

2011-12 Challenge Grant Application Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care/ Opportunity, Inc.

Introduction

Opportunity, Inc. is soliciting applications for inclusion in the Continuum of Care submission to the Office on Homelessness Challenge Grant program. Based on the fact that this year's funding level is similar to last, we expect that the Continuum of Care will receive either one of two levels of funding: \$96,000 or \$60,000.

Although the state has not yet released its application to lead agencies (of which Opportunity, Inc. is one), the statute governing selection criteria has not changed. Therefore, applications will be based on quality of service, leverage, and need. The quality of service is taken from documents included in last year's HUD Continuum of Care grant, and need is based on point-in-time results, so those outcomes are fixed. As always, leverage is the primary concern. Please note within this document the section on leverage, which was taken directly from the draft version of the 2011 competition. This is of critical importance to a successful outcome of the Continuum of Care application.

Over the past five years, applicants have used Challenge Grant funds to run cold night shelters, soup kitchens, direct assistance programs, fund improvements to facilities serving the homeless. Reviewers look for a geographic spread, to ensure both counties have access to funds, and for diversity of program offerings. Applicants proposing new services to meet underserved needs will get additional points. An example might be a program for assisting homeless children through tutoring or mentoring, or setting up a monthly clinic for wound care or other medical needs associated with homelessness. Using data taken from the latest point-in-time count to demonstrate need is a plus. The point-in-time count is on the website, and documents trends in homeless need in this area.

Eligibility:

In order to **qualify**, the applying entity must:

1. Be a **member** of the Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care/ Opportunity, Inc.(Opportunity Inc.). Membership can be obtained by attending 3 out of 5 consecutive membership meetings, or through payment of a \$50 membership to Opportunity, Inc. If you have questions concerning membership status, call 850-409-3070.
2. Be **actively engaged** in on-going activities that touch on the basic core functions of a homeless continuum: prevention, alleviation, assistance toward self-sufficiency, and/or advocacy. Applicants may propose new projects, but should have current experience with the homeless arena.
3. Participate in the Homeless Management Information System (**HMIS**) or commit to joining the HMIS system upon grant award;
4. Demonstrate the **organizational capacity** to carry through with the proposed program of work. Organizations may be start-ups, or be starting up a program new to their agency, but should still be able to demonstrate the fiscal and programmatic background to complete the grant projects.

5. Provide documentation of leverage in terms of previous, non-reimbursed service to the homeless. Please note this leverage can NOT include in-kind donations or volunteer service (see extract from Office on Homelessness included later in this application). Applicants are strongly encouraged to produce leverage at least equaling the amount requested. Leverage does not have to be entirely from your organization – if a church can produce letters from several other non-applicant churches, the total will be counted.

Funding Limits

Since this grant is the only source of outside funding currently available for the two-county district, all requests must be limited to \$10,000 or less. Funding requests may be modified, based on the award granted from the state. Part of the funding will be reserved for enhancing the Homeless Management Information System to meet case management needs of all service providers in the Continuum of Care. This amount will not exceed 15% of the grant total, and may well be less. For the 2010-11 cycle, HMIS funding came to less than 5% of the total.

Inherently Religious Activities

This has been a difficult topic for many of our churches and faith-based agencies. Let me quote from the relevant OMB circular created by the federal government and used by the state: "Applicants may not use government funds for inherently religious activities or to build the programs or services that include inherently religious activities. If inherently religious activities are also programs of the applicant organization, then the inherently religious activities must be separate in time or location from the programs/services supported by the government." How this works in practice is that Church A hosts a dinner and Bible study. If the dinner and Bible study take place at the same time and location, and if Bible study is a condition of getting a meal, the grant may not fund the dinner. BUT, if Church A serves dinner, invites guests to a separate location for a Bible study, and does not make attendance at Bible study a prerequisite for being served a meal, then the events are separated by time and location. The grant will pay for dinner. However, please do not refer to the dinner program as "Dinner and Bible Study" when submitting an invoice. You are begging to be audited and to have the government request a refund.

Administrative Fees

In deference to the intense administrative requirements involved in the request for proposal process, as well as the fiscal and programmatic oversight for as many as 14 grants (the 2010-11 total), the Continuum of Care requests that all successful applicants pay 5% of the total award by January 1, 2012. The Challenge Grant statute specifically prohibits the lead agency from collecting Challenge Grant funds for administration. However, the Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, does not expect substantially under-funded lead agencies to tackle these projects without compensation, and suggests that lead agencies charge an administrative fee to be paid for out of unrestricted funds from the grant recipients. Grant recipients may bill the Challenge Grant for 5% administrative fees, which can then put into

whatever fund source the original 5% was taken. If your agency cannot provide this fee, please do not apply. The fee will be part of the contract issued at the time of grant award.

The state does not provide separate funding for the administrative of the Challenge Grant. State aid is restricted to \$11,850 per year to maintain all functions mandated by FS 420.623, such as carrying out the point in time survey, providing resource and referral, facilitating strategic planning, etc., AND writing for and administering specified state and federal grants. Funds for the administration of this grant, which is onerous, must come from elsewhere, and the Continuum of Care Board of Directors has determined that the most logical source is the beneficiaries of this work effort.

Time Line

Initial release of the grant will occur via the web site and through e-mail among the Continuum of Care list serves on May 26, 2011.

A workshop on Challenge Grant applications, award management, and tips for writing grant applications will be held June 2, 2011 at the 203 Cloverdale office, at 5 p.m. Should time and scheduling allow, meetings will also be held in Crestview and Walton County. Should there be enough people interested in this workshop who cannot make the June 2 timeline, a followup workshop will be held. However, the time line between a second workshop and submittal deadlines may be short. All additional workshops will be announced as rapidly as possible.

Any questions about the grant application may be addressed to Lenore Wilson, 409-3070 or by e-mail (ravenlen@aol.com) prior to 5 p.m. June 14. Answers will be grouped, and posted to the entire listserv and on the website at regular intervals.

Applications are due by noon, Central Time, Friday, June 17, 2010. No late applications will be accepted. The mail does not arrive until 2 p.m. or later, so all mail entries must be sent in time to ensure delivery by Thursday, June 16. Applications may be brought in person or mailed. Faxed applications will not be accepted, due to legibility issues, and e-mail versions will not be accepted as they do not carry an original signature.

Submit applications to the Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care/ Opportunity, Inc., 203 Cloverdale Boulevard, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, 32547-1405.

An independent, impartial and anonymous review committee of at least three persons will convene between June 20-24, to score applications and make recommendations for funding to the Continuum of Care Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will meet no later than June 27 to receive recommendations and vote on acceptance or rejection of the review committee report. Members of the Board of Directors with a financial interest in the outcome of the vote will be recused from this portion of the meeting.

Announcement of grant awards will be noticed through the e-mail list serves, and posted to the web site, on June 28, 2010.

Format Instructions:

The grant application should be brief and concise, no longer than 10 single-spaced pages. Break up long paragraphs and use white space between questions and answers to assist the reviewers in reading the application. Use 12 point font, preferably Arial or Times New Roman, with one inch margins. Please delete pages 1-3, and descriptive language from the application portion of the grant prior to submission. A good rule of thumb is to delete anything in regular, as opposed to bold, type.

Fatal Flaws

- 1) **Failure to meet deadline of noon, Central Time, Friday, June 17, 2011.**
- 2) **Failure to adhere to formatting instructions**
- 3) **Failure to provide adequate evidence of leverage as described in the state Challenge Grant application, copied from the state application section and placed in the instructions below.**
- 4) **No signature on the final application page.**

**2010-11 Challenge Grant Application for
Okaloosa and Walton Counties
Issued by Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care/
Opportunity, Inc.**

Applicant Organizational Name:

Applicant Address:

Applicant Contact Name:

Contact Information: Phone:

Email:

Project Title:

Description of Target Population to be Served by Proposed Funds – 10 points

What homeless population(s) are being addressed by the proposal: victims of domestic violence; families with children; persons seeking employment; working homeless; homeless with mental illness; physically disabled; persons with substance abuse disorders; youth; elderly, chronically homeless; newly homeless; persons in imminent danger of homelessness? Describe the group you are seeking to serve, and what outreach efforts you will use to make them aware of service availability? If you are providing support to homeless service providers, please describe what population(s) these service providers assist.

Please include the geographic area covered, as well as population characteristics (south Okaloosa, south Walton, south Fort Walton Beach; north Fort Walton Beach, Crestview, Destin, Niceville, Holt, DeFuniak Springs, Freeport, etc.).

Description of Proposed Services and Benefits to Homeless: - 30 points

Please be specific. Are you planning to provide meals, and if so, what times, days of the week, and where. What other services are offered at the meal site? If you are a cold night shelter, what services do you provide beyond a pallet: meals, snacks, showers, laundry, entertainment; hair cuts? Do you offer HIV/AIDS testing?

If you provide homeless prevention, what are your guidelines: do you check for verification of circumstances (i.e., eviction letter or letter advising of termination of utility service)? Do you have limitations as to how much you will spend for rent, utilities, clothing? Do you pay deposits? If so, do you pay deposits and first month's rent, or one or the other.

Do you help with transition to self-sufficiency, providing funds for services such as car repair and/or insurance, gas vouchers, ID, bicycles, moving expenses, medical expenses?

Please organize your answer by stating the proposed benefit and how they relate to the prevention and/or alleviation of homelessness.

Include information where applicable as to the decision-making process when determining who receives assistance – if bus tickets are requested, will you check to make sure the person is traveling to a job, family, house or for compassionate purposes such as a funeral? In case of rent assistance, will you verify income? Will you check with a landlord to ensure that rent payment will actually prevent eviction?

If you are a network or organization that supports homeless service providers, state how your organization will enhance service provider effectiveness, and discuss what types of service providers you support (those providing prevention, meals, shelter, etc.).

Provide some information as to your experience in providing these services in the past, and list outcomes such as: open for 7 cold nights, serving an average of 72 persons, providing an average of 144 meals per night; providing clothing to 150 persons over the winter.

Requested Funding Amount:**Budget Detail: - 20 points**

Note that the budget applies to the program noted above, and does not pertain in any way to the agency overall budget. Again, be specific: for example:

XYZ church provides lunch on 40 Wednesdays, serving 60 persons per day. Total cost: $40 \times 100 \times \$1.15$ per meal = \$2,401.15.

An alternative calculation might be:

XYZ church spends \$400 per month through ABC Food Bank, using these funds to feeding Wednesday lunch for 60 persons per meal over a 6 month period of time. $6 \text{ months} \times \$400 = \$2,400$.

OR:

KLM Charity provides payments of up to \$300 for rent and \$200 for utilities (payable to landlords and utility companies) to clients in need of homeless prevention assistance. KLM Charity expects to serve 10 clients, at an average of \$400 per client, or \$4,000.

Expenses do not have to be limited to food. You may ask for assistance in providing security, cleaning, utilities, and anything else you can justify as essential to running your program.

You may also request funding to improve your infrastructure. For example: TUV church wishes to provide showers to homeless persons during cold nights, but only has a 40 gallon tank. Thus, TUV asks for \$800 to replace the 40 gallon tank with the 80 gallon tank.

Total budget request may not equal more than \$10,000.

Participation in the Continuum of Care: 20 points

Did organization participate in the Point-in-Time survey? (a list of participating agencies will be provided to the evaluation committee). Did organization provide Continuum of Care with completed point-in-time count tools, send out representatives on field surveys, supply signature sheets?

Does organization have permanent representation in the Continuum of Care monthly meetings?

How often does organizational representative attend Continuum of Care meetings?

Describe any other participation in Continuum of Care activities (work on special projects, fund-raising, committee meetings, community awareness on behalf of Continuum).

Leverage: 20 points

Many of the leverage letters provided by applicants to the Continuum of Care do not pass the scrutiny of the Department of Children and Families, and are deducted from our score in the state-wide competition. Churches and agencies have reported on-kind donations and volunteer efforts, resulting in the removal of the entire letter (including documented cash) from the application package.

Letters signed by persons not immediately recognizable as having the authority to sign a legally binding contract for a church or agency must be accompanied by a corporate resolution authorizing that person to sign legal contracts. For example, DCF assumes a pastor or president of the Board of Trustees has signatory authority for a church. If your church rests signatory authority in some other person, say a church secretary or treasurer, a letter signed by the pastor or president of the Board of Trustees must be attached documenting this authority. My verbal assurances of having been told this was indeed an authorized signature do not carry any weight. The same holds true: letters should be signed by an executive director or Chairman of the Board of Directors.

In preparing a leverage letter, please note the following description of acceptable leverage letters. The DCF Office on Homelessness has provided us with an example of an acceptable letter, which will be disseminated through the list serve and the website. Agencies receiving any of the McKinney-Vento funding listed below should send information regarding grant award date, amount, and grant number.

Failure to provide an adequate leverage letter is considered a fatal flaw, and will cause rejection of the entire application.

Instructions from the Florida Office on Homelessness:

B. Ability to leverage McKinney Act and private money for the provision of services to homeless persons.

The lead agency shall list on the form in Exhibit D all funding received by organizations participating in the continuum of care from grants authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.S., ss 11371, et. seq.), and from private sources (non-governmental) for homeless services within its catchment area. The list shall be limited to those grants received or private cash received within the period from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

For grants, "received" shall be defined as the total amount of the grant award as reflected on the **fully executed grant award letter from the grantor agency as dated within the above stated period.** Grant award

letters with electronic signatures are acceptable. In addition, the local grantee is encouraged to submit a letter on agency letterhead certifying the federal grant award, along with evidence from a federal agency internet site clearly depicting the award to the agency. Once the grant award has been claimed as leverage in a Challenge Grant application, it may no longer be claimed on any future Challenge Grant application. Do not include any grant awards claimed in your Challenge Grant applications from 2010 or prior years.

For private funds, the amount received shall be the actual amount of cash received during the period (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) for direct services targeted to homeless persons. In-kind services or donations of goods or services shall not be eligible to be claimed as leverage. **The amount of cash received for service to the homeless shall be evidenced by a letter on agency letterhead, signed by the chief executive officer, stating the amount of cash received for homeless service, and the specific homeless services supported by that cash.** Do not claim in-kind services, donated goods or time, or the value of services provided with other funds in the cash leverage letter. The lead agency shall provide this evidence in the application, and keep it on file in the continuum records. Like the grant funding, once the private cash is claimed in a Challenge Grant application, it may no longer be claimed on any future Challenge Grant application.

Lead agencies are directed to the following programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, for claims of grant funding leveraged. These are the only grant sources that shall be recognized for leverage.

See next page:

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>CFDA</u>	<u>Federal Agency</u>	<u>Eligible Grantees</u>
1. Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program	17.805	HHS	Dept. of Labor grant award to community agency
2. Healthcare for the Homeless	93.224	HHS	HHS grant award to local government or non-profit agency
3. Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)	93.150	Educ.	DCF award or contract specifying amount of PATH dollars to community agency
4. Education for Homeless Children & Youth	84.196	HUD	FL Dept. of Education grant award to local school district
5. Emergency Shelter Grant	14.231	HUD	HUD grant award to unit of local government, or DCF award to non-profit agency
6. Shelter Plus Care	14.238	HUD	HUD grant award to project sponsor or to CoC lead agency
7. Supportive Housing Program	14.235	HUD	HUD grant award to project sponsor or to CoC lead agency
8. Section 8 Moderate Rehab, Single Room Occupancy	14.249	HUD	HUD grant award to public housing authority or COC lead agency
9. Emergency Food and Shelter	97.024	FEMA	National office of United Way award to local United Way agency

The lead agency shall fully document in the application the amounts claimed as leverage and maintain that evidence in its files to support the certification of leverage claimed on Exhibit D. Failure of the lead agency to execute the certification of leverage, following the completeness review period, shall cause the application to be ranked last on the leverage preference criteria.

The amount of leveraged grant, as certified by the lead agency, shall be divided by the population of the continuum's catchment area, to calculate a leverage ratio of McKinney-Vento grant. Likewise, the amount of private cash received for direct homeless services, as certified by the lead agency shall be divided by the population of the continuum's catchment area, to calculate a leverage ratio of private dollars per 1000 population

The ranking of the applications shall be based on the two leverage ratios calculated. The application with the highest ratio of McKinney-Vento grants per thousand persons shall be ranked number 1 on this factor. The next highest ratio of McKinney grants will be ranked 2 and so on until all applications are ranked.

Similarly, all applications will be ranked on the private cash ratio, with highest ratio ranked number 1. The second highest ratio of private cash is ranked number 2 and so on.

A final ranking shall be established by combining the two rankings of the leveraging ratios. Example, an application is ranked 4th on McKinney grant leverage and 15th on private cash leverage. The total ranking score for that application would be 19. The application with the lowest combined ranking score will be ranked first on this preference criteria."

Signature:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this proposal is true and correct.

Authorized Signature:

Title: _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 1:

Allowable Costs:

- Program supplies, including but not limited to: food, paper products, cleaning supplies, blankets
- Homeless assistance, including but not limited to: clothing, food, , local bus passes, IDs, bicycles, sleeping bags, emergency child care, medical appointments, prescription medication, eyeglasses, hearing aids, dental work, gas vouchers, car repair, car insurance, pre-paid phones, literacy aids
- Costs associated with program maintenance, including but not limited to: security, carpet cleaning, gas for transporting clients and/or supplies; first-aid kits
- Infrastructure enhancements, including but not limited to: freezer, showers, laundry room, storage space, new chairs and tables
- Homeless services, including but not limited to: case management (resource and referral, linkage to other benefits, follow-through to ensure benefits were received, transporting to medical appointments, etc.); financial counseling, negotiations with land-lords, creditors, utility companies; legal assistance.

Note: all expenses must be essential to alleviation, prevention or transitioning the homeless into self-sufficiency. For instance, the Challenge Grant will pay for Christmas Eve dinner supplies, but not Christmas decorations. Please use common sense: giving a homeless person a gift of a flannel shirt and oranges would fill an essential need. Giving them cigarettes and beer would not. The Challenge Grant pays for the first, and not the second.

Non-Allowable Costs:

- Cash payments to homeless persons
- Payments for services reimbursed by another funding source – this includes grocery bills paid for out of food stamps or other government aid
- Inherently religious materials, including but not limited to: Bibles, worship guides, hymnals, Bible Study curriculum, or Communion wine
- Weapons
- Alcohol, tobacco or other drugs
- Costs associated with the normal cost of doing business
- Hotel expenses except in case of emergency or illness
- Bus tickets, unless verification has been made of legitimacy of need and purpose
- Sales tax
- Items which appear to be for the benefit of the individual purchaser as opposed to the specified group use (i.e., a receipt showing 20 pounds of ground beef, 40 pounds of pasta, 20 cans of spaghetti sauce, one candy bar and one soda will be readjusted to remove the candy bar and soda.