



BENTON COUNTY
HB 5019 RAPID REHOUSING INITIATIVE
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Issue Date: March 15, 2024

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| Funding Name: | Benton County HB 5019 Rapid Rehousing (HB5019-RRH) Funds |
| Due Date/Time: | April 15, 2024, at 5:00 pm |
| Contact: | Rebecca Taylor: 541-766-6787 rebecca.taylor@bentoncountyor.gov |
| Total Funding Available: | Case Management: \$360,000 Street Outreach: \$80,000 |

1. ANNOUNCEMENT AND SPECIAL INFORMATION

The Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response Office is seeking applications from eligible entities to help support **case management** and **street outreach services**. These case management and street outreach services will play a critical role in Benton County’s House Bill (HB) 5019 Rapid Rehousing (HB 5019-RRH) Initiative that will coordinate a system of care to address and prevent homelessness. System coordination will be supported through a Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool which relies on a structure of strong partnership among a diverse network of community organizations serving populations experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The goal of the HB 5019 Rapid Rehousing initiative is to achieve long-term housing stability for **31 households by June 30, 2025**. All provided services will be culturally responsive, low barrier, and ensure equitable access and outcomes through Housing First principles and evidence-based practices. Services will be provided with a trauma-informed and harm reduction approach. Culturally responsive programs and services will be prioritized.

Applicants are required to read, understand, and comply with all information contained within this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). All Proposals are binding upon the Applicants for sixty (60) days from the Proposal Due Date/Time.

Applications are to be submitted by email no later than 5PM PST on April 15, 2024. **The online application can be accessed at bentoncountyor.gov/rfps.** To request a paper copy of this NOFO and the application please contact **Rebecca Taylor, Coordinated Homeless Response Project Manager**, at Rebecca.taylor@bentoncountyor.gov or **541-766-6787**.

Applicants may not communicate with County employees or representatives about the NOFO during the application process until the Benton County Financial Services Department has notified Applicants of the selected Proposals. Communication in violation of this restriction may result in rejection of an application. County staff encourage questions regarding this NOFO, application, eligibility criteria and other questions relevant to the programs and scope of services covered in this NOFO. Questions must be submitted no sooner than **March 25, 2024**, and no later than **March 29, 2024**. Please send questions during this time period to bchealthcontracts@bentoncountyor.gov. Questions will be answered via e-mail and posted to bentoncountyor.gov/rfps by **Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 5:00pm**.

2. BACKGROUND

On January 10, 2023, Governor Kotek declared a homelessness state of emergency in response to the 80% rise in unsheltered homelessness in areas throughout Oregon. Oregon Housing Community Services Department (OHCS) was awarded funding through HB 5019 during the 2023 Session of the Oregon Legislature to increase shelter capacity and connections to shelter, support rapid rehousing initiatives, provide capacity support for culturally responsive organizations, and provide sanitation services for communities within the OR-505 - Oregon Balance of State Continuum of Care (referred to as Balance of State, or BoS) and for the administration of support relating to these objectives. As a community within the BoS, OHCS awarded Benton County \$1,120,232.00 (HB 5019-RRH), to support activities with the objective of rapidly rehousing 31 unsheltered households by June 30, 2025.

Prior to eligibility for funding, Benton County submitted an Unsheltered Homelessness Emergency Response Plan (“HB 5019 Homeless Response Plan”) that specifies current local, state, federal, and other resources allocated to emergency shelter services, rehousing services, and housing stabilization services, and current service levels and gaps in services and resources in emergency response areas specifically impacting people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response Office (CHRO) conducted community engagement among diverse communities within Benton County, including rural partners, people who have experienced homelessness personally, service providers who help individuals and families transition out of homelessness, first responders, elected officials, LGBT community members, Black community members, biracial community members, OSU students, and members of the faith-based community. This engagement identified locally relevant and proven strategies to reduce barriers to housing people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Using this information, the CHRO researched system-level service delivery models that could be funded with an initial investment using Benton County's HB 5019-RRH funds and have the potential to fill service gaps among Benton County's current homeless response system to rehouse people and keep them housed more effectively. Successful models that leverage existing regional and local strategies and programs to serve vulnerable populations include:

- Rapidly available flexible funding to help people access and keep housing.
- Resources for health and mental health services.
- Resources for people with intensive case management needs throughout their entire journey from unsheltered homelessness to housing stability.

3. PROGRAM AND FUNDING PLAN

Benton County and the CHRO are committed to sustaining effective strategies supported by the HB 5019-RRH funds beyond this initial state investment. The CHRO is working to coordinate a system of care to address and prevent homelessness through services and supports that lead to housing stability and equitable outcomes for people. This work will be funded by the HB 5019-RRH funds and be administered through a Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP). Dedicated staffing for program coordination and housing navigation within the county Health Department will provide operational and administrative support to the FHSP. The FHSP support staff will serve as a central point of contact for FHSP partners and providers (NOFO recipients) to access the FHSP's centralized management of housing resources that match resources to eligible FHSP-referred households and provides housing navigation support to both households and providers.

As the community lead and direct recipient of the HB 5019-RRH Funds, the CHRO has established a preliminary budget plan, in alignment with the HB 5019 Homeless Response Plan and local policy priorities to support HB 5019-RRH eligible activities with the goal to

rapidly rehouse 31 households by June 30, 2025. These eligible activities include:

- Housing navigation
- Tenancy supports
- Intensive case management
- Street outreach
- Rental subsidies
- Landlord engagement and incentives

The CHRO has identified for this NOFO an estimated \$360,000 for **case management** services and \$80,000 for **street outreach** services. These service components will work in coordination with the FHSP and its staff towards reaching the goals of the HB 5019-RRH Initiative. Recipients of this funding are expected to build and maintain effective partnerships with all FHSP partners, which may include but are not limited to: law enforcement, behavioral health, City and County staff, Community Services Consortium (CSC), Linn Benton Housing Authority (LBHA), Rural Continuum of Care, InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO), Samaritan Health Services, Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), community-based organizations (CBO) serving unsheltered populations within Benton County, and private market landlords.

4. FHSP Populations Served

The FHSP is guided by a commitment to advance equity for communities disproportionately affected by housing instability and homelessness and to reduce barriers to housing for these communities.

Local data gathered during the development of the HB 5019 Homeless Response Plan shows an overrepresentation of certain subpopulations in Benton County's sheltered and unsheltered populations experiencing homelessness. These populations include:

- Black and Native American communities
- Families with children
- People with high and complex needs, where the level of need may not meet eligibility for existing housing programs (mental health, substance use, physical needs, aging, developmental and neuro diversity, etc.)

The goal of the FHSP is to coordinate a system of care that fully addresses the unique and complex needs and barriers of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The FHSP model is intended to reduce the barriers to accessing housing for overrepresented

populations. Barriers identified during the development of the HB 5019 Homeless Response Plan include discrimination, lack of available units for large families, and histories of convictions, evictions, and bankruptcy that cause landlords to reject rental applications.

5. FHSP Service Geography

Services funded through the FHSP must be located within geographical boundary of Benton County.

The FHSP aims to achieve an equitable distribution of services throughout Benton County. Investments will be prioritized in geographic areas that address existing service gaps and meet the needs of communities that are disproportionately underserved.

6. FHSP Service Delivery Approaches

All FHSP services are expected to be aligned with the following service delivery approaches:

- **Racial and Ethnic Equity:** to effectively address homelessness, we must acknowledge and address through our work the continuing role that structural and institutional racism have in causing disproportionate homelessness among Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/e, Asian, Pacific Islander, immigrant and refugee communities, many of which are significantly overrepresented in Benton County's homelessness data. Eliminating these disparities requires that resources be prioritized and services be delivered in a manner that acknowledges and addresses the barriers to housing caused by racism and discrimination.
- **Collaboration and Cooperation:** All providers of FHSP services are expected to work collaboratively and demonstrate cooperation with all FHSP partners who work with and within the FHSP to better serve and improve outcomes for people navigating unsheltered homelessness into housing stability. Partners of the FHSP include but are not limited to: law enforcement, behavioral health, City and County staff and departments, Community Services Consortium (CSC), Linn Benton Housing Authority (LBHA), Rural Continuum of Care, InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO), Samaritan Health Services, Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), community-based organizations (CBO) serving unsheltered populations within Benton County, and private market landlords.
- **Culturally Specific and Responsive Services:** All providers of FHSP services are expected to deliver services in a culturally responsive manner. Culturally responsive services are respectful of, and relevant to, the beliefs, practices, neurodiversity, sexual orientation and gender identity, culture, and linguistic needs of diverse participating populations and communities. Many providers will also be expected to deliver services that are culturally specific. Culturally specific services are informed

by specific communities, where the majority of participants are reflective of that community, and use language, structures, and settings familiar to the culture of the target population to create an environment of belonging and safety in which services are delivered.

- **Housing First:** Housing First is a widely accepted best practice for homeless service programs and is based in the belief that stable housing should serve as a platform from which people can pursue other health, economic, and personal needs and goals. A Housing First approach aims to quickly and successfully connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry. Key components include few to no programmatic prerequisites or housing readiness requirements, low-barrier admission policies, supportive services that are voluntary and participant-led, and an emphasis on participant choice and self-determination.
- **Low Barrier:** FHSP-funded services and programs should be designed to ensure that all eligible households are able to easily access the services they need. All programs and services should have low or no barriers to entry with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of underserved communities and populations that experience multiple barriers to accessing and succeeding in services. Any documentation required for determining program eligibility should be low barrier and include self-reporting options.
- **Evidence-Based Practices:** The FHSP Program utilizes approaches proven to quickly and equitably coordinate the access, assessment, prioritization and referrals to housing for people who have experienced prolonged homelessness and marginalization by society. These practices include Coordinated Entry, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, and strengths-based practices.

7. FHSP Scope of Services

The goal of the HB 5019-RRH Initiative is to achieve long-term housing stability for 31 households by June 30, 2025. HB 5019-RRH funds will support components of the FHSP, as well as meeting Benton County's goal of rapidly rehousing 31 households.

FHSP Service Components

This section lists the core FHSP **Service Components** funded by this HB 5019-RRH NOFO. In many cases, more than one **Service Component** or its individual subcomponents may be combined into an integrated service model, with the different components provided by a single organization or by multiple organizations working collaboratively or through aligned agreements.

Examples:

- **Applicant 1** applies to provide only **subcomponent A.i and A.ii.** of the **Street Outreach Service Components** (see below). **Applicant 1's** application demonstrates coordination with **Applicant 2** whose application provides the remaining **subcomponents A.iii and A.iv.**
- **Applicant 1** and **Applicant 2** both apply for the entire scope of the Case Management Service Component and its subcomponents. Applicant 1's application demonstrates organizational capacity and experience to serve one priority population, Families with Children, while Applicant 2's application demonstrates organizational capacity and experience serving other priority populations: Black and Native American Communities and People with High Complex Needs. Collectively both Applicant 1 and Applicant 2 fulfill the FHSP Case Management Service Component.

Eligible Services and Activities

All services and activities funded through this NOFO process must be aligned with the service delivery approaches listed in section #6 above and be utilized for the following purposes.

- A. Street Outreach:** Outreach to people experiencing homelessness in locations where structured connections to services do not currently exist, with a focus on building relationships and service engagement through person-centered, trauma-informed and strengths-based practices. Services include completing coordinated entry assessments, linking people with services to promote connections to stable housing, and connecting people to the FHSP system of care. Funded services may also include:
- i. Providing services and supplies to meet basic needs such as food support, hygiene services, restrooms, survival gear, storage, etc.
 - ii. Providing connections to safety-off-the-street services, such as emergency shelter, motel vouchers, day centers, safety planning, peer support, and crisis resources.
 - iii. Behavioral health and addiction recovery outreach, and culturally specific outreach services.
 - iv. Emergency on-call services in the event of severe weather, natural disasters, public health, or other emergencies. May include outreach, information sharing, distribution of basic needs supplies, transportation, and service connections.

B. Case Management and Wrap Around Supports: The FHSP will have participants navigating out of unsheltered homelessness to living in a variety of housing settings, including, but not limited to, scattered-site settings, project-based settings, and residential facility settings, using FHSP locally funded rent subsidies or a federal voucher. Flexible and person-centered case management that provides ongoing wraparound supports before, during, and after housing placement is an essential component of the FHSP and will be delivered in close coordination and collaboration with the entire system of care. Case management supports in the FHSP helping meet the housing stability needs of FHSP participants are expected to align with other Service Components of the FHSP that can be provided by multiple organizations.

Funded Case Management activities may include:

- i. Health services: Community-based (on-site and off-site) mental health services, addiction and recovery supports, community health workers, peer support services, strategies that support harm reduction, health care navigation, wellness programs, assistance applying for medical benefits, non-clinical behavioral health supports, behavioral health outreach services, crisis intervention, pregnant and parenting support services, and support with navigating the behavioral health system and accessing clinical services as needed. (Clinical services that can be funded through Medicaid will not be funded through this NOFO, but support to assist clients to access those services will be funded.)
- ii. Peer support services: Support specialists that use the therapeutic value of lived experience to provide support for individuals with substance use or mental health issues. Peer support specialists are often from the communities with which they work, creating systems of support which are relevant to the community, trauma informed, culturally specific and culturally responsive.
- iii. Education, training, and employment services: Services aimed at increasing incomes by providing access to education, training, and public and private workforce resources, with a focus on meeting the needs of individuals who face barriers to employment and/or are experiencing barriers to employability.
- iv. Benefits navigation and legal services: Assistance with accessing benefits such as Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Income, Medicaid/Medicare benefits, and Veterans benefits. Assistance with accessing or providing civil legal services that facilitate housing access and stability, including assistance to enforce tenants' rights, expungement rights, and rights guaranteed under civil rights laws.

8. FHSP Service Integration Strategies

The FHSP Service Components described in section 7 will operate in close alignment with one another as part of the system of care. In many cases, individual programs will incorporate more than one FHSP Service Component into an integrated approach. For example, street outreach and case management programs will connect participants with housing navigation and placement services, supportive housing services will need to connect participants with housing retention and resident services, and all of the FHSP Service Components will need to connect participants with tailored ongoing wraparound supports. This alignment and integration can be achieved through a variety of different strategies:

- Some organizations will provide multiple integrated FHSP Service Components. These organizations should respond to the NOFO by proposing an integrated approach that includes multiple FHSP Service Components listed in section 7.
- Some organizations have existing partnerships that they can leverage to create an integrated approach. These organizations should respond to the NOFO by identifying the set of partner organizations that will work together to provide each FHSP Service Component.
- Some organizations have capacity, interest and/or expertise within one FHSP Service Component or its individual subcomponents. These organizations should focus their NOFO response on the particular FHSP Service Component their organization is interested in providing.

When grants are awarded, the CHRO will work in collaboration with awardees of this NOFO to explore potential strategies to achieve the necessary alignment and integration between the different FHSP Service Components. Potential service integration strategies include partnerships, collaborations, contract alignment, designated services, and subcontractor relationships. In some cases, the CHRO may serve as a matchmaker to connect providers of complementary services to one another to create a coordinated program. In other cases, the CHRO may work with one or more providers to create mobile service teams that can provide support services to multiple housing settings. The CHRO may also develop aligned contracts that will enable providers of one FHSP Service Component to access other necessary services for their participants. For example, the CHRO may contract with behavioral health providers to ensure their services are available for other contracted organizations to draw from as needed to meet the needs of individual participants.

9. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to apply for funding all applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Applicants must either be a governmental, community-based, or non-profit organization whose mission and services align with **Sections 4 through 7** of this NOFO.
- Applicants must have the organizational capacity to carry out their proposed activities.
- Contractor recipients will be required to obtain adequate insurance covering worker's compensation, bodily injury, property damage, or automobile liability, depending on the nature of the project. Contractors will be responsible for obtaining any necessary licenses, permits, and/or jurisdictional approvals, and for complying with applicable federal, state, and municipal laws, codes and regulations.
- All recipients of funds will be required to enter into a grant agreement with Benton County that outlines the details of the proposed program, project, or services with anticipated timelines and outcomes. See **Appendix B**, "SAMPLE HB 5019-RRH Subrecipient Agreement."

Submission of a proposal does not guarantee funding.

10. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated by a review committee. Each evaluation criteria has been assigned points on its relative value to the proposal as a whole.

| | Evaluation Criteria (Based on responses to Application questions in Appendix A) | Scoring Method | Points (Weight) |
|--|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| | Organizational Mission and Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization’s mission and services align with the overall goals of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool. • Organization demonstrates sufficient and operational capacity to enter into a contractual relationship with Benton County. • Equity is integrated into the organization’s mission and services, data and evaluation, and staff and volunteer recruitment and retention practices. | Points Based | 25 (25% of Total) |
| | Equity and Inclusion Organization has demonstrated experience with and commitment to: | Points Based | 25 (25% of Total) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with populations prioritized by Benton County’s HB 5019 Rapid Rehousing Initiative and partnering organizations. • Including representatives of priority populations in the organization’s staff, volunteers, and/or leadership. • Addressing racial and ethnic inequity by reducing barriers to accessing housing and support services for Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/e, Asians, Pacific Islanders, immigrants and refugees and other marginalized communities disproportionately impacted by housing instability and homelessness. • Providing culturally responsive and/or culturally specific services, as defined in Section 6. | | |
| | <p>Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization’s approach to service delivery aligns with the FHSP Service Delivery Approaches (see Section 6). • Organization demonstrates effective strategies to increase access to services and improve housing outcomes for populations with multiple and complex barriers. • Organization demonstrates its willingness and ability to effectively align and coordinate services with other agencies and organizations to improve housing outcomes for people. | <p>Points Based</p> | <p>25 (25% of Total)</p> |
| | <p>FHSP Service Component</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization’s proposed service delivery approach would provide a beneficial addition to the system of care coordinating with and within the FHSP. • The proposed service approach aligns with the guidelines described in Sections 6 through 7 and would contribute to the achievement of Benton County’s HB 5019 Rapid Rehousing Initiative. • The proposed service population and geography align with the Sections 4 and 5. • The organization is well suited to provide the proposed service for reasons such as its experience with the proposed geographic area and service population, its programmatic expertise, its experience with related types of programs, its strong ideas for effective service strategies, etc. | <p>Points Based</p> | <p>25 (25% of Total)</p> |

11. Application and Selection Process

To be eligible for review, proposals must be received by the required submission date and time (**April 15, 2024, at 5:00pm**), contain all the required components, and propose use of funding within the scope of services of this NOFO. This NOFO is an open, competitive process to award funding based upon satisfaction of the described.

Proposals must be consistent with the following sections of this NOFO:

Section 4. FHSP Populations Served

Section 5. FHSP Service Geography

Section 6. FHSP Service Delivery Approaches

Section 7. FHSP Scope of Services

12. Funding Cycle and Timeline

| Event | Date (2024) | Time |
|---|---------------------|---------|
| Application Made Available | Fri, March 15 | |
| Question and Answer Period | March 25 – March 29 | |
| Questions Due | Fri, March 29 | 5:00 pm |
| Answers Released | Thurs, April 4 | 5:00 pm |
| Application Due Date | Mon, April, 15 | 5:00 pm |
| Award Decision and Notification (estimated) | May | |
| Agreement Start Date (estimated) | May | |
| Agreement End Date | June 30 2025 | |

13. Application Instructions

Applications are due by April 15, 2024, no later than 5:00 pm.

Applicants should complete the provided application, attached here as Appendix A. The same application is available online at bentoncountyor.gov/rfps. Coordinated Homeless Response Office (CHRO) staff encourage questions regarding this NOFO, application, eligibility criteria and other questions relevant to the programs and scope of services covered in this NOFO. Questions must be submitted no sooner than **March 25, 2024**, and no later than **March 29, 2024**. Please send questions during this time period to bchealthcontracts@bentoncountyor.gov. Questions will be answered via e-mail and posted to bentoncountyor.gov/rfps by **Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 5:00pm**.

All applications will initially be reviewed by CHRO for timeliness and completeness of the NOFO requirements. The County reserves the right to pursue clarification of any information in an application. After the initial review, eligible applications will be reviewed and competitively scored by the scoring team utilizing assessment and ranking outlined in **Section 11, Evaluation Criteria** (above). The final selection of applications will be from those that best meet the competitive evaluation criteria requirements, in accordance with available funding sources.

All applicants will be informed of the final selection whether they are successful or unsuccessful (tentative May 2024).

Application Threshold Review

- Application is submitted on time.
- Application package is complete (all required materials included)
 - Completed and signed application.
 - Budget proposal for proposed Service Component. Must include:
 - Personnel cost
 - Direct services cost
 - Administrative cost (Max 15% of final award)

HB 5019-RRH funds provided through this NOFO may not be used to supplant other funds available for the same purpose.

- Insurance as listed in Exhibit B of this packet.
- W9
- Application proposal aligns with the following NOFO sections:
 - Section 4. FHSP Populations Served
 - Section 5. FHSP Service Geography
 - Section 6. FHSP Service Delivery Approaches
 - Section 7. FHSP Scope of Services