

Governor
Mikie Sherrill

Commissioner
Jacquelyn Suárez

OFFICE OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION:

HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION PILOT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - FY27

RFP Due Completed in SAGE: No later than 11:59pm on 12/11/2026

OHP: HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION PILOT - FY27 - RFP

I. Name of the grant program

HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION PILOT - FY27

II. DCA contact information

Jenn Debiec, Programs Lead, OHP, Jennifer.Debiec@dca.nj.gov
Shahilda Boynes, Program Manager, OHP, Shahilda.Boynes@dca.nj.gov

III. Purpose of the grant program

To provide:

1. Homelessness diversion assistance to households at imminent risk of homelessness or households that can be rapidly exited from homelessness in identified counties/regions (see below).

IV. RFP Due Completed in SAGE: No later than 11:59pm on 12/11/2026

***Award Notification Date*:** On or about 01/15/2027

V. Funding

This RFP utilizes state appropriated special-purpose and homelessness prevention funding.

Total OHP Funds:	*$5,350,000.00*
Total Funds Available for this RFP	**$5,350,000.00**

Applicants may apply for more than one county/region and are encouraged to align regional selection with services provided in the state's 16 Continuums-of-Care.

If an agency is a participant of the Medicaid 1115 waiver program the agency can leverage these funds to maximize their funding for direct client assistance.

VI. Need Based Allocation Methodology

For FY27, DCA's Office of Homelessness Prevention (OHP) is implementing a need-based funding allocation structure for the Homelessness Diversion Pilot. Rather than distributing funding equally across participating counties and regions, available funds have been allocated based on the relative level of homelessness identified through HMIS data, including sheltered and unsheltered program admissions. This approach is intended to direct resources proportionately to areas demonstrating greater need. The table below identifies the funding allocation and anticipated number of awards for each eligible county or region.

Awards will be distributed using the following matrix:

County/Region	Need Based Share	County/Regional Allocation	Proposed # of Awards
Essex	19.26%	$1,030,444.84	3 @ ~$343,481.62
Hudson	9.99%	$534,651.22	2 @ $267,325.61
Middlesex	9.86%	$527,455.36	2 @ $263,727.68
Passaic	7.71%	$412,681.66	1
Atlantic	6.72%	$359,432.42	1
Mercer	6.64%	$355,474.67	1
Bergen	6.27%	$335,326.32	1
Union	4.84%	$258,690.58	1
Camden & Burlington	8.15%	$436,422.86	1
Ocean & Monmouth	5.23%	$279,217.75	1
Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon	4.89%	$261,766.81	1
Morris & Somerset	4.89%	$261,766.81	1
Cumberland, Salem, Gloucester, Cape May	5.55%	$296,668.70	1
Total number of Awards	**100%**	**$5,350,000.00**	**17**

Need Based Share Formula:

County/Region’s homeless share = Total numbers of homeless individuals (sheltered and unsheltered) admitted in that county/region during the reporting period used to determine the FY27 funding allocations.

Total statewide homeless numbers = Total number of homeless individuals (sheltered and unsheltered) admitted to a program in HMIS in the entire state during an identified time-period.

County's homelessness share % = (County's homeless share / Total statewide homeless number) * 100

VII. Eligible entities

Nonprofit organizations and municipalities serving at least one of the above counties/regions with at least three (3) years of experience successfully administering and operating homelessness prevention, street outreach, homelessness diversion, and/or rapid re-housing programs.

Agencies selected must service the entire county/region and agencies may collaborate to provide diversion services (with an executed memorandum of understanding [MOU] outlining the collaboration or partnership). However, in partnership or collaborative Homelessness Diversion projects, no more than one agency may be selected as the lead agency in a collaborative award and the maximum grant awarded will not exceed the chart above.

All applicants must also demonstrate:

1. **Existing homelessness prevention and/or diversion programs and demonstrable experience in serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness and imminently homeless families.**

    a. When speaking to an agency's experience, both the integration of diversion principles and the incorporation of no/low-barrier services into the agency's portfolio must be clearly articulated with collateral data speaking to the tangible outcomes and impact of services.

    This includes statistics regarding the number of individuals and families served, the percentage of those who were able to transition to stable housing, and the length of time in which they were able to achieve this.

    Moreover, it is crucial that the agency can provide evidence of the efficiency and effectiveness of their services, such as demonstrating lower rates of recidivism into homelessness, increases in self-sufficiency among clients, and improvements in overall wellbeing.

    Agencies must demonstrate and affirm the ability to pay with a company credit card and/or turn-around payments within 24 hours of request. This program is meant to be rapid response, and payments should not take longer than 72 hours to complete.

    The collateral data should also include testimonials or case studies that illustrate successful prevention or diversion stories, underlining the agency's ability to help

those in need.

2. **A diverse compilation of resources and partnerships to support and assist households that are homeless and at risk of homelessness exit those situations and circumstances.**

    a. An agency's application should demonstrate a diverse compilation of resources and partnerships. Acceptable examples are found below:

        1. **Resource Inventory**: Catalogue and describe the range of resources that the agency has available for persons experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness. This could include direct services such as emergency shelter and food, case management, job training, mental health counseling, other OHP programs, or substance abuse treatment. The inventory should also include indirect resources like connections to affordable housing, educational programs, healthcare facilities, and legal aid. The more comprehensive and diversified the resource inventory, the better equipped the agency is to handle various cases of homelessness.
        2. **Partnership Network**: Provide evidence of partnerships that the agency has formed with other organizations in the community, whether they are governmental, non-profit, or private entities. This can be through formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs), joint programs, shared funding or co-hosted events.
        3. **Success Stories**: Showcase success stories that have resulted from the use of these resources and partnerships. This might involve detailing case studies of individuals or families who were able to exit homelessness with the agency's assistance, highlighting how the agency's resources and partnerships were instrumental in their transition.
        4. **Outcomes Data**: Demonstrate with data the effectiveness of the agency's resources and partnerships. This could involve statistics on the number of people served, the rate of successful housing placements, improvements in employment status, reductions in recidivism, etc. The data should be presented in a way that is transparent and easy to understand.
        5. **Feedback from Clients and Partners**: Include feedback or testimonials from clients who have benefited from these resources and partnerships, as well as from partners who have collaborated with the agency. This will provide a first-hand account of the agency's work and its impact.
        6. **Innovative Solutions**: Detail any innovative or unique solutions that have been developed through these resources and partnerships. This could involve cutting-edge programs, unique partnerships, or novel resources that the agency has put into place to address homelessness. This demonstrates the agency's commitment to continuous improvement and creative problem-solving.

3. **The willingness and capacity to partner with local and county law enforcement, the service area's correspondent Continuum-of-Care (CoC), public services (e.g., libraries), and regional and local health care providers.**

    a. Agencies should demonstrate this will and capacity through executed MOU/MOA/Letters of Support.
    b. All agencies applying for funding through this program must be active members of their correspondent CoC.
    c. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to aligning their diversion activities with DCA's Homelessness Response Initiative (HRI), including coordination with HRI activities and partners within their proposed service area, where applicable. Such coordination should support timely referrals, access to available housing and community resources, and efforts to prevent shelter entry or rapidly resolve episodes of homelessness.

4. **Commitment to Housing First:**

    a. Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, which include but are not limited to:
        1. Ensuring low-barrier, easily accessible assistance to all people, including, but not limited to, people with no income or income history, and people with active substance abuse or mental health issues;
        2. Helping participants quickly identify and resolve barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing;
        3. Seeking to quickly resolve the housing crisis before focusing on other non-housing related services;
        4. Allowing participants to choose the services and housing that meets their needs, within practical and funding limitations;
        5. Connecting participants to appropriate support and services available in the community that foster long-term housing stability.

    b. Agencies must demonstrate commitment to the above outlined principles either via memorandum or board resolution and provide proof of same.

5. Commitment to the Inclusion of & Incorporation of Feedback from Persons with Lived Experience & Expertise (PWLEE):

    a. OHP is committed to incorporating the perspectives and insights of persons with lived experience and expertise (PWLEE) of homelessness and housing instability in feedback and program evaluation processes.

1. OHP regularly receives this feedback through the DCA Statewide PWLEE Advisory Board, which meets monthly and a quarterly basis with OHP/DCA leadership.

b. As this feedback is critical to promoting inclusion, equity, diversity, and access in the homelessness prevention and services ecosystem (HPSE), all OHP grantees must affirm and provide proof of organizational alignment with (or the good faith effort of development of alignment with) the following key principles for ensuring the inclusion of PWLEE in feedback in their programs and organization:

1. Centering the voices of PWLEE: PWLEE have a unique perspective on the experience of homelessness and offer valuable insights into the challenges and barriers they face. It is essential to center their voices in feedback processes to ensure that their experiences and needs are accurately represented.

2. Creation of a safe and supportive environment: PWLEE may have experienced trauma or marginalization related to their experiences of homelessness. It is important to create a safe and supportive environment for them to share their feedback, where they feel heard and respected.

3. Using inclusive language and communication: Feedback processes should use language and communication that is inclusive and accessible to all. This includes using plain language, avoiding jargon or technical terms, and ensuring that all communication is available in formats that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

4. Providing opportunities for meaningful engagement: PWLEE should have opportunities to provide feedback in ways that are meaningful and accessible to them. This may include one-on-one conversations, focus groups, surveys, or other methods of engagement that suit their preferences and needs.

5. Recognition of power imbalances: Power imbalances can and often do exist between PWLEE and those collecting feedback, which can lead to a lack of representation or influence. It is important to recognize and address these imbalances to ensure that the perspectives and experiences of PWLEE are fully represented and considered in feedback processes.

c. Applicants for OHP funding are required to document affirmation of the principles through supplementary materials submitted as addenda to their application.

Acceptable materials indicating affirmation include, but are not limited to:

1. Centering PWLEE Voices: This could be proven through agency protocols highlighting how PWLEE's perspectives are prioritized, or instances where their insights have influenced changes in the program.

2. Creating Safe Environments: Evidence of this could include policies or guidelines about creating respectful and supportive spaces for PWLEE, and possibly testimonials from PWLEE on their experience participating in feedback processes.

3. Inclusive Language and Communication: Applicants may share their guidelines or examples of accessible, jargon-free communication materials, including different formats for individuals with disabilities.

4. Opportunities for Meaningful Engagement: This could be shown through the variety of feedback methods employed to suit different preferences and needs of PWLEE, and how this feedback has been utilized by applicant.

5. Recognition of Power Imbalances: Applicant could provide evidence of their strategies to identify and address power imbalances, such as policies for equitable treatment, or practices promoting shared decision-making.

6. Active Pursuit of Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access: Applicant may share the organization's policies, training programs, and examples of actions taken to uphold these values.

7. Evidence of Good Faith Effort: For organizations still developing alignment with these principles, they should provide a detailed plan showcasing their understanding of these principles and their steps towards incorporating them. This can include timelines, measurable goals, and designated personnel responsible for each step.

VIII. Ineligible entities

The following entities are ineligible to apply for funding under this RFP:

1. Entities listed on DCA's High-Risk Grantee List.
2. Entities with overdue required audit submissions, as applicable.
3. Entities listed on the State Debarment List, available at: https://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue/debarment/

IX. Target populations

Households experiencing homelessness and households at imminent risk of becoming homeless (see definitions in sub-section 2, below).

1. Income Limitations & Assets

For the purposes of homelessness diversion services and flex funding, ***there is not a rigid income cap for providing services***. However, OHP/DCA expects that most households receiving services will have incomes at or below 120% of AMI.

Similarly, while OHP/DCA expects all diversion providers to screen applicants for liquid assets (e.g., cash, bonds, equities, or other securities) to assist in preventing homelessness during housing stabilization planning, unavailability of assets and/or illiquidity due to identity theft, domestic violence, death of a family member, pending legal action, or other challenge/encumbrance approved in writing by OHP, should not be a barrier to assistance to divert an otherwise eligible household from homelessness.

In situations where there is a "reasonable prospect of repayment" of assistance, as defined in NJAC § 5:41-2.3 Levels of assistance, flex funding assistance shall be provided as a loan using the process set forth in NJAC § 5:41.

2. Definitions of 'at-risk of homelessness' and 'homelessness'

Awardees will document that all project participants who receive homelessness diversion assistance either:

(1) meet at least one of the HUD categorical criteria of 'at-risk of homelessness' or 'homeless' [(1), (2), (3), or (4) of in 24 CFR §§ 576.2 & 578.3].

AND/OR

(2) are a person that:

(I) Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place described in paragraph (1) of the "homeless" definition in 24 CFR §§ 576.2; or

(II) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness diversion assistance; or

(III) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; or

(IV) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; or

(V) Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; or

(VI) Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons reside per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau; or

(VII) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); or

(VIII) Is living in a housing situation where a member of the housing is trading sex for housing; or

(IX) Is being trafficked; or

(X) Is leaving or have left their permanent residence because of emotional, financial, or physical abuse or threats of abuse and have no safe, alternative housing; or

(XI) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness and will likely enter into unsheltered homelessness without diversionary services and assistance.

3. Immigration status

In alignment with HUD ESG guidance, OHP-funded homelessness diversion services are available regardless of immigration status as they qualify as services necessary for the protection of life and safety under federal law.

X. Eligible Activities

This program assists through the following two homelessness diversion activity components:

Component 1: Homelessness Diversion Services

Homelessness diversion is a conflict resolution technique and rapidly delivered case management approach to a household housing crisis.

This project component is intended to expand the capacity of agencies to provide diversion assistance to households initially engaged through the homeless services system who may be

ineligible for, or better served by an alternative to, other homeless assistance programs. Diversion services will help households identify safe and appropriate housing options and expedite access to those options, with the goal of ensuring that episodes of homelessness are **rare, brief in duration, and nonrecurring.**

If diversion assistance cannot prevent a household's episode of homelessness (e.g., because the household cannot sustain the proposed rent payment) or facilitate a rapid exit from homelessness (generally within approximately 14 days), diversion may not be the most appropriate intervention. In these circumstances, projects should coordinate referrals to other appropriate housing assistance or supportive service programs, such as HPRP, RRH, SSO, ICMS, or other available resources.

Lastly, diversion should not be a barrier to shelter or waitlists for housing. Diversion intervention is intended to assist people in avoiding shelter if possible or to return immediately to housing. Similarly, diversion activities should align with housing and sustainment of housing needs only, encouraging creative and collaborative problem solving, and affording the maximum agency possible to households to be partners in their exit from a housing crisis.

Component 2: Flexible Funding

Services in this component consist of diversion housing stabilization assistance and direct client assistance. Specific requirements and eligible costs include:

1. **Diversion Housing Stabilization Assistance:**
    i. Rental Assistance
    ii. Utility Assistance (when not eligible for LIHEAP, USF, or other DCA/State programs)
    iii. Rental & Utility Arrears
    iv. Deposits (Rent, Utility, Pet, etc.)
    v. Income Stabilization (items and costs related to increasing household income [e.g., purchase of a set of steel-toed work boots or non-slip shoes, car repair costs, temporary childcare assistance to maintain employment].
    vi. Household Goods
    vii. Moving Costs
    viii. Other Costs that can be demonstrably linked to the stabilization of housing (following the co-created housing stabilization plan) and the household’s homelessness exit/prevention.
    ix. Other Costs allowable and articulated in OHP PPB #23-01.

2. **Direct Client Assistance** (not to exceed $50.00 in cash value)

XI. Ineligible activities

Activities not specifically approved through this application or subsequently approved in writing by DCA.

XII. Grant term – Initial with option to continue*

Initial Propsed Term: 2/1/2027- 1/31/2028

Extension Evaluation Process: The Office of Homelessness Prevention (OHP) is committed to ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and impact of this grant program. As such, a comprehensive program evaluation will be conducted in the third quarter of the initial term to assess the program's performance and determine the potential for extension or additional award beyond the initial term.

The evaluation process will include, but is not limited to:

- Assessment of program outcomes and key performance indicators
- Review of grantee compliance with program requirements and reporting obligations
- Analysis of financial management and resource utilization
- Evaluation of community impact and stakeholder feedback
- Consideration of alignment with OHP's strategic goals and objectives

Based on the results of this comprehensive evaluation, the OHP Programs team will make a determination regarding:

A. Extension of the current grant term
B. Issuance of a new award to the current grantee
C. Opening of a new competitive application process
D. Any other appropriate action as determined by OHP

Grantees are encouraged to maintain detailed records, actively participate in ongoing program monitoring, and be prepared to provide any additional information requested during the evaluation process. Please note that while the possibility of extension or additional award exists, it is not guaranteed and will be solely based on the program's performance, available funding, and alignment with OHP's priorities at the time of evaluation.

XIII. Application Process – Required SAGE Fields

Applications must be submitted electronically through the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE) by the deadline established in this RFP. Applicants must complete all required application fields and upload supporting documentation as instructed in Section XIV.

1. **Project Narrative (5,000-character limit)** - Applicants must describe:
    a. Project type and county/region to be served, including how services will be made available throughout the proposed service area.

b. Proposed approach to diversion services and flexible financial assistance, as applicable, including how the project will prevent shelter entry and facilitate rapid housing resolution.
c. Approach to assessing household needs, determining whether diversion is appropriate, and coordinating referrals to alternative housing assistance or supportive services when necessary.
d. Proposed referral, service delivery, and housing resolution processes, including the ability to provide timely financial assistance consistent with the program's rapid-response requirements.
e. Coordination with the local Continuum of Care (CoC), including Coordinated Entry, where applicable; DCA's Homelessness Response Initiative (HRI); and other community partners and housing resources.
f. How the project will incorporate Housing First principles, low-barrier services, participant choice, and feedback from persons with lived experience and expertise (PWLEE).
g. Proposed data collection, management, reporting, and housing stability follow-up procedures.

2. **Agency Capacity (5,000-character limit)** - Applicants must describe:
    a. Agency mission and at least three years of experience successfully administering and operating homelessness prevention, street outreach, diversion, and/or rapid re-housing programs, consistent with Section VII. Describe related rental assistance and supportive service experience, as applicable, and identify existing homelessness prevention and/or diversion programs.
    b. Experience incorporating diversion principles and no/low-barrier approaches into existing services. Describe the agency's commitment to Housing First principles and its practices or planned steps for incorporating PWLEE feedback.
    c. Demonstrated program outcomes, supported by available data, including households served, successful housing resolutions, time to housing, and housing stability or returns to homelessness, where available. Include brief examples or case studies illustrating successful prevention or diversion interventions.
    d. Existing community resources and partnerships, including collaboration with the CoC, public agencies, healthcare providers, and other housing and supportive service organizations. Describe active CoC participation, relationships with local and county law enforcement and public services such as libraries, and capacity to coordinate with HRI partners, where applicable. Demonstrate the ability to serve the entire proposed county/region, directly or through documented partnerships.
    e. Staffing capacity, qualifications, and experience to implement the proposed project, including the ability to provide timely assistance and payments consistent with the rapid-response requirements in Section VII.
    f. Financial management, fiscal oversight, and grant administration capacity, including sufficient cash flow to sustain staffing and effectively administer the proposed grant.

g. Reference supporting documentation submitted under Section XIV, as applicable.

3. **Program Components** - Applicants must:
    a. Complete the Program Components section in SAGE, identifying the applicable program type/sub-type, project name, and service location information, including the physical street address.
    b. Ensure this information is consistent with the proposed project and county/region to be served.

4. **Scope of Services** – (Focus this section on the proposed service delivery process. Agency history, qualifications, and past outcomes should be addressed in Agency Capacity). Applicants must describe:
    a. How proposed diversion services will be delivered throughout the county/region.
    b. Participant access, referral, and eligibility determination procedures.
    c. Assessment, housing problem-solving, and household-directed housing resolution planning.
    d. Administration of flexible financial assistance, including approval and payment procedures.
    e. Coordination with other programs and community partners, including referrals when diversion is not appropriate or sufficient.
    f. Participant follow-up and housing stability assessment activities.
    g. Staff and partner responsibilities and how services will meet the program's rapid-response requirements.

5. **Objectives** – (Proposed objectives must be consistent with the scope of services, requested funding, and performance expectations established in this RFP). Applicants must:
    a. Complete the Objectives section in SAGE, identifying measurable commitments for the grant term.
    b. Provide a short description, detailed description, methods, performance measures, and associated application program component for each objective.
    c. Address proposed diversion services and flexible financial assistance, as applicable.
    d. Identify the anticipated number of households to be screened and served.
    e. Identify expected housing resolutions, including prevention of shelter entry and rapid exits from homelessness.
    f. Identify timeframes for providing assistance and resolving housing crises.
    g. Address compliance with the required HMIS data quality standard.

6. **Personnel and Positions (Schedule A)** - Applicants must:
    a. Identify staff responsible for project implementation and administration, including proposed personnel allocations and costs.

b. Identify proposed consultants, as applicable.
c. Include job descriptions for positions created through the proposed project, as applicable.

7. **Other Sources of Funding** - Applicants must:
    a. Complete the Other Sources of Funding section in SAGE, identifying other funding sources supporting the proposed project.
    b. Code each source as (F) Federal Government, (S) State Government, (L) Local City/County Government, (PF) Private/Foundation, or (TP) Third Party Payor.

8. **Project Budget** - Applicants must:
    a. Complete the applicable SAGE budget sections consistent with the funding limits, eligible activities, and allowable expenses established in this RFP.
    b. Ensure proposed costs are reasonable, appropriately allocated, and consistent with the scope of services and objectives.

9. **Required Attachments** - Applicants must submit all required supporting documents and certifications in accordance with Section XIV, using designated SAGE upload links where available.

XIV. Application Process – Required Attachments and Certifications

Applicants must submit all required supporting documentation through SAGE. Documents with dedicated upload links must be submitted individually in their designated locations. Required documents without dedicated upload links must be combined and uploaded as instructed below.

1. **Documents with Dedicated SAGE Upload Links** - Applicants must submit or complete the following, as applicable,

    a. Articles of Incorporation.
    b. Staff Resumes and Job Descriptions: Resumes for current positions that would be allocated to this proposed project and/or job descriptions for positions created through the proposed project, submitted through Schedule A.
    c. Verification of Current SAM Registration: Documentation showing an unexpired registration date.
    d. Certification Sheets
        1. Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension (Schedule G).
        2. Certification Regarding Lobbying (Schedule H).
        3. DCA Resolution (Schedule I), or Local Match Resolution, as applicable.
        4. IRS Determination Letter: Required for new nonprofit, nongovernmental applicants only.
        5. Organizational Chart: Required for nongovernmental applicants only.
        6. Application Cover Page: Completed and executed as required.
        7. Statement of Board President

8. Statement of Mayor or County Official, *as applicable*

2. **Documents without Dedicated SAGE Upload Links** - Applicants must combine the documents identified in Items below into one or two PDF files and upload them using the two-upload links at the bottom of the Certification Sheets page, under the heading "Please upload any third-party agreements(s) that may be pertinent to this grant." These links must be used for all required attachments without a designated upload location, including documents that are not third-party agreements.

    a. **Organizational and Financial Documentation** - Applicants must submit:
        1. **Organizational Bylaws**: Current organizational bylaws, as applicable.
        2. **Financial Audits:** The applicant's three most recent annual financial audits, including statements of cash flows or equivalent financial documentation.
        3. **IRS Form 990:** The applicant's most recent IRS Form 990

        *Financial documentation must demonstrate that the applicant has sufficient cash flow and financial capacity to sustain staffing and effectively administer the proposed grant.

    b. **Homelessness Diversion Program Documentation** - Applicants must submit:
        1. **Continuum of Care (CoC) Letter:** A letter from the applicable CoC documenting the applicant's membership and participation in CoC activities, including Coordinated Entry and Point-in-Time (PIT) Count activities, as applicable.
        2. **Agency Experience and Supporting Data:** Documentation demonstrating relevant experience and outcomes in homelessness prevention, diversion, outreach, rapid re-housing, or related housing assistance activities, consistent with Section VII.
        3. **Resource Inventory and Community Partnerships:** A listing and description of available housing assistance, supportive services, community resources, and established referral connections. Include documentation of relevant partnerships, such as executed MOUs/MOAs or letters of support, consistent with Section VII. Collaborative applications must include an executed MOU identifying the lead agency and outlining partner roles and responsibilities.
        4. **Housing First Affirmation:** A memorandum or board resolution affirming the applicant's commitment to Housing First principles and low-barrier service delivery, consistent with Section VII.
        5. **PWLEE Inclusion**: Documentation demonstrating organizational alignment with the PWLEE inclusion principles in Section VII, or a good faith plan for developing that alignment, including how PWLEE feedback has informed or will inform program design, implementation, and improvement.

6. **Diversion Process Map:** A process map illustrating the proposed diversion process from initial household engagement and assessment through housing resolution, referral, discharge, and follow-up, including coordination with the local CoC.
7. **Marketing and Outreach Materials:** A proposed marketing plan and slide deck/PowerPoint presentation describing how the applicant will promote the diversion program and engage community stakeholders and referral partners.

XV. Example Budget – Diversion Services Project ($260,000 Illustrative Award)

Note: This budget is provided for illustrative purposes only. Actual award amounts vary by county/region, as outlined in Section VI. Applicants must develop their proposed budgets based on the applicable funding allocation, anticipated number of households to be served, projected service delivery and financial assistance needs, and allowable expenses established in this RFP. Proposed costs should be reasonable and appropriate for the anticipated level of service provision.

Example Budget ***Total Award: $260,000***	
Category	*Amount ($)*
Administration (up to 10%)	
Admin Personnel	
Salaries/Wages Administrative Oversight	15,000.00
Fringe Benefits	6,000.00
Admin Operating	
Audit/Accounting	3,000.00
Other Administrative Expenses	2,000.00
Administration Total	**$26,000.00***
Program (90%)	
Direct Expenses	
Staff salary (1 FTE)	$65,000.00

Fringe (capped at 40%)	$26,000.00
Operational Expenses	
Miscellaneous Operating Expenses	$5,000.00
Diversion: Flexible Funds	$132,000.00
Diversion: Direct Client Assistance	$5,000.00
NJ HMIS	$1,000.00
Program Total	**$234,000.00***
Total Award	**$260,000.00**
Remaining	*$0.00*

Note: Administrative expenses may include grant oversight, fiscal management, accounting, and other allowable administrative costs. Miscellaneous program operating expenses may include outreach materials, office supplies, staff training, and other reasonable and necessary expenses associated with program delivery. All expenditures must be allowable under this RFP, properly documented, and directly related to the approved project. Costs must be appropriately allocated to avoid duplication between administrative and program expense.

XVI. Reporting and Monitoring Requirements

Awarded grantees will be required to comply with the following reporting and monitoring requirements throughout the grant term. DCA's Office of Homelessness Prevention (OHP) will monitor grantee performance, expenditures, data quality, and compliance with program requirements.

1. **Monthly Progress Reports -** Grantees must submit monthly programmatic progress reports through the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE). Reports must describe program activities, progress toward established goals and performance measures, households served, housing resolutions achieved, challenges encountered, and any corrective actions or program improvements undertaken.

2. **Monthly Financial Status Reports (FSRs)** - Grantees must submit monthly Financial Status Reports (FSRs) through SAGE documenting grant expenditures. FSRs must include appropriate supporting documentation, including proof of cost and payment, and demonstrate that expenditures are allowable, properly allocated, and consistent with the approved grant budget.

3. **Monthly NJ HMIS Reports** - Grantees must maintain accurate and timely participant-level data in the New Jersey Homeless Management Information System (NJ HMIS) and submit monthly HMIS-generated programmatic reports, or reports in another format

prescribed by OHP. Reports must capture required service delivery and performance measures, including households served, diversion interventions, flexible financial assistance, housing outcomes, and applicable follow-up measures.

4. **Participant and Fiscal Records** - Grantees must maintain complete, accurate, and current participant and fiscal records, including client service logs, sufficient to document eligibility, diversion assessments, housing resolution plans, services provided, financial assistance, referrals, housing outcomes, follow-up activities, and expenditures. Records must be maintained in accordance with applicable program requirements and made available to DCA OHP for monitoring and review.

5. **Monitoring, Site Visits, and File Reviews** - DCA OHP will conduct monthly reviews of grantees' programmatic and financial reports to assess progress and compliance with grant requirements. Monitoring may also include site visits, participant file reviews, data quality assessments, and requests for supporting fiscal or programmatic documentation. DCA OHP may conduct additional monitoring as necessary based on identified concerns or program performance.

6. **Required Meetings and Trainings** - Grantees must participate in peer-to-peer meetings every two months, quarterly leadership meetings, mandatory training, and other meetings as scheduled by DCA OHP. These meetings will support information sharing, discussion of implementation challenges, identification of effective diversion practices, and continuous program improvement.

7. **Housing Stability Follow-Up -** Grantees must conduct and document follow-up efforts to assess housing stability at three and six months following program discharge, where feasible, and report outcomes in accordance with DCA OHP requirements.

8. **Corrective Action and Compliance** - Grantees must respond to monitoring findings, reporting deficiencies, data quality concerns, or other compliance issues identified by DCA OHP. When required, grantees must develop and implement corrective action plans within timelines established by DCA OHP. Failure to meet reporting, monitoring, or program requirements may result in additional oversight or other remedies consistent with the grant agreement and applicable requirements.

XVII. Training requirements

Grantees must ensure that staff responsible for HMIS data entry and reporting complete required NJ HMIS general user training and HMIS Diversion program-specific training, as applicable to their assigned responsibilities. Staff must also complete any required refresher or updated training necessary to comply with HMIS data collection and reporting requirements.

In addition, the entity must participate in and make presentations to various audiences during required training and meetings according to the schedule designated by the Office of Homelessness Prevention. The entity must also work in collaboration with other DCA grantees to achieve this initiative's objectives.

XVIII. Grantee Performance Expectations & Requirements

All grantees must demonstrate the capacity to provide timely, person-centered homelessness diversion services focused on preventing entry into homelessness or rapidly resolving an episode of homelessness. Grantees will be evaluated on program implementation, service delivery, housing outcomes, data quality, and compliance with grant requirements.

1. **Program Implementation and Coordination -** Grantees must:
    a. Establish and operationalize the project within 30 calendar days of the grant term start date, unless otherwise approved in writing by DCA OHP.
    b. Notify the corresponding Continuum of Care (CoC) leadership of the award and proposed services within five business days of award notification.
    c. Present the program's eligibility criteria, referral procedures, and available assistance to the CoC's general membership and other relevant community stakeholders.
    d. Establish referral and coordination procedures with emergency shelters, Coordinated Entry, homelessness prevention programs, outreach providers, and other relevant housing and supportive service providers.
    e. Align diversion activities with DCA's Homelessness Response Initiative (HRI), including coordination with HRI partners and activities within the proposed service area, where applicable.
    f. Participate in required OHP training, peer-to-peer meetings, monitoring activities, and applicable Point-in-Time (PIT) Count activities.

2. **Service Delivery Expectations -** Grantees must:
    a. Provide timely, low-barrier, person-centered housing problem-solving services to households experiencing an immediate housing crisis.
    b. Assess each household's housing circumstances, available resources, preferences, and potential options for safely preventing or rapidly resolving homelessness.
    c. Develop and document a household-directed housing resolution plan identifying the proposed intervention, available resources, anticipated timeframe, and necessary follow-up.
    d. Maintain the capacity to issue flexible financial assistance payments within 24 hours of request, consistent with program requirements.
    e. Prioritize rapid resolution of housing crises, with a general goal of resolving diversion cases within 14 calendar days of initial engagement. Cases requiring additional time must include documentation of the circumstances and continued housing resolution efforts.
    f. Facilitate timely referrals and coordinated transitions to other appropriate housing interventions when diversion is not feasible or sufficient to resolve the household's housing crisis.
    g. Ensure diversion services do not delay or restrict access to emergency shelter, Coordinated Entry, or other appropriate assistance.

3. **Data Collection and Documentation -** Grantees must:
    a. Participate in NJ HMIS (or other countywide HMIS system) and comply with applicable OHP and HMIS data collection, documentation, and reporting requirements.
    b. Maintain a minimum 95% data quality standard for required program records, including enrollment, services provided, financial assistance, exit destinations, and housing outcomes.
    c. Maintain accurate and timely participant records, including assessments, housing resolution plans, case notes, client service logs, service transactions, referrals, and changes in household circumstances.
    d. Document all flexible financial assistance provided, including the amount, purpose, approval, payment, and connection to the household's housing resolution plan.
    e. Maintain documentation supporting required housing stability follow-up and performance measures.
    f. Submit all required programmatic, financial, and HMIS reports in accordance with Section XVI.

4. **Program Performance Measures -** Grantees will be required to collect and report the following performance measures:
    a. Households Screened: Number of households screened or assessed for diversion assistance.
    b. Households Served: Number of households enrolled in and receiving diversion services.
    c. Successful Diversion: Number and percentage of households that avoid entry into emergency shelter or other homelessness through a safe and appropriate housing resolution.
    d. Rapid Exit from Homelessness: Number and percentage of households experiencing homelessness that obtain a safe and appropriate housing arrangement through diversion assistance.
    e. Timeliness of Intervention: Average number of calendar days between initial engagement and resolution of the immediate housing crisis.
    f. Flexible Financial Assistance: Number of households receiving flexible financial assistance, total assistance provided, and average assistance per household.
    g. Housing Stability: Percentage of households maintaining housing or remaining diverted from homelessness at three and six months following program discharge, w*here follow-up information is available.*
    h. Referrals to Other Interventions: Number of households referred or connected to other housing programs or supportive services when diversion is not an appropriate or sufficient intervention.

5. **Housing Outcome Performance Targets -** Grantees are expected to work toward the following housing stability outcomes:

a. At least 80% of households with a successful housing resolution maintaining housing or remaining outside homelessness three months following discharge.
b. At least 75% of households with a successful housing resolution maintaining housing or remaining outside homelessness six months following discharge.

Housing stability outcomes will be assessed using available follow-up information and must be reported with the number of households successfully contacted or whose housing status was otherwise verified. OHP will evaluate these outcomes in conjunction with program volume, household circumstances, available resources, and the completeness of follow-up data. Performance targets will not be evaluated solely on the basis of raw enrollment or service counts.

6. **Performance Monitoring and Continuous Improvement**

OHP will monitor grantee performance through required reporting, HMIS data review, fiscal monitoring, site visits, participant file reviews, and other applicable oversight activities.

Grantees may be required to participate in performance improvement activities when monitoring identifies concerns related to service delivery, housing outcomes, data quality, financial assistance administration, or compliance with grant requirements.

OHP may consider documented program performance, implementation capacity, financial management, and compliance history when making decisions regarding continued funding and grant extensions.

XIX. Threshold requirements

Applications must satisfy the following threshold requirements to be considered for funding. DCA OHP will review submitted applications for completeness and compliance with the eligibility and submission requirements established in this RFP. Applicants must provide all required information and supporting documentation through SAGE, as applicable. Applications that do not satisfy the threshold requirements may be deemed ineligible for further review.

Applications missing any required documents identified in Items 6–12 below will be provided five (5) business days from the date of DCA OHP's notification to upload the missing documentation through SAGE. Failure to submit the required documentation within the specified timeframe may result in the application being deemed incomplete and ineligible for further consideration.

1. Demonstrate a minimum of three years of experience in providing homelessness prevention and housing services such as financial assistance, housing relocation and stabilization services to the target population.
2. Attend at least one mandatory RFP technical assistance (TA) workshop.

3. Demonstrate active participation in the applicable Continuum of Care (CoC).
4. Participate in NJ HMIS (or other countywide HMIS system) and comply with applicable HMIS requirements.
5. Agree to attend required general and program specific HMIS trainings.
6. Provide the 3 years of audits [to include statement cash flows [or equivalent]) and latest IRS Form 990.
    a. Applicant's submissions **must demonstrably show** that they have sufficient cash flows to sustain staff and effectively administer the grant.
7. Organizational bylaws.
8. Articles of Incorporation.
9. Staff resumes and current organizational chart.
10. Verification of current System for Award Management (SAM) registration.
11. All required certification sheets.
12. All required attachments in Section XIV of this RFP.

XX. Scoring Rubric

Section	Point Value

Section 1: Organizational Capacity and Experience (up to 25 points)
• **Mission alignment with RFP goals (up to 15 points)**
  • Mission focuses on serving those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and emphasizes rapid resolution of housing crises (0-5 points)
  • Describes creative problem solving that aligns with principles of diversion and Housing First (0-3 points)
  • Describes experience implementing diversion techniques (0-3 points)
  • Provides data/outcomes demonstrating diversion program efficacy (0-2 points)
  • Discusses incorporation of no/low-barrier approaches (0-2 points)
• **Years of experience in homeless services (up to 5 points)**
  • 3 years of experience (2 points)
  • 4-5 years of experience (3 points)
  • More than 5 years of experience (5 points)
• **Experience providing rental assistance and supportive services (up to 5 points)**
  • Types of rental assistance and supportive services provided (0-2 points)
  • Data on households served through these interventions (0-2 points)
  • Examples of successful housing placements/stabilization (0-1 point)
	25 Points

Section 2: Proposed Approach • **Clearly defined project type and service area (up to 5 points)**	**50 Points**

• Indicates project type (diversion services and/or flexible funding) (0-2 points) • Specifies county/counties that will be served (0-3 points) • **Detailed project process map (up to 10 points)** • Step-by-step description of service delivery process (0-5 points) • Roles and hand-offs between staff and partners clearly defined (0-2 points) • Process aligns with HUD definitions and eligibility criteria (0-3 points) • **Qualifications of project staff (up to 10 points)** • Resumes demonstrate capabilities matched to assigned roles (0-5 points) • Key positions filled with qualified candidates (0-2 points) • Sufficient staff roles/positions for project implementation (0-2 points) • Staff retention rate/turnover metrics (0-1 point) • **Data collection, management, and reporting processes (up to 10 points)** • Methods for timely and accurate data collection described (0-5 points) • Process for recording data in NJ HMIS/AWARDS explained (0-2 points) • Capacity for generating required reports demonstrated (0-3 points) • **Partnerships with CoC, healthcare, and other entities (up to 5 points)** • Strength of partnership with CoC evidenced through MOU and/or letter of support (0-2 points) • Additional partnerships documented through MOUs/letters of support (0-2 points) • Leverages partnerships for client referrals and resources (0-1 point) • **Marketing/outreach plan (up to 5 points)** • Targets relevant stakeholders for program awareness (0-2 points) • Uses appropriate communication channels and materials (0-2 points) • Promotes program alignment with Coordinated Entry (0-1 point) • **Reasonable and allowable budget (up to 5 points)** • Costs limited to eligible expenses (0-2 points) • Budget aligned with program design, anticipated households served, and projected service delivery needs (0-2 points) • Leverages other resources where possible (0-1 point)	
Section 3: Commitment to Best Practices • **Embraces Housing First principles (up to 10 points)** • Documentation of board resolution/policy adopting Housing First (0-3 points)	**25 Points**

• Low barriers, client-driven approach described in application (0-4 points) • Willingness to accept clients regardless of income, assets, household composition, etc. (0-3 points) • **Centers voice of those with lived expertise (up to 5 points)** • Policies/process for including lived expertise feedback (0-2 points) • Examples of incorporating feedback provided (0-2 points) • Lived expertise inclusion in organizational leadership (0-1 point) • **Pursues diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and access (up to 5 points)** • Policies for equitable treatment of clients (0-2 points) • Staff training on implicit bias, cultural competence, etc. (0-2 points) • Accessibility of program and materials to disabilities (0-1 point) • **Participates in HMIS, PIT, and other COC activities (up to 5 points)** • Demonstrates participation in NJ HMIS or another applicable countywide HMIS system and completion of required HMIS training, or a commitment to complete required training upon award (0-2 points). • Demonstrates participation in PIT Count activities, active engagement in CoC meetings, and coordination with community partners, as documented by the CoC letter (0–3 points)	
Section 4: Threshold Requirements (Pass/Fail) • Meets all threshold criteria listed in RFP	**Application is Eligible/Ineligible**
Section 5: Past Performance (for past DCA grantees only – up to 10 points max) • Timely and complete FSR submissions (0-2 points) • Timely and complete monthly performance report submissions (0-2 points) • Regular communication with DCA regarding referrals (0-2 points) • Compliance with DCA data requirements including timely HMIS reporting with minimal data quality issues (0-2 points) • Housing stability outcomes meet the benchmarks indicated in past contracts (0-1 point) • No recapture of funds and on-target expenditure rate (0-1 point)	**Max 10-point bonus**
Section 6: Overall Proposal Quality (0-10 points) • Well-written, easy to understand, thorough, and compelling overall proposal **(0-10 bonus points)**	**Max 10-point bonus**
Total Points (Max):	**120**