

**SALT LAKE COUNTY
PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR THE
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION
AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM FUNDS**

Background

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that was passed by Congress and signed by President Obama, has made funds available to Salt Lake County through a direct allocation from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Of the \$1.5 billion dollars allocated nationally, Salt Lake County will receive a one time grant of \$1,005,916 for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). This funding was allocated through the Emergency Services Grant (ESG) formula and is a three-year grant.

While HPRP is similar to the Emergency Services Grant (ESG), there are a number of substantial differences, particularly in relation to eligible activities and eligible program participants. Primarily, HPRP funds will be used primarily for homelessness prevention and, to provide rapid re-housing services, where ESG funds have a wider range of eligible activities, such as renovation or operation of homeless shelters. In addition, while ESG requires a dollar for dollar match of cash or in-kind services, HPRP has no such match requirement.

Purpose of Consolidated Plan

A Five Year Consolidated Plan is required by HUD for all jurisdictions that receive annual grants from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Salt Lake County receives funding for four programs including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG); HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME); and the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI).

Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan

In order to receive the HPRP funds, Salt Lake County must complete a Substantial Amendment to its current 2008-09 Consolidated Action Plan and submit it to HUD by May 18, 2009. Upon submission of the Substantial Amendment, HUD will review and respond within 45 days. Additionally, the County must have the funds obligated by September 30, 2009. Within the first two years of the program at least 60% of the funds must be expended and 100% within three years or they could be subject to recapture by HUD.

The Consolidated Plan for Salt Lake County has identified addressing assisting the Homeless, Chronic Homeless, and Special Needs Populations as a Priority Need. There are nine main objectives identified to address this Need and they are aligned with the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. These objectives are in line with and supportive of the HPRP program goals. There are several specific objectives identified; these include the use of the HMIS program; rapidly re-housing people who have become homeless; providing supportive services to prevent homelessness and focusing on

outcomes by having a strong collaborative inter-organizational process for funding and program direction.

One of the main goals Salt Lake County hopes to achieve through the HPRP funds is to streamline the system of serving those at risk of homelessness and those individuals or families that can be stably re-housed long term through the partnerships of all available agencies, funding resources, and available social services.

Citizen Participation and Public Comment

Before submission to HUD the County must provide the public an opportunity to comment for twelve days, on the Substantial Amendment, which will be presented at a public meeting on May 7, 2009. The plan itself will be posted on the Division of Community Resources and Development's web page beginning May 3, 2009, and will be open for comment for a minimum of 12 calendar days thereafter. It will also be available electronically upon request. A notice of the open comment period will be published in the newspaper, sent to the County's Public Information Officer for distribution to the local media; posted on the public bulletin board outside the County Council Chambers; given to the organizations listed on our agency contact list, and sent to all persons or groups that request information. We received comments from two agencies supporting the plan and the use of funds. We also received several questions at the public hearing regarding the eligible use of funds, however there were no suggested changes to the plan format.

Description of Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)

The HPRP program is a three-year grant focused on housing for homeless and at-risk households. It will provide temporary financial assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services to individuals and families who are homeless or would be except for this assistance. The HPRP program is designed to provide housing stability for two groups of people; first, those at risk of becoming homeless and second, those who have recently become homeless.

There are four categories of eligible activities for the HPRP program:

- Financial Assistance – Short-term (3 months) and medium rental assistance (4-18 months) assistance cannot exceed 18 months, security and utility deposits, moving costs and storage costs assistance (3 months) and motel/hotel vouchers (up to 30 days)
- Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services – Case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, legal services and credit repair services
- Data Collection and Evaluation – Costs of collecting and reporting data under the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Administrative Costs – Costs related to administering the grant. These are limited to 5% of the grant amount

Consultations and Collaboration

Salt Lake County has been working closely with Salt Lake City and the State of Utah who also received one time grants of approximately \$1,700,000 and \$5,000,000 respectively to coordinate, as funds from both Salt Lake City and the State of Utah can and will be used in Salt Lake County. The County has also been working with the agencies that responded to the RFP's for the ESG, CDBG, HOME and SSBG funds in December 2008 and January 2009. These agencies deal almost exclusively with homeless prevention, case management, supportive services and housing services for homeless individuals and families. These agencies have the expertise and capacity to manage these activities and are currently using the Utah Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which is required for use of HPRP funds. These agencies are also involved in the Salt Lake County Homeless Coordinating Council and work extensively with the Continuum of Care in coordinating homeless services. These agencies provide the services listed as a Priority Need in the Homeless, Chronic Homeless, and Special Needs section of the Consolidated Plan for Salt Lake County. HPRP will be blended into the current activities of the Continuum and Consolidated Plan to ensure service to any eligible high risk person/family within the County's jurisdiction.

Distribution and Administration of HPRP Funds

With \$1,005,916 in HPRP funds available over a three year period, Salt Lake County expects to expend approximately \$325,000 each year. It is proposed that the majority of the money be used as flexible funding to: (1) provide one time funding to help people at risk of becoming homeless to remain in their own homes and (2) provide one time or short term rental assistance (up to 12 months) to place people back in housing.

The recommendation is to contract with the agencies mentioned above but to ensure clients seen by other agencies have access to the prevention and re-housing services. This will make certain there is "No Wrong Door" for accessing services. This will be accomplished by developing a risk assessment tool for both homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing guaranteeing that those most in need will be using these one time resources. The State, City and County are now engaged in on-going discussions with the service providers regarding the development of these risk assessment tools and how to coordinate the use of HPRP funds. Part of the discussion also includes how other stimulus funding coming into the State of Utah can help bolster and support the HPRP.

The most recent Point in Time (PIT) count indicates that Salt Lake County has approximately 65% of the State's homeless population. The unemployment and foreclosure rates are expected to increase over the next 12 months. Within Salt Lake County there are significant efforts currently underway to help people remain in their homes through the use of landlord tenant mediation, rental and utility assistance. Re-housing the homeless is being accomplished through the use of Tennant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) programs which can include rent and utility deposits and short term rental subsidies. Funding through HPRP is designed to provide these types of services.

The HPRP program funds awarded to Salt Lake County are designed to provide housing stability to two groups of people; first, to those at risk of becoming homeless and second,

to those who have recently become homeless. These program funds are to be used to help them stay in their own housing or if homeless to move quickly back into a stable housing environment. Agencies that could provide these services are among those that submitted applications for federal funding within the last 3-4 months.

Salt Lake County is recommending that the majority of these funds be used for the flexible financial assistance. This will be achieved through both the Homelessness Prevention Program and the Rapid Re-Housing Program. In addition, a small amount of funding will be available for the Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services to provide assistance to clients as needed. Five percent of the funds will be utilized for the Administration of this program and will be reasonably shared with the agencies selected to provide program services.

A Homelessness Prevention program designed to provide financial assistance that will include short-term (up to 3-months) rental assistance to eligible households will be provided through case managers at a central location and clients will come through referrals from qualifying agencies. All participants will be screened to ensure they meet the HPRP requirements:

- That homelessness is imminent without the assistance;
- To ensure that they are cases that with the limited direct assistance it will prevent homelessness; and
- Income must be 50% of the Area Median Income or less.

Rapid Re-Housing Activities will be available to eligible homeless households and will provide financial assistance including short-term and medium-term rental assistance for up to twelve months. Assistance may be provided for up to of 18 months on a case by case basis. Eligible participants are individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness. We anticipate that one agency will provide coordination among the shelters involved. Participants will also receive intensive case management to assist in stabilizing housing, maintaining housing, increasing skills and income, as well as providing attention to any other special needs. Financial assistance may also be provided to cover security deposits, rent and utility assistance, and as needed past due utility or rental payments to the extent that such prohibit a participant from being re-housed. This assistance cannot exceed six months prior to the current date. All participants will be screened to ensure they meet the HPRP requirements:

- The housing unit has been inspected and meets the required Habitability Standards
- Program Eligibility is certified at least once every 3 months for all program participants receiving medium-term rental assistance
- No assistance is made that is also being provided through another federal, state or local housing subsidy program

The Rapid Re-Housing program will also include assisting participants in accessing benefits from Social Security and Medicaid that facilitate movement from shelters and

permanent housing more rapidly, as well as assistance to participants in accessing affordable housing and to arrange for the inspection of such units to assure each unit meets the required habitability standards.

Over the three-year period of the HPRP grant it is anticipated that 200 clients at an average of \$2,500 each will benefit from the Homelessness Prevention services, and the Rapid Re-Housing program anticipates serving approximately 112 individuals at an average of \$4,000 each.

Activity	Twelve Month Amount
Prevention Services	\$144,270
Re-housing Services	\$144,270
Housing Relocation & Stabilization Services	\$ 20,000
Data collection/management	\$ 10,000
Administration	\$ 16,765
Total	\$335,305

Oversight and Monitoring of HPRP Funds

Oversight and monitoring by Salt Lake County will occur regularly and be focused on the following objectives:

- Agencies selected to administer programs will be reviewed to ensure they have the appropriate policies in place to comply with HPRP program requirements
- Timely expenditure of funds
- Achievement of goals for each programs objectives and targets
- Funds spent in accordance with contracted budget and scope of work
- Reports are submitted quarterly. No funds will be disbursed without proper reports being submitted.
- Funds will be drawn quarterly through IDIS
- All programs will be monitored on sight at least annually and all reimbursement requests will receive a desk review for program, activity and client eligibility, progress with performance measurements and compliance with inspections as needed.