30 days of invoice receipt. Eligible costs are defined in Exhibit A.

LETTER OF INTEREST CONTENT AND FORMAT

Responses to this solicitation must be provided in the form of a letter of interest issued on agency letterhead and signed by an authorized organizational representative with authority to bind the organization to the services and budget proposed. Letters of interest must be submitted in standard 11-point Times New Roman font. Letters of interest may not exceed five single-spaced pages excluding attachments and must include the following narrative sections.

Agency Experience: Letters of Interest must include a description of the agency's experience providing services outlined in the Scope of Work. Descriptions should include specific services provided, scale of those services in terms of households served, and past performance outcomes as they relate to financial stability and permanent housing (i.e. #/% of participants successfully exiting to permanent housing, #/% of participants with income at project exit, etc.)

Project Description: Letters of Interest must include a detailed description that demonstrates the capacity and plan to provide all services outlined in the scope of work within the required timeframes. The project description must include the proposed implementation schedule to bring project to 100% operating capacity upon notice of award.

Projects funded under this solicitation must operate using a low demand/low barrier approach and may not incorporate sobriety, identity documents, or other barriers to emergency shelter enrollment or participation. If the applicant excludes one or more populations from congregate shelter environments (i.e. under the influence, prior convictions), the project description must include a detailed plan to provide safe shelter for such persons in an alternative setting.

Projects applying to serve victims of domestic abuse must describe how shelter residents will be offered trauma-informed supportive services including but not limited to counseling and legal services as part of shelter participation. Projects applying to service victims of domestic abuse must indicate in their project description that the project complies with the TPCH Service Standards for Domestic Violence Projects posted at <https://tpch.net/about/tpch-governing-documents/>.

Project Staffing: Letters of Interest must include a description of project staffing that identifies all existing staff members to be assigned to this project, qualifications, and the time dedicated to this project as a percentage of full-time equivalency. Letters must also explain how existing staffing, if engaged in the proposed project, will be sufficient to deliver assigned services in light of other responsibilities. For new staff positions to be created through this solicitation, agency must provide a brief description of new position(s) to be created, percentage of time dedicated to this project, minimum position requirements, and anticipated timeline for recruiting and onboarding new staff members.

Continuity Plan: Letters of Interest must describe the agency's plan to ensure uninterrupted continuity of operations in the event of staff illness or other shortage and in the event of additional stay-at-home orders if issued.

Use of Current/Past Funds to Address COVID-19: Letters of Interest must include a detailed accounting of all funding received by the applicant through state/local government and/or philanthropy to prepare for, prevent, and/or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This accounting should include the funding source, amount, and how those funds were used to mitigate challenges related to the pandemic. Include quantifiable detail whenever possible (i.e. provided non-congregate shelter for 300 households in hotels to de-compress congregate shelter setting, etc.). If the applicant is applying under Objective 3 (Restore Shelter Capacity to Pre-Pandemic Levels), the Letter of Interest must additionally explain why prior funding was insufficient to sustain emergency shelter capacity at pre-pandemic levels and how the funding requested through this solicitation will be sufficient to do so.

Points of Contact: Letters of interest must include the name, title, phone number, and email address of two persons able to answer questions related to the Letter of Interest and enter into subaward negotiations with the City of Tucson.

Certification: Letters of interest must include the following Certification exactly as it is written:

By submitting this application, I confirm that I am authorized to make this offer on behalf of <Organization Name>. I recognize that this is a firm and binding offer for delivery of the full Scope of Services outlined in the City of Tucson's Request for Letters of Interest at the proposed budget. I recognize that negotiation of any changes to this proposal will be at the discretion of the City of Tucson.

Attachments Excluded from Page Limitation: The following materials must be attached to the Letter of Interest and are not counted toward the 5-page limit.

Project Budget: Respondents must attach a detailed project budget which identifies all proposed costs including quantity, calculation methodology, and justification.

Indirect Cost Rate: Indirect costs shall be reimbursable to the extent authorized by 2 CFR 200.

If the agency has a current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), agency must attach a copy of its current agreement and include the indirect cost calculation within its project budget.

If the agency does not currently nor has it ever had a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, the agency must include a statement in the Letter of Interest that it intends to use the de minimus indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 for guidance related to calculating modified total indirect costs).

If the agency has previously had a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement but does not have a current agreement, or has never had a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement and is requesting a rate other than 10%, agency must include a statement in the Letter of Interest that it is requesting to negotiate an indirect or administrative cost rate with the City of Tucson. Agencies should include the proposed negotiated rate within their project budget and provide as an attachment a detailed accounting of the rationale for the proposed rate, costs included in the proposed rate, and costs included in the direct cost base against which the proposed negotiated rate will be applied. Negotiated rates are at the discretion of the City of Tucson.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Responses must be emailed to Jodie.barnes@tucsonaz.gov and received no later than the due date listed. Late and/or incomplete applications will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS SOLICITATION

All questions regarding this solicitation should be emailed to Jodie.barnes@tucsonaz.gov. Please allow up to two business days for a response.

EVALUATION OF RESPONSES

Responses to this solicitation shall be competitively evaluated by a review panel established by the City of Tucson. Projects will be evaluated using the following criteria.

SCORING CRITERIA	MAX SCORE
Agency Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">Extent to which applicant demonstrates prior success delivering the proposed service or similar	15 points

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which past performance outcomes, including those reported in proposal, prior City of Tucson subawards, and/or prior Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant projects reported by TPCH demonstrate achievement of outcomes stated in the scope of work • Extent to which organization has prior experience administering HUD funds 	
<p>Project Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which applicant includes detailed plan to provide all required services • Extent to which proposed implementation schedule meets the immediate community need • Extent to which proposed services will meet the needs of population served 	35 points
<p>PROJECT STAFFING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which applicant provides a detailed staffing plan comprised of persons with relevant expertise and experience to deliver proposed services • Extent to which applicant's staffing plan offers sufficient staffing ratios to deliver proposed services and achieve outcomes stated in the scope of work 	10 points
<p>CONTINUITY PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which applicant provides a detailed and reasonable plan to ensure continuity of services in the event of staff shortage or stay at home orders 	10 points
<p>USE OF CURRENT/PAST FUNDS TO ADDRESS COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If agency has received prior funding to address COVID-19, extent to which those funds were used to sustain/increase housing and services for people experiencing homelessness • If agency has received prior funding to address COVID-19, extent to which the use of those funds resulted in measurable increases and improvements in service access, safety, and/or delivery 	10 points
<p>PROJECT BUDGET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project budget includes eligible costs and does not exceed the maximum amount of funding available per household based on the proposed number of households to be served • Extent to which project budget is reasonable, necessary, and prudent to deliver project 	20 points

EXHIBIT A
CITY OF TUCSON – CARES ACT HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
SCOPE OF WORK: LOW DEMAND SHELTER

FUNDING SOURCE

HUD – CARES Act Community Development Block Grant-CV) Public Services Funds

TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE

A total of \$300,000 is available for distribution to multiple organizations. Agencies may apply for up to \$100,000.

PERFORMANCE PERIOD

Project services shall begin within 20 days of award and are expected to continue through the end of the performance period on June 30, 2021.

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT/NON-SUPPLANTING

Pursuant to Community Development Block Grant Program requirements, funding under this solicitation may only be used to create new shelter projects, expand existing shelter projects to serve additional households served beyond the project's nightly capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, or sustain shelter services at the project's nightly capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. If funds are being requested to sustain shelter services at the nightly capacity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, only those costs that are directly attributable to increasing social distancing and/or preventative measures to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious disease among shelter residents and staff are eligible.

ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES

- Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence meaning:
 - An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is 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, or
 - An individual or family living in a supervised 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, or local government programs for low-income individuals, or
 - And individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation, or
- Individuals and families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence, and
 - Has no other residence (24 CFR 576.2 Homeless Definition paragraph 4.ii), and
 - Lacks the resources or support networks such as family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing (24 CFR 576.2 Homeless Definition paragraph 4.iii),
- Individuals and families served by project must reside in the City of Tucson.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- February 15, 2021 – Project launch: By this date, project must begin accepting 100% of nightly referrals and maintain accurate shelter occupancy data in HMIS Shelter Point with community visibility enabled (updated within 2 hours of entry/exit)
- April 15, 2021 – Quarterly Report due to City of Tucson (covering February 15-March 30)
- June 30, 2021 – 100% of services provided and grant funds expended by project end
- July 15, 2021 – Quarterly and Final Reports due to City of Tucson

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Upon receipt of referral or walk-in by person seeking shelter, project shall confirm through self-report and document participant eligibility in the client file based on housing status as of the day of referral/walk-in.

- Provide nightly emergency shelter accommodations for eligible persons including:
 - Initial COVID-19 testing and connection to health services
 - Nightly accommodation between the hours of 6pm and 8am at minimum
 - Health and hygiene supplies
 - Restrooms and bathing facilities
 - Evening and morning meals, snacks
- Eligible costs include:
 - Facility Costs (if congregate shelter)
 - Maintenance including minor or routine repairs
 - Facility rent
 - Utilities
 - Furnishings
 - Leasing/Hotel Costs (if non-congregate shelter)
 - Hotel occupancy charges
 - Rented unit leasing costs (security deposit, monthly rent)
 - Utilities (telephone, electric, water, gas, municipal services)
 - Security
 - Fuel
 - Equipment

- Insurance
- Food
- Supplies
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Transportation including cost of program participant's travel to and from medical care, employment, child-care, or other essential service facilities. Eligible transportation costs include:
 - Program participant's travel on public transportation and cost of project staff to assist program participants to use public transportation, if applicable
 - Mileage allowance for project staff to visit program participants
 - Leasing a vehicle for the project in which staff transport program participants and/or staff serving program participants
 - Gas, insurance, taxes, and maintenance for vehicles owned or leased by project for use described above
- Coordinated community referral to City of Tucson and/or community housing navigators to deliver and arrange essential services for all project participants aimed at facilitating successful placement in permanent housing and financial stability.
- Additional Requirements
 - Shelter services must be immediately available upon acceptance to the project. If using hotel/motel vouchers and/or leased units to provide emergency shelter, the project design must provide for shelter guests to obtain residence on the day of referral.
 - All participants entering shelter shall be eligible for continued nightly shelter until the end of the performance period or until moving into transitional or permanent housing, whichever occurs first. Shelter residents shall not be discharged from shelter nightly but may be discharged if the shelter bed is abandoned for one or more nights.
 - Shelter services must be low-barrier and may not require sobriety or identity documents. Shelter projects funded under this solicitation may not require participation in supportive services, volunteer activities, religious activities, or social programming in order to obtain or maintain shelter residency.
 - Assist shelter participants to ensure safe care for animals and storage of personal belongings during period of shelter stay.
 - Shelter may be provided in congregate or non-congregate settings appropriately fitted to enable social distancing within the temporary shelter environment.
 - Follow best practices for preventing and responding to COVID-19 infection in congregate shelter environments as defined in the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers](#) and ensure cleaning/disinfection protocols are sufficient to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - Participate in HMIS Shelter Point module which tracks real-time shelter bed availability with community visibility enabled.

- Enter program participant information into the TPCH Homeless Management Information System and other databases specified by the City of Tucson within two hours of shelter entry/exit.
- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the City of Tucson and/or community-based teams regarding the implementation and utilization of the project.
- Complete reporting as required by the City of Tucson for project monitoring and HUD reports.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Projects funded under this solicitation are expected to achieve the following performance measures. Projects will be monitored by the City of Tucson and funding may be reduced or eliminated in the event of on-going underperformance.

- 60% or more of households served will have known exit destinations
- 60% or more of households served will exit to permanent housing destinations
- 90% or higher nightly bed utilization
- 90% or higher HMIS Data Quality