

Central Florida Commission on Homelessness

Request for Applications 20.3

Services to Enhance the Capacity of the Regional Family Homelessness Response System

Release Date: Saturday, March 7, 2020

Completed Applications Must Be Received by: Friday, 5:00 pm, EST, March 27, 2020

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Attachments:

Attachment A	Application Form
Attachment B	Requirements Related to a Housing First Approach to Program Operation
Attachment C	Housing Navigation and Housing Stability Case Management Scope of Work
Attachment D	Interim Homelessness Diversion Scope of Work
Attachment E	Project Performance Metrics and the Awarding of Performance Bonus Funds
Attachment F	HMIS-Related Requirements

Section I. Acronyms and Definitions.

a. Acronyms.

The following acronyms are in use throughout this Request for Applications:

CES =	Coordinated Entry System
CFCH =	Central Florida Commission on Homelessness
CFR =	Code of Federal Regulations
CoC =	Continuum of Care
CoC FL-507 =	Central Florida Commission on Homelessness (formerly Central Florida CoC)
HMIS =	Homeless Management Information System
HSN =	Homeless Services Network of Central Florida, Inc.
HUD =	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

b. Definitions.

For purposes of this RFA:

- (1) “CoC Interim Rule” means 24 CFR Part 578, as amended.
- (2) “Family” means a household whose members include at least one adult and at least one minor, dependent child for whom that adult is the parent or legal guardian.
- (3) “Literally Homeless Family” means a Family that meets either condition (1) or (4) of the definition of homelessness as set forth in Section 578.3 of the CoC Interim Rule.
- (4) “CoC FL-507 Coverage Area” or “Target Area” means Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties.
- (5) “Homelessness Diversion” or “Diversion” means assistance, whether financial or non-financial, provided to a family experiencing homelessness that enables them to directly secure or return to permanent housing prior to entry into the formal homelessness response system.
- (6) “Rapid Exit” means assistance provided to a family residing in an emergency shelter or related setting that enables them to move directly into permanent housing.
- (7) “Navigation” means the process of gathering documentation needed to determine funding source and project eligibility.
- (8) “Housing Stability Case Management” or “Case Management” means housing-focused services, provided in an intensive-field based manner, that result in supporting efforts by a family to obtain and maintain stable, Permanent Housing.
- (9) “Permanent Housing” means a dwelling unit occupied under a rental agreement, as those terms are defined in the Florida Landlord and Residential Tenant Act.
- (10) “Critical Supportive Services” means services are essential to permanent housing retention and stability which could include, but are not limited to transportation, child care, life skills training, or other supportive services defined at 24 CFR Part 578.53 of the CoC Interim Rule.

(11) “Housing Pipeline” means the process by and structure through which the family homelessness response system facilitates the progression of families experiencing homelessness from initial contact into stable, sustainable permanent housing.

(12) “Homelessness Response System Access Point” or “Access Point” means a location or medium by which a literally homeless family may request assistance and begin the process of assessment and movement through the housing pipeline.

(13) “HUB” means an access point at a physical location, typically based within another partnering agency. For purposes of this RFA, a HUB must be located in the Target Area.

All terms used in this RFA that are not otherwise defined herein shall have definitions as set forth in the CoC Interim Rule or CoC FL-507 policies.

Section II. Description of Funding Opportunity.

A. About CFCH and HSN.

The Central Florida Commission on Homelessness (CFCH) is a collective impact collaborative from across Florida’s Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties committed to ending homelessness through shared expertise, data informed decision making, best-practice development, and using our collective voice to advocate for our homeless neighbors.

Homeless Services Network (HSN) serves as the lead agency for the CFCH, with responsibilities that include the coordination of stakeholders in and components of the regional homelessness response system, the solicitation of applications for funding made available to the CFCH to bolster that system, and optimization of the performance of that system through effective resource management and continuous improvement.

B. About the Family Homelessness Response System.

The family homelessness response system is the integrated array of housing and supportive services resources that collectively work to reduce the length of time families experiencing homelessness in Central Florida remain without housing, to promote their retention of housing, and to limit returns to homelessness. The primary components of the family homelessness response system include assessment, diversion, emergency shelter, rapid exit, navigation, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing and homelessness prevention, all of which are linked as part of the housing pipeline. The components of the family homelessness response system are coordinated and linked through CES and HMIS.

C. About this RFA.

The purpose of this RFA is to select sub-recipients that will work collaboratively with HSN and one another to increase the capacity and effectiveness of the family homelessness response system in Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties through the strategic provision of enhanced services.

This RFA is expected to be the first of three (3) requests for applications issued by HSN in order to implement planned enhancements to the family homelessness response system.

Section III. Eligibility Information.

A. Entities eligible to apply for funding under this RFA include:

1. Corporations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and
2. Local governments or their arms

B. Threshold Requirements

In addition to the prerequisites listed under each activity to be funded under paragraph B below, each Applicant must satisfy basic eligibility requirements in order to be accepted and considered for funding. Applications that do not meet the following threshold conditions will not be reviewed or scored:

1. The Applicant timely submitted a complete Application Form in response to this RFA
2. The Applicant proposed activities that are eligible for consideration under this RFA.
3. The Applicant has at least two (2) audited years of demonstrated experience directly aiding families experiencing homelessness in Orange, Osceola and/or Seminole Counties in a manner consistent with housing-focused principles, as well as a physical presence in the Central Florida region. For purposes of this RFA, “audited year” means an Applicant fiscal year for which the Applicant has ensured the completion of an independent financial audit of its activities during that period.
4. The Applicant will commit to the practice of Housing First prior to contract execution.
5. The Applicant has an active signed Partner Agreement on file with HSN, in its capacity as HMIS Lead, and has assigned an Agency Liaison with an agreement on file with HSN OR can document at least two year’s use of a DV comparable data system.
6. The Applicant has no unresolved IRS or other outstanding federal or State of Florida audit findings, and has not debarred as a vendor by the State of Florida or any local government within the Target Area.
7. The Applicant commits to follow the applicable CoC FL-507-adopted standards for the appropriate project type(s).
8. The Applicant commits to regular and ongoing participation in all applicable CES Registry Management processes.
9. The Applicant has documented participation in CFCH (CoC) work groups, training and/or meetings.

C. Eligible Activities.

Activities eligible for funding under this RFA include direct provision of the following services:

1. **Activity: Coordinated Entry Community Resource Specialists**
Diversion and Rapid Exit from homelessness through the deployment and intervention of Coordinated Entry Community Resource Specialists (CR Specialists) at the front end of the family homelessness response system. Specialists will work in concert with shelters, HUBs and other Access Points to facilitate and accelerate placement into and retention of permanent housing, including maintaining a short-term caseload. More specifically, CR Specialists will provide services in accordance with the relevant portions of the CoC FL-507 Interim Diversion Scope of Work, which is appended to this RFA as Attachment D.

Expected Maximum Award: \$180,000 (annualized). HSN anticipates awarding funds sufficient to create a total of three (3) FTE CR Specialist positions to support increased volume and effectiveness of the Housing Pipeline.

Pre-requisites: Demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of assistance to literally homeless individuals and families with children, including participation in diversion training and/or implementation. Demonstrated capacity and commitment to flexibly but comprehensively provide the necessary services in at least two (2) counties in the Target Area without restriction.

2. **Activity: Flexible Family Support Specialists**

Increased and accelerated progression of families into and through the housing pipeline facilitated by CES-assigned deployment of Flexible Family Support Specialists. The Specialists will address gaps or overflow in the family homelessness response system that impede Housing Pipeline flow. Specialists must be flexible with potential assignments to assist the broadest range of families throughout the region at any point along the Housing Pipeline for a variable length of time, including Assessment, Diversion, Rapid Exit, Navigation or Housing Stability Case Management. Specialists will follow the Interim Diversion Scope of Work and the Housing Stability Case Management Scope of Work, which are appended to this RFA as Attachments C and D, respectively.

Expected Maximum Award: \$120,000 (annualized). HSN anticipates awarding funds sufficient for a total of two (2) FTE Flexible Family Support Specialist positions.

Pre-requisites: Demonstrated experience and expertise in provision of assistance to literally homeless individuals and families with children across the housing pipeline. Demonstrated capacity and commitment to provide the necessary services with flexibility in at least two (2) counties in the Target Area without restriction. Ability to provide short-term services to broadest range of literally homeless families strongly preferred. Ability to provide services in both English and Spanish and/or Creole also strongly preferred.

3. **Activity: Move-On Family Case Manager/Peer Support Specialist**

Increased housing sustainability for families that remain in permanent housing after completion of a period of Rapid Rehousing assistance and increased capacity of the family homelessness response system through the provision of lower-intensity Housing Stability Case Management and support services to families who would otherwise be considered for enrollment into PSH. These services will be provided/linked by a Move-On Family Case Manager or Peer Support Specialist. Families identified as a result of their participation in Rapid Rehousing as needing long-term subsidies and other supports in order to sustain housing stability will be prioritized for matching to a Housing Choice Voucher (or other long-term rental subsidy) and assigned to the Move-On Family Case Manager.

Expected Maximum Award: \$60,000 (annualized). HSN anticipates awarding funds sufficient to establish one (1) FTE Move-On Case Manager or Peer Support Specialist position.

Pre-requisites: Demonstrated experience and expertise in provision of Rapid Rehousing or Permanent Supportive Housing case management assistance to families with children experiencing literal homelessness. Demonstrated capacity and commitment to provide the necessary services with flexibility in at least two (2) counties in the Target Area without restriction.

4. **Activity: Access to Critical Services**

As part of its submission requesting funding under Activities 1, 2 or 3, an Applicant may request a supplemental award of funding to provide for the delivery of certain Critical Services that pertain directly to their proposed role in the family homelessness response system. These Critical Services must be integral to the assisted families' progression through the Housing Pipeline toward and retention of families in permanent housing. Examples of Critical Services include

child care, transportation, employment related expenses, move-in supplies, and utility deposits. **Applicants may not apply for funding for this Activity 4 as a stand-alone activity. Applicants may apply for up to \$25,000 (annualized) in Activity 4 funding for each FTE position requested. If applying for Activity 4 funding via multiple Applications, the total of all such Activity 4 requests may not exceed \$100,000 (annualized).**

Expected Maximum Award: HSN anticipates awarding \$100,000 (annualized) in funds sufficient to support appropriate critical activities.

Pre-requisites: Demonstrated experience with and expertise in provision of services to literally homeless individuals and families with children. Demonstrated capacity to serve the entire Target Area is strongly preferred; capacity to serve at least two (2) counties required. Must submit an Application for funding under at least one of Activities 1, 2 or 3.

Summary of Funding Availability (by Activity)				
Activ ity #	Component	Expected Total Amount Available (annualized)	Maximum Total Amount Available (18-24 months)	Expected # of Awards
1	Community Resource Specialists	\$180,000	\$270,000 - \$360,000	1-3
2	Flexible Support Specialists	\$120,000	\$180,000 - \$240,000	1-2
3	Move-On Family Case Manager/Peer Support Specialist	\$60,000	\$90,000 - \$120,000	1
4	Critical Services	\$100,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000	1-3
	TOTAL	\$460,000	\$690,000 - \$920,000	2-6

Section IV. Submission of Applications.

An eligible Applicant may request funding to provide one or more of the activities listed in Section 3 above by submitting at least one completed Application Form (Attachment A) to application@hsncfl.org prior to the submission deadline. One Application Form should be completed for each activity among Activities 1, 2 or 3 for which the Applicant requests funding.

The Application Form will be available via the CFCH website at <http://www.centralfloridacoc.org> until the application deadline.

The Application Deadline for submitting a completed Application form signed by an authorized representative of the Applicant and all required attachments is 5:00 p.m., EST, on March 27, 2020. Applications not received in the manner described at Section VI.B. below by this deadline will not be reviewed or considered.

Applications should be submitted in Word format, with the signature page submitted in PDF format.

Section V. Key Information for Applicants.

A. Total Amount of Funding to Be Awarded.

Through this RFA process, HSN anticipates awarding sub-grant amounts to selected Applicants totaling up to \$460,000 (annualized). From this annualized amount, HSN will award an estimated \$360,000 to sub-recipients to support six (6) FTE positions as described Section III. C. (1, 2 and 3) and \$100,000 to be administered by sub-recipients to provide Critical Services as described in Section III. C. (4) as an integral part of facilitating families' diversion from homelessness, progression through the Housing Pipeline, and retention in permanent housing.

HSN expects that initial subcontract terms will be between 18 and 24 months in length. As a result, the maximum total amount for all awards expected to be made under this RFA is \$920,000, excluding any performance bonuses to be awarded under paragraph E below.

B. Number of Sub-grants to Be Awarded.

HSN anticipates selecting between two (2) and six (6) Applicants as sub-recipients to perform the activities described in Section III.C. above

C. Application Scoring and Project Selection Process.

1. Scoring Rubric

Applications will be scored using a point system based on 13 evaluation criteria, with a maximum score of 115 points. The scoring criteria and respective maximum point values are as follows:

Organizational Experience (Application questions B.1 and 2) - 10 points

Grant Administrative Experience (Application questions B.3) – 8 points

Program Administrative Competencies (Application questions B.4) – 10 points

Program Activity Experience (Application questions B.5, 6, and or 7) - 12 points

Organizational Policies (Application section C.) – 8 points

Training Requirements (Application section D.) – 8 points

HMIS Capacity (Applications sections E and F.) – 8 points

Budget Reasonability, Feasibility and Relevance (Application section G.) – 16 points

Financial Capacity (Attachment 2 and 3) - 10 points

Blending with other funded projects to maximize system performance (Overall) - 10 points

Integration of Critical Services with Other Proposed Activity/Innovation of Proposed Service Delivery - 10 points

Matching funds bonus (Application section F-Incidental Expense Budget form) – 5 Points

Applications that do not include a request for funding for Activity 4 will be held harmless in the scoring process.

2. Project Selection Process

- A Community Ranking Committee will review scores and develop recommendations for the CFCH Managing Board. Recommended funding awards may include multiple potential configurations of sub-recipients, staffing positions and funding amounts, as well as requests that HSN facilitate negotiations with or among sub-recipients in order to facilitate identification of the optimal configuration.
- B. Ranking Committee recommendations will be transmitted to the CFCH Managing Board for review and ratification.

D. Expectations of Ongoing Collaborative.

Sub-recipients selected through this RFA process must, as a condition of receipt of any award amount, engage in active and continuous collaboration with HSN and the group of other sub-recipients to identify and implement innovative, effective solutions to family homelessness.

In support of such collaboration, HSN will:

- 1) Facilitate an ongoing working group to plan, refine and evaluate the implementation of the Project.
- 2) Make additional funding available for performance-based bonuses to be made available to all sub-recipients in the event that the collaboration results in successful outcomes.

E. Performance Bonuses.

One aim of the Project is to move the family homelessness response system toward performance-based contracting. To that end, HSN will make available up to \$60,000 (annualized) in outcome-based supplemental funding (i.e., performance bonuses) to be potentially distributed to all sub-recipients in the event that their collective efforts result in the project meeting specified system and program level performance benchmarks.

To that end, HSN will evaluate project effectiveness using key performance metrics that assess the ability of the family homelessness system to divert or rapidly exit families from homelessness, ensure housing retention and prevent returns to homelessness.

HSN will award any performance bonuses for which sub-recipients may be eligible on a quarterly basis. Performance bonus amounts for reaching collaborative performance benchmarks will be distributed proportionately based on the number of sub-recipients in the Collective and their base award amounts. HSN will also award individual agency bonuses based on program level performance benchmarks. HSN may also award previously unearned bonus amounts in a subsequent period based on cumulative performance rather than on quarterly activity. An explanation of the process of development and use of the performance metrics is appended to this RFA as Attachment E.

Section VI. Key Events and Resources for Prospective Applicants

A. Timeline of Key Events.

The following key events are anticipated in relation to the issuance of this RFA, the subsequent review of applications received in response to this RFA and the selection of applications. All dates listed in this timeline refer to 2020.

<u>Event or Due Date</u>	<u>Anticipated Date (and Time, if applicable)</u>
Release of RFA and Application (PDF)	March 7
RFA Information and Q&A Session 1**	Monday, March 16, 3 p.m..
RFA Information and Q&A Session 2** (repeat)	Wednesday, March 18, 9 a.m.
Applications Due to HSN	Friday, March 27, 5 p.m.
Community Ranking Committee (<i>tentative</i>)	First week of April
CoC Managing Board Meeting (<i>tentative</i>)	Wednesday, April 8, 1:00 p.m.
Funding Decision Notifications	Friday, April 17
Expected Start Date for Funded Projects	Friday, May 15

** Teleconference and/or Go to Meeting access information will be posted on the funding page of the CFCH website and sent to all persons on the Interested Parties List.

B. Deadline for Submission of Applicants.

All Applications must be submitted to HSN no later than the deadline of 5:00 p.m., EST, March 27, 2020. For purposes of this RFA, “submitted” means that a completed Application, including all required attachments, is received by HSN via the email address application@hsncfl.org. Applications submitted after the deadline cannot and will not be accepted or reviewed. Applications should be submitted in Word format, with the signature page submitted in PDF format.

C. Resources for Prospective Applicants.

As the Lead Agency, HSN will:

1. Host two webinars/teleconferences for the purpose of explaining this RFA and the associated review process, as well as answering questions raised by prospective Applicants. See paragraph D below.
2. Respond to questions raised by Applicants and others by posting and updating the list of such questions and associated responses. A list of Frequently Asked Questions and responses will be emailed to all agencies that self-identify as interested in applying through at least March 24, 2020.
3. As necessary, issue other correspondence as a result of information received from the CFCH Managing Board or other authoritative source that is pertinent to this RFA.
4. Seek to accommodate and facilitate participation by prospective Applicant representatives with disabilities or Limited English Proficiency.

D. Applicant Information Sessions.

As part of the Application process, HSN has scheduled two informational webinars/teleconference for prospective Applicants as indicated in the Application Timeline of Events at Section VI. above. Attendance at the session is strongly recommended for all prospective Applicants, and may affect scoring.

Section VII. Communication

A. Point of Contact.

All inquiries regarding this RFA and the associated application review process may be directed to HSN as follows:

E-mail: application@hscnfl.org

Website: https://www.centralfloridacoc.org/?page_id=1527

U.S. Mail: HSN, 4065-D L.B. McLeod Rd, Orlando, FL 32811

B. Interested Parties List.

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to sign up for the RFA Interested Parties List to receive periodic announcements and updates regarding this RFA and the associated application review process. Individuals may subscribe to the Interested Parties List by sending a request via email to application@hscnfl.org or by attending an Applicant Information Session.

Section VIII. Post-Award Requirements.

A. Sub-recipients and Sub-recipient Agreements.

The majority of Projects selected for funding through this RFA process, upon completion of any additional post-award requirements, will become sub-recipients of Day 1 Family Fund funding via an agreement with HSN. The sub-recipient agreement will address the responsibilities of both HSN and the Sub-recipient, including but not limited to, service delivery, program reporting and administrative requirements.

B. Program and Funding Requirements.

Funds may only be used to perform eligible activities that serve eligible participants in compliance with the federal, state and local laws and regulations that are applicable to other funding administered by HSN, including but not limited to 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), 24 CFR Part 100 (Discriminatory Conduct Under the Fair Housing Act), and 24 CFR Part 578 (Continuum of Care Program). The purpose of extending these requirements to funding awarded under this RFA is to promote consistency and efficiency of administration across the system. HSN will provide training and support for sub-recipients to assist them with developing the capacity to meet such requirements.

C. Restrictions on Assignment.

Each sub-recipient retains the responsibility to comply with the terms and conditions of its sub-recipient agreement throughout the award period, in accordance with all applicable federal laws and regulations. The Sub-recipient is also responsible for ensuring and, when necessary, demonstrating compliance on the part of any contractor providing services under such agreement. However, Sub-recipients may not assign responsibility for performance of the activities funded under the agreement without the prior approval of HSN.

Section IX. Additional Specifications.

A. Changes to this RFA.

Although the content of this RFA is not expected to change substantially following its issuance, HSN reserves the right to issue modifications thereto after the initial release date, including but not limited, clarifications and corrections.

Applicants are encouraged to subscribe to the Interested Parties List by sending an email expressing intent to apply to application@hsncfl.org in order to ensure prompt notification of all announcements related to this RFA, including changes.

B. Adjustments to Submitted Applications and the RFA Process.

1. HSN reserves the right to propose adjustments to the scope of services, funding amounts, collaborative arrangements, and other project characteristics submitted in an application based on factors unrelated to the application itself in order to best align the goals of the Day 1 Family Fund.
2. HSN reserves the right to authorize the correction of errors and/or the clarification of irregularities in the content of any application that would not affect the scoring of applications or the selection of Projects.
3. HSN reserves the right to make adjustments to the process and timeline described in this RFA that would not reduce or restrict the ability of a prospective Applicant to participate without competitive disadvantage.
4. HSN reserves all rights not expressly granted in this RFA, including but not limited to, the rights to make no funding awards, to make partial funding awards, and to negotiate with any selected Applicant regarding the amount of funding to be awarded, the scope of work and any other items of any contract resulting from this RFA.