



SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

2021-2022 NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA) HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

STAFF CONTACT:

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Notice of Funding Availability
SKAGIT COUNTY HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

Skagit County seeks applications, no later than **3:00pm on February 12th, 2021**, from qualified parties experienced in implementing projects to provide homeless crisis response services. Funds for this program will come from the Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG), Skagit County Document Recording Fees, and Skagit County Behavioral Health Sales Tax Funds.

Skagit County receives various state grants and document recording fees for which funds must be used in accordance with funding guidelines, statutory requirements, and the strategies outlined in the [2019-2024 Skagit County 5-Year Homeless Housing Plan](#).

Proposals are sought in the following categories:

- Coordinated Entry and Assessment
- Diversion
- Interim Housing
- Rental Assistance and Case Management

Preliminary estimates for allocations are based on recent revenue patterns. Please note these allocation amounts are estimates and will not necessarily be fully awarded, depending on the availability of funding.

Each application must be submitted to Skagit County Public Health, Attn: Sarah Hinman, 700 S 2nd St #301, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, or emailed to sarahh@co.skagit.wa.us no later than **3:00pm on February 12th**. Late proposals will not be accepted.

Letter of Interest for new projects only (attached) is due by 3:00pm, January 22nd. No applications to fund new projects will be accepted from any organization that does not submit a Letter of Interest with that project specifically identified.

Applicants are encouraged to submit questions to the County for additional information. Responses will be added to the County's Housing [Website](#) weekly during the NOFA period. Questions should be submitted via email to mstarr@co.skagit.wa.us with "2021-2022 NOFA Question" as the subject line.

Skagit County reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any and all applications received. Skagit County reserves the right to negotiate contract terms subsequent to the submissions of applications from the selected qualified applicants. Skagit County reserves the right to require any projects selected for funding to undertake the project in a manner specified by the County in the contract, which may include, but is not limited to, coordination with specific programs, services, or other resources. All awards are contingent on the availability of funding.

All proposals are public information and subject to public disclosure.

The County is not liable for any costs incurred by applicants prior to entering into a contract. Costs associated with developing the application and any other expenses incurred by the applicant in

responding to the NOFA are entirely the responsibility of the applicant and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by the County.

I. Background

In order to reduce the prevalence of homelessness, the amount of time people spend in a state of homelessness, and homelessness recidivism in Skagit County, Skagit County Public Health will make funding available to support a robust homeless crisis response system.

The County has prioritized funding to accelerate a shift toward a homeless crisis response system that, when scaled appropriately, could assess and respond to the housing crisis of all people experiencing homelessness in Skagit County. In order to do so, the system must prioritize unsheltered households and create an emphasis on housing-focused services that are designed to address the immediate crisis of homelessness, and return people to a safe permanent housing situation with adequate supports in place. The homeless crisis response system will also connect households with other mainstream services to address longer-term needs, such as mental and physical health, employment, and education.

The County seeks to fund a diverse set of services that maximize resources to respond to the homelessness crisis; provide geographic coverage across Skagit County, and demographic coverage across all populations experiencing homelessness; balance short-term needs with long-term investments; and build on the strengths and resiliency of individuals and families involved in the homeless and low-income housing systems.

II. NOFA Timeline

In administering this NOFA, Skagit County will adhere to the below timeline:

Action	Date	Time
NOFA Release	Thursday, January 7 th	
Letters of Interest Due (new programs only)	Friday, January 22 nd	3:00pm
Applications Due	Friday, February 12 th	3:00pm
Tentative Awards Announced	Friday, May 14 th	3:00pm
Contracts Begin	Thursday, July 1 st	

III. Availability of Funds

Estimated grant funds included in this NOFA total \$1,974,879. Projects will be funded by the following sources:

- Document Recording Fees (local)
Skagit County is eligible for and receives fees authorized by RCW 36.22.178 and RCW 36.22.179. Skagit County intends to award funds for projects that employ strategies established in the Skagit County 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Program guidelines are partially set by the Washington State Department of Commerce, and Skagit County must adhere to these guidelines in administering this grant.
- Consolidated Homeless Grant (state)
Skagit County is a “Lead Agency” for the Consolidated Homeless Grant Program (CHG). CHG combines state homeless resources into a single grant opportunity under the administration of the Washington State Department of Commerce. Program guidelines are set by the Washington State Department of Commerce, and Skagit County must adhere to these guidelines in administering this grant. All CHG grant awards are tentative. Final funding amounts will be determined after the Washington State Operating Budget is finalized.
- 0.1% Behavioral Health Sales Tax (local)
Skagit County collects funds under RCW 82.14.460. These funds must be used for the purpose of providing for the operation or delivery of chemical dependency or mental health treatment programs and services. Programs and services includes housing and case management that is a component of a coordinated chemical dependency or mental health treatment program or service.

Approximate Funding Availability

Base CHG	HEN (CHG)	PSH (CHG)	Local Doc Fee	Local .01% BH Sales Tax	Total
\$303,789	\$383,244	\$26,846	\$950,000	\$311,000	\$1,974,879

This is a competitive application process for limited funding; therefore, applications that meet all criteria are not guaranteed an award of funds, and successful applications may be funded for less than the amount requested. Existing projects (those that currently receive County-awarded funds) are not guaranteed funding from year to year. Projects that will be funded in successive years are those that align with the requirements and expectations of this NOFA.

IV. Minimum Qualifications

Organizations must meet the following minimum qualifications to be considered for funding:

- Organization must be a local government, Council of Governments, Housing Authority, Community Action Agency, Regional Support Network (under 71.24 RCW), nonprofit community

or neighborhood-based organization, federally recognized Indian tribe in the state of Washington, or regional or statewide nonprofit housing-assistance organization that operates programs to end homelessness within a defined service area.

- Organization must be able to comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws; Organization should review [“A Guide to Fair Housing for Nonprofit Housing & Shelter Providers”](#) prior to applying for funding. Contracts may be monitored for compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and any violation will result in a 30-day corrective action notice.
- Organization must be able to comply with all contract requirements of Skagit County, the Washington State Department of Commerce, and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (depending on source of funds used).
- Compliance with service-specific eligibility criteria (as described below).
- Organization has qualified and responsible management and staffing resources necessary to implement the project, including any applicable licensing and credentialing requirements.
- Organization has sound financial management systems and financial capacity to operate programs on a reimbursement basis.
- Organization is able to comply with the insurance requirements of the contract.
- Organization has experience in operating proposed project or program, or demonstrated knowledge and training necessary to operate proposed project.

A proposer’s overall capacity, specialized experience, reputation, past performance for similar services, technical competence, financial stability, and ability to meet program goals will all be considered in the award decision. Existing providers’ HMIS data will be reviewed for both data entry quality and performance benchmarks and will be considered in award decisions.

Grantees should expect Skagit County to conduct in-person monitoring and client file review once during the grant cycle. Other contract monitoring will occur through review of HMIS data, reported monthly by the contractor. Skagit County reserves the right to conduct additional assessment and contract monitoring at any time during the grant cycle.

Contracts may include performance measures, per requirements set by the Washington State Department of Commerce.

V. Proposal Submission Requirements & Evaluation Process

Currently Funded Projects

Please submit the following:

- a. Attachment B: Application Cover Sheet
- b. Attachment C: Budget and Narrative
- c. Attachment D: Currently Funded Projects

If your organization is seeking funding for a new project, or proposing significant changes to current project, you will need to submit the full proposal as outlined below.

New Projects

Please include the following in your proposal:

- a. Attachment A: Letter of Interest (Due January 22nd)
- b. Attachment B: Application Cover Sheet
- c. Responses to the narrative application questions
- d. Attachment C: Budget and Narrative
- e. Most recent financial audit

If your organization is seeking funding for more than one project, please submit one application per proposed project.

Skagit County Public Health intends to select the proposals that are the most qualified to meet local needs. The submitted proposal must fully address the requirements listed in this solicitation and the proposer's degree of experience, knowledge, and ability to provide experienced and qualified services as proposed. Skagit County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received by reason of this request, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner deemed to be in the best interests of the County.

Staff will conduct an initial review to eliminate any proposals that do not meet minimum qualifications. Following this review, staff will provide all proposals that meet minimum qualifications to an Allocations Committee, comprised of the Public Health Director and representatives from the Low Income and Homeless Housing Allocations Committee. The Allocations Committee will score applications and make a recommendation for funding to the United Way Board of Directors. The United Way Board of Directors will vote and make a recommendation of funding to the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners. The Commissioners make the final decision on any contracts executed between proposers and Skagit County Public Health.

Staff may contact applicants for clarifying interviews related to application during evaluation process.

All applicants seeking Consolidated Homeless Grant Funding are required to abide by the Department of Commerce's [CHG](#) Program Guidelines. Additionally, agencies applying for CHG funding will be expected to adhere to any additional contractual requirements put forth by the Department of Commerce and/or the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

COORDINATED ENTRY AND ASSESSMENT FUNDING NOTICE

The purpose of Coordinated Entry is to make it easier for households experiencing homelessness to connect with the services that are best suited to meet their housing needs. Coordinated Entry will also help create and sustain relationships among service providers to improve coordination. The selected agency will also provide leadership and HMIS support to the Skagit County Homeless Crisis Response System, as well as other system-wide administrative functions. The provision of a Coordinated Entry system is a state- and federally-mandated requirement. The County will select one agency to receive this funding.

Eligible Activities include staffing, facility, and overhead costs associated with:

- Operating a countywide Housing Resource Center.
- Leading the Point-In-Time Count, following all guidelines distributed by the Washington State Department of Commerce.
- Providing countywide HMIS administration, support, and data summaries.
- Providing other administrative functions, as set forth by Skagit County.

Grant Requirements

- Coordinated Entry
 - Establish a location where households experiencing homelessness or imminently at-risk of homelessness can access housing services and other referrals.
 - Maintain a countywide Housing Interest Pool using HMIS.
 - Advertise Coordinated Entry access points and partner agencies.
 - Establish and utilize a standardized assessment tool that matches households with services that will help them exit homelessness AND prioritizes households with the greatest need.
 - Maintain up-to-date information on program capacities, vacancies, and eligibility criteria.
 - Work with the Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee to develop and maintain policies that include how households are referred to programs; the uniform decision-making process for using the assessment to prioritize households for programs; a protocol for rejecting referrals that ensures rejections are justified and rejected households are referred to appropriate services whenever possible; and other system policies.
 - Provide warm handoffs involving close coordination with the agency to which the household is referred.
 - Develop grievance policies and a procedure for allowing customer and provider feedback.
 - Provide written materials and intake appointments in English and Spanish.
 - Develop a reliable system to address emergent needs after regular business hours.
 - Provide leadership to the Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee and maintain/update Policies & Procedures.

- Landlord Engagement
 - Establish and maintain a list of interested landlords that includes information on rental properties (including buildings with fewer than 50 units). The list must be updated at least once per quarter and distributed to partner agencies and households that are offered rent assistance.
 - Conduct and document outreach to private rental landlords at least quarterly about opportunities to provide rental housing to people experiencing homelessness.
 - Work assertively to develop relationships and partnerships with private landlords to increase availability of rental units for homeless households on the Interest Pool.
- HMIS
 - Develop and maintain HMIS data-sharing agreements.
 - Assist Skagit County with countywide reporting requirements and data requests.
 - Provide training, leadership, technical assistance, and data expertise to other Skagit County agencies using HMIS.
 - Conduct the legislature-mandated 45% set-aside audit (if required in 2021-2022).
- Point-in-Time Count
 - Plan and administer January 2022 Point-In-Time Count that captures the geographic and demographic diversity of households experiencing homelessness in Skagit County, in accordance with the guidelines distributed by the Washington State Department of Commerce and contract expectations.
 - Create and execute a robust volunteer engagement plan.
 - Plan and execute a Point-In-Time Count.
 - Balance staff and volunteer safety with the need for an accurate count.
 - Begin Point-In-Time Count planning by July 2021 and provide monthly progress updates to Skagit County. The County plans for the contractor to allocate approximately .25 FTE toward Point-in-Time Count planning activities between July 2021 and January 2022.
 - Coordinate with youth providers to administer a specific Youth Count.

DIVERSION FUNDING NOTICE

The Diversion process takes place during a family's initial contact with the homeless response system — either at Coordinated Entry or at the front door of an emergency shelter. A Diversion-trained staff member initiates an exploratory conversation with the family to brainstorm practical solutions for preventing households from becoming homeless, or moving from homelessness to housing. Families are prompted to identify safe housing options based on their own available resources, not those of the homeless response system. To help ease the transition out of homelessness, the system may offer families a flexible combination of short-term services and one-time financial assistance. Organizations interested in providing Diversion services should break out staff and client expenses in program proposal and budget.

Eligible Direct Service Activities

- Housing search
- Creative problem solving
- Mediation or conflict resolution with landlords, family members or friends
- Assistance or referral for credit repair, job search, legal assistance, etc.

Eligible One-Time Financial Assistance

- Rent, deposit, moving expenses
- Utilities, background checks
- Transportation, work supplies, employment certifications, etc.

Grant Requirements

- Diversion-specific staff must be trained in the housing Diversion model before providing Diversion services.
- Households opting to receive Diversion services may not be pre-screened for perceived ability to be successful through this intervention
- This funding may not be awarded if another source of Diversion funding is secured.

INTERIM HOUSING FUNDING NOTICE

The source of these funds is CHG and local document recording fees. Due to federal and state grant requirements and a need to spend down these funds, awards for programs that are able to comply with CHG requirements will be prioritized for this funding.

The County will not fund any new transitional housing programs during this grant cycle; only previously funded transitional housing programs may be funded.

Eligible expenses include administration, operations (including housing-focused case management), and facility support:

Eligible Activities

- Drop-in Shelter
- Continuous-stay Shelter
- Interim/Transitional Housing
- Flex funding related to housing, not to exceed 10% of total award
- Motel Voucher Program

Grant Requirements

Due to state requirements that place conditions on Skagit County funding, all funded programs must:

- Accept referrals exclusively from the Skagit County Housing Resource Center (Youth, Drop-in Shelter, Farmworker, and Domestic Violence providers are excluded from this requirement).
- Enter all client information into HMIS following CHG and HUD data standards applicable to the program.
- Prioritize based on vulnerability with an emphasis on unsheltered households.

Programs receiving CHG funding will need to abide by all CHG rules as set by the Department of Commerce for the 2021-2022 funding round.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND CASE MANAGEMENT FUNDING NOTICE

The source of these funds is CHG and local document recording fees. Set-asides for HEN and PSH funds will influence the allocation of these dollars.

More information on eligible expenses can be found at <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/consolidated-homeless-grant/>.

Eligible Activities

- Targeted Prevention
- Flex Funding
- Assertive Outreach/Street Outreach
- Housing-Focused Case Management
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Master Leasing
- Landlord Mitigation Funds

Grant Requirements

- Priority will be given to programs that abide by CHG rules as set by the Department of Commerce.
- Billed activities must be eligible under CHG guidelines.
- Serve households that are homeless or at imminent risk of homeless as defined by the Washington State Department of Commerce AND at or below 30% AMI, DSHS HEN Referral, or TANF Enrolled. Some exceptions may be made for literally homeless households who are over income. Households entering rapid re-housing programs are exempt from income eligibility and housing status requirements for the first 90 days of program participation.
- Prioritize based on vulnerability with an emphasis on unsheltered households.
- To be eligible for permanent supportive housing, a household must be homeless AND include at least one household member who has a disability that is expected to be long-term or of indefinite duration and substantially impedes the household member's ability to live independently.
- Utilize progressive engagement; all support services must be voluntary.
- Assess each household and create housing stability plans.
- Accept referrals exclusively from the Skagit County Housing Resource Center (Youth and Domestic Violence providers are excluded from this requirement).
- Must enter accurate client data into the HMIS system according to HUD and Commerce timeliness and data standards.
- Must have the financial systems to make rent payments to landlords in a timely fashion or contract with an agency able to do so (must have an MOU in place).

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. NEW PROJECT SUMMARY (20pts)

Include a detailed description – up to a maximum of three pages – of the proposed project, target populations, partnerships, and services/activities to be provided; include a description of how the project is aligned with the NOFA Priorities and Best Practices in Homeless Crisis Response.

2. OUTREACH AND ACCESS (10pts)

Provide a maximum one-page summary of how the proposed new project will reach and be accessed by the targeted population(s), any anticipated barriers to project access, and how these barriers will be addressed. Also describe any exclusionary criteria used by the project (such as criminal background, sobriety requirements, etc.), why these criteria were selected, and how these criteria are supported by best practices. Describe any mandatory program guidelines (such as life skills classes, work requirements, etc.), why these guidelines were selected, and how these guidelines are supported by best practice and/or outcome data. Please also describe the agency's process for accepting referrals from the coordinated entry system and working with households that meet coordinated entry priorities for service.

3. PROJECT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES (10pts)

Provide a one-paragraph description of proposed outputs and outcomes. If possible, please use past HMIS data to ground predictions about future performance.

4. BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE (10pts)

Complete attached budget and narrative form (Attachment C). Describe efforts by the agency to obtain alternative future sources of funding to support the proposed project. Provide any other relevant narrative accompaniment to the project budget that you would like the review team to know. Preference will be given to projects that leverage state and federal funds.

Attachment A: Letter of Interest

Please type or print all information. Return the completed and signed form to Megan Starr, Skagit County Public Health, 700 S 2nd St #301, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 or mstarr@co.skagit.wa.us.

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please attach a one- or two-paragraph description of your proposed project and the approximate amount of funding requested. *Funding requests and project descriptions are not considered final and may change prior to the submission of a final proposal.*

Signature below indicates an interest in becoming a contractor for Skagit County. I understand that signing this letter does not bind me to submission of a full application. All information submitted in this letter of interest is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I fully understand that any significant misstatement in or omission from this application may constitute cause for denial of participation.

Name and Title (print or type)

Signature

Date

Attachment B: Application Cover Sheet

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please check the appropriate box below and provide the information requested:

- Incorporated as a private nonprofit corporation in the State of Washington and has been granted 501(c) (3) tax exempt status by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN): _____
- A public corporation, commission, or authority established pursuant to applicable Washington State law
- Other _____

State of Washington Business License Number(s): _____

Program Licensure or Certification Status, if applicable: _____

Has there been any Audit Finding or Management Letters (within the last 3 years) from any public funder?

- No
- Yes — Please attach

Total Dollars Requested: _____ **Funding Category:** _____

I understand the terms and conditions of the NOFA and certify that the above-named agency will comply with all Skagit County requirements if a contract award is made. All information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Project Sponsor

Print Name

Title

Signature

Date

Attachment C: Budget and Narrative

Instructions and Definitions

BUDGET NARRATIVE: The Budget Narrative includes explanation of computations as well as the justification of how and/or why a line item helps to meet the program goals and outcomes.

COMPUTATION: Show basis/formula of requested dollar amount.

COLUMN A (Total County Funds): This column reflects all of the funds from Skagit County Human Services to cover the program or project to be accomplished.

COLUMN B (Total Funds from Other Sources): This column reflects all of the funds secured or requested from other sources to support this program or project, including other grants and donations.

COLUMN C (Total Value of In-Kind/Non-cash Support): In-kind support is non-dollar contributions such as space and office equipment.

COLUMN D (Total Budget A+B+C=D): This column reflects the total sum necessary to implement the program or project.

PERSONNEL COSTS: Provide salaries and wages of all employees whether part-time, full-time, temporary, or volunteer in-kind value. List each position by title. Show the annual salary rate and the percentage of time to be devoted to the project. Attach a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: Fringe benefits are for the personnel listed and only for the percentage of time devoted to the project. Include commonly accepted fringe benefits paid on behalf of employees, such as FICA, health and life insurance, retirement, worker's compensation, unemployment insurance, and other approved payroll-related costs. Fringe benefits should be based on actual known costs or an established formula.

FACILITY: Include estimated rent or mortgage payments

OFFICE SUPPLIES AND EXPENSES: Include all basic office accessories and supplies, including copier materials, printing and postage, etc. Generally, supplies include any materials that are expendable or consumed during the course of the project.

COMMUNICATIONS: Include phone service, long distance charges and e-mail/Internet account fees.

TRAVEL: Itemize travel expenses by purpose (e.g. staff to training, field interviews, advisory group meetings, etc.) Show the basis of computation (e.g. six people to 3-day training at \$x airfare, \$x lodging, \$x meals).

CONTRACTED SERVICES: Provide a description of the product or service to be procured by contract.

DIRECT CLIENT SERVICES/COSTS: Miscellaneous items such as incentives, client workbooks etc.

OTHER: Include all program expenses not included above. Please itemize any expense of more than \$500.

ADMINISTRATIVE OVERHEAD/INDIRECT COSTS: Ten percent (10%) of the total project budget based on the net of direct service costs. Funds designated for administrative overhead are fixed amounts and not subject to cost-related provisions.

Organization: _____

Project Name: _____

Name and Title of Person Completing Budget: _____

I. Budget

	A	B	C	D
EXPENSES	County Funds	Funds from Other Sources (Outline in II)	Value of In-kind or Non-cash Support	Total Budget (A+B+C=D)
Personnel Costs				
SALARY SUBTOTAL				
Employee Benefits				
TOTAL PERSONNEL				
Facility				
Office Supplies/Expenses				
Communications				
Travel				
Contracted Services				
Direct Client Svcs/Costs				
Other				
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL				
Overhead/Indirect Costs				
GRAND TOTAL				

III. Budget Narrative

Personnel Costs:

Employee Benefits:

Facility:

Office Supplies/Expenses:

Communications:

Travel:

Contracted Services:

Direct Client Services/Costs:

Other:

Attachment D: Currently Funded Projects

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

1. Project Overview

Brief description of current project

2. Future of Project

Proposed changes to current project

3. Funding

Funding Category of Project: _____

<i>Current County funding</i>	<i>Proposed 2021-2022 funding</i>

4. Progress Update

<i>Currently Contracted Performance Measures</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>