

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) #012024

Challenge and Emergency Solutions Grant Opportunities

For

Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties Continuum of Care (CoC FL511)

RFP Release Date: Tuesday, May 21, 2024

RFP Closing Date: Monday, June 10, 2024 at 8 PM CST

The RFP is located on the Opening Doors Website
[Opening Doors Northwest Florida \(openingdoorsnwfl.org\)](https://openingdoorsnwfl.org)

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Contact: Ms. Martika Baker, HMIS Director
Opening Doors Northwest Florida
1020 N. New Warrington Road
Pensacola, FL 32506
850-741-4616
grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org

Opening Doors Northwest Florida is an Equal Opportunity Employer Program
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities.

Section I: General Information

A. Request for Proposals (RFP) Overview

This Request for Proposals is announcing the opportunity for interested and qualified applicants to apply for reallocated Challenge Grant and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. These grants must be used to develop programs that support the CoC Plan for Escambia and Santa Rosa County Continuum of Care (CoC) FL-511. These programs will support administrative costs and provide direct client services to individuals and families who are at imminent risk of homelessness or experiencing literal homelessness. Prospective candidates are welcome to present their proposal(s) as per the guidelines mentioned in this RFP.

Awards will be granted based on a competitive process. The quality of the program design, its expected outcomes, the cost per participant, the ability to leverage funds, the involvement of collaborative partners, and an understanding of the target population will all be considered. The RFP instructions will provide specific criteria to evaluate all the submitted proposals.

Awarded contracts from this RFP are for a twelve-month (12) period, July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. There is no option to extend the contract. Contracts will be performance-based with funding linked to defined performance outcomes, including CoC APR and ESG CAPER measures for the project, contractors' satisfactory performance, achieving benchmarks and contract goals, and other items as applicable.

The applicants to this RFP must provide a proposal per the terms and conditions set forth herein, to provide all or part of services under the Challenge and/or ESG program as described in the Scope of Work.

B. Eligible Applicants

Organizations submitting proposals must have the ability to receive, disburse, and account for funds per generally accepted accounting practices (as deemed acceptable by the State Office on Homelessness and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development); are licensed or otherwise authorized to do business in the State of Florida; demonstrate the ability to provide program services as specified in the RFP; are not debarred or suspended for participation in state or federal contracts, fidelity bonded; and demonstrate the ability to comply with Challenge and/or ESG regulations.

Organizations eligible to submit proposals for this RFP are limited to **private not-for-profit organizations (including faith and community-based organizations)** operating and providing services in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

Any non-profit entity MUST have been incorporated for at least **two** years (as evidenced by a letter from the appropriate governing body certifying incorporation) AND be designated as a 501 c-3 tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

Eligible non-profit organizations must have an active Board of Directors, updated bylaws, regularly scheduled meetings, meeting minutes, and financial oversight.

Non-profit organizations seeking funding through this RFP are required to register with the System for Awards Management (SAM). To obtain SAM registration, please visit www.sam.gov and ensure that your registration is publicly searchable. If SAM registration cannot be completed before the RFP Submission Deadline, evidence of the registration process initiation must be provided by emailing grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org. Note that successful completion of SAM registration is mandatory for organizations receiving funding.

Further, your organization must be registered with the Division of Corporations (sunbiz.org) and the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services: Solicitation of Contributions (fdacs.gov).

Prospective grant applicants must demonstrate their fiscal capacity to manage multiple contracts, allocate funds with precision, and track expenses by fund. In addition, they must possess liquid cash funds to sustain at least two months of project operations and expenses.

To qualify for a grant, your organization must have robust financial policies and procedures, including a board-approved annual budget and oversight, an annual single audit, review or financial compilation, a designated finance person with separation of duties, and cash reserves for grants that reimburse expenses or require matching funds.

Your organization's executive director or board president must submit a match letter for the grant applied for within the grant application. Additionally, after the award, a monthly match roll-up report must be submitted as evidence of fulfilling monthly match requirements.

Section II: Background Information

C. Authority

The Office on Homelessness was created within the Department of Children and Families as the central point of contact within the state government to address homelessness, under Section 420.622 Florida Statutes. In 2019, the Office on Homelessness consolidated all homelessness-related services funded by legislative appropriation and competitive procurement into the Unified Homelessness Contract, including the Challenge Grant,

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, and other provisions.

Funds for the Challenge and ESG Programs are allocated to Continuum of Care and are pass-through Lead Agencies in the State of Florida based on a formula. The applicability of service tasks under the Challenge Grant must comply with the CoC Plan and all applicable rules, regulations, and policies related to the Challenge program, as defined in Section 420.622(4), Florida Statutes. The applicability of services tasks under the ESG program must comply with the HUD CoC and ESG Written Standards and all applicable rules, regulations, and policies related to the ESG program, as defined in 24 CFR Part 576.

D. Available Funds

The total award amount available through this RFP is **\$158,764.09** to support the eligible activities as described in Parts I and II. These grant funds are for activities performed for the fiscal year of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Organizations awarded under this RFP must submit one application for their organization. The application allows each organization to submit a proposal for each grant/ program funding source.

Challenge Grant			
Component	Available Budget	Eligible Activities	No. of Potential Awards
Housing Need	\$50,990	Emergency Shelter/Homeless Motel Vouchers, Homeless Prevention, Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Case/Care Management	1
Program Need	\$750	HMIS and Case/Care Management	
Service Need	\$3,000	Street Outreach Materials (e.g., food, hygiene kits, clothing, Case/Care Management, Life Skills, Landlord Engagement, Tenant Education, Material Goods, Local Bus Fare/Rideshare Services, Job Training and Employment, Education	
Subrecipient Admin	\$1094.80	General Management, Oversight, and Coordination: Salaries, wages, and related costs of subcontractor staff whose primary responsibilities involve Challenge program administration assignments (e.g., preparing budgets, schedules, and technical adjustment	

		requests, preparing Challenge program reports and documents for submission to DCF; Coordinating the resolution of monitoring findings, and more. The awarded subcontractors MOU will include additional information about eligible activities under this component.	
Emergency Solutions Grant			
Component	Available Budget	Eligible Activities	No. of Potential Awards
Street Outreach	\$13,917.49	See 24 CFR Part 576.101	1
Emergency Shelter	\$45,458.05	See 24 CFR Part 576.102	1-to-2
Rapid Re-housing	\$40,000	See 24 CFR Part 576.104 through 24 CFR Part 576.106	1
HMIS	\$2,534.65	See 24 CFR Part 576.107 *Note: Subcontractors cannot purchase another HMIS software program; unless the subcontractor is a VSP or legal services provider, per the organization’s bylaws and IRS registration. Funds can be used to pay for participation fees that the HMIS Lead charges.	Dependent upon the number of awards.

E. Scope of Work

Challenge Grant Funding

Challenge funds are used locally to assist homeless individuals or households at risk of becoming homeless. The funds may be used to assist those clients defined as homeless and at imminent risk of homelessness by the 2023 Florida Statutes (24 CFR 578.3 “Homeless”). The grant intends to help implement the local homeless assistance plan and help the community reach the goals and objectives outlined in the CoC plan. Challenge Grant allowable activities include housing, program, and service projects.

Emergency Solutions Grant Funding

ESG funds provide funding to (1) engage homeless individuals and families living on the streets through outreach contacts; (2) improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families and help operate these shelters; (3) provide essential services to shelter residents, (4) prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless, and (5) rapidly re-house literally homeless individuals and families. These funds may be used to assist program participants defined as homeless under the HEARTH Act of 2009 (24 CFR 578.3(1)(i-iii)). Subrecipients awarded ESG funds in the CoC catchment area must adhere to the written standards established by the Continuum of Care for coordinated services in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

F. Catchment Area, Location, and Times

For this RFP, services will occur within the following Counties: Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. Awarded subcontractors must deliver services in a manner that is consistent with applicable program requirements.

1. Services for Street Outreach must be provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and or those hours deemed necessary by the subcontractor to meet the needs of clients seeking services.
2. Services for Emergency Shelters must be provided 24 hours a day, seven (7) days per week, including holidays.
3. Services for homeless prevention and rapid re-housing assistance programs must be provided during normal business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and/or those hours deemed necessary by the subcontractor to meet the needs of clients seeking services.
4. Any change in location and/or service time does not require an amendment to an MOU but will require a written request from the subcontractor before the time change.

G. Performance Expectations: Deliverables

Challenge Grant

A unit of service is one (1) month of providing housing, service, and/or program needs in a manner consistent with the CoC Plan to eligible individuals as described in Part E.

Each month, the subcontractor must provide eligible housing, program, and/or services to program participants residing in the specified geographic area.

Challenge Grant Activities (FY 24-25)	Total Individuals (monthly)	Total Individuals (annual)
Housing Need	3	36
Service Need	3	36
Program Need	3	36

Emergency Solutions Grant

A unit of service is one (1) month of providing emergency shelter including expenses related to operating emergency shelters or essential services, street outreach to unsheltered individuals outside the walls of an agency, and/or rapid re-housing assistance to eligible individuals in Part E.

Emergency Solutions Grant Activities (FY 24-25)	Total Individuals (monthly)	Total Individuals (annual)
Street Outreach	25	300
Emergency Shelter	4-to-6	48-to-72
Rapid Rehousing	3	36

It is the goal of the CoC to award these funds to subcontractors that will deliver services to eligible program participants for a specified program for twelve (12) calendar months. The Subcontractor will be responsible for demonstrating satisfactory performance of the service deliverables. Subcontractors that cannot demonstrate satisfactory performance towards the service deliverables may incur a financial penalty of 10%, and/or may result in termination of the subcontract agreement.

H. LOCAL PRIORITIES

In keeping with Opening Doors' primary purpose of preventing and ending homelessness, and subsequently adopting the "All-In" strategic plan of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, applicants that propose activities that assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness to move into permanent housing and provide ongoing supportive services to increase the likelihood that these individuals and families will be able to retain permanent housing once housed will be given priority consideration.

Additionally, prioritization will be given to projects that provide client-focused, trauma-informed, and culturally competent services to historically underserved or marginalized groups.

CoCs are charged with providing services that are results-oriented. Therefore, projects must meet the performance criteria defined by the State Unified Homelessness Contract and CoC performance goals.

Further, candidates must describe a detailed plan to provide services to the following subpopulations: homeless families with children, chronically homeless men and women with disabling conditions, homeless unaccompanied youth, domestic violence survivors, and/or homeless veterans adjusting to civilian life. It is important to identify the target population of your proposed program.

Performance for the 2024 Challenge Grant and Emergency Solutions Grant Programs are:

1. Investment in Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing, including rental subsidies, landlord incentives, and case management to increase exits to permanent housing and reduce returns to homelessness;
2. Provision of funds to support Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter development and operations;
3. Promotion of Housing First and Fair Housing in all projects that provide shelter and housing services; and
4. Strategically invest in the supply of essential services and coordinate with active mainstream benefit providers to reduce the length of time people experience homelessness.

I. BEST PRACTICES AND SERVICES APPROACH

Low Barrier Approach

Low Barrier is an approach through which a minimal number of expectations are placed on persons who wish to participate in services. The aim of a low-barrier approach, as it pertains to emergency shelter, supportive services, rental assistance and any other activity eligible under this RFP is to have as few barriers and rules as possible to allow as many individuals as possible to access services by meeting them “where they’re at” rather than requiring that they meet eligibility milestones, such as abstaining from substance use for a specific length of time prior to being eligible to receive services. This often means that people staying in low-barrier shelters or participating in other eligible services are not expected to abstain from using alcohol, forced to into treatment or case/care management, or other rules as a condition of continued participation. Provision of low-barrier services means not screening people out of services, but rather using assessments and case management to design personalized service plans for each participant. Dismissals (asking a client to leave or discontinuing their services) are to be a last resort only and used only in cases in which a participant poses imminent danger to other participants or staff. In cases in which a participant is dismissed, the dismissal is not to be permanent.

Housing First

Housing First is an approach guided by the belief that housing is the solution to homelessness and that housing should be used as a tool to promote stabilization, rather than a reward for having stabilized. This strategy prioritizes successfully connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. Participants in services at funded programs are to be moved into independent and permanent housing as quickly as is safe and appropriate, then provided with additional support and services as needed. Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation.

Trauma-Informed Care

Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach in the human service field that assumes that an individual is more likely than not to have a history of trauma. Trauma-informed care recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's life- including service staff. Opening Doors expects service delivery that is grounded in an understanding of the causes and consequences of trauma and promotes resilience and healing. Trauma-informed organizations ensure that mission, culture, and practice are aligned to recognize and support trauma survivors.

Fair Housing and Equal Access

The CoC is required to affirmatively market all housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach. Mandated by the Equal Access Rule, housing assisted by HUD and made available through the CoC must also be made available to individuals and families without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status per 24 CFR 5.105 (a)(2). Individual organization policies about affirmatively furthering fair housing may not be used in place of this policy; rather they should be used in conjunction with this CoC-mandated policy. The CoC ensures that persons with disabilities have equal access to services through compliance with the requirements of Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. CoC FL-511 does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities based on disability in the CoC's services, programs, or activities.

Affirmative Furthering Fair Housing

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, known as the Fair Housing Act, requires recipients and subrecipients of HUD-funded programs to adopt policies that affirmatively further the Fair Housing Act. The requirement to affirmatively further fair housing requires recipients of HUD funds to take meaningful actions to combat discrimination, overcome segregation patterns, and foster inclusive communities free from barriers to access opportunities, like housing and shelter.

As such, programs within this competition prohibit discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation)
- Familial status
- Disability

Project applicants must

1. Conduct a gap assessment in needed programs and services to address inequity among protected classes.

2. Describe approaches to promote integration and reduce segregation in service provision; and
3. Detail a comprehensive plan to enhance the community's effort to transform areas of poverty into areas of opportunity.

Prohibition Against Involuntary Family Separation

The age of a child under age 18 must not be used as a basis for denying any family's admission to an emergency shelter that will or is currently using ESG funding or services and provides shelter to families with children under age 18.

Thus, project applicants must describe a plan to address gaps in service delivery to families with children, regardless of protected characteristics.

J. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

1. Continuum of Care Participation

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a group of service providers and stakeholders working together to prevent and end homelessness in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, Florida. Subrecipients must join the CoC Membership and participate in at least 2 CoC committees or workgroups. A representative of an awarded subrecipient must attend 100% of the CoC membership and CoC committee meetings. Subrecipient organizations must attend the monthly HUD CoC and ESG Workgroup and participate in the annual Point-in-Time and Housing Inventory Count.

2. Coordinated Entry System (CES) Participation

The Guardian Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a community-wide system through which people experiencing homelessness or who are at-risk can access the crisis response system in a streamlined way. Individuals and families needing housing interventions enter the CES by undergoing a standardized assessment that measures their needs and strengths and adding them to the community-wide By-Name List for housing.

Participating providers then use the list to identify potential participants for their housing and housing-related services. Grantees will be required to accept referrals from the CES into its emergency intervention services, assess, and enter participants into the CES, and fill openings in the Rapid Rehousing/Prevention assistance programs through the CES case staffing process.

Opening Doors also requires that any funded provider through these funds serve as an access point for the CES, by assessing those who need to be entered and referred through CES. Grantees will be expected to participate further in developing the system and to incorporate CES into its service delivery system to the greatest possible extent.

3. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on providing housing and other services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness on a community-wide basis. CoC FL-511 participates in the PromisSE HMIS implementation with the software vendor, ServicePoint. Project applicants awarded under this RFP must enroll program participants, track service delivery, and develop progressive case plans in this community-wide data system, per HMIS Technical and Data Standards and CoC Data Quality Monitoring Plan.

Each organization will receive one free HMIS License valued at \$125.00. License fees will be invoiced to subrecipients in August 2024 and must be paid no later than September 15th. Awardees will be required to budget for additional HMIS Licenses.

Applicants must comply with all relevant laws regarding the protection of personal information of the individuals they serve. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify Opening Doors in their response to this RFP of any restrictions that prevent them from entering client data into the local HMIS. However, the project applicant must identify and purchase software for a comparable database for collecting and reporting client-level data to the HMIS Lead.

Applicants must actively participate in HMIS or begin participation post-award, according to HMIS Data Standards and the applicable rules of the state or federal funder.

Applicants who receive an award will need to assign key staff members to enter data into HMIS for their project. Other roles, such as Agency Admin and Security Officer, must be chosen and trained by the CoC Agency Admin and CoC Security Officer at Opening Doors. At the very least, the Agency Admin and Agency Security Officer must attend monthly HMIS Workgroup meetings.

4. Personnel Requirements

Organizations who are awarded grant funding must have key staff with job descriptions and/or resumes that meet the following:

- Program Manager
- Case Manager
- Accountant or Bookkeeper
- HMIS Data Entry (Agency Admin and Security Officer)
- Quality Control

All staff members who are paid by the grant or complete grant activities must pass a DCF Level 2 Background Screening before the hire date, performing any work related to the grant, and/or gaining access to the live HMIS. In addition, all new hires must complete E-Verify within three days of the start date with an awarded subcontractor.

All staff members who are paid by the grant or complete grant activities must attend and complete annual training to include, but are not limited to, HMIS Privacy and Security Training, HMIS Basics Training, Case Management, DCF Trainings, etc.

K. INVOICING & REPORTING

ESG and Challenge Grant are fixed-cost reimbursement; thus, the subrecipient will receive one-twelfth of the annual award each month. Subrecipients are expected to submit monthly invoices, status reports, roll-up reports, and expenditure-supporting documentation and receipts no later than the 5th of the month following service delivery.

Subrecipients are also expected to monitor the quality of their data through Annual Performance Reports and CAPER reports to ensure accurate monthly reporting.

All services subcontracted in this RFP will require at least two performance monitoring periods. This will include client record review, customer satisfaction surveys, employee reviews, policies and procedures review, and HMIS performance review.

L. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Your organization must write a grant application and narrative that identifies the following:

- The proposed grant opportunity and eligible activities
- The program design, target population, and number of individuals to be served.
- The proposed budget, including itemization of staffing, benefits, program costs, etc.
- A plan and strategies to adopt and enhance the CoC local priorities.
- A plan and strategies to improve the best practices and services approach.

This RFP lacks all the necessary information to perform the grant. Additional details will be provided through a comprehensive technical assistance session with CoC Lead Staff upon award notification.

1. Required Forms

The online Application can be accessed at <https://forms.gle/hXJzx4ucNG5LSfyw5>. Use of the provided Application, [Budget Templates \(Challenge, ESG\)](#), and [Match Letter Template](#) is mandatory. There is a requirement to submit a Budget Narrative (within the Budget Template) explaining the plan for staffing costs (including the number of individual positions that will be supported by the grant), operations costs, a list of estimated costs for equipment to be purchased with grant funds, and detail regarding the cost of providing direct financial assistance to the target population, where applicable.

2. Submission Dates and Times

- a. Each entity desiring to submit a proposal is required to submit a letter of intent to apply at grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org no later than May 30, 2024, at 8:00

p.m. CST. This letter of intent should include all activity areas for which the organization plans to apply for funds, by naming the Grant and Program Component / Activity.

- b. Proposal applications will be accepted no later than 8:00 p.m. CST, June 10, 2024. Please consult the Opening Doors DCF RFP Timeline (Attachment A) in this document to ensure your proposal meets all the required responses in the identified time frames.

3. Notifications

Applicants will be generally notified regarding the results of funding decisions within 14 days of the application submission deadline. Delays in responding to requests for clarification or additional information on the part of an applicant may delay such decisions. Please review the section for “Curable Deficiencies” to understand the potential clarification or additional information that may be requested.

4. Technical Considerations

- a. Applicants with disabilities in need of reasonable accommodations to access and/or submit the Application Form may send a Reasonable Accommodation Request to grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org. Opening Doors suggests that Reasonable Accommodation Requests be submitted at least 15 days before the subcontract term start date.
- b. Deadline extensions may be granted to Applicants who experience unforeseeable difficulties during their submission process, including those caused by severe weather conditions, natural disasters or other acts of God. In the event of unforeseeable difficulties during the submission process, Applicants must notify Opening Doors by email at grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org within 12 hours of the resolution of the difficulty and be prepared to submit evidence of the occurrence and duration of the unforeseeable difficulty. Decisions regarding granting deadline extension due to unforeseeable difficulties will be made by the Opening Doors Executive Committee and will be final.

M. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

All applications that are submitted within the submission period will be reviewed by the CoC Performance Review and Ranking Committee. Project applications submitted by organizations must meet all requirements, regulations, eligible activities, priorities, and application instructions of this RFP. The CoC Project Review and Selection Committee will evaluate project applications per the Evaluation Matrix (Attachment E). Project applications scoring below **75** may not be considered for funding. Funding is dependent on the number of high-scoring proposals and may result in an award either higher or lower than the initial proposal. There will be a negotiation period on deliverables and funding awards after the top 2 proposals have been evaluated and identified.

N. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Applicants shall submit all questions concerning the scope of services, eligibility and/or

programmatic requirement of the DCF Funding in writing by email only and directed to grants@openingdoorsnwfl.org . Such questions concerning the RFP process shall be submitted no later than 72 hours before the last day of application acceptance.

Applicants who fail to do so will waive all further rights to protest, based on these specifications and conditions. To ensure a fair and open process, all questions submitted will be posted weekly without attribution to the party that has submitted the question, along with Opening Doors' written response, on the [RFP Competition Page](#). Opening Doors will make a good faith effort to redact any information contained in the question that could reasonably be expected to be used to identify the party that has submitted the question, provided the redaction is not material to communicating the meaning or scope of the question. Opening Doors makes no guarantees that the party submitting the question will not or cannot be identified by another party.

O. Objections to Terms

Should an Applicant object on any ground to any provision or legal requirement set forth in this RFP, the Applicant must, no less than 72 hours prior to the Submission Deadline, provide written notice to Opening Doors setting forth with specificity the grounds for the objection. The failure of an Applicant to object to the manner set forth in this paragraph shall constitute a complete and irrevocable waiver of any such objection.

P. Change Notices.

Opening Doors may modify the RFP, prior to the Submission Deadline, by issuing an Addenda to the RFP, which will be posted at the [RFP Competition Page](#). The Applicant shall be responsible for ensuring that its application reflects all Addenda issued by Opening Doors before the Submission Deadline regardless of when the application is submitted. Therefore, Opening Doors recommends that the Applicant consult the website weekly, including shortly before the Submission Deadline, to determine if the Applicant has downloaded all RFP Addenda.

Q. Errors and Omissions

Applicants are responsible for reviewing all portions of this RFP. Applicants are to promptly notify Opening Doors, in writing, if the Applicant discovers any ambiguity, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the RFP. Any such notification should be directed to Opening Doors promptly after discovery. Failure by Opening Doors to object to an error, omission, or deviation in the application will in no way modify the RFP or excuse an Applicant from full compliance with the specifications of the RFP if awarded.

R. Financial Responsibility

Opening Doors accepts no financial responsibility for any costs incurred by an entity in responding to this RFP. Submissions of the RFP will become the property of Opening Doors and may be used by Opening Doors in any way deemed appropriate.

S. Curable Deficiencies

A deficiency is curable if it relates to the completeness, internal consistency, and/or correct computations of information found in the grant application in response to instructions outlined in the application kit. In addition, the deficiency is curable only if it will not result in a substantial revision of the application or a fundamental feature of the program (additional guidance may be contained in the screening instructions). Once all deficiencies are determined to be curable, Opening Doors will:

1. Notify the applicant in writing of the curable deficiency(ies) identified in the application. The email shall state the date and time (as permitted in the RFP, normally 2 calendar days from the date of the notification and referred to as the cure period) for the applicant to respond to the deficiency(ies) to Opening Doors. It is suggested that the letter recommends the earliest response feasible by the applicant to permit time for a second response if the first response is inadequate.
2. The liaison will follow up the letter with a call to the applicant to alert them to the matter. The liaison will record the name and title of the person spoken to, along with the date and time of the conversation. If the applicant submits incomplete corrections before the end of the cure period, they will be advised to provide complete and corrected materials. The materials must be received by the end of the original cure period. No extension of the cure period is permitted unless subsequently announced in the RFP.
3. All curable deficiencies will be logged onto the “Curable Deficiency” log.

Remainder of Page Intentionally Left Blank

FY 2024 Request for Proposals Timeline

Challenge Grant / Emergency Solutions Grant and Reallocated Funds

DATE	TASK	DETAILS
4/19/2024	State Unified Grant Camp	A capacity-building session hosted by Opening Doors to prepare potential project applicants for the 2024 State Unified RFP process. The session will be held at 1020 N. New Warrington Road, Pensacola, FL 32506 at 9:30 AM CST.
5/21/2024	Official RFP Announcement	Official announcement of State Unified RFP. Staff will post public announcements on the Opening Doors website (openingdoorsnwfl.org). Additional announcements will be released via email listserv and Governmental Liaison listserv.
5/21/2024	Posting of Application	RFP Application is posted to the Opening Doors website on the competition page.
5/30/2024	Letter of Intent	Submit the Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for the RFP no later than 8 PM CST.
6/10/2024	RFP Project Application Submission Deadline	PROPOSALS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS ARE DUE by 8 PM CST. Proposals and required documentation must be submitted online.
6/12/2024	Project Review and Ranking	The Project Review and Ranking Committee (PRRC) will review and score all proposals. Project review and ranking will be completed 6/12-6/17.
6/18/2024	Notice of Intent to Award	The notice of intent to award the highest-ranked application will be announced publicly.
6/19/2024	Appeals Window Opens	Project applicants may submit an appeal. This appeal may be a request to submit additional information for a curable deficiency. Incurable deficiencies will not be considered for the appeals process.
6/21/2024	Appeals Window Closes	Submission of appeals is due by 8 PM CST.
6/24/2024	Appeals Response Due	The PRRC will review the appeal. PRRC will evaluate new information to determine the impact on the final score. PRRC will respond to the appeal via Opening Doors.
6/25/2024	CoC Council Executive Committee Notification	Opening Doors delivers the final project applicant score and ranking report to the CoC Executive Committee. Opening Doors will make final recommendations from the PRRC. The CoC Executive Committee will make comments. Positive feedback will permit the Lead Agency to move to contract.
6/26/2024	Public Announcement of Awardees	Opening Doors Staff will issue notices of awards to the Applicant's point of contact and Continuum of Care.
6/27/2024	MOU Production and Delivery	Opening Doors Staff will work with awarded applicants to complete MOUs and addendums.
7/1/2024	Subcontract Term Begins	The grant period for the awarded grants begins the week of 7/1/2024.

Match and Leverage Letter Instruction Template

Match/Leverage is the amount above and beyond what the CoC, Challenge, or ESG grant reimburses. In addition to the 25% required Match for Challenge -or- 100% required Match for ESG, a significant Leverage amount (100% or more) will help the Escambia and Santa Rosa County Continuum of Care be competitive (keep/increase HUD and State funds), especially if applying for a new CoC project.

MATCH and LEVERAGE amounts can be put in the same letter and maybe one or both of the following:

1. **Cash** = funds directly received by Sponsor/Subrecipient - grant, donations/fundraising, etc.
2. **In-Kind** = services or donations provided by other entities (FL Medicaid); needs documentation of MOU.

MATCH = **25%** is the required *minimum threshold* that must be used to support all CoC and Challenge subcontracts; **100%** is the required *minimum threshold* that must be used to support all ESG subcontracts; the Match amount must pay for an eligible service (see examples below); and only the 25% Match, not Leverage, must be tracked/documented/reported (i.e. *APR services match letter* and kept in file records for 5 years).

LEVERAGE = any amount *over the 25%* minimum Match provided to the CoC or Challenge project -or- any amount equal to or over the 100% minimum match provided to the ESG project from eligible costs AND/OR non-eligible additional costs (goods/services) that also help participants.

****Mental Health Agencies** with access to bill FL Medicaid are considered an “In-Kind service” with Access Florida Community Partner Agreements counting as an MOU. As service amounts vary per client, please provide a match/leverage commitment amount that would equal the maximum amount of **service dollars** provided to the maximum number of **clients** your agency could serve during the year under the specific program. Your agency is not required to set aside the match/leverage amount if you have sufficient access to bill FL Medicaid.*

What Counts as Match

Match must be used for eligible program costs. Public or private funds. Verify if public funds are allowed to be used as match. Funds that are not used as match for any other program. Cash or in-kind-fairly evaluated.

What Counts as Leverage

Leverage includes cash, (public or private) received for any program-related costs that make the program fully operational. The grant must have been executed, or private money received, in the most recent 7/1-6/30 period.

Eligible Costs for Match/Leverage:

- Outreach and Assess Service Needs
- Moving Costs and/or Utility Deposits
- Case Management
- Childcare and/or Legal Services
- Education Services
- Employment Assistance & Job Training
- Transportation and/or Food
- Housing Search & Counseling Services
- Life Skills Training
- Mental Health Services
- Outpatient Health Services
- Substance Abuse Treatment Services

WHAT IS NOT MATCH OR LEVERAGE?

- Cash or any in-kind contributions used as match for another grant/otherwise obligated.
- Cash or any in-kind statutorily prohibited as match (e.g. CoC funds can't match other CoC funds).
- Savings or benefits that belong to program participants, not the recipient/subrecipient.

What must be included in the In-Kind Match MOU?

- The MOU must establish the unconditional commitment, except for selection to receive a grant, by the third party to provide the services and must include:
- Should be on the agency letterhead of third-party;
- Name of the program and agency receiving services;
- Name of the third-party providing services;
- Date resources will be available; time frame of services;
- Specific service to be provided;
- Profession of the persons providing the service; and
- Hourly cost of the service to be provided.

What are Match Record-Keeping Requirements?

The Project must keep records of the source and use of match. Records must indicate the grant and fiscal year for which each matching contribution is counted. Records must show how the value placed on third-party in-kind match was derived. Volunteer services must be allocated using the same methods used for regular personnel costs.

Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties CoC (FL-511)

FY 2024 **NEW** PROJECT REVIEW AND RANKING RUBRIC

The deadline to submit project applications for the 2024 Annual CoC Competition is June 10, 2024.

CoC FL-511 ensures NEW project applicants participate in the local HMIS for the community. The CoC FL-511 Review and Ranking Committee will evaluate each expansion project based on their data performance during this RFP and the July 1, 2023 – March 2024 Quarterly Report Card period. In addition, the Project Review and Ranking Committee will evaluate other local criteria related to compliance with the Continuum of Care Plan and the HUD CoC and ESG Written Standards.

This tool meets the objective criteria within the 2024 Challenge and Emergency Solutions Grant Reallocated Funds RFP. The outcome of the review and ranking process will determine the Notice of Intent to Award for this fiscal year.

I. <u>Priority Project Type</u> A project applicant can only receive points for two (2) project types below. Appropriate selection of project type demonstrates an understanding of the RFP goals. 15 POINTS MAXIMUM 13% OF SCORE	
PH: RRH	10 points
PH: PSH	10 points
Emergency Shelter	5 points
Transitional Housing	5 points
Street Outreach	5 points

II. <u>Dedication to Serve Priority Population</u> The applicant must demonstrate a history of working with the target population. 10 POINTS MAXIMUM 8% OF SCORE		
Chronically Homeless / Housing First (100% Dedicated)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Domestic Violence Survivors (100% Dedicated)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Unhoused Families with Children experiencing chronic absenteeism and severe health needs	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Unaccompanied Youth (Age 18 – 24)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Veterans	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)

III. Description of Application History and Service Location

The applicant must demonstrate a history of the organization's mission, the services provided to the target population, the proposed services to benefit the public, and the service location.

10 POINTS MAXIMUM

8% OF SCORE

Instruction: Review the application for proposed services. Project applicants must describe their organization’s history, current and proposed services, and service area.

Description of services offered

The project is proposing new services to the CoC.
Yes (2 points) / No (0 points)

The project is proposing existing services in the CoC.
Yes (1 points) / No (0 points)

Applicant Experience

Applicant experience (0-5 years)
(1 points)

Applicant experience (6-10 years)
(2 points)

Applicant experience (10+)
(3 points)

Service Area

Escambia County Only
(2 points)

Santa Rosa County Only
(2 points)

Both Escambia and Santa Rosa County
(4 points)

IV. Adherence to Budget and Match Requirements

The applicant must demonstrate high-quality financial capacity and strategic planning. The reviewer will evaluate the budget narrative for appropriateness, clear explanation of use, and financial commitment from the organization.

25 POINTS MAXIMUM

21% OF SCORE

Did the applicant budget proposed program activities in alignment with the program regulations for the grant applied?

Appropriate budget for services
Yes (3 points) / No (0 points)

Did the applicant’s budget narrative clearly explain the use of funds and itemize the proposed activities?

The narrative clearly explains the budget
Yes (3 points) / No (0 points)

Compare the proposed staffing budget to direct client services – what percentage of the budget will directly serve program participants?

75-100% for Direct Services
(6 points)

50-74% for Direct Services
(4 points)

25-49% for Direct Services
(2 points)

≤ 24% for Direct Services
(0 points)

Match Requirements: HUD/DCF expects a subrecipient to share in the cost, or “match” a percentage of the funds requested from the grant. Match can be actual expenditure (cash) or virtual cost (in-kind contribution).

Did the applicant meet the match requirement required for the proposed grant?	
The minimum Challenge Match requirement is met, and it must be an eligible program activity (25% Match). Yes (5 points) / No (0 points)	
The minimum ESG Match requirement is met, and it must be an eligible program activity (100% Match). Yes (5 points) / No (0 points)	
Leverage Requirements: HUD/DCF expects a subrecipient to strengthen a project to enable it to go further. Leverage is the non-match cash committed to making a project fully operational. Did the applicant meet the leverage requirement required for the proposed grant?	
1:1 Leverage (1 point)	2:1 Leverage (3 points)

V. <u>CoC Participation</u> The applicant must demonstrate participation in the CoC. The CoC Lead agency will provide a spreadsheet to reviewers of meeting attendance and participation in the primary functions of the CoC. 20 POINTS MAXIMUM 17% OF SCORE				
CoC Meeting Attendance	Above 75% (5 points)	50%-to-74% (2 points)	26% to 49% (1 point)	≤25% (0 points)
Participation in a CoC Workgroup or Committee	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	
Participation in Point-in-Time	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	
Project reported in Housing Inventory Count with 85% Capacity or higher	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	

VI. <u>Participation in HMIS</u> Current subrecipients applying for an expansion project must demonstrate meeting HMIS Data Integrity threshold. The CoC Lead agency will provide data performance reports to reviewers. 5 POINTS MAXIMUM 4% OF SCORE		
Non-VSPs: New Applicant demonstrates an understanding of the HMIS requirements and agrees to participate in the HMIS implementation by collecting data on all clients served per the HUD HMIS Data and Technical Standard.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Victim Service Providers cannot use the CoC's HMIS but must commit to use an HMIS comparable system, improve aggregate data reporting, and submit reports to the HMIS LEAD for SAGE reporting.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)

VII. Participation in Coordinated Entry

The project applicant must demonstrate participation in HMIS. The HMIS Lead will provide reports to reviewers.

5 POINTS MAXIMUM

4% OF SCORE

New Applicant demonstrates understanding of the Coordinated Entry process and agrees to participate in the CE System in HMIS.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
---	--------------------------	-------------------------

VIII. Evidence of Best Practices

The project applicant must demonstrate within the narrative of the proposal commitment to best practices and established policies in place.

30 POINTS MAXIMUM

25% OF SCORE

The applicant describes a comprehensive policy and strategies to ensure the project is Housing First and/or Low-Barrier.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes a comprehensive policy and strategies to solicit feedback and include people with lived experience and expertise in assessing gaps and needs; program development; and employment and leadership roles within the organization?	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes a plan for adhering to VAWA and details a comprehensive emergency transfer aligned with the CoC?	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes policies and procedures for ensuring eligibility for housing and shelter funded by HUD will be made without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant commits to adhering to affirmatively furthering fair housing, including evidence of inclusive housing, and sheltering practices that support gender identity and sexual orientation in a formal policy.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
For Shelter/Transitional Housing Providers Only: The applicant describes policies and procedures for ensuring families with children are not denied access based on the age of the child.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)

Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties CoC (FL-511)

FY 2024 EXPANSION PROJECT REVIEW AND RANKING RUBRIC

The deadline to submit project applications for the 2024 Annual CoC Competition is June 10, 2024.

CoC FL-511 ensures expansion project applicants participate in the local HMIS for the community. The CoC FL-511 Review and Ranking Committee will evaluate each expansion project based on their data performance during this RFP and the July 1, 2023 – March 2024 Quarterly Report Card period. In addition, the Project Review and Ranking Committee will evaluate other local criteria related to compliance with the Continuum of Care Plan and the HUD CoC and ESG Written Standards.

This tool meets the objective criteria within the 2024 Challenge and Emergency Solutions Grant Reallocated Funds RFP. The outcome of the review and ranking process will determine the Notice of Intent to Award for this fiscal year.

I. Priority Project Type

A project applicant can only receive points for two (2) project types below. Appropriate selection of project type demonstrates an understanding of the RFP goals.

15 POINTS MAXIMUM

13% OF SCORE

PH: RRH	10 points
PH: PSH	10 points
Emergency Shelter	5 points
Transitional Housing	5 points
Street Outreach	5 points

II. Dedication to Serve Priority Population

The applicant must demonstrate a history of working with the target population.

10 POINTS MAXIMUM

8% OF SCORE

Chronically Homeless / Housing First (100% Dedicated)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Domestic Violence Survivors (100% Dedicated)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Unhoused Families with Children experiencing chronic absenteeism and severe health needs	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Unaccompanied Youth (Age 18 – 24)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Veterans	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)

III. Description of Application History and Service Location

The applicant must demonstrate a history of the organization's mission, the services provided to the target population, the proposed services to benefit the public, and the service location.

10 POINTS MAXIMUM

8% OF SCORE

Instruction: Review the application for proposed services. Project applicants must describe their organization's history, current and proposed services, and service area.

Description of services offered

The project is proposing new services to the CoC.
Yes (2 points) / No (0 points)

The project is proposing existing services in the CoC.
Yes (1 points) / No (0 points)

Applicant Experience

Applicant experience (0-5 years)
(1 points)

Applicant experience (6-10 years)
(2 points)

Applicant experience (10+)
(3 points)

Service Area

Escambia County Only
(2 points)

Santa Rosa County Only
(2 points)

Both Escambia and Santa Rosa
County
(4 points)

IV. Adherence to Budget and Match Requirements

The applicant must demonstrate high-quality financial capacity and strategic planning. The reviewer will evaluate the budget narrative for appropriateness, clear explanation of use, and financial commitment from the organization.

25 POINTS MAXIMUM

21% OF SCORE

Did the applicant budget proposed program activities in alignment with the program regulations for the grant applied?

Appropriate budget for services
Yes (3 points) / No (0 points)

Did the applicant's budget narrative clearly explain the use of funds and itemize the proposed activities?

The narrative clearly explains the budget
Yes (3 points) / No (0 points)

Compare the proposed staffing budget to direct client services – what percentage of the budget will directly serve program participants?

75-100% for Direct
Services
(6 points)

50-74% for Direct
Services
(4 points)

25-49% for Direct
Services
(2 points)

≤ 24% for Direct
Services
(0 points)

Match Requirements: HUD/DCF expects a subrecipient to share in the cost, or "match" a percentage of the funds requested from the grant. Match can be actual expenditure (cash) or virtual cost (in-kind contribution).

Did the applicant meet the match requirement required for the proposed grant?

The minimum Challenge Match requirement is met, and it must be an eligible program activity (25% Match). Yes (5 points) / No (0 points)	
The minimum ESG Match requirement is met, and it must be an eligible program activity (100% Match). Yes (5 points) / No (0 points)	
Leverage Requirements: HUD/DCF expects a subrecipient to strengthen a project to enable it to go further. Leverage is the non-match cash committed to making a project fully operational. Did the applicant meet the leverage requirement required for the proposed grant?	
1:1 Leverage (1 point)	2:1 Leverage (3 points)

V. <u>CoC Participation</u> The applicant must demonstrate participation in the CoC. The CoC Lead agency will provide a spreadsheet to reviewers of meeting attendance and participation in the primary functions of the CoC. 20 POINTS MAXIMUM 17% OF SCORE				
CoC Meeting Attendance	Above 75% (5 points)	50%-to-74% (2 points)	26% to 49% (1 point)	≤25% (0 points)
Participation in a CoC Workgroup or Committee	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	
Participation in Point-in-Time	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	
Project reported in Housing Inventory Count with 85% Capacity or higher	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)	

VI. <u>Participation in HMIS</u> Current subrecipients applying for an expansion project must demonstrate meeting HMIS Data Integrity threshold. The CoC Lead agency will provide data performance reports to reviewers. 5 POINTS MAXIMUM 4% OF SCORE			
HMIS Data Integrity: The CoC maintains a minimum data quality threshold (grading score) of 94% or higher. Applicants currently receiving CoC funds were required to maintain this threshold for FY2023. Exemption: Victim Service Providers – See next row	Grading Score 95-100% (5 points)	Grading Score 85-94% (3 points)	Grading Score 70-84% (0 points)
Victim Service Providers cannot use the CoC’s HMIS but must commit to use an HMIS comparable system, improve aggregate data reporting, and submit reports to the HMIS LEAD for SAGE reporting.	YES (5 points)		NO (0 points)

VII. Participation in Coordinated Entry

The project applicant must demonstrate participation in HMIS. The HMIS Lead will provide reports to reviewers.

5 POINTS MAXIMUM

4% OF SCORE

Minimum of 50% of project entries received through Coordinated Entry Referral (Housing Projects Only)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
Minimum of 30% of project entries referred to Coordinated Entry (Shelters Only)	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)

VIII. Evidence of Best Practices

The project applicant must demonstrate within the narrative of the proposal commitment to best practices and established policies in place.

30 POINTS MAXIMUM

25% OF SCORE

The applicant describes a comprehensive policy and strategies to ensure project is Housing First and/or Low-Barrier.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes a comprehensive policy and strategies to solicit feedback and include people with lived experience and expertise in assessing gaps and needs; program development; and employment and leadership roles within the organization?	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes a plan for adhering to VAWA and details a comprehensive emergency transfer aligned with the CoC?	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant describes policies and procedures for ensuring eligibility for housing and shelter funded by HUD will be made without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
The applicant commits to adhering to affirmatively furthering fair housing, including evidence of inclusive housing, and sheltering practices that support gender identity and sexual orientation in a formal policy.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)
For Shelter/Transitional Housing Providers Only: The applicant describes policies and procedures for ensuring families with children are not denied access based on the age of the child.	YES (5 points)	NO (0 points)