



**FY2022 Continuum of Care
Renewal Project Application**

Agencies that apply for funds through the CoC Funding Process must complete an application for each program in E-snaps. In addition, agencies must complete this Renewal Project Application for each program.

This form is due on **Wednesday August 31, 2022 at NOON** by e-mail to hsc@cityofmadison.com. **Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Please do not wait until the deadline to submit the application. No grace period will be granted.** If you have questions, please contact Torrie Kopp Mueller, tkoppmueller@cityofmadison.com or call 608-266-6254.

Agencies with more than one CoC project must submit a separate form for EACH project.

Agency Name	Dane County Human Services/Housing Initiatives, Inc.
Project Name	Rental Assistance

Project Contact Name	Brad Hinkfuss
Phone Number	608.620.1751
E-Mail	bhinkfuss@housinginitiatives.org

Funding Request	\$1,211,734
Proposed # of Units	84
Proposed # of Beds	116

Threshold Criteria	
Does the agency have any outstanding HUD monitoring findings? If yes, please provide explanation. <i>Dane County is working with Subrecipient, Housing Initiatives and the HUD Milwaukee office to address findings. Subrecipient and Dane County have agreed preliminarily with drafted corrections. Final resolution is pending final HUD review which will take place in the next 2-4 weeks.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _x_Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the project comply with the CoC Interim Rule 24 CFR 578 ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _x_Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency have a SAM.gov registration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _x_Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No

Does the agency have an active Unique Entity ID (formerly DUNS Number)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency have any delinquent federal debt? If yes, please provide explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _No
Is the agency under debarment or suspension from doing business with the Federal Government and/or on the Federal do not pay list? If yes, please provide explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency currently enter data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or comparable database for Domestic Violence providers? If no, please explain how the agency plans on becoming an HMIS agency by the YHDP project implementation start date in the narrative below.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency commit to participating in system-wide continuous quality improvement activities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency agree to participate in the Coordinated Entry System and follow Coordinated Entry policies and procedures ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No
Does the agency agree to follow the Dane CoC Written Standards ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _Yes <input type="checkbox"/> _No

Please answer the following questions:

Project applications will be reviewed based upon adherence to the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, FY22 CoC NOFO, as well as results of the Project Performance Scorecard.

1. Describe the grantee’s (and any sub-grantee’s) experience in administering this type of program. Describe the qualification of the staff assigned to the proposed program, including their knowledge and experience.

Dane County Human Services (DCHS) provides a comprehensive array of services and programs to over 65,000 customers in Dane County each year. The department employs almost 700 full-time staff and contracts with purchase-of-services with 139 organizations. It operates an annual budget currently of over \$232,000,000. The Rental Assistance Grant represents just one valuable component within this huge array of public services. It is a critically valuable piece that addresses a particularly vulnerable population: the homeless and mentally ill. This is where Housing Initiatives, Inc. (HII) aligns and partners with DCHS as a subrecipient of the grant.

Housing Initiatives, Inc. (HII) has a 29-year history of providing permanent supportive housing (PSH) for persons who are homeless and have severe and persistent mental illnesses. This mission speaks directly to multiple priorities within the Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Dane County, WI (2016). In short, the funds made available through Rental Assistance directly and exclusively support the homeless and mentally ill. HII achieves this primarily through the 151 units in 33 properties that the agency owns and operates within the City of Madison, scattered throughout the city. Clients are integrated into established neighborhoods at a more personal, non-institutional level. Clients have multiple opportunities to reach and interact with agency staff, who recognize when clients may be experiencing a mental health crisis. This facilitates quick intervention from experienced case worker staff from HII or other partner agencies that provide mental health services.

In more limited cases, clients can also secure housing from private landlords within Dane County. At the time of this application, HII has clients residing in the cities of Madison, Fitchburg, Sun Prairie and Middleton, the village of DeForest and the towns of Madison and Burke. Over the past 10 years, Housing Initiatives has partnered with 50 private landlords using a team approach between Housing Initiatives, landlords and case workers to monitor and intervene with clients as needs arise.

The cornerstone of HII's success is the staff and its experience administering the program and working with the clients they serve:

Bradley Hinkfuss: Mr. Hinkfuss has led the agency as Executive Director for the past three years. His diverse history includes leading many programs while working at Porchlight, Inc. for 16 years, as well as 2 years at Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, working in urban development in Illinois, and working overseas with the US Peace Corps in the construction of affordable housing. He served as President of the Dane County Homeless Services Consortium in 2021.

Gayle Boushon: Ms. Boushon serves as the Director of Finance and Business Operations. She has a long history of working in public and private accounting firms. As a CPA with a long history in accounting, she also has extensive experience with the issues particular to non-profit organizations. The fiscal acumen she brings to the table helps HII manage its grants, finances and internal operations very effectively.

Tami Fleming: Mrs. Fleming has been Director of Client Services at Housing Initiatives since May of 2022. Prior to this Tami was Executive Director of Shelter from the Storm Ministries, a transitional living shelter for single moms and their children. Before this Tami worked in Street Outreach, creating "Friends of the State Street Family". Tami brings an incredible amount of knowledge and expertise in working with chronically homeless people. She is also a trained EMT and an expert in Housing First and Harm Reduction.

Mary Carrasco-Schoer: Ms. Carrasco-Schoer is the HII team as Property Manager. Although she has only been with the agency for a year, Ms. Carrasco-Schoer brings considerable experience in managing properties and clients that receive Section 8 and Section 42 tax credits. Her business acumen (MBA, BA, Real Estate) is further bolstered by many years of direct supportive service work with vulnerable and recovery populations.

Additionally, Housing Initiatives has three supportive services staff that collectively serve the Calypso Rd. Housing First project, as well as the broader array of scattered site PSH apartments:

Maryam Williams (MA, BA): Ms. Williams has been with HII since March of 2022. In the time she's been with the agency she has trained as a Rehabilitation Worker and has received her Dane County Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) accreditation. She brings half a decade's experience of working with traditionally marginalized communities in various social justice movements. She has a background in employment services but has rapidly acclimatized to providing supportive services for HII clients.

Kevin Scott (BS-Psychology): Mr. Scott comes to HII with several years' experience working in different capacities with Tellurian's Adult Residential Program which focuses on serving clients with co-occurring conditions of mental health and substance abuse.

Kevin McGettigan (MFA, BA): Mr. McGettigan has very extensive experience in working in the local mental health recovery system with the Dane County Care Center and Tellurian. As a Certified Peer Specialist and Recovery Coach, his years of experience add depth, expertise and knowledge of local systems to the HII services team.

Housing Initiatives, Inc. has administered the Rental Assistance program (formerly Shelter-Plus-Care) since 1995. That year, HUD awarded a five-year grant totaling \$917,000 (\$194,200 per year). Of the thirty-nine clients initially housed with that grant, four clients are still housed with Housing Initiatives.

Since then, the program has grown to be funded at \$1,211,734 for the 2022 renewal. The contract in the past has stipulated that the Rental Assistance program provide rental assistance for qualified clients in 84 units. Due to the way Housing Initiatives collects and leverages rental income, as well as improving program stability by housing clients in properties that HII owns and operates, HII has been able to consistently house above and beyond the HUD contract requirements. In fact, for the previously completed program year the program served 169 clients - at 134% of the unit utilization rates and at 130% of the bed utilization rates.

The Rental Assistance grant is a Continuum of Care program and is subject to HEARTH Act regulations. Housing Initiatives has administered the program for over 27 years, is in good standing with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

2. Please describe how your project takes proactive steps to minimize or overcome barriers to housing retention.
- HII has four FTE case workers on staff who work directly with any and all clients to support them in whatever it takes to retain their housing. This starts on day one, when clients who were literally homeless the day before meet with the property manager and a case worker to prepare to move in to their new PSH apartment. Identifying potential issues at the time of move-in helps case workers devise service plans tailored to the unique needs of each individual. Based on individualized plans, HII staff work to build broader support networks around any client in need.***

As part of their service approach, HII staff receive training to achieve accreditation to work with clients to register for additional services through Dane County Comprehensive Community Services (CCS). This opens another avenue for service provision by HII staff and many other agencies and service workers utilizing the CCS system.

In 2019, HII increased service worker staffing to four FTE positions for the first time. This staffing increase dramatically improved supportive service provision at all housing locations. The agency adheres to a Housing First approach, and supportive service staff employ a harm reduction model in providing client services. In doing so, they offer multiple options to help clients retain housing and improve their situation. Examples include direct support for emergent needs, personal service plans, flexible repayment plans, payee arrangements, and application to other community resources. The staff also engages in ongoing professional training, and actively collaborate with the broader Dane County and Madison homeless services network.

The extent of collaboration and networking with other supportive services agencies cannot be overstated. In particular, our supportive service staff work to build relationships with other support agencies in a never-ending quest to provide more targeted and effective services for HII clients. These services include supports such as in-home health care needs, AODA treatment, education, mental health care, crisis intervention, elder abuse support, domestic violence survivor support, probation & parole collaboration, and many more. With clients fresh out of homelessness – oftentimes for several years – and compounded with severe mental illness, it truly takes a collective effort to stabilize them and build long-term solutions.

3. In your last operating year:
- How many households exited the program?
In the last operating year, 20 households left the program.
 - Why did the households exit? (i.e. one was terminated from the program & one moved into subsidized housing & one was evicted):
 - 1 left of their own volition for permanent, independent housing***
 - 4 transferred within the CoC to partner agencies***
 - 1 exited into transitional housing for homeless persons***
 - 1 client didn't know/refused to answer***
 - 10 data not collected (no exit interview completed)***
 - 4 died***
 - If the participant(s) was evicted, please list the reason?
No clients were evicted during the past program year.
 - Did the program attempt an agency transfer for any of the leavers? If so, what was the outcome?
Yes, there were 4 transfers of clients to other partner agencies. Although we do not maintain active contact with these past clients, it is our understanding that they remain connected with supportive services through other agencies and are seeking new housing options.
 - How many new households entered the program?

There were 8 new households that entered the program.

- f. How many transfers were accepted into the program?

There were no transfers accepted during the operating year.

4. Was the program found to be in non-compliance with the Written Standards by the CoC from October 1, 2020-Present? If yes, describe the nature of the issue and how the issue has been addressed.

No, the Rental Assistance program was not found to be in non-compliance with the Written Standards at any point from October 1, 2020 to the present.

5. Describe your agency's efforts to improve service quality and outcomes for the program. Please include how you solicit and incorporate feedback from program participants.

Over the past three years, HII has engaged in much more assertive outreach with all clients. This is done primarily through the supportive service staff reaching out to all clients to ascertain their well-being and potential need for new or different services. The start of the pandemic created the ideal setting to adopt this approach since our staff were temporarily restricted from meeting directly with clients in person, inside. HII also sent out multiple direct mailings to all clients to communicate information about the pandemic and HII support services. In addition, the Property Manager now sends out much more regular direct correspondence to update clients concerning their compliance standing, upcoming renewals, and any other matter of concern. The agency also maintains regular office hours with ample opportunity for clients to call, drop in, or make an appointment to meet with staff to discuss any issue. Collectively, these multiple avenues for soliciting and receiving feedback have resulted in the agency having much closer relationships with all clients. Ultimately this helps tremendously with service quality and outcomes since HII staff are learning about needs and problems proactively when they can still devise strategies to address them.

6. What percentage of staff members working for this program identify as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Color?

For the last program year, 22% (2 of 9) staff members identified as a Person of Color.

7. How does this program work against systematic racism and other structures of oppression?

HII takes systemic racism and other forms of oppression very seriously. This is evident on the front end by the adoption and prominent display of policies embodied in the agency Affirmative Marketing and Tenant Selection Plan. This directive is carried out in part with our partner agencies, such as the Institute for Community Alliances that runs the Coordinated Entry program. HII is committed to taking new clients directly from Coordinated Entry or the Veterans Administration irrespective of race, nationality, or other protected classes. The agency is committed to taking new clients as they arrive, irrespective of personal attributes. To some degree the agency relies on the good efforts of its partners in selecting those clients.

At a systemic level, HII staff participate within the CoC to identify and address system-wide issues that may be furthering systemic racism, and then working with other partner agencies to meaningfully address those concerns. One such issue became apparent in the past year when a data analysis showed that a disproportionately low number of Black people were being housed relative to the total number of Black people within the Coordinated Entry system. This resulted in a focused group to explore and adopt a different means of evaluating and making decisions about housing placements.

Internally, HII staff have engaged in all-staff meetings in which the staff discussed ways in which existing practices might have unintended racist effects and implications. Having such open discussions has been helpful in keeping the issue at the forefront of staff perspectives. It has also resulted in staff seeking out specific in-service training to help build best practices and an understanding of how racism potentially impacts clients by virtue of agency policies & practices. This is an ongoing training issue for HII.

8. How is this program and its practices culturally responsive to the population(s) who participate?

This program is culturally responsive to the participating populations by taking a highly individualized approach to each client. Since all clients at HII present with histories of chronic homelessness and severe mental health conditions, staff have developed an approach of building service and interaction plans with clients that are relationship-based, and that consider the mental health, physical health, trauma, cultural disposition, and behavioral history of each client. Cultural responsiveness is an integral component of this approach. Even so, staff are committed to making this an issue of ongoing training and policy development. They will continue to seek out training and educational opportunities, and look for ways to better integrate those practices into an approach that already strives to be culturally responsive.

9. What barriers does your project have for participation by Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color (e.g. lack of outreach)? What steps has your agency taken or will take to eliminate the identified barriers?

Housing Initiatives receives all our client referrals through the Dane County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry process (VI-SPDAT), VA or other partner organization referrals. We do not make the selections of who will participate in our project and have little to no criteria for denying someone housing (e.g. previous criminal record, substance use, etc.)

With that in mind, the greatest barriers our project has for participation by Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color is lack of information or knowledge of processes for applying for permanent housing. Members of the homeless community come to our Services Office to apply for housing on a monthly basis. Our Services team then refers these people to the Beacon so they can apply for Coordinated Entry and have a trained worker take them through the VI-SPDAT application process.

HII tries to eliminate these barriers by providing any information our tenants, their significant others, their family members, their friends and their community may need to access permanent housing or other services. If our services staff can answer a question, refer on or aid in getting these people connected into services, we do our best to. In the past operating year our services staff has assisted numerous Black and Persons of Color living with our clients into applying for various case management programs and other vital services. If they qualify for Coordinated Entry, we assist them with applying for that as well.

HII staff also participate within the CoC to identify and address system-wide issues that may be furthering systemic racism, and then working with other partner agencies to meaningfully address those concerns. One such issue became apparent in the past year when a data analysis showed that a disproportionately low number of Black people were being housed relative to the total number of Black people within the Coordinated Entry system. This resulted in a focused group to explore and adopt a different means of evaluating and making decisions about housing placements.

Alignment with Housing First Principles

- 1) Please **attach your agency and/or project written policies** that clearly demonstrate participants are NOT SCREENED OUT based on the following criteria, and indicate the document and page number where the panel can find each provision. If applying for more than one project, submit the policies one time if they apply to all projects seeking funding.

	Name of Document/File	Page Number
Having too little or no income	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	13
Active, or history of, substance use or a substance use disorder	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	13

Having a criminal record *	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	13
History of domestic violence (e.g., lack of a protective order, period of separation from abuser, or law enforcement involvement)	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	13

*1A) Please note if there are specific criminal records the program denies for, what they are and the reason for denial.

2) Please **attach your agency and/or project written policies** that clearly demonstrate participants are NOT TERMINATED from the program for the following reasons, and indicate the document and page number where the panel can find each provision. If applying for more than one project, submit the policies one time if they apply to all projects seeking funding.

	Name of Document/File	Page Number
Failure to participate in supportive services	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	14
Failure to make progress on a service plan	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	14
Loss of income or failure to improve income	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	14
Being a victim of domestic violence	Housing Initiatives Handbook for Tenants and Clients	14

Please provide any information that will give context to any low scores on the Project Performance Scorecard.