

# *Department of Administration*

## *Bureau of Housing*

### *July 2023 Updates*

#### **WERA (Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance) Program**

WERA is being administered by WISCAP and the local Community Action Programs, along with Energy Services, Inc. with a dedicated hotline to answer questions.

ERA 1 funds have been completely expended.

A moratorium on application intake commenced January 31 and ended June 1. Agencies are processing applications that were submitted by January 31. ERA 2's most recent extraction was 7/21/2023.

#### **WERA REPORT as of July 21, 2023**

Total Rent Assistance (WERA) distributed: **\$260,912,191**. This covers 68 Wisconsin counties excluding Brown, Dane, Milwaukee and Waukesha.

July 21, 2023 extraction #111- **\$215,320**; Avg per Extraction- **\$2.35M**

Total Households: **64,676**

Total Persons: **158,658** (There is some duplication of households and persons as some have drawn funds from WERA 1 and WERA 2)

Total Spending per household (HH) is approximately **\$4,022**.

**63.84%** HH are 0 to ≤ 30% AMI; **22.01%** HH are > 30% and ≤ 50% AMI; **13.57%** HH > 50% and ≤ 80% AMI.

#### **Wisconsin Eviction Data Project**

<https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/Wisconsin-Eviction-Data-Project.aspx>

The Wisconsin Eviction Data Project is produced by the [Interagency Council on Homelessness](#) to track, on a monthly basis, the number of eviction filings and judgements for eviction in all 72 counties in the state to track the state's housing economy, the efficacy of homelessness prevention programs, and to inform the public on housing policy needs throughout Wisconsin.

#### **HOME ARP Program**

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 appropriated \$5 billion to provide housing, services, and shelter to individuals experiencing homeless and other vulnerable populations, to be allocated by formula to jurisdictions that qualified for HOME Investment Partnerships Program allocations in Fiscal Year 2021. DEHCR received \$41,859,563 in funding. The program is still in development. In the coming month, DEHCR will submit a substantial amendment to the State's HOME-ARP Allocation Plan for public comment. This amendment indicates a removal of the HOME-ARP Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Activity and reallocation of funding to the

Nonprofit Operating and Capacity Building Activities. Additionally, the amended plan would allow for applying organizations to establish preferences for specific Qualifying Populations and enable the use of the Expanded Coordinated Entry referral method.

### **CARES ESG-CV Funds**

The State of Wisconsin was awarded two Emergency Solutions Grants-Coronavirus (ESG-CV) totaling \$32,484,591. Round 1 included \$12,723,269 and round 2 totaled \$19,761,322

These ESG-CV funds are to be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) among individuals and families who are homeless or receiving homeless assistance; and to support additional homeless assistance and homelessness prevention activities to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. ESG-CV funds the following activities: Rapid Re-Housing, Homelessness Prevention, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, and HMIS.

DEHCR received an additional \$173,646.87 in ESG-CV funding from HUD due to a federal reallocation that took place late August 2022. Those funds, along with unspent funds from the original allocations, were awarded in December 2022 through a competitive application process (a total of about \$1.5 million). Eight agencies received awards (3 emergency shelter renovation projects, one emergency shelter operations project, one motel voucher project, one street outreach project, one HMIS-support agency, and one non-HMIS support agency). All funds must be expended by September 30, 2023.

As of the end of June 2023, ESG-CV grantee expenditures are reported at about \$31.2 million which is 96% of the total funding awarded to grantees.

### **CARES ACT – HOPWA**

The State of Wisconsin was awarded one Housing Opportunities for Person with AIDS – Coronavirus (HOPWA-CV) supplemental grant for \$113,711. The HOPWA-CV funds were awarded to Vivent Health to maintain operations and rental assistance, supportive services and other necessary actions for low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

The HOPWA-CV supplemental grant may be used to fund the following activities:

- Assisting HOPWA eligible households in accessing essential services and supplies such as food, water, medications, medical care, and information
- Educating assisted households on ways to reduce the risk of getting sick or spreading infectious diseases such as COVID-19 to others
- Providing transportation services for eligible households, including costs for privately-owned vehicle transportation when needed, to access medical care, supplies, and food or to commute to places of employment
- Providing nutrition services for eligible households in the form of food banks, groceries, and meal deliveries

- Providing lodging at hotels, motels, or other locations to quarantine HOPWA-eligible persons or their household members
- Providing short-term mortgage, and utility (STRMU) assistance payments to prevent homelessness of a tenant or mortgagor of a dwelling for a period of up to 24 months

**HOPWA-CV supplemental funding has been fully expensed.**

### **Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grant (SSHG)**

On September 28, 2022, Governor Tony Evers announced \$2.7 million in new, targeted grants to ensure support and services are available for families and individuals who need them. These new grants were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to provide critical resources to domestic violence programs and emergency and homeless shelter services throughout the state of Wisconsin.

Of the \$2.7 million available, up to \$1.2 million was allocated to the Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants (SSHG) program. The Secretary's Office has approved an increase in that allocation level from \$1.2 million to \$2 million. In 2021, SSSG grantees were surveyed to identify their funding needs for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 winter seasons as well as their needs for critical capital investments. DEHCR utilized the existing 2022 SSSG funding formula and contracts to calculate the proportion of funding that each grantee would receive, creating the SSHG awards.

Like the SSSG program, SSHG funding may be used to assist individuals and families who are homeless by providing grants to local agencies in Wisconsin that provide emergency shelter and supportive services. Funding can be utilized for most shelter operation costs such as salaries and utilities.

- For the 2022-2023 winter season, 45 agencies received SSHG awards totaling \$2 million.
- As of the end of March, SSHG expenditures were roughly \$1.3 million which is 65% of the total budget.
- The grant period ended on April 30, 2023.

### **State Shelter Subsidy Grant – Homeless Case Management Services (SSSG HCMS)**

On September 28, 2022, Governor Tony Evers announced \$2.7 million in new, targeted grants to ensure support and services are available for families and individuals who need them. These new grants were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to provide critical resources to domestic violence programs and emergency and homeless shelter services throughout the state of Wisconsin.

Of the \$2.7 million available, \$500,000 was allocated to the State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG) program. These funds will be used to provide homeless case management services (HCMS) to families and individuals who currently reside in emergency shelter facilities or motel voucher programs.

- For 2023, 10 agencies received SSSG HCMS awards totaling \$500,000.

## **BUREAU OF HOUSING UPDATES**

### **HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation (HHR)**

Provides direct assistance for acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction. Funds are awarded through a biennial funding cycle.

- New 2023 HHR contracts started 7/1/23 and go through December 2024.

### **Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)**

State funds set aside to assist with acquisition and foreclosure prevention. These funds are awarded on a biennial competition basis.

- DEHCR awarded \$2.6 million in HCRI funds for the 2023-2025 biennium with contracts in July 2023. Performance period for HCRI contracts run from July 1, 2023 to September 30, 2025.

### **HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)**

Rental Housing Development (RHD) Program is designed to assist affordable housing development opportunities for persons at or below 60% County Median Income (CMI).

- Applications are accepted via website. General application round deadline ended June 2023.
- Rental activities all require targeting Section 3 workers in projects awarded HOME funds over \$200,000.

### **Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)**

The TBRA program provides security deposits and rental assistance, up to 24 months, to individuals and families at or below 60% County Median Income (CMI) who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

- DEHCR approved 13 TBRA grantee awards for the 2022-2024 application, totaling \$4.7 million.
- For the 2023-2025 grant period, DEHCR received 14 applications. All 14 applicants were eligible to receive TBRA awards totaling \$6.4 million.

***Public Housing Authorities are encouraged to partner with their local TBRA grant recipient to assist with gap payments while clients are waiting to receive housing choice vouchers.***

### **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)/Housing Assistance Program (HAP)/Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) (EHH)**

The ESG federal funds are to assist with rapid re-housing, homelessness prevention, emergency shelter and street outreach. The Housing Assistance Program is a state program to assist for housing, support services and administrative costs to facilitate the movement of homeless

individuals and families to independent living. Homeless Prevention Program is a state program used for rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention.

- Contracts for the 2022-2023 grant cycle were executed in August 2022. Twenty-five grantees across the state received a total of \$7,134,006 in funding (\$3,262,257 ESG / \$2,971,749 HPP / \$900,000 HAP). This grant cycle includes a one-time double allocation of HPP to better align funding and grant cycles as well as a permanent increase in HAP funding.
- The EHH application for the 2023-24 grant cycle was released in April 2023 and applications were due in June 2023. The total funding available is \$5,751,107 (\$3,311,975 ESG / \$1,539,132 HPP / \$900,000 HAP).
- 2023-24 applications are currently under review and contracts will be executed in the next 30-60 days. The performance period will be October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024.

### **Homeless Case Management Services Grant (HCMS)**

This program supports intensive case management for families living in shelters and motels, through motel voucher programs. The case management provided focuses on financial management, employment, ensuring school continuation for children, and enrolling unemployed or underemployed parents in W-2 or Food Share Employment and Training.

- 10 grantees were awarded \$50,000 each for the 2023-24 grant cycle (July 2023 through June 2024).
- Applications for the 2024-2025 cycle will likely open in March 2024. Timing is subject to change.

### **Employment Grant (EG)**

This grant provides one \$75,000 award each year to a municipality (county, city, village, or town), or a federally recognized tribal governing body (new starting in 2024). Funds can be used to provide programming connecting people experiencing homelessness with work and training opportunities. Eligible costs include participants' wages/stipends, as well as operational and administrative expenses. Preference is given to applicants who will partner with an agency to provide supportive services to participants. Last, starting in 2024, the applicant can either have an active HMIS subscription themselves, or an MOU with an agency to perform HMIS data entry.

- The 2023 grant was awarded to the City of Madison.
- Applications for the 2024 cycle will likely open in September 2023. Timing is subject to change.

### **Recovery Voucher Grant Program (RV)**

This grant program started in January 2023. It provides an option for individuals (and their families) experiencing homelessness who have also been diagnosed with an opioid use disorder (OUD) or who have been receiving treatment for OUD within the past 12-months to be housed in Department of Health Services' recognized recovery residences.

For the 2024 grant year, the maximum award will be increased to \$125,000 with allocations for client assistance (including transportation), case management, and administrative costs.

- In 2023, 7 grantees received awards totaling \$609,800.
- Applications for the 2024 grant year will likely be posted in late August and be due in late September. Timing is subject to change.

### **Directions for Pulling Sam.gov Documentation**

Step by step instructions for pulling registration status and exclusion status from Sam.gov are now on [DEHCR's website](#).

### **Application Training**

Competition for grant dollars is increasing due to the growth in the number of agencies submitting applications and the reduction in overall funding (COVID funding is trailing off). To help agencies submit the best possible applications, the DEHCR Supportive Housing Team held a training. A recording of the presentation as well as a copy of the presentation can be found on [DEHCR's website](#).

### **State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG)**

The SSSG program assists individuals and families who are experiencing homeless by awarding state grants to eligible agencies that provide emergency shelter and supportive services. SSSG funding is awarded based on shelter nights, eligibility requirements and minimum and maximum amounts set by state statutes and administrative code. Funding can be utilized for most shelter operation costs such as salaries and utilities.

- For 2023, 49 agencies received awards totaling \$1,647,400.

### **Critical Assistance (CA)**

The Critical Assistance (CA) program provides homeless prevention assistance to individuals and families who are at or below 60% County Median Income (CMI), at risk of homelessness and who reside in areas that other homeless prevention resources are exhausted or not available. CA funds can provide a one-time only payment towards the following items: security deposits, rental payments, mortgage payments, utility payments and tax arrearages.

- For the 2022-2023 grant period, Foundation for Rural Housing received \$565,600 in CA renewal funding to provide services in the Wisconsin Balance of State areas.
- For the 2023-2024 grant period, DEHCR received one application. Foundation for Rural Housing was awarded CA funding totaling \$282,800.

### **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)**

The State of Wisconsin receives HOPWA funding based on a formula developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) federal HOPWA program. The HOPWA program provides housing assistance and supportive services to low-income persons and their families living with HIV/AIDS. HOPWA funds can be utilized for housing assistance activities such as tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA), permanent facility-based housing (P-FBH), or short-term mortgage, rent and utility (STRMU) assistance. HOPWA funds may also be

used for supportive services and housing information services either in conjunction to or separately from housing assistance.

- For the 2022-2023 grant period, Vivent Health was awarded \$934,593 in HOPWA renewal funding. Vivent Health expects to provide STRMU assistance to 134 HIV/AIDS client households; TBRA to 21 HIV/AIDS client households; housing information services to 134 HIV/AIDS client households and supportive services to 157 persons with HIV/AIDS.
- The 2023-2024 HOPWA application will be available on the DEHCR website in August.

### **Fair Housing Contract**

DEHCR contracts with an outside agency to provide fair housing assistance and information statewide. To be an eligible Fair Housing applicant, the contractor must meet the following mandatory qualifications: experience in fair housing complaint investigations and follow-up; experience in fair housing training and outreach; a toll-free telephone number; in-person office locations and a website to assist individuals who believe they have experienced illegal housing discrimination.

Fair Housing services include providing fair housing information statewide; counseling Wisconsin residents on fair housing law; making fair housing complaint intake and investigation available to persons who believe they have experienced discrimination; and conducting fair housing testing. By offering these services, the Division meets various state and federal fair housing requirements.

- For 2022-2023, Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council was awarded \$62,150 in Fair Housing funding to provide these services statewide under the terms of the 2022 request for purchasing authority process.

For more information of the Department of Administration programs, visit the website at <https://energyandhousing.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>.