



Request for Proposals (RFP) FY 2015 – 2016

Homeless Continuum of Care Challenge Grant Big Bend Continuum of Care

Introduction

The homeless assistance Challenge Grant is available through the State of Florida Department of Children and Families Office on Homelessness to assist in implementing the services and activities contained within local homeless assistance continuums of care plans. The grant can fund any activity that is contained within our continuum of care homeless assistance plan.

The Challenge Grant funding is available through a competitive application process open only to the “lead agency” of each continuum of care (CoC). Locally, the lead agency for the Big Bend catchment area’s continuum of care is the Big Bend Homeless Coalition (Homeless Coalition). The Homeless Coalition may apply on behalf of any of the local providers of service or housing, consistent with the continuum of care’s local plan.

The level of state funding for FY 2015-16 is \$3,800,000. The maximum grant award to any single CoC is \$200,000. This is a competitive process among the State’s 28 CoCs. CoCs are not guaranteed funding through this grant, and, if awarded, the funding may be less than the amount requested.

The Challenge Grant funding must be used locally to assist those individuals and households that are homeless, and/or those at risk of becoming homeless. The intent of the state grant is to help to implement the local homeless assistance plan, and to help the community reach the goals and objectives outlined in the continuum of care plan. All grant funds must go to activities that directly benefit homeless persons or those at risk of homelessness. Activities that are not eligible include, but are not limited to, public education, training, planning, capacity building and HMIS, except to the extent that HMIS is used as a case management tool for coordination of services.

The full State solicitation can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/oo5urwj>. Applicants are advised to read the State solicitation to understand the restrictions of the funding and requirements accompanying funding.

Local Request for Proposals

As the lead agency and collaborative applicant for the Big Bend Continuum of Care, the Big Bend Homeless Coalition is soliciting proposals for the current application cycle. The proposals will be evaluated by an independent review committee composed of members of the public having no ties to agencies applying for funding. The CoC Board will select the project(s) to be proposed to the State Office on Homelessness for funding and will also establish the level of funding to be proposed for each project. The Big Bend Homeless Coalition, as the lead agency and eligible applicant, will prepare and submit the application according to state guidelines.

For all agencies interested in submitting a proposal, an email of intent to apply must be submitted by Friday, July 31, 2015 at 5:00pm. Emails of intent must be sent to Tom Pierce at bigbendcoc@gmail.com.

Review Process

The CoC will establish an independent review process, criteria, committee and schedule for the application process which will be presented to the CoC Governing Board for approval. It has been determined that the Lead Agency and potential applicant for project funding under this grant, Big Bend Homeless Coalition staff should not have a role in the evaluation process, with the exception of the development assistance as described above. Zack Summerlin will be available to respond to questions about the grant solicitation.

Tom Pierce, a member of the CoC Executive Committee and Chair of the CoC Funding Committee, will collect applications through a CoC-designated email (bigbendcoc@gmail.com), provide applications to an Independent Review Committee, and communicate with the Executive Committee and CoC Governing Board of behalf of the Independent Review Committee to finalize the selection of projects for inclusion in our grant application.

Big Bend CoC Proposal Requirements

Proposals will be accepted for any activity that directly benefits homeless persons or persons at risk of homelessness and that is identified in the proposed Big Bend Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Plan. (See attachment for the current CoC plan).

- The required content of proposals is described below. Assume a project period of **November 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016** (eight months) in all responses.
 - **Agency capacity.** Briefly describe (1) the agency’s experience serving people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness; (2) performance and outcome measures of current agency projects; and (3) the agency’s capacity to deliver the activities proposed.
 - **Budget and budget narrative.** Provide a brief but complete line-item budget. A brief budget narrative must provide explanations for each line item of projected expenditures. The budget section must include the projected spending of the proposed project funds by quarter and specific sources and types of match to satisfy the 100% match committed requirement (cash or in-kind) for the proposed project.
 - **Project narrative.** Provide a brief narrative that clearly describes:
 1. whether the proposed project is a new or existing service
 2. specific activity(ies) to be funded;
 3. the target population(s) to be served;
 4. the number of unduplicated persons to be served;
 5. the performance outcomes to be achieved, to be tracked and reported upon during the grant period; and
 6. the specific objective in the CoC Plan that is addressed by the proposed project, including an explanation describing how the proposed activities contribute to achieving that objective.

- **HMIS commitment.** Proposals must include a signed certification on agency letterhead that the proposing agency will participate in the Big Bend CoC Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The exceptions to this requirement are agencies, such as those serving victims of domestic violence, who are exempted from the HMIS requirement. Such agencies remain required to submit aggregate data related to activities funded.
- **IRS letter.** Project applicants must be private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organizations; provide the agency's 501(c)3 determination letter from the IRS.
- Each proposal must be no more than 7 single-spaced pages (excluding the HMIS letter and IRS letter).
- Completed proposals must be submitted **electronically** to Tom Pierce at bigbendcoc@gmail.com by August 12 at 12:00pm. Tom will then provide all applications to the independent review committee composed of individuals unaffiliated with grant applicants. Incomplete, late, and/or paper submissions will not be considered.

Big Bend CoC Proposal Evaluation

Challenge Grant proposals will be evaluated by an independent review committee composed of individuals unaffiliated with grant applicants. Tom Pierce will collect the applications and then forward the proposals to the independent committee. The committee will score and submit its recommendations to the CoC Board to select the project(s) and funding levels to be proposed to the State Office on Homelessness for funding. Proposals will be evaluated using the attached format at the end of this document.

Schedule and Deadlines

Challenge Grant Release	July 17, 2015	
CoC Notification of Grant Release	July 20, 2015	
CoC Community Planning Forum	July 24, 2015	2:00pm
Email Notification of Intent to Apply	July 31, 2015	5:00pm
Challenge Grant Project Planning Meeting	August 4, 2015	9:00am
Proposals due to the Independent Review Committee	August 12, 2015	12:00pm
Review Committee Response	August 14, 2015	
CoC Executive Committee Review	August 17, 2015	
CoC Board Approval	August 24, 2015	11:45am
Deadline for BBHC's Submission to State	September 1, 2015	3:00pm

**Big Bend Continuum of Care
Challenge Grant Proposal Evaluation
FY2015-16**

Applicant Name: _____

Requested Funding: _____

Recommended Funding: _____

Quality of Service (defined in the grant solicitation)	Points (1-5)	Comments
1. Does the project further community goals? How?		
2. Is the project a new project? Describe how it is expanding service capacity in the CoC.		
3. Explain how the agency provides quality services to homeless persons in your community.		
Project Narrative (defined in the grant solicitation)	Points (1-5)	Comments
4. Does the project narrative clearly outline project goals?		
5. Do the projects in the narrative demonstrate that they can be completed in 10 months (or ongoing activities)?		
6. Does the narrative focus on assisting homeless persons?		
7. Does the project align with the community's plan to implement a coordinated assessment or central intake system to screen, assess, and refer persons to the appropriate service provider?		
Agency Capacity	Points (1-5)	Comments
8. Agency's experience serving people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness is demonstrated		
9. Performance and outcome measures of current agency projects are defined		
10. Agency's capacity to deliver the activities proposed within the grant period is demonstrated		
Budget	Points (1-5)	Comments
11. Budget is complete and reasonable and eligible		
12. Budget narrative is provided in sufficient detail to determine eligibility		
13. 100% match identified clearly and committed		
TOTAL POINTS		

Scoring Criteria: 1 (minimal evidence to support deliverable) – 5 (significant evidence of excellence), 0 (no evidence provided)