



**Winston-Salem**

**City of Winston-Salem**

**Request for Proposals to Operate a  
Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS  
(HOPWA) Program**

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## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### **HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA) PROGRAM**

The City of Winston-Salem is accepting proposals from qualified program administrators with the capacity and experience matching the specifications outlined in this RFP to operate a Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA) Program. This program will provide housing and supportive services within a 5-county geographical region, known as the Eligible Metro Service Area (EMSA), to low-income people living with HIV (PLWH). The goal of the HOPWA program is to ensure that affordable housing options and related housing services are available to low income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families, to assist in achieving and maintaining housing stability, thereby avoiding homelessness and improving their access to and engagement in treatment and care.

#### **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS**

All funding proposals must be received by 12:00 p.m., August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 using the City of Winston-Salem's "Neighborly" software portal. No proposals will be accepted after the deadline passes.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The HOPWA program was established by the Department of Housing of Urban Development (HUD) to address the specific needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. HOPWA focuses on securing stable housing and supportive services for HIV-positive and AIDS-diagnosed persons and is currently the only Federal program dedicated to providing housing to low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS. Housing is a critical component of healthcare, and data consistently show that persons living with HIV/AIDS who are stably housed have higher rates of viral suppression and healthier lives. The purpose of the HOPWA program is to provide resources to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Funds may be used to assist all forms of housing designed to prevent homelessness.

#### **SERVICE AREA**

HUD distributes HOPWA program funds using a statutory formula that relies on HIV statistics and area incidence from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The City of Winston-Salem will oversee the provision of HOPWA funding in the Eligible Metro Service Area (EMSA) **of Forsyth, Davies, Davidson, Yadkin, and Stokes Counties**. Applying agencies or

organizations are encouraged to demonstrate program collaboration with other agencies in the region and to provide services to the greatest number of people possible.

## **FUNDING PROVISIONS**

\$710,304 in funding is projected to be made available approximately the first week of August 2021. This is a competitive application process for limited funding. Applicants that meet the minimum criteria are not guaranteed an award. Additionally, successful applications may be funded for less than the amount requested. No contracts can be executed until the selection process has been completed, regulatory requirements have been met and funds have been released by HUD.

The selected administrator will be responsible for overseeing and tracking all expenditures and invoicing the City of Winston-Salem appropriately at regular intervals. The administrator is expected to provide services directly or partner with additional agencies, such as local housing authorities, to ensure the housing needs of the target population of PLWH are served across the EMSA.

## **HOPWA SERVICES OVERVIEW**

**Under HOPWA regulations, family means a household composed of two or more related persons. The term also includes one or more eligible persons living with another person or persons who are determined to be important to their care and wellbeing. The term also includes the surviving members of any family who were living with the person with AIDS at the time of his or her death in a unit assisted under HOPWA for a certain grace period following the death of the HOPWA client.**

### **I. Participant Eligibility**

HOPWA will provide assistance for individuals and households that:

- Have medical documentation of an HIV/AIDS diagnosis
- Have household income not exceeding 80% of the area median income (AMI) in the Winston-Salem MSA
- Are residents of the EMSA of Forsyth, Davies, Davidson, Yadkin, and Stokes Counties

### **II. Core Services, Activities and Programming**

Each administrator must ensure that the following mandatory services are provided to each eligible participant in HOPWA:

1. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance: Funding is provided to an eligible client to allow them to exercise housing unit choice. Upon leaving the unit, the contract with the landlord terminates and the client's assistance is then transferred to a new housing option.
2. Short-Term Rent, Mortgage and Utility Assistance : This component is intended to serve as immediate assistance paid to a landlord, mortgage or utility company on behalf of an eligible HOPWA client at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness and/or utility disconnections.
3. Permanent Housing Placement : PHP is an activity that assists clients and their families with establishing permanent residence with the goal of continued, stable occupancy. Eligible activities include:
  - Housing referrals and tenant counseling
  - Costs associated with housing placement, including application fees, credit check expenses, first month's rent and security deposit, and utility connection fees/processing costs
4. Resource Identification: This component allows agencies to coordinate and develop housing assistance resources for eligible clients and their families. Eligible activities include:
  - Conducting preliminary research into determining the feasibility of specific housing initiatives
  - Developing and maintaining relationships with property owners/landlords and the local housing community

### **III. Additional Eligible Services**

1. Hotel/Motel Vouchers: Provides hotel or motel vouchers for up to 60 days if no suitable shelter beds are available, and/or if rental housing has been identified but not yet available for move-in by participants.
2. Housing Information : Provides counseling, information and supportive services to assist in locating, acquiring, financing and maintaining housing.
3. Transitional Housing : Supports facility-based housing as individuals and families move to permanent housing.
4. Supportive Services: Drug and alcohol abuse treatment and counseling, and services that help clients manage their HIV/AIDS healthcare needs, including mental health and transportation services. Strict limits apply for healthcare costs.
5. Transportation: Actual costs for clients to attend housing-related or medical appointments. Bus passes, Ride-share, or gas vouchers may be used. (Ride share and gas vouchers can only be used when bus transportation is unavailable)

### **IV. Prohibited Costs and Activities**

Under HUD guidelines for HOPWA, healthcare costs such as HIV/AIDS treatment therapies, services and pharmaceuticals may not be funded under the program. HOPWA funds must not be used for HIV/AIDS education or prevention activities or to replace existing funds for services currently available to the target population from other programs, such as Ryan White and Integrated Targeted Testing Services. Agencies should be aware of strict limitations on the use of HOPWA funding for health-related services and work to identify alternative sources of funding for these services to maximize resources devoted to housing clients.

## **HABITABILITY STANDARDS**

Each applicant must provide safe and sanitary housing that is in compliance with all applicable state and local housing codes, licensing requirements, and any other requirements in the jurisdiction in which the housing is located. Applicants must also follow the habitability standards as set forth by HUD (see chart on page 6).

	1. <i>Structure and materials</i> : The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.
	2. <i>Access</i> : The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.
	3. <i>Space and security</i> : Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. Each resident must be provided with an acceptable place to sleep.
	4. <i>Interior air quality</i> : Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structures must be free of pollutants in the air at levels that threaten the health of residents.
	5. <i>Water Supply</i> : The water supply must be free from contamination.
	6. <i>Sanitary Facilities</i> : Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
	7. <i>Thermal environment</i> : The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
	8. <i>Illumination and electricity</i> : The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire.
	9. <i>Food preparation and refuse disposal</i> : All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
	10. <i>Sanitary condition</i> : The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.
	11. <i>Lead Based Paint</i> : If the structure was built prior to 1978, and a child under the age of six or a pregnant woman will reside in the property, and the property has a defective paint surface inside or outside the structure, the property cannot be approved until the defective surface on which paint is cracking, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose is repaired by at least scraping and painting the surface with two coats of non-lead based paint. If a child under age six residing in the HOPWA-assisted property has an Elevated Blood Level, paint surfaces must be tested for lead-based paint. If lead is found present, the surface must be abated in accordance with 24 CFR Part 35.
	12. <i>Fire safety</i> : Both conditions below must be met to meet this standard. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If the unit is occupied by hearing-impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person.</li> </ol>

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|  | b. The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas. |
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## **AVOIDING DUPLICATION OF SERVICES**

Agencies selected for funding must implement procedures to evaluate each household's needs in comparison to the household's resources so as to prevent any duplication of benefits involving the funds available under this RFP. A copy of these procedures will need to be provided with this application. Duplication of benefits occurs when Federal financial assistance is provided to a household which also receives financial assistance for the same costs from another source, and the total amount received exceeds the total need for those costs. Any agency administering assistance under this RFP must have policies and procedures that require any households receiving the assistance to repay it if it is determined to be duplicative.

## **PARTICIPANT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

Each funding partner must provide reasonable due process to clients prior to terminating their access to services. At minimum, a clearly documented and communicated appeals process must be provided, and feature at least one level of administrative review to consider termination of services for any reason. The funded organization must clearly inform all recipients of services of these procedures in writing during intake. Additionally, applicants must maintain documentation that this policy was shared during the intake process. A copy of the applicant's grievance policy will need to be provided with this application.

## **AFFIRMATIVE OUTREACH**

All funded agencies must adopt, enact and document procedures to communicate the availability of services to all qualifying persons in the EMSA, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, familial status or ability. A copy of the applicants affirmative outreach procedures will need to be provided with this application.

## **MATCH**

Due to limited amounts of funding made available through the federal HOPWA program, and the significant need for housing for low income persons living with HIV/AIDS, leverage of other resources is critical. Funding decisions favor proposals demonstrating support from other sources.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

General reporting requirements are in place for HOPWA. The City of Winston-Salem will periodically request data submissions from the administrator to satisfy internal and Federal reporting requirements. General data and documentation submission requirements for individual programs include, but are not limited to, narratives detailing program expenditures, housing placements and waitlists, and quality improvement activities. Indicators will be used during the year to monitor progress toward the outcomes. Specific guidelines will be explained and included in any final agency funding agreements.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Proposals will be rated based on relevance to the demonstrated need and the following scoring and evaluation criteria.

- A. Organizational Capacity and Demonstrated Effectiveness:** Agency must demonstrate ability to implement the Program proposed in submitted application. The agency's mission and experience in serving people living with HIV/AIDS. Agency must be able to demonstrate strong fiscal management and controls. Applicant must show the capacity to serve various service areas as a result of multiple existing service locations. Applicant must show they have the capacity to serve underserved areas and demonstrate the capacity to manage caseloads of at least 150 clients.
- B. Program Implementation:** Applicant must provide a program implementation plan that will have staff on-boarded in a reasonable timeframe. Applicant must detail what type of recruitment practices will be used to ensure service utilization. A chart detailing staff names, positions, their roles in the HOPWA program, percentage of time dedicated to the HOPWA program, and years of experience providing similar services must be provided. Applicant must detail how clients will learn about the program (referral process, advertising) and what process clients will need to take to receive services and how staff will determine client eligibility. Applicant must demonstrate diversity and inclusion in age, race, gender, and language for staff and clients served.
- C. Organizational Experience:** Agency must demonstrate substantial experience and expertise in knowledge of federal statutes and regulations governing the federal Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, Section 8 Programs, and other federal housing programs. Experience designing delivery systems for housing and related services funded by HOPWA and providing support or oversight of housing development for persons with HIV/AIDS. Applicant must demonstrate understanding of the laws governing disclosure of HIV/AIDS status and client confidentiality.
- D. Linkage to Care:** As engagement in medical care is essential to a successful and holistic approach to working with people living with HIV/AIDS, the agency must demonstrate how they will determine if clients are linked to HIV medical care, and how they will assist with linking the clients who are not in HIV medical care. Applicant must show letters of support, copies of referral or partnership agreements with other HIV/AIDS care providers.

Applicant must specifically state the specific function each partner will perform to ensure that the project assists eligible households towards housing stability.

- E. Understanding of Need:** Applicant must demonstrate understanding of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the service areas. Applicant must demonstrate understanding of factors that impact housing stability of low income persons living with HIV/AIDS. Applicant must demonstrate understanding of consumer housing preferences and needs.
- F. Recordkeeping:** Applicant must demonstrate the ability to collect, monitor, and utilize client’s feedback about the program to enhance services. Applicant will be required to track and report progress towards outcomes. Applicant must be specific about how outcomes will be reported and collected within their agency. Applicant must develop outcomes and detail strategies that will be used to achieve those outcomes. Applicant must have the ability to track units of service, service costs, and use of funds. Applicant must have the ability to manage verification and compliance requirements, client recordkeeping and regular reporting.
- G. Budget:** Applicant must demonstrate how the HOPWA funding requested is necessary to support the project, and justification for the number of clients proposed to be served. The applicant must indicate what other support the agency will leverage in order to provide services.

## **ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY FOR FUNDING**

To be eligible for funding, agencies must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. The agency must have current nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax exempt status and eligibility to receive tax deductible contributions, as confirmed by the Internal Revenue Service.
2. The agency must have “Current-Active” status to conduct business in the State of North Carolina at least one year prior to the date of publication of this Request for Proposals, as confirmed by the NC Secretary of State (<https://www.sosnc.gov/search/index/corp>).
3. The agency has submitted third-party financial review or audited financial statements prepared by a qualified accountant or accounting service covering the organization’s most recent fiscal year. Audit findings may make the applicant ineligible to receive assistance from the City.
4. The agency must not be debarred or suspended by any federal agency.
5. The application must be complete and responsive. All questions must be answered completely.

The application packet must include each of the following items to be eligible for consideration:

1. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest Policy
2. Last 3 Years of IRS 990 as submitted to the Internal Revenue Service
3. Organization By-Laws
4. Articles of Incorporation

5. Organization policies including personnel, formal non-discrimination, procurement, and accounting
6. IRS 501(c)3 Designation Letter
7. Most Recent Audited financial statements or a third-party review
8. Agency Budget: Current, Last Year, Upcoming Year
8. NC Secretary of State – current and active status  
(<https://www.sosnc.gov/search/index/corp>)
9. List of Current Board Members
10. Affirmative Outreach Plan
11. Grievance and Appeals Policy
12. Accounting and Procurement Policies
13. Anti-Discrimination Policy
14. Fair Housing Policy
15. Personnel Policies
16. Organizational Chart which includes HOPWA funded positions
17. Resumes for HOPWA funded positions
18. Procedures for Duplication of Services
19. Appeals Process
20. Affirmative Outreach Procedures

**SCORING**

<p>Program Plan and Implementation</p>	<p>The proposal presents a sound approach for delivery of the services and will engage the intended beneficiaries; the proposal clearly outlines service needs and benefits; as appropriate, the proposal details how collaboration among agencies will contribute to program success.</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>Community Need, Outreach, Community Linkages</p>	<p>The proposed program has shown they have community partner connections. Has knowledge of the community need and community linkages needed to make the program successful.</p>	<p>15</p>

Organizational Capacity and Demonstrated Effectiveness	The history, experience, and function of the organization will contribute to the program’s success. Organizational structure and human resources are appropriate to support the program. The organization has the ability to start and finish the program in a timely manner. Organization has relevant background, experience, and qualifications to conduct risk assessments and fiscal monitoring activities.	20
Cost Effectiveness/ Budget	The proposed cost elements and budget are reasonable. The program has potential to be sustained in future years. Any potential barriers to program success are identified and are addressed by strategies to overcome them. The average cost of assistance is reasonable in relation to the goals of the program.	20
Continuous Quality Improvement	The organization undertakes and completes a client satisfaction survey. The organization has and provides a grievance policy to clients. Organization describes the standard process for assuring that clients are made aware and understand the grievance procedure.	10
Staff & Agency Qualifications/ Record Keeping	Relevant background, experience, and qualifications to conduct risk assessments and fiscal monitoring activities.	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**SUBMISSION PROCEDURE**

To submit a proposal, agencies must complete the application through the following website: <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/winston-salem/participant>. Instructions for accessing the Neighborly Software portal and registering an account are provided in the “Getting Started Guide,” which accompanies this RFP. **This RFP and the Getting Started Guide can both be found at <https://www.cityofws.org/2453/Homelessness>** under Request for Proposals-Housing Opportunities for Persons with AID- HOPWA.

Once in Neighborly, applications are to be submitted under the “HOPWA Agency **Funding**” section. When initiating an application in Neighborly, please use the following naming convention

for the case: **“Agency Name-HOPWA.”** For example, if a nonprofit organization named **“Helping Hands”** is applying for funding, the case name would be **“Helping Hands-HOPWA”**. This naming process will help to identify applications for funding.

Applications must be authorized by the Board of Directors of the organization submitting the proposal. Although not required to be submitted, the organization should retain the minutes of the board meeting authorizing the submission of the application. An electronic signature on the application indicates the agency’s representative has authority to submit the application.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Questions may be emailed to [hcsd@cityofws.org](mailto:hcsd@cityofws.org) and in the subject line include “RFP-HOPWA FY21”.