

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND HOUSING STABILITY SERVICES

Program Goal: 4,500 households

The Homelessness Prevention and Housing Stability Services Program serves vulnerable families and individuals who are at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness. The program addresses housing-related barriers through a combination of housing stabilization support services and financial assistance. A housing stability assessment is required at the onset of services to determine the level of need and the amount of assistance required. Stabilization services typically include but are not limited to assistance with housing search, landlord negotiations, budget and financial coaching, assistance applying for mainstream benefits, reviewing leases, and meeting with participants to assess their ongoing level of need.

This program is structured to be flexible to meet the different financial and service needs of those at risk of homelessness and people experiencing homelessness using a progressive engagement framework. This approach is consistent with current national promising practices and local experience that point to the need for a holistic and flexible approach. In serving households at risk of homelessness, the program targets resources for households at greatest risk of homelessness including formerly homeless households and households experiencing extreme overcrowding.

Contractors are required to enter data in the Homeless Management Information System for the purpose of overall program planning as well as performance review. A key outcome measure is ongoing housing stability: the number of households who do not enter or return to homelessness 12 months after assistance to the household ends.

A. Eligible households

To be eligible to apply for program funds, households must meet all the following requirements:

- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
 - Households at risk of homelessness must have a documented housing crisis. For the purposes of this program, couching surfing or doubled up households with limited resources may be considered at risk of homelessness. Households must reside in Seattle at the time of program intake.
 - Homeless households must be literally homeless households staying in a place not meant for human habitation and must be referred through King County's regional Coordinated Entry for All system.
- 50% of Area Median Income or below
- Inadequate financial resources to secure or maintain stable housing without assistance
- Financial assistance may not exceed 12 months in a 36-month period

B. Eligible use of funds

Financial assistance is available for:

- Rent payments
- Rent or utility arrears needed to obtain or retain secure, stable housing
- Security and/or utility deposits and other move-in costs (background check fees, first and last month's rent)
- Legal and language interpretation fees needed to stop an eviction action

- Agency staffing and associated service delivery costs required to provide housing stabilization services
- Transportation assistance

C. Program requirements

Levy funds will be administered by contractors who demonstrate ability to do the following:

- Provide housing stabilization services
- Provide financial assistance to prevent or address homelessness using a progressive engagement framework
- Enter data directly into the region's Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) for program planning and performance review

D. Program reporting

The Human Services Department will provide an annual program progress report to the Office of Housing to be included in the Housing Levy annual report due to the City Council no later than March 31st of each year. The annual data will be provided separately for homelessness prevention assistance to households at risk of homelessness, and for assistance to households who are experiencing homelessness. The data will include but not be limited to:

- Demographic data for program participants such as race, gender, disability status, household income, and household composition,
- Program financial information such as average amount of assistance per household,
- The number of households served; and
- Program performance outcomes including the following:
 - 1) The number and percent of households exiting to permanent housing at program exit;
 - 2) The number and percent of households exiting to other (homelessness, shelter, etc.) at program exit;
 - 3) The number and percent of households stably housed at 12 months;and
 - 4) The number and percent of households stably housed at 24 months.