



**Request for Proposals
2023-130
Kitsap Housing and Essential Needs Program
Proposal Deadline: June 7, 2023**

Release Date

5/8/2023

Issuing Agency

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the Kitsap County Department of Human Services, herein after referred to as “the County.”

Summary

Kitsap County is seeking a qualified applicant to operate the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Program, as detailed below.

Contract Term

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025

Budget

Funding for this contract shall come from the Consolidated Homeless Grant Program. Responses to this RFP should include a specific annual program budget, including Administration, Program Operations, and Rental Assistance. Anticipated funds available are \$1,300,000 each state fiscal year.

The amount of actual funds available will depend on the state budget and the Consolidated Homeless Grant award to the Department of Human Services from the Department of Commerce. After the final CHG award to Kitsap County is announced, the winning respondent to this RFP will be invited to provide an adjusted final budget.

Timeline

5/8/2023 – 5/22/2023	RFP issued & advertised
5/22/2023 (3:00 PM PST)	Letters of intent due
5/23/2023 (3:00 PM PST)	Questions due
5/30/2023	Addendum posted (if questions received)
6/7/2023 (3:00 PM PST)	Proposals due
6/7/23-6/15/23	Proposal review & selection process
6/15/2023	Announcement of winning proposal
6/15/23 –7/15/23	Contracting process
7/1/23	Contract begins

Solicited Services

Manage the Housing and Essential Needs Program (HEN) throughout Kitsap County. HEN provides monthly rental assistance and personal needs items to eligible individuals who are qualified by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

The HEN Program is governed by state law, including WACs 388-400-0060 and 388-400-0070. Funding for the program is provided through the state general fund budget, administered by the Department of Commerce, and granted to the Kitsap County Department of Human Services. The Department of Human Services sub-contracts HEN-designated funding to a community-based organization through this RFP process.

Program Goals

The overall goal of the HEN Program is to provide housing stability for individuals who are either temporarily disabled or permanently disabled while they are getting approved for SSI Disability through the Social Security Administration. It also provides personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, transportation passes, and other personal need items.

The Department of Commerce determines eligible uses of funds and specific policies and procedures for the HEN Program, which are listed in the Guidelines for the Consolidated Homeless Grant and are updated periodically.

Scope of Work

The following allowable uses of funds outline the elements of the scope of work, including specific requirements. Additional details can be found in the Department of Commerce's Guidelines for the Consolidated Homeless Grant.

Program Operations

Operate the HEN Program, including performing intakes and assessments, conducting eligibility reviews, distributing essential needs items, issuing checks to landlords, coordinating with DSHS on referrals, coordinating with Kitsap's coordinated entry program, assisting clients with finding housing, collecting required data, entering data into the Homeless Management Information System, and working with clients to develop and carry out individualized Housing Stability Plans. Allowable expenses include:

- Salaries and benefits for staff costs directly attributable to the program or to the homeless system, including but not limited to program staff, information technology (IT) staff, human resources (HR) staff, bookkeeping staff, and accounting staff.
- Office space, utilities, supplies, phone, internet, and training related to grant management and/or service delivery/conferences/travel and per diem.
- Equipment up to \$1,500 per grant period unless approved in advance by Kitsap County and Commerce.
- Intake and assessment, including time spent assessing a household, whether or not the household is determined eligible.
- Housing Stability Services, including developing an individualized housing and service plan, monitoring and evaluating household progress, identifying creative and immediate housing solutions outside of the traditional homeless service system (diversion), SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR), and assuring that households' rights are protected.
- Housing Search and Placement Services, including services or activities designed to assist households in locating, obtaining, and retaining suitable housing, tenant counseling, assisting households to understand leases, inspections, securing utilities, making moving arrangements, and representative payee services concerning rent and utilities.
- Mediation and outreach to property owners/landlords related to locating or retaining housing (landlord incentives).
- Optional support services for individuals in permanent supportive housing, including case management and connections to resources.
- Data collection and entry.

- General liability insurance and automobile insurance.
- Other costs as approved in advance by Kitsap County and Commerce.

Flexible Funding

Flexible Funding is the provision of goods or payments of expenses not included in other allowable expense categories, which directly help a household to obtain or maintain permanent housing or meet essential household needs.

Essential household needs means personal health and hygiene items, cleaning supplies, transportation passes and other personal need items.

- Households are eligible for Flexible Funding up to \$1,500 per household.
- Households eligible for HEN are eligible for Flexible Funding. Households receiving only Flexible Funding and not ongoing assistance are exempt from income eligibility requirements. Verification of housing status is required. Flexible Funding payments must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of the household and noted in a household's housing stability plan.
- Essential household need items are exempt from the \$1,500 cap and are available to households with a HEN Referral, or who are otherwise eligible for CHG. Verification of housing status is not required for households with a HEN referral. Essential needs distribution does not need to be documented in housing stability plans.

Rental Assistance

Based on referrals from DSHS, qualify clients for rental assistance. Based on a projection of their need, using required Commerce forms, make monthly payments to landlords or housing providers. Allowable expenses include:

- Monthly rent and any combination of first and last months' rent. Rent may only be paid one month at a time, although rental arrears, pro-rated rent, and last month's rent may be included with the first month's payment. Monthly rent is not time-limited.
- Rental arrears and associated late fees. Rental arrears may be paid if the payment enables the household to obtain or maintain permanent housing. Arrears is not time-limited.
 - Rental arrears is any missed rent payment currently owed (full or partial), including the current month or past months.
 - Rental arrears for HEN households can be paid for a time period when the household was not HEN enrolled.
- Lot rent for RV or manufactured home.
- Costs of parking spaces when connected to a unit.
- Incentives paid to landlords, including reimbursement for damages.
- Security deposits for households moving into new units.
- Hotel/Motel expenses for households if no suitable shelter bed is available during housing search or when a hotel/motel unit is used as permanent housing.
- Utilities which are included in rent.
- Landlord administrative fees required with rent.

Other Housing Costs

- Utility payments for households also receiving rental assistance.
- Utility arrears may be paid if the payment enables the household to obtain or maintain permanent housing. Utility arrears are not time-limited.
- Utility-only assistance (including arrears) can be provided when no other utility assistance, such as LIHEAP, is available to prevent a shut-off, and documented using the *Utility-Only Assistance Form*.
- Utility deposits for a household moving into a new unit.

- Application fees, background, credit check fees, and costs of urinalyses for drug testing of household members if necessary/required for rental housing.
- Other costs as approved by Commerce.

Administration

Up to 7 percent of total HEN reimbursed costs over the course of the grant period may be used for administration. This limit must be reconciled before the end of the grant period.

Allowable administrative costs benefit the organization as a whole and cannot be attributed specifically to a particular program or to the homeless crisis response system. Administrative costs may include the same types of expenses that are listed in program operations (such as IT staff and office supplies), in the case that these costs are benefiting the agency as a whole and are not attributed to a particular program or the homeless system. Administrative costs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Executive director salary and benefits
- General organization insurance
- Organization wide audits
- Board expenses
- Organization-wide membership fees and dues
- Washington State Quality Award (WSQA) expenses
- General agency facilities costs (including those associated with executive positions) such as rent, depreciation expenses, and operations and maintenance

All amounts billed to administration must be supported by actual costs. If actual costs in the fiscal year for HEN meet the budget cap, that amount may be charged in equal monthly amounts.

- Billed directly such as IT services that are billed by the hour.
- Shared costs that are allocated directly by means of a cost allocation plan.
- Costs related to executive personnel such that a direct relationship between the cost and the benefit cannot be established must be charged indirectly by use of an indirect cost rate which has been appropriately negotiated with an approved cognizant agency or by use of the 10 percent *de minimus* rate.

Evaluation

The HEN Program should be considered a “work in progress,” with frequent internal evaluations to make necessary adjustments to ensure the efficacy of the program. In addition, periodic “check ins” with partner agencies should be used to ensure that those partnerships support the efficacy of the HEN Program and that they are working for all parties.

- Implement program evaluation tools to measure client satisfaction and program effectiveness.
- Submit quarterly reports to Kitsap County. Provide additional reports and data as requested by Kitsap County.
- Periodic on-site monitoring and evaluation by the County.
- Periodic monitoring and evaluation by Commerce.

Expectations of Contractor

- Flexibility – the HEN Program is a work in progress. Policies, procedures and tools will need to be adjusted and refined over time.
- Collaborative Approach – the HEN provider(s) must have the ability to build and maintain strong and effective working partnerships homeless service providers, housing providers, and landlords.
- Communication – HEN staff must have the ability to communicate how the system works to both homeless people, providers, and the public.
- Objectivity – successful operation of the HEN Program requires that the provider use consistency and fairness in applying all policies and procedures and use of tools.

- Problem Solving – the HEN Program provider must embrace a problem-solving approach to ending homelessness. To be effective, the HEN provider must employ staff who are skilled at problem-solving and understand how to adopt a strengths-based and client-centered approach to all aspects of service delivery.
- Housing First – the organizational mission and philosophy of the HEN provider must be aligned with Housing First principles: everyone is housing ready and there should be minimal barriers or service participation requirements imposed on homeless people as a condition of entering housing.
- Systems Thinking – the HEN Program is an essential component of the County’s homeless response system. To successfully operate the HEN Program, the selected provider must embrace a systems-thinking approach.
- Data-informed – the HEN data collected will be used for ongoing and continuous system improvement. The HEN provider must have strong commitment to data quality and a willingness make data-informed decisions and must make progress towards statewide performance targets as established by Commerce.

Performance Measurement

The following outcomes/outputs will be used to assess the performance of the HEN Program:

- Destinations of clients when they exit the program
- Returns to homelessness within two years of exiting the program to a stable housing situation

Additional performance measures may be added, or the above performance measures may be modified, with agreement between the County and the HEN Program provider.

Evaluation of Proposals

Letter of Intent

In order to be an applicant for this RFP, the applicant must submit a Letter of Intent no later than **3:00 PM May 22, 2023**, using the instructions below, stating the intention to submit a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals. The Letter of Intent must be accompanied by a summary of the applicant’s experience in providing the types of services outlined in this Request for Proposals.

If only one qualified applicant submits a Letter of Intent, Kitsap County reserves the right to substitute the bid proposal and review process with a sole-source contract process. In this event, the sole bidder will be contacted to initiate the sole-source contract process.

Proposal Information

Proposals should include:

- 1) Introductory Letter including the organization name, address, contact person, email, and reason your organization should be selected for this work.
- 2) Statement of qualification, including:
 - Organizational experience and workload – include a detailed description of similar programs successfully undertaken and implemented.
 - Program supervisory personnel experience.
- 3) Project Approach: A written description (2 - 4 page narrative) of your approach to designing, implementing and operating this program. Proposals should respond with specific details about how each of the listed elements of the HEN Program will be addressed. Include information about:
 - program philosophy and methodology;
 - program management;
 - staffing levels, including job descriptions of personnel planned for HEN Program;
 - anticipated partnerships with other Kitsap agencies;
 - data collection methods;
 - and program evaluation methods.

4) Program Implementation and Operation Timeline

5) Budget Proposal on an annualized basis, including program operational costs, personnel costs, rental assistance costs, essential needs costs, and administrative costs.

5) References

Kitsap County encourages disadvantaged, minority, and women-led organizations to respond. Two (2) copies of Proposal with the solicitation number and name clearly indicated must be submitted to:

By Mail

Glen McNeil
Kitsap County Department of
Administrative Services
Purchasing Office
614 Division Street MS-7
Port Orchard, WA 98366

OR

Express, Courier, or Hand delivery

Glen McNeil
Kitsap County Department of Administrative
Services
Purchasing Office – Fourth Floor
619 Division Street
Port Orchard, WA 98366

OR

By email (preferred): Attention Glen McNeil at Purchasing@kitsap.gov

Submittals must be received in the Purchasing Office no later than 3:00 p.m. PDT on June 7, 2023. Submittals received after this date will be returned unopened. All questions regarding this project should be directed to Sheri Frontiero or Mandy Meigs, Kitsap County Human Resources, at email address humanresources@kitsap.gov

Clarifications

Any questions, requests for additional information, or requests for clarification regarding this request for proposals will be accepted via e-mail by Glen McNeil at Purchasing@kitsap.gov until 3:00 PM May 23, 2023. Answers to any questions received will be posted as an Addendum by May 30, 2023.

Selection Criteria

Responses will be evaluated, and the contractor selected based on the following criteria:

- 1) The applicant's approach, plan of work, recommended schedules, and suggested responsibility assignments and staffing levels.
- 2) Qualifications and experience in providing the requested services as exemplified by past projects.
- 3) Knowledge of and experience in implementing and operating homeless programs.
- 4) Experience and ability to form partnerships with other Kitsap agencies serving homeless clients.
- 5) Budget.

Kitsap County shall make the final determination of the most qualified applicant to negotiate a contract with. Prior to final selection, the Proposal Review Panel may select a short list and interview prospective applicants and/or may require submittal of further documentation regarding the applicant's capabilities and qualifications. Dates and times for those interviews are to be determined. The contract will be issued by Kitsap County as a Consolidated Homeless Grant sub-contract. All standard provisions of a Consolidated Homeless Grant sub-contract will apply.

Reservations

Kitsap County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive informality, technical defect, or clerical error in any proposal, as the interest of Kitsap County may require. All cost incurred in the preparation of

the proposal will be borne entirely by the submitter. All materials submitted to Kitsap County become the property of Kitsap County and become public record.