

# *Department of Administration*

## *Bureau of Housing*

### *November 2022 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 and take applications.

ERA 1 funds have been completely expended.  
ERA2 in spend down.

#### **WERA REPORT as of November 11, 2022**

Total Rent Assistance (WERA) distributed: **\$217,472,721**. This covers 68 Wisconsin counties excluding Brown, Dane, Milwaukee and Waukesha.

November 9, 2022, extraction #90- **\$2,660,688**; Avg per Extraction- **\$2.4M**

Total Households **53,476**

Total Persons **132,657** (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 **\$4,066**.

**65%** HH are 0 to ≤ 30% AMI; **22%** HH are > 30% and ≤ 50% AMI; **13%** 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. As of October 2022, the program's allocation plan has been approved by HUD. Program staff are working on policies and procedures for the program and anticipate the release of an application in early 2023.

### **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.

As of the end of September 2022, ESG-CV expenditures are reported at about \$30.1 million which is 96% of the total award. All but one ESG-CV contract ended either 6/30/22 or 9/30/22.

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, will be awarded by the end of 2022 through a competitive application process. The application was released on 10/21/22 and is due 11/18/22. The primary purpose of the funds is for larger projects, such as emergency shelter rehab. There is a required minimum request of \$100,000 and an allowed maximum request of \$500,000. The application is open to all agencies who are current or past ESG grant recipients. All funds are to be expended by 9/30/23.

### **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 expended.**

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

On Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 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). The Secretary's Office has approved an increase in that allocation level from \$1.2 million to \$2 million. Back 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 Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grant (SSHG).

Like the SSSG program, SSHG funding may be used to assist individuals and families who are homeless. DEHCR will award SSHG funding to local agencies in Wisconsin that provide emergency shelter and supportive services. These funds can be utilized for shelter operation costs such as salaries and utilities.

- For the 2022-2023 winter season, 45 agencies received SSHG awards totaling \$2 million.

## **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.

- Current 2020 HHR contracts go through December 2022.
- The recently awarded HHR 2021 contracts have a period of performance that runs from July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023.
- Applications due March 15, 2023 for next HHR 2022 contracts starting 7/1/23.

### **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 2021-2023 biennium with contracts in July 2021. Performance period for HCRI contracts run from July 1, 2021-September 30, 2023.
- Applications due March 15, 2023 for 2023-2025 contracts starting 7/1/23.

### **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 now have a maximum of \$1,000,000 per award, increased from \$500,000. General application round is 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 15 TBRA grantee awards for the 2021-2023 application, totaling \$6.6 million.
- DEHCR approved 13 TBRA grantee awards for the 2022-2024 application, totaling \$4.7 million.

The TBRA program manual has been updated with two important changes.

- TBRA clients may now be housed in agency owned units.
- Individual agencies cannot complete their own market analysis for the purpose of adjusting rent standards.

***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.

- The 2021-2022 contract period is July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. Twenty-five grantees across the state received a total of \$5,434,013 in funding (\$3,619,013 ESG / \$1,515,000 HPP / \$300,000 HAP).
- 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 Program Manuals were updated. There are several changes and clarifications.

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

This program supports intensive case management for families living in shelter focusing 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 2022-23 grant cycle.

### **Employment Grant**

This program helps connect people experiencing homelessness to work and training opportunities. Funding can be used to cover clients' wages, as well as operational, and administrative costs.

- Contact has been awarded to 1 grantee for the 2022 calendar year grant cycle.
- Applications for the 2023 grant cycle were due 11/11/22 and are being reviewed. More information can be found on [DEHCR's Website](#).

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

This is a new program starting in January 2023. It will provide an option for people 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 recovery residences. Grant recipients will become the RV administrator the program for their CoC/LC and in this role will receive client referrals, enter clients into the program, and work with recognized recovery residences to house them. A grant will also be awarded for an HMIS Lead Agency. Grantees can be awarded up to \$100,000 per year depending on the expected demand for services in their area.

- 5 RV Administrator grants and 1 HMIS Lead Agency grant were awarded for 2023
- Performance Period: 1/1/23-12/31/23

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

The SSSG program assists individuals and families who are 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 2022, 45 agencies received awards totaling \$1,623,200.
- The 2023 SSSG application period closed on Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. About 50 applications were received. DEHCR staff are in the process of scoring applications.

### **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 2022-2023, Foundation for Rural Housing received \$565,600 in CA renewal funding to provide services in the Wisconsin Balance of State area.

### **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 short-term rent, mortgage and utility (STRMU) assistance, up to 21 weeks per year, and tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) to low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families to prevent homelessness. HOPWA funds may also be used to provide supportive services and housing information services in conjunction with housing assistance to clients.

- For 2022-2023, Vivent Health was awarded \$934,593 in HOPWA renewal funding. The agency proposes to provide STRMU assistance to 134 HIV/AIDS client households at or below 80 percent of CMI; 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.

### **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; and have 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>.