

Homelessness Prevention Fund

Homelessness Prevention Fund Description: The stimulus bill provides \$1,500,000,000 for funding the Homeless Prevention Fund. Stimulus funds will be distributed on a formula basis and eligible applicants include Metropolitan Cities, urban counties and States (for distribution to local governments and private nonprofit organizations). This is a new program that can enhance the ability to assist in the prevention of homelessness in Wyoming. The allocation to Wyoming is \$1,718,313 and 5% may be used for grant administration costs. The Homelessness Prevention Fund is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and guidelines for this program are to be developed by HUD within 30 days of the signing of the Stimulus Bill. Grantees shall expend at least 60% of the funds within 2 years and 100% of funds within 3 years. Grantees receiving these funds shall collect data on use of funds and persons served in the HUD Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which is currently administered in Wyoming by the Wyoming Business Council-Wyoming Rural Development Council with oversight by the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative.

The Homelessness Prevention Funds may be used for:

- Short-term or medium term rental assistance
- Housing relocation and stabilization services including: housing search, mediation or outreach to property owners, credit repair, security or utility deposits, utility payments, rental assistance for a final month at a location, moving cost assistance, and case management
- Other appropriate activities for homelessness prevention and rapid-rehousing of persons who have become homeless.

Guidelines have been released by HUD and the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative will serve as an advisory board to further define the program for the State. The Wyoming Homeless Collaborative is comprised of organizations and agencies that provide homeless services, economic development and housing representatives. The Collaborative provides oversight of the Wyoming Point-In-Time homeless count; the HMIS system; and grant application selection and submission of the annual HUD Continuum of Care grant. Applications are due to HUD through a substantial amendment to the State Consolidated Plan by May 19, 2009.

Policy and Implementation Issues

The allocation of these funds will provide homelessness prevention funding to local governments and organizations including organizations that have not been successful in obtaining funds through the HUD Continuum of Care grant or other sources. It should be noted that these are one time funds. In addition, coordination between the Wyoming Business Council-Wyoming Rural Development Council and the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative with the Wyoming Department of Health is essential to assure that there is not overlap with the Homelessness Prevention Fund and the Community Service Block Grant administered through Wyoming Department of Health. At the local level, coordination between applicants and the designated CSBG eligible entity is also essential.

April 2, 2009
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