

**City of Columbus, Ohio**  
**Substantial Amendment to the**  
**FY 2011 Annual Action Plan for the**  
**Second Allocation of Emergency Solutions Grants Program Funds**

**1. SF-424 (to be submitted to HUD)**

**2. Summary of Consultation Process**

The City of Columbus consulted with the Community Shelter Board (CSB) regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> allocation of FY2011 Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. The CSB is the Continuum of Care (CoC) lead agency in Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio and the local non-profit entity in charge of ending homelessness in our community. The proposed usage of funds was discussed and agreement between the COC and the City was secured.

In preparation for requirements and changes under HEARTH, an ad hoc committee was convened on March 5 to discuss restructuring the Continuum of Care Steering Committee (CoC SC) and the Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) – the two local policy making entities. The ad hoc committee was comprised of representatives from the City of Columbus, Franklin County, The Columbus Foundation, Community Housing Network, the Community Shelter Board Citizens Advisory Council, the Affordable Housing Trust for Columbus and Franklin County, the United Way of Central Ohio, the Columbus Coalition for the Homeless, the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County and CSB staff. The group reviewed the ESG guidelines and a proposed restructuring model that will combine the two policy making entities so that they are in position and have the ability to comply with the HEARTH guidelines. The structural change was reviewed by the CoC SC on April 10 and will be reviewed by the RLFC on May 17. The ad hoc committee recommended that the CSB of Trustees make the final decision on the restructuring at its May 25 meeting and that implementation of those efforts begin in July 2012.

**3. Summary of Citizen Participation Process**

The City of Columbus adhered to the Citizen Participation process identified in the City of Columbus Citizen Participation Plan. A public notice was placed in the Columbus Dispatch on Friday, April 6<sup>th</sup> commencing a 30 day public comment period through May 6<sup>th</sup> and held a public hearing on the proposed substantial amendment was held on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Public comments can be submitted to Phil Carter at [pdcarter@columbus.gov](mailto:pdcarter@columbus.gov)

#### 4. Match

State Funds*	\$235,649
Local allocations**	<u>\$546,553</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$782,202</b>

\*ODOD ESG, ODOD

\*\*City Safety Net, Franklin County RETF, HUD HMIS grant, private funds

Proposed uses: homeless families rapid re-housing activities; housing relocation and stabilization services; tenant based services and HMIS activities

#### 5. Proposed Activities and Overall Budget

##### A. Proposed Activities

##### **1) Corresponding priority needs from recipient's Annual Action Plan**

DH1A: Increase the range of housing options and related services for special needs populations (E.G. homeless, elderly, disabled).

1. Help prevent homelessness and help families and individuals move out of emergency shelter and into transitional housing or permanent housing.

##### **2) Concise description of the activity, including the number and types of persons to be served**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> allocation of ESG will be used to provide rapid re-housing type services to homeless families residing in the YWCA Family Center, the local emergency shelter dedicated to serving families. For the 12 month period of the grant, 692 families are projected to be served. In addition, ESG funds will be used towards the operation of the local HMIS, Columbus ServicePoint.

##### **3) Corresponding standard objective and outcome categories**

###### Theme One: Affordable Housing opportunity

Goal 1: Continue to support the current level of housing options and related services for special needs populations (e.g. homeless, elderly, disabled, HIV/AIDs).

Objective 1: Assist families and individuals in maintaining or obtaining permanent housing through a Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing system.

**4) Start date and completion date**

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

**5) ESG and other funding amounts**

\$159,208 in ESG 2011 Second Allocation

**6) One or more performance indicators**

# of households assisted from emergency shelters into permanent housing

**7) Projected accomplishments, in accordance with each indicator, to be made within one year**

692 family households will be provided with rapid re-housing services at exit from the YWCA Family emergency shelter during the timeframe 7/1/2012 – 6/30/2013.

**8) Projected accomplishments, in accordance with each performance indicator, to be made over the period for which the grant will be used for that activity**

692 family households will be provided with rapid re-housing services at exit from the YWCA Family emergency shelter during the timeframe 7/1/2012 – 6/30/2013.

**B. Discussion of funding priorities**

**Funding, policies and procedures for operating and administration of the local HMIS**

A Continuum of Care meeting was held on April 10, 2012. At the meeting, the CoC approved the uses of funds for the 2<sup>nd</sup> allocation of the ESG funds. At the same meeting, the performance standards for the rapid re-housing system were reviewed and also approved. In regards to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the COC has already developed policies and procedures for the operations and administration of the system. The policies and procedures are reviewed annually and those policies (along with any proposed changes) are distributed to the participating agencies participating for their feedback, and then after their adoption their implementation. These policies and procedures are included as contractual requirements for each agency accessing our HMIS. In regards to the ESG FY2011 second allocation, no additional consultation with the CoC was needed regarding these policies and procedures.

### **Rapid Re-housing Priority**

The Community Shelter Board's (CSB) Rapid Re-housing Program is a program provided in partnership with the Homeless Families Foundation (HFF), Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio (VOAGO) and The Salvation Army (TSA). The Rapid Re-housing Program targets families with children staying at the YWCA Family Center, the local emergency shelter for families, who cannot be quickly re-housed in permanent housing due to various barriers like eviction, credit, poor work history, convictions, etc. Families in this program receive housing relocation and stabilization services and short-term financial assistance. CSB has a long history of providing rapid re-housing services to families experiencing homelessness. CSB has proven that rapid re-housing works and is the most effective approach in ending family homelessness. At exit from the rapid re-housing programs, 90% of families remain stable in their housing and exit the program with a successful outcome (for the long-term, only 5% of families return to homelessness, after receiving rapid re-housing assistance.) In addition, stays in the emergency shelter are short, less than 30 days. The rapid re-housing strategy follows the goals established in the HUD Opening Doors, Federal Strategic Plan to end Homelessness. Our local goal is for minimal shelter stays and to return the family in crisis to stability in as short a time-frame as possible.

This program increases housing stability, as the family has to relocate only once after a short-term service period in the emergency shelter (the family moves only once while participating in a family system program funded through CSB). Housing relocation and stabilization services are initiated while families are at the Family Center, and are intended to assist families in locating permanent affordable housing within two weeks of referral from the Family Center. The YWCA Family Center meets with families within 2 days of arrival at shelter. At this time a housing track is assigned to the family, in-line with their needs, and a referral packet is put together for the next-step housing provider. The YWCA uses assessment tools that are incorporated in the local HMIS and are shared with the rapid re-housing providers so that all system participants use the same tools (attached). Concurrently, the family is assisted in looking for a landlord that will rent to them. The Family Center works with the Rapid Re-housing provider for the family to be referred and enrolled in their program. Once a referral is accepted by a Rapid Re-housing program, the family will be enrolled in the program and case management will initiate.

The Rapid Re-housing program provides some units that are master-leased by the providers and convert to permanent housing with transitional support. The conversion occurs in the form of a "rapid re-housing" approach, where the provider initially master leases the unit, allowing families who otherwise may not qualify for housing to be placed in the unit. The lease is then transferred to the assisted family following a brief period. Other units within this model are leased directly to the family and the program provides limited, usually short-term rental assistance with the same transitional supports. The supports taper off and the family remains in their housing unit at the exit from the program. This model allows housing capacity to flex up or down according to need.

Housing relocation and stabilization services continue until the family has sufficient income to afford housing, linkage with supportive services in the community occurs and/or the family has ended contact. Services are typically provided for up to 90-120 days after housing placement. ESG funds will be used for housing relocation and stabilization services only, specifically for housing search and placement and housing stability case management.

### **HMIS priority**

The local HMIS is operated by the Community Shelter Board which employs a full time Database Administrator, Data and Evaluation Manager, Operations Administrator, and Operations Director with data and evaluation responsibilities. CSB maintains a contract with Bowman Systems for their HMIS system, ServicePoint. The HMIS is used to collect, monitor, and evaluate homeless and housing services in Columbus and Franklin County. CSB staff oversees data collection, monitor and enforce data quality standards, privacy and security standards, provide user training and technical assistance in accordance with HUD standards. CSB provides all required HUD reporting at our CoC level. Our local system is known nationwide for its strong emphasis on performance monitoring and evaluation of programs entering data in the HMIS. Columbus has high coverage rates of homeless programs using the HMIS. The quality of the data is monitored continuously and its high reliability allows CSB to provide extensive reporting regarding program performance that help with continuous program improvements and shape the local provision of services for individuals and families in crisis. The federal plan to end homelessness, Opening Doors, issued by USICH, emphasizes the importance of program management through outcomes and our local community continues to operate by these standards. Per USICH, “good data is essential to measuring what works, what doesn’t and what we need to do better.”

**C. Detailed Budget**

<b>7/1/12-6/30/13 Detailed Budget Table</b>					
<b>First Allocation</b>	\$0.00	<b>FY 2011 Emergency Shelter Grants/Emergency Solutions Grants Program Allocations</b>			
<b>Second Allocation</b>	\$159,208.00				
<b>Grant Amount</b>	\$159,208.00				
<b>Total Administration</b>	\$33,168				
		<b>First Allocation</b>		<b>Second Allocation</b>	<b>Total Fiscal Year 2011</b>
	<b>Eligible Activities</b>	<b>Activity Amount</b>	<b>Reprogrammed Amount</b>	<b>Activity Amount</b>	<b>Activity Amount</b>
<b>Emergency Shelter Grants Program</b>	Homeless Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
	<i>Rehab/Conversion</i>				\$0.00
	<i>Operations</i>				\$0.00
	<i>Essential Services</i>				\$0.00
	Homelessness Prevention				\$0.00
	Administration				\$0.00
	<b>Emergency Shelter Grants Subtotal</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Emergency Solutions Grants Program</b>	Emergency Shelter**			\$0.00	\$0.00
	<i>Renovation**</i>			\$0.00	\$0.00
	<i>Operation**</i>			\$0.00	\$0.00
	<i>Essential Service**</i>			\$0.00	\$0.00
	<i>URA Assistance**</i>			\$0.00	\$0.00
	Street Outreach - Essential Services**			\$0.00	\$0.00
	HMIS				\$0.00
	Rapid Re-housing		\$0.00	\$126,040.00	\$126,040.00
	<i>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services</i>			\$126,040.00	\$126,040.00
	<i>Tenant-Based Rental Assistance</i>				\$0.00
	<i>Project-Based Rental Assistance</i>				\$0.00
	Homelessness Prevention		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	<i>Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services</i>				\$0
	<i>Tenant-Based Rental Assistance</i>				\$0
	<i>Project-Based Rental Assistance</i>				\$0.00
	Administration			\$33,168.00	\$33,168.00
	<b>Emergency Solutions Grants Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$159,208.00</b>	<b>\$159,208.00</b>
		<b>Total Grant Amount:</b>			<b>\$159,208.00</b>

*Budget Note: No rental assistance will be offered using 2<sup>nd</sup> allocation of ESG funds. However, match funds will be used to provide tenant based rental assistance.*

## **6. Written Standards for Provision of ESG Assistance**

See **ATTACHMENT A: Emergency Solutions Grant Policies and Procedures**

## **7. Describe Process for Making Sub-awards**

The City of Columbus and Franklin County are collaborating to fund ESG initiatives that benefit the city and county. We have agreed to combine our allocations and work through the Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) and Community Shelter Board (CSB).

Created in 1986, CSB responds to the problem of homelessness in Franklin County. The founders include the City of Columbus, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, the United Way of Central Ohio, The Columbus Foundation, the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce and others concerned about the quality of life in Franklin County. CSB is a non-profit intermediary organization that innovates solutions, creates collaborations, and invests in quality programs in order to end homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County. See [www.csb.org](http://www.csb.org) The City establishes contracts and subrecipient agreements with CSB for administering City funds to eligible and qualified nonprofit service providers of homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, and supportive services for permanent supportive housing. Sources of City grant funds include Federal Emergency Shelter Grant, Community Development Block Grant funds, and City general funds.

CSB staffs both the City/County Continuum of Care Committee and the RLFC. The RLFC is a collaborative of local funders (city, county, public housing authority, philanthropic, etc.) committed to implementing the Rebuilding Lives Plan which calls for making emergency shelter available for all those in crisis and developing permanent housing linked to services for those with long-term needs.

[http://csb.org/files/docs/publications/2008/Community%20Summary%20\(final\).pdf](http://csb.org/files/docs/publications/2008/Community%20Summary%20(final).pdf)

The City of Columbus will award a subrecipient agreement to the Community Shelter Board in collaboration with Franklin County.

## **8. Homeless Participation Requirement**

Participation on the policy making entity of the recipient: The Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) is a CSB sponsored group that has membership comprised of homeless and formerly homeless individuals. The group meets monthly and gives feedback to CSB on priority activities. The CAC, in the current structure of the Continuum of Care has 4 designated seats. The CAC assigns these seats from their membership. The Continuum of Care values input and participation by the CAC in all processes. These are:

- Designated seats on all committees.

- The opportunity to review and comment on new projects prior to the Continuum of care review.
- The opportunity to review and comment on the Continuum of Care annual plan, policies, and program standards.

## 9. Performance Standards

The performance standards applicable for the rapid re-housing programs are as follows:

**Successful Housing Outcome:** A successful housing outcome is represented by a household that exits the program and remains stable in their own, permanent housing location. The percentage outcome is calculated by dividing the total number of HMIS destinations that are considered successful housing outcomes by the total number of distinct household exits during the report period. The goal for the rapid re-housing program is 90% successful housing outcomes.

**The Average Length of Shelter Stay Measure:** indicates the program's success in quickly re-housing a homeless family. The measure represents the average number of days households receive services as measured from the point of entry in the rapid re-housing program to the exit date from the emergency shelter (households enter into the rapid re-housing program prior to their exit from shelter so that the rapid re-housing program can facilitate housing location and start case management). The outcome is calculated by determining the number of days between the shelter exit date and the rapid re-housing program entry date for each family and dividing by the number of total distinct households served with an entry date in the rapid re-housing program within the report period. The goal for the rapid re-housing program is 15 days for the average length of shelter stay.

(All families served by the rapid re-housing programs with ESG funds will have income below 35% AMI, ensuring that the most in need homeless families will receive the assistance.)

It is anticipated that these funds will help with the increased need we are experiencing in our community. In our family system we saw an increase of over 20% in the number of families that became homeless last year. With the termination of the HPRP funds, this gap funding will help rapid re-housing providers with the increased need in service provision. We do not see a reduction in the need for shelter through the availability of these funds but we do expect a reduction in the average length of stay a family is homeless at the YWCA Family Center as these funds will help with the rapid movement of families through shelter and into permanent housing. There is an expedited process presently in place for families entering the rapid re-housing programs with the attempt to decrease shelter stay from 22 days down to 13 days.

All families work with Case Managers to develop individualized goal plans. The ultimate goal of the program is for each family to secure a permanent residence. The case manager facilitates the move into housing and applications for financial assistance, completes a furniture bank appointment, assists with utility connection, provides agency supplies when necessary, and also

supplies Project Welcome Home boxes from the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. The Case Manager will also assess the family's eligibility for mainstream benefits, using the Ohio Benefits Bank.

The families participating in the program have multiple barriers to housing such as multiple evictions, alcohol and substance abuse, mental health issues, lack of high school diploma/GED, and poor employment histories. As such case managers assist families in either providing or referring families to services such as life skills training, behavioral health services, pregnancy support, parenting classes, domestic violence counseling, child care, GED classes, and employment training and services.

## **10. Certifications (to be submitted to HUD)**

### **E. Requirements for Optional Changes to the FY 2011 Annual Action Plan**

#### **Description of the Centralized/Coordinated Assessment Systems**

As part of the Single Adult Shelter system, CSB has implemented the Coordinated Point of Access (CPoA) for all clients attempting to obtain shelter. The CPoA has specialists available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to conduct a preliminary triage and assessment and to explore diversion possibilities via a prescribed set of diversion questions. Clients identified as meeting shelter eligibility criteria are then referred to the most appropriate shelter bed. All single adult shelters must coordinate services through the Coordinated Point of Access. Once sheltered, each individual's need is assessed using the community's Vulnerability Assessment (attached.)

Within the Family Shelter System, all families seeking shelter must contact the YWCA Family Center to determine eligibility for shelter. The Family Center staff conducts diversion and triage in order to determine the best avenue for the family. Once the family is admitted into the YWCA Family Center, after a need assessment is completed, they will then be referred to the best program for the individual family's needs. Additional programs can only be accessed through the YWCA Family Center.

#### **Description of Monitoring of activities**

As the sub-recipient of ESG funds and other city, county, state and federal dollars, CSB is in charge of monitoring the implementation and activities of programs that help homeless individuals and families throughout Columbus and Franklin County. These programs are implemented by various local non-profit social service agencies.

CSB's monitoring is part of the CSB Program Review and Certification process. CSB's certification standards were developed by a community advisory committee and have been in place since 2000. These standards are an integral component of CSB's funding awards each year, and they assure that only those agencies that demonstrate good ethical practices are funded to deliver critical homeless services.

The goal of the standards is to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services to homeless persons. The standards monitor the following 12 areas:

1. Organizational Structure and Management
2. Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws
3. Personnel
4. Fiscal Administration
5. Program Operations
6. Data Collection and Columbus ServicePoint
7. Quality Assurance and Evaluation
8. Consumer Involvement
9. Community Relations and Good Neighbor Agreements
10. Facility Standards
11. Safety Standards
12. Security Plan

While these standards monitor a very broad range of practices, of special note is the emphasis on ethical treatment of clients. When someone loses their home, there is a state of uncertainty and instability. People seeking emergency shelter have often been devastated by job losses, layoffs, home or rental property foreclosures and family problems. CSB's standards guarantee each person their right to be treated with dignity and respect. Standards also cover rights and practices for:

- Client privacy, confidentiality, and notification when such information will be shared
- Opportunities to self identify their own goals
- To be well-informed of all available services
- Right for counsel during appeals and grievances processes as well as rights to reject substandard housing
- Right to enroll children in public schools
- Guarantee that clients will not be refused housing based on inability to pay
- Right to be notified of CSB's policy on searches
- Right to information regarding tenant/landlord procedures under Ohio law
- To be well-informed of opportunities to be involved in decision making, service planning and the opportunity to participate in a Citizens Advisory Council
- Guarantee of staff training and associated procedures for reporting elderly or child abuse

CSB conducts Program Review and Certification site visits to each of its partner agencies on an annual basis. Every four years, CSB conducts a full review of each partner agency. A full review means that all standards applicable to each of the agency's programs are reviewed. Reviews during the other three years are less stringent, targeted reviews.

The standards are divided into tiers. Tier 1 standards are reviewed during every site visit. Tier 2 standards are only reviewed during the full review every four years. Tier 3 standards are self-certified, meaning that partner agencies monitor these standards annually and sign a document saying that they are compliant. CSB also has voluntary standards – standards that CSB suggest partner agencies adopt as a set of best practices.

The Community Shelter Board operates an outcomes-based funding model that uses measurable performance standards to monitor and evaluate agencies and system progress toward community goals. The performance standards reinforce an overall vision and strategy for improving the homeless services system and working toward the eventual elimination of homelessness.

CSB evaluates 15 system-level performance measures and more than 30 client- and program-level measures. Key performance measures include length of stay, housing outcomes, cost-efficiency, and recidivism. In addition, CSB evaluates compliance with administrative and program standards. Performance measures and standards are developed with input from the CSB Board and staff, the Continuum of Care Steering Committee, and the broader stakeholder community.

Based on this information, CSB designs goals for each outcome measure, assigns a performance metric to each measure, devises a methodology for tracking each measure across the system, and plans for integration of feedback. CSB also identifies the key players involved in each performance measure, ensuring accountability. For program level measures specifically, CSB works directly with each provider agency to set and establish a work plan for performance goals. These goals are outlined in a Performance Outcome Plan (POP) and included in the agency's contract.

CSB's annual performance evaluation of homeless programs can be broken into three distinct levels. First, CSB assesses and scores: each system and program performance goal as Achieved, Not Achieved), or Not Applicable. An Achieved Goal is defined as 90 percent or better of a numerical goal or within 5 percentage points of a percentage goal. Not Applicable is assigned when a performance goal was not assigned or the program is too new to be measured. Second, each system and program is assessed as a High, Medium, or Low performer based on overall achievement of system-level performance outcomes and overall program performance outcomes, respectively. A program that experiences repeated difficulty meeting performance goals is considered a 'program of concern'.

Programs rated as 'Low' performers or repeatedly identified as a 'program of concern' are handled by CSB through a Quality Improvement Intervention Program (QII). The QII is based on quarterly one-on-one dialogues between CSB and the provider agency to support performance

improvement. Funding decisions or merit awards are often based on the rating that each program receives during its annual evaluation.

If a system is scored as low performing, CSB works with all the providers in that system collectively to determine the source(s) of or barrier(s) to stronger performance. For example, the introduction of a new program - such as the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) - can adversely affect system performance as programs go through a learning phase during the first few months of implementation.

At the third and final level of evaluation, the homeless services system's effectiveness as a whole is monitored and evaluated by quarterly, semi-annual, and annual reviews of aggregated data from providers and the communities various systems.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENT A: Emergency Solutions Grant Policies and Procedures**

**ATTACHMENT B: Emergency Solutions Grant Coordinated Point of Access Triage Form**

**ATTACHMENT C: Emergency Solutions Grant Rental Assistance Template**

**ATTACHMENT A: Emergency Solutions Grant Vulnerability Assessment**

**ATTACHMENT A: Emergency Solutions Grant YWCA Family Center Intake  
Information**