

FY25 Mason County Special NOFO Homeless Crisis Response System

Welcome to Mason County’s Special Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for additional funding awards for Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025) from the Department of Commerce through the Consolidated Homeless Grant Contract (Contract Number 24-46108-20 Amendment C).

CONTRACT AWARD: July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

APPLICATION DUE DATE

The deadline for submitting applications to Mason County Public Health and Human Services is **June 28, by 4 pm**. Applicants must complete the excel application and submit their application to Todd Parker at tparker@masoncountywa.gov. Please review these instructions, Consolidated Homeless Grant Guidelines and Mason County Written Standards to aid in writing a complete application.

AUTHORITY

The Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (Chapter 43.185C RCW) in 2005 (the “Act”) authorizes these funds. The Act, along with legislation, allows the collection of surcharges on documents recorded for the sale and/or transfer of real property to fund homeless programs. The document recording surcharge funds (“surcharge funds”) are used by the state and local government agencies to reduce homelessness (RCW 36.22.179).

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Any IRS designated non-profit or neighborhood-based organization, local government, Council of Governments, Housing Authority, Community Action Agency, or federally recognized Indian tribe serving residents of unincorporated Mason County, or any of the Mason County Cities and Towns, may apply to use the funds for eligible activities. Mason County requires that all applicants that apply for funding be registered as a business entity with the State of Washington and possess a Washington State Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number and Federal Tax ID number.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

There is no guarantee the funds listed below will continue past June 30, 2025. The funds must be prioritized for existing programs, be in compliance with the Consolidated Homeless Grant Guidelines and align with Mason County’s 5-year plan both located on the county website here: [Housing & Homelessness \(masoncountywa.gov\)](https://www.masoncountywa.gov/housing-homelessness).

Consolidated Homeless Grant Budget Line	Allocation
CHG FY 2025 Supplemental Funds:	\$244,171
Local DRF Support 2025:	\$267,914
TOTAL:	\$512,085

Mason County reserves the right to determine which budget line to allocate from when determining the selected awards. Mason County may also determine to award funds in phases or reserve funds to support programs that provide rental assistance due to increasing housing costs and the ability to maintain current services.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & COMMUNITY PRIORITY AREAS:

Homeless Crisis Response Systems respond to the immediacy and urgency of homelessness and make sure that everyone has a safe and appropriate place to live. Homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it can't be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and one-time experience. The priority is to end homelessness throughout Mason County with a special focus on the following sub-populations: adult, family, youth, chronically homeless and veterans. We look to organizations that are committed to this purpose and have the capacity to grow and make drastic improvements towards this end goal.

Priority is given to agencies that implement coordinated approaches that are grounded in Housing First and public health principles to reduce the prevalence of unsheltered homelessness, and improve: services engagement, health outcomes, and housing stability among highly vulnerable, unsheltered individuals and families. The Consolidated Homeless Grant contains eviction prevention funding to help prevent homelessness among the most vulnerable households.

The Housing and Behavioral Health Advisory Board has identified the following funding priorities:

- Priority #1: No families with minor children sleep outside.
- Priority #2: No young adult/transitional-aged youth (18-21) sleep outside.
- Priority #3: No senior sleeps outside.

Mason County is interested in innovative approaches to supportive housing where there are formal partnerships among agencies and/or braiding other fund sources to create a comprehensive program that will keep people housed and reduce returns to homelessness. In smaller, rural communities it may be more cost effective for agencies to collaborate on resources that benefit the community and the homeless crisis response system. Examples of these proposals may include one from a Behavioral Health Agency that has experience owning property or a joint proposal from a housing agency and a behavioral health agency. In a joint proposal example, the housing agency would own the property and have the capacity to provide supportive case management activities and the behavioral health agency would provide the intensive case management where they may be able to bill other funds sources for additional and/or more clinically based supportive services.

Under the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (Chapter 43.185C RCW), it is required that the Department of Commerce complete a 5-year Implementation Plan and County's create a local 5-year plan that is aligned with the Implementation Plan. The local 5-year plan guides future funding priorities and is due by December 1, 2025. Therefore, Mason County prioritizes assistance with local plan development as part of this RFP.

RECOMMENDED PROPOSALS THAT ALIGN WITH THE ABOVE PRIORITIES AND USES OF THE FUNDS:

A. Facilitator and consultant for Local 5-year Plan Development:

- a. The facilitator will work as an independent contractor with the local Homeless Task Force and through public input as identified in the Draft Plan Guidance (<https://deptofcommerce.box.com/s/24dbmyyhg5pt1mgtrl8f1at3yubq16uo>). The consultant will adhere to any changes to the Plan Guidance as it is finalized. The local plan will meet the conditions in the Plan Guidance and addresses the need for short-term and long-term housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. The local plan must provide goals, strategies, activities, performance measures, and timelines to eliminate homelessness within the entire jurisdiction of Mason County. The consultant will work with the County and City to meet process requirements which include Notice of Plan Development, Notice of Public Hearing and Public Engagement Documentation, Key Stakeholders Participation and Collaboration, and ensure Finalization of the Plan that aligns with allowable expenses and the requirements of the local plan guidance by the Department of Commerce. The full guidance for requirement is included in 2025-2030 Local Homeless Housing Plan Guidance. Key deliverables include facilitating community meetings, engaging stakeholders as described in the plan guidance, and provide a final written local plan in accordance with the available funding by June 30, 2025.

B. Program and Capacity Expansion:

- a. **Program Development:** Proposals are encouraged that further develop current programs to: provide better service to individuals in need, adhere to best practices, meet program fidelity measures, provide adequately staffed programs to support clients and meet outcomes, reduce returns to homelessness, and support staff retention.
- b. **HOST Home Program:** A HOST Home Program or similar program in serving eligible persons within the North Mason School District. A HOST Housing Program must operate in accordance with RCW 74.15.020 and guidance from The Department of Commerce Office of Homeless Youth ([Host Homes Programs Report - Washington State Department of Commerce](#)).
- c. **Underserved and/or marginalized populations:** A proposal will state how the agency and program(s) will be enhanced to seek and serve populations least likely to apply for public assistance. Priority will be given to proposals that are in collaboration with By and For Organizations and how the services will help meet racial equity performance measures.
- d. **Coordinated Entry Diversion:** Expansion of Diversion Programs that provide one-time assistance aimed at resolving homelessness. Key components are problem solving conversation and creativity. Some communities have been investing more energy in Diversion efforts and have their diversion staff trained in mediation (Pierce). Diverting people from needing more intensive housing interventions can be helpful in maximizing funds. Diversion can be used for move-in costs, transportation, housing, etc.
- e. **“Enhanced Shelters”:** Enhanced Shelters provide short-term temporary emergency services for those experiencing homelessness and will follow the allowable expenses listed in CHG 6.2 outlining facility support. With enhanced shelters the goal would be able to expand services offered through shelters by

providing services that increase shelter stays such as meals, hygiene services, storage, and other items. Examples of services may include toilet facilities, laundry (bedding and changes of clothing) for emergency shelter participants, secure storage, food services in shelters, emergency showers, pet food and crates, etc. This could also mean agency collaboration to provide services that increase shelter stays from the priority populations: minor children, young adults, and seniors. Capital expenditures are not an allowable use.

SELECTION PROCESS

Mason County staff will jointly review applications for minimum eligibility requirements. This will include a threshold review to ensure applications meet the minimum threshold requirements as follows:

- A complete application submitted on or before the due date.
- All supporting documentation is supplied.
- Proposal includes eligible activities.
- The proposal aligns with the priority areas and local 5-year plan.
- The applicant can meet and maintain compliance with applicable federal, state, and/or local regulations, as identified.

Qualifying applications will be evaluated on the following categories:

- Organization qualifications
- Risk Assessment & Financial
- Budget Allocation and Cost Effectiveness
- Community Collaboration
- Racial Equity
- Programmatic Implementation and Management
- Program Performance Measures
- Previous contract administration and performance. This criterion only applies to organizations that have contracted with Mason County within the last 5 years.

During the selection process, Mason County employees will not disclose 1) information regarding any applicant's relative standing, 2) the amount of assistance requested by an applicant, and 3) any information contained in the application. Prior to the application deadline, Mason County may not disclose the identity of any applicant or the number of applicants that have applied for assistance.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPLICANTS

- A. All payments will be dispersed on a reimbursement basis. Invoices are due not later than the 15th of each month.
- B. All applicants understand that they must have the cash reserves to operate on a 30-calendar day reimbursement process.
- C. For new applicants, funding is intended for the purpose of providing new or expanded programs and services rather than supplant existing funding.
- D. Duplicate Payment: Ensure accounting practices that avoid duplicate payment or duplication of benefits. The County shall not pay the Grantee if the Grantee has charged or will charge any other party under any other grant, subgrant/subcontract, or agreement, for the same services or expenses.

- E. Ability to comply with all items listed in the accompanying RFP Disclosure Document, written standards, and applicable section of the Consolidated Homeless Grant Guidelines.
- F. Participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the local 5-year plan. Work collaboratively within the community and within programs to meet targeted outcomes.
- G. Understand that funding supports a Housing Crisis Response System and agencies are expected to collaborate for the overall improvement of the system and system performance measurements. In some cases, system performance involvement and measures will include the entire agency and not just the program(s) funded.
- H. Ability and commitment to meet Performance Requirements by project type.
- I. Use a Housing First approach.
- J. Use HMIS, conform to all HMIS Data Standards and comply with data accuracy, completeness, and timeliness parameters.
- K. Enter data into Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) database and monitor data quality and timeliness.
- L. Meets requirements to participate in Coordinated Entry
- M. Take a leadership role in the annual Point in Time Homeless Census Count to accurately count persons experiencing homelessness in the populations served.
 - a. Rapid Re-housing projects, according to the HIC/PIT Count Data Collection Notice of October 2022: “Homeless households currently residing on the street, in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or Safe Haven, but who are also enrolled in an RRH project and awaiting housing placement, should be counted based on where they resided on the night of the count.”
- N. Are committed to ending homelessness among at least one subpopulation (Family, Adult, Youth, Veteran and Chronically Homeless) and will work in the community as a system to accomplish this goal.
- O. Ability to meet the insurance requirements.
- P. Advance Equity: In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color as well as individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ and individuals with disabilities are substantially overrepresented in the homeless population. Mason County Public Health and Human Services is emphasizing system and program changes to address equity within programs through identifying and addressing the needs of subpopulations who are disproportionately more likely to experience homelessness, such as the populations identified above, and other populations who are disproportionately more likely to experience homelessness. Agencies should be reviewing their strategies to support and serve underserved communities throughout Mason County, identify barriers that led to any disparities in communities being served, and take steps to eliminate these barriers. This includes, in conjunction with people experiencing homelessness, reviewing program policies, procedures, and processes to determine where and how to address disparities affecting underserved communities experiencing homelessness.

CONTRACT AWARD AND NOTIFICATION TO SELECTED APPLICANTS

Decisions regarding contract awards for services solicited by this announcement will be made no later than July 30, 2024.

If a contract is not finalized within 60 days of the award date, the County can rescind the award for non-responsiveness.

OWNERSHIP OF MATERIAL

Responses, applications, and other materials submitted in response to this request become the property of Mason County, are documents of public record, and will not be returned. By applying, applicants acknowledge and agree that they and/or their organization claim no proprietary rights to the ideas or approaches contained in the applications.

PROPOSAL COSTS AND PAYMENT OF CONTINGENT FEES

Mason County is not liable for any costs incurred by an applicant prior to the issuance of a contract. All costs incurred in response to this solicitation are the responsibility of the applicant, including travel costs to attend workshops and/or contract negotiation sessions.

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a response to this RFP, the applicant acknowledges and accepts all terms and conditions of this request and all County, Washington State, and Federal regulations and requirements related to the delivery of the eligible activities. If the applicant is awarded a contract, the application will become part of the contract agreement. The application is bound by the terms of the application unless the County agrees that specific parts of the application are not part of the agreement. The County reserves the right to introduce different or additional terms and/or conditions during final contract negotiations. Applicants will be required to enter into a formal written agreement with Mason County.

INSURANCE

CONTRACTOR shall provide insurance that meets or exceeds the minimum insurance requirements of the County listed below:

1. Commercial General Liability Insurance using Insurance Services Office "Commercial General Liability" policy form CG 00 01, with an edition date prior to 2004, or the exact equivalent. Coverage for an additional insured shall not be limited to its vicarious liability. Defense costs must be paid in addition to limits. Limits shall be no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for all covered losses and no less than \$2,000,000 general aggregate, for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage, including without limitation, blanket contractual liability.
2. Workers' Compensation on a state-approved policy form providing statutory benefits as required by law with employer's liability limits for CONTRACTOR's, with two (2) or more employees and/or **volunteers**, no less than \$1,000,000 per accident for all covered losses.
3. Business Auto Coverage on ISO Business Auto Coverage form CA 00 01 including owned, non-owned and hired autos, or the exact equivalent. Limits shall be no less than \$1,000,000 per accident, combined single limit. If CONTRACTOR owns no vehicles, this requirement may be satisfied by a non-owned auto endorsement to the general liability policy described above. If CONTRACTOR or CONTRACTOR's employees will use personal autos in any way on this project, CONTRACTOR shall obtain evidence of personal auto liability coverage for each such person.

4. A Certificate of Insurance naming COUNTY as the Certificate Holder must be provided to COUNTY within five (5) days of CONTRACT execution. An updated certificate of insurance will be provided upon renewal.

RIGHT TO REJECT OR NEGOTIATE

Mason County reserves the right to reject any or all applications, if such a rejection is in the County's best interest. This Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is a solicitation for offers and shall not be construed as an offer, a guarantee, or a promise that the solicited services will be purchased by the County. The County may withdraw this notification at any time and for any reason without liability to applicants for damages, including, but not limited to, bid preparations costs.

Additionally, Mason County reserves the right to negotiate with selected applicants and may request additional information or modification from an applicant. When deemed advisable, and before a contract is issued, Mason County reserves the right to arrange an on-site visit/review to determine the applicants' ability to meet the terms and conditions described in this RFP.

CANCELLATION OF APPLICANTS

Mason County reserves the right, with or without cause, to cancel any contract resulting from this RFP with thirty (30) calendar days written notice sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the applicant's address of record, as indicated on the applicant's proposal to this RFP (or last known address on file).

NOTIFICATION OF REQUIRED ASSURANCES

Equal Employment Opportunity: This law prohibits discrimination against any employee or application for employment because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin. Provisions to effectuate this prohibition must be included in all construction contracts. The Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin. The Contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Fair Housing and Affirmative Marketing: All housing construction, purchase or rental projects must comply with the following federal fair housing laws, including but not limited to:

- [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) as amended;
- [The Fair Housing Act](#);
- [Equal Opportunity in Housing Act](#); and
- [Age Discrimination Act](#)

All housing projects must adopt affirmative marketing procedures in compliance with federal and county policy. An affirmative marketing plan must be provided. The plan must, to the greatest extent possible, provide information to the public and potential tenants that may be underserved in the community.

Accessibility: All projects must comply with the accessibility laws, including:

- [Americans with Disabilities Act](#); and
- [Fair Housing Act](#)

Financial Management: The applicant must comply with all relevant accounting/financial standards and have a management system in place that can demonstrate cost reasonableness.

APPLICATION:

Submit a PDF to Todd Parker, tparker@masoncountywa.gov, by 4 pm on June 28th with the following information.

Organization:

Name of the Agency or Business

Mailing Address

Physical Address, if different from mailing address

City, State, Zip

Organization Type: Non-profit, Government Entity, Limited Liability Corporation, Sole Proprietorship, or other

UBI Number

DUNS Number

EIN Number

SWV Number

Number of years in business

Number of years providing the services in the proposal

Last financial audit or monitoring, by whom and the result.

Personnel: Please include name, title, email, and phone number

Executive Director

Program Director/Manager/Lead

Finance/accounting

Lead HMIS Data Entry and Quality

Lead person for this project and their qualifications.

Questions

Facilitator and consultant for the 5-year plan:

1. Briefly describe your experience and qualifications for consulting and facilitation of similar work and the results.
2. Describe how you would engage and work with the local government, the largest city, the Homeless Task Force and engage other stakeholders and community members in this project.
3. Write a project timeline with milestones.
4. Write a Scope of Work for this project that includes key deliverables and project milestones.
5. Is there anything else you would like to communicate that is pertinent to the successful completion of this project?
6. Are you available for an interview should the panel decide to interview candidates?

Program and Capacity Expansion

1. Briefly describe the program, the community need, how its aimed at reducing homelessness, and what it will accomplish. Please include data as part of the rationale for this program or enhancement.
2. How does the program adhere to best practices or evidence-based practices for this model? Provide references.
3. How does the staffing model conform to and support the best practices and/or evidence-based practices?
4. How will the program be developed or enhanced to better serve people that are least likely to apply?
5. How will the added capacity or enhancement of the program improve outcomes?
6. How does the program evaluate client engagement and satisfaction?
7. What is the marketing plan?
8. How will this program be different from current programs or other programs offered in the community? How will program differentiation be evident through observation, client experience, agency interaction, and through policies and procedures.
9. List MOU's that the agency has in place or will obtain with this additional funding to enhance services and outcomes.
10. How will the project be measured for cost-effectiveness?
11. Write a project timeline with implementation milestones and outcome measures.
12. Write a Scope of Work for this program that includes key deliverables and outcome measures.

Budget

Provide a detailed budget for the project that itemizes anticipated expenses and provides a project total. All expenses must be allowable under the Consolidated Homeless Grant Guidelines.

Please be aware that while some of the budget categories allow up to 15% Administration, this applies to the entire contract and may or may not be met for each program. Please also keep in mind that program budgets will be evaluated against the need in the community and the ratio of operational expenses to payments made on behalf of program participants.