



New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

Office of Homelessness Prevention

Rural/Suburban Outreach & Engagement RFP

FY23

A. Name of the Grant:

Rural/Suburban Outreach & Engagement – FY23

B. DCA Contact Information:

Tina McGill, Program Manager, Office of Homelessness Prevention, Tina.McGill@dca.nj.gov

Michael Callahan, Director, Office of Homelessness Prevention, Michael.Callahan@dca.nj.gov

C. Issue:

Across the State's Homelessness Prevention service ecosystem and the nation, Outreach Services (OS) have proven to be an impactful program to effect a person experiencing homelessness's entry into services to end their homelessness. For the purposes of this RFP, we define Outreach Services more expansively than the HUD definition of Street Outreach (i.e., activities designed to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care. HUD defined component services generally consist of engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health services, and transportation). OHP's expanded definition includes eligibility of persons who are at-risk of becoming homeless in rural and suburban communities without intervention and whose situation and circumstances require in-person engagement to prevent homelessness.

An analysis of Outreach Services throughout the state indicate that the service is correlated with increases in the year-over-year change in the % of clients entering the prevention ecosystem. Similarly, national and state-level data have shown that Outreach Services are an effective tool to identify, engage with, and enter into services both un-sheltered and at-risk persons with high acuity, high chronicity, and low involvement with supportive services.

Currently, there are a lack of and/or limited Outreach Services in the following counties in New Jersey: Burlington County, Cape May County, Cumberland County, Gloucester County, Hunterdon County, Monmouth County, Salem County, Sussex County and Warren County. Despite the lack of a structured outreach service provider in these counties, there have been (as of this writing using NJ HMIS data) 3,655 requests for homelessness and homelessness prevention service/intervention in these counties using the NJ 211 hotline.



On average, in Q1 2022, only 11.3% of persons contacting 211 for prevention services (Range: 7 to 13.4%) in these counties were successfully referred to services and 5.5% of persons seeking shelter successfully obtained it after contact. It is the intent of this pilot to use these metrics as a baseline and to improve these conversion rates, especially given the successful placement rates in counties with robust Outreach Services (e.g., Essex whose YTD OS Shelter referral & placement rate is 17.18% and Drop-in Center referral and placement rate is 18.92%).

In interfacing with providers of services in these identified counties (e.g., PATH & SSO), the major barriers to effect entry into the homelessness prevention ecosystem are: 1) geographic disbursement and distribution of service resources; 2) organizational capacity limits (both in terms of staff and caseload capacity); and 3) limited access to transportation resources.

D. Purposes of the Grant:

- 1) To deploy mobile case management, engagement, and low-barrier prevention services to those persons experiencing homelessness in camps, under bridges, at parks, in temporary motels, shelters, meal sites, libraries, and public facilities (transit hubs) and those at-risk of becoming homeless and rapidly entering unsheltered conditions.

- 2) To add staff and transportation capacity to rural and suburban county homeless prevention ecosystems to overcome spoked transportation systems to rapidly engage with unsheltered and at-risk persons.

- 3) For grantees to formally partner with and interface with healthcare providers, local police, senior services, addiction services, and mental health providers to rapidly and simultaneously achieve prevention, treatment, and placement outcomes.

- 4) To reduce length-of-stay in and utilization of high-cost programs (e.g., ED visits for sheltering) and increase frequency of engagement with those unhoused and at-risk consumers with high acuity (i.e., mental and physical health needs) & high chronicity (return to homelessness).

Grantees will work with a wide variety of existing homelessness prevention and rapid exit programs and partnerships to arrive at the intended outcomes (the identification of those at-risk of and currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and the prevention of, Outreach and Engagement from, and rapid exits from unsheltered homelessness and prevention of unsheltered homelessness).

Specific metrics to be benchmarked and assessed for performance will be (but are not limited to):



- 1) # of OS consumers engaged with
- 2) % of OS consumers compared to total County non-permanent housing consumers
- 3) % of consumers accepting of services
- 4) % of consumers accepting referrals to support services
- 5) % of consumers not accepting of services but that are re-engaged
- 6) conversion rate of # of engagements/# of successful referrals
- 7) conversion rate of # of engagements/# of unsuccessful assessments/service entry
- 8) average # of engagements to affect positive outcome
 - a) for unsheltered consumers, positive outcome = sheltering
 - b) for unsheltered consumers, positive outcome = sustainment of shelter at 3, 6, and 9 months
- 9) ratio of assessed service needs to successful referral connection
- 10) time to contact upon notice of consumer need

Grantees will be routinely assessed for their ability to achieve these outcomes and will be coached by the OHP Data Team on both measurement and reporting practices to capture these data points.

E. Maximum Award: \$250,000

For a total of eight (8) grantees, serving each county as follows:

1. 1 for Burlington
2. 1 for Cape May
3. 1 for Gloucester
4. 1 for Hunterdon
5. 1 for Monmouth
6. 1 for Salem and Cumberland
7. 1 for Sussex
8. 1 for Warren

An advancement of 35% of the grant amount will be provided upon execution of the contract



Eligible Applicants: New Jersey non-profit social services agencies with:

1. Existing homelessness prevention programs and demonstrable experience in serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness and imminently homeless families.
2. A diverse compilation of resources and partnerships to support and assist households that are homeless and at risk of homelessness.
3. A referral relationship (as demonstrated in a Letter of Support) with at least one Emergency Shelter provider in the county of service AND/OR access to a provider wait list (e.g., shelter, motels, homeless students, PHA waitlists, CWA TRA denial list, CWA hotel / motel stayers list, permanent housing, sober living, senior living, housing designated for youth, etc.). Access to wait list should be demonstrated explicitly in a Letter of Support from the entity maintaining the wait list from which the applicant can contact individuals experiencing homelessness or who are imminently homeless in the proposed service area. *NB: in counties where there is limited shelter capacity, grantees must demonstrate knowledge of emergency placement mechanisms (e.g., hotels, multi-county collaborations) to end a household's unsheltered homelessness.*
4. The willingness and capacity to partner with local and county law enforcement, the service area's correspondent Continuum-of-Care (CoC), public services (e.g., libraries), and regional and local health care providers.

F. In-eligible Applicants:

1. Listed on the DCA list of High-Risk grantees and, as applicable, the current audit submission is not overdue.
2. Listed on the State Debarment list, located at www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/treas/revenue/debarch.pl

G. Target populations / eligible households:

In all situations, the Outreach & Engagement Specialist(s) should work with unsheltered or at-risk consumers to obtain and maintain shelter and to effect entry into the homelessness prevention service ecosystem in each county. For the purposes of this program, "at-risk of homelessness" is defined as:

1. An individual or family that does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the HUD "homeless" definition.
2. Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.
3. People who are trading sex for housing.



4. People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled-up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing.
5. People who are staying with friends but cannot stay there for longer than 14 days.
6. People who are being trafficked.
7. People who left or are leaving home because of physical, emotional, or financial abuse or threats of abuse and have no safe, alternative housing.

If a person refuses shelter, referrals, or services, the Outreach & Engagement Specialist will create a plan to elicit barriers to ending homelessness and to work with the consumer in future engagements to engender a relationship of trust to engage with opportunities to become housed. The Office of Homelessness Prevention understands the intricate causations of homelessness and encourages Outreach & Engagement Specialists to be flexible in their perceptions of such causes and prompt in working together with consumers to remove barriers to housing.

Income and contact limitations

1. There is not a rigid income cap for providing services, but DCA expects that most customers will be in households at or below 120% of the AMI.

2. Households currently unsheltered may have multiple barriers to obtain housing and may be resistant to interfacing with the homelessness prevention ecosystem. DCA encourages grantees to provide Outreach Services and to connect with these households without limitations on contact frequency to increase the likelihood of an opportunity to exit or prevent homelessness.

H. Scope of Services/ Required Elements:

Outreach and Engagement Specialists **must** be available in-person and in the field. Outreach and Engagement Specialists will directly assist households with preventing and/or exiting from homelessness in such ways including but not limited to:

1. Having (or acquiring using grant funding) an appropriate vehicle to conduct service activities.
2. Transporting (or facilitating the transport) of consumers to shelter and services.
3. Having at least one designated site within the service area to meet with households (as needed).
4. Having at least two face-to-face meetings with each household encountered.
5. Capturing precise location data (latitude/longitude, MGRS grid, or street address) for consumers encountered and served.



6. Maintaining 90% data quality on UDE (Universal Data Elements) information for households encountered:

<u>Universal Data Elements (UDE) - HUD</u>	<u>Non-UDE Elements</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of Birth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Interactions/Contact Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of Contact Events (Address or Lat/Long)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity (HMIS) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender (HMIS) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race (HMIS) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously Homeless? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household size? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children at Admission 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marital Status 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veteran Status 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Status 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Income Sources 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entitlements 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of times the client has been on the streets, in emergency shelter, or a safe haven in the past three years including today 	

7. Using creative housing problem-solving techniques.

8. Using the flexible funds in this initiative (alone or with other funding streams) to remove barriers to housing.

9. Developing, documenting, and executing a housing plan.

10. Recording encounter and case note data no later than 24 hours post-encounter in AWARDS.

11. Using the full weight of all the agency's resources and any resources available on the federal, state, and local levels.

12. Maintaining regular communications with the Office of Homelessness Prevention.



13. Notifying the Office of Homelessness Prevention of all challenges, concerns, questions, and issues regarding the Homelessness Outreach and Engagement grant.
14. Maintaining documentation of real-time outputs and outcomes, and the availability of staff to attend mandatory trainings and meetings.
15. Ability to secure a COVID-19 safe quiet space to meet with households within the grantee's geographical service area. Alternatively, grantees may secure a safe location for meeting with households that are disabled or otherwise unable to travel to agency's site.
16. Maintaining and submitting current, accurate and timely records and reports for all households that agree to participate in the Homelessness Outreach and Engagement grant.
17. Implementing a Housing First approach.
18. Coordinating and case conferencing with other homelessness prevention agencies within the service county and across county lines for households transferring outside the grantee's service area.
19. For grantees in Salem and Cumberland counties, joint case conferencing will be required.

I. Required Trainings:

Each grantee agrees that staff will participate in all mandatory trainings and meetings according to a schedule provided by the Office of Homelessness Prevention. Trainings and meetings are to increase understanding of Outreach & Engagement and its interplay with other aspects of case management and as part of a larger housing problem-solving approach to preventing homelessness. Direct staff, Supervisors and Leadership staff must agree to the following mandatory training participation as part of this program:

1. *Harm reduction*
2. *Landlord collaborations*
3. *Housing First*
4. *Eviction Prevention*
5. *Reporting, including the use of the Homelessness Management Information System database (HMIS), known as AWARDS, report building, and uploading options*
6. *Racial equity*
7. *Trauma-Informed Service Delivery*
8. *Outreach and Engagement Service Delivery Coaching*

In addition, the entity must participate in and make presentations to various audiences during required trainings and meetings according to the schedule designated by the Office of



Homelessness Prevention. The entity must also work in collaboration with other DCA grantees to achieve this initiative's objectives.

J. Ineligible activities:

Activities not specifically approved through this application or subsequently approved in writing by DCA.

K. Grant Term: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

L. Qualifications required for applicant staff:

1. Staff must have completed or will schedule AWARDS training through New Jersey Housing Mortgage and Finance Agency.
2. Staff must have experience and knowledge of available resources at the local, state, and federal levels.
3. Outreach and Engagement Specialists are required to have 1 year of experience in assisting homeless persons with securing housing or at least 1 year lived experience in homelessness.
4. Outreach and Engagement Specialists must complete annually scheduled training for cultural diversity, mandated reporting, racial equity, trauma informed service delivery.
5. Outreach and Engagement Specialists must have the physical capacity to engage with consumers experiencing homelessness in camps, under bridges, at parks, in temporary motels, shelters, meal sites, libraries, and public facilities (transit hubs) and those at-risk of becoming homeless and rapidly entering into unsheltered conditions.
6. Outreach and Engagement Specialists should have a valid state-issued Driver's License and be able to transport consumers to referred services and shelter, as needed.



7. Outreach and Engagement Specialists should have the ability to work non-traditional (e.g., 3pm -11pm) hours to respond to and meet with consumers.

M. RFP Due Date: November 28, 2022

Award Notification Date: On or about December 29, 2022

N. Application Process:

All applicants are required to attend an application training webinar at a date yet to be determined. Applications must be submitted in the Department's electronic grant management system known as SAGE at <http://dcasage.intelligrants.com> and include:

1. Agency description.
2. Proposed program descriptions.
3. Program objectives.
4. Scope of services.
5. Contact information.
6. Program components.
7. Proposed program service areas.
8. Program personnel listing and resumes of key staff.
9. Staffing organizational chart.
10. Consultant listing.
11. Proposed program budget.

O. Required application attachments:

1. Certification regarding debarment and suspension.
2. Certification regarding lobbying.
3. Resolution from grantee board.
4. Letter(s) of support from referral & wait list partners identified.
5. Partnership listing and a list of the services provided through such partnerships.
6. List of all services, corresponding funders and amounts for initiatives provided by the agency.



7. Signed application cover page.
8. Bylaws and articles of incorporation.
9. Program service area.
10. Other sources of funds for this initiative.
11. A comprehensive list of all known resources to this agency.
12. An example slide deck for presentation to public and other entities in order to market services.

P. Eligible Activities/ Expenses:

1. Staff salaries and mileage reimbursement to attend meetings, case conferencing, trainings sponsored directly through this grant, or otherwise pre-approved by the Office of Homelessness Prevention.
2. Field work that facilitates off-site meetings with households and other necessary Homelessness Outreach and Engagement related activities.
3. The purchase of a vehicle to conduct activities outlined above.
3. Direct Client Assistance to clients in the form of gift cards not exceeding \$50 and direct client assistance payments on behalf of the household.
4. Program supplies, communication expenses, program specific quiet space, and costs directly related to delivering effective program services.
5. Data collection and submission activities, completion of timely (HMIS/AWARDS) trainings through New Jersey Housing Mortgage and Finance Association (NJHMFA), and timely SAGE reporting.

Q. Budget.

Office of Homelessness Prevention – Rural & Suburban Outreach	
<i>Example Budget – Grantee receiving \$250,000.00</i>	
<i>Category</i>	<i>Amount (\$)</i>
Administration (10%)	\$25,000.00
<i>Personnel</i>	
<i>Salaries/Wages</i>	
<i>Fringe</i>	
<i>Operating</i>	
<i>Audit</i>	
<i>Other</i>	
Program (90%)	
<i>Direct Expenses</i>	
Salaries* (Two F/T Specialists - Capped at 40% of total budget)	\$100,000.00



Fringe**: (Capped at standard of 37%)	\$37,000.00
Equipment Purchase (Vehicle)	\$60,000.00
Equipment Purchase (Other)	\$7,000.00
Food/Emergency Supplies for Rapport Building (Other)	\$10,000.00
HMIS & Data collection/entry (capped at \$1,000.00)	\$1,000.00
Total	\$240,000.00
Remaining	\$10,000.00

R. Review Criteria: Applications will be reviewed and scored based on a 100-point system. Applications will be scored as follows:

1. Demonstration of sufficient capacity to undertake the proposal. – Maximum of 50 points

i. Demonstration of length of experience in case management and knowledge of homelessness prevention and rapid exit strategies, barriers to housing, resources available to assist homeless and housing insecure households, assistance available across local, state, and federal agencies.

ii. Demonstration of regional or statewide level work in homelessness prevention or housing stabilization.

iii. Detailed list of case management methods.

iv. Demonstration of hiring and staffing readiness and case management capacity.

v. Demonstration of data tracking and reporting experience or capacity.

vi. The execution plan (what resources the applicant has and are in need of) for the project described.

2. Ability to implement the proposal in an effective and timely manner consistent with the intent and spirit of this proposal. – Maximum of 25 points

i. Clear description of the activities proposed and how they will be integrated into existing programming / operations.

ii. Examples of agency capacity that will permit such implementation that will facilitate homelessness prevention and exits from homelessness.

iii. Clear description of how the CoC Coordinated Entry agency will process and send



appropriate referrals to the grantee. ***NB: If the grantee is providing services in a catchment area that does not currently utilize Coordinated Entry, the program elements must clearly articulate the process mapping through which an engaged household will obtain shelter and enter the prevention ecosystem. This process mapping should be corroborated through letters of support from partner entities.***

3. Example Presentation: Applicants agree to make Homelessness Outreach and Engagement presentations at shelters, other congregate settings, and community events open to the public. – Maximum 10 points

Example Presentations, at a minimum, should include:

- i. Name of Agency and Program
- ii. Description of the Program
- iii. Process Map of Program (i.e., from initial contact to placement)
- iv. Identifications of Partnerships (existing and in-process)
- v. Contact information for referrals

4. Proposed costs are eligible, detailed, reasonable, and clearly defined. – Maximum of 15 points

S. Date by which applicants will be notified: On or about November 30th, 2022

T. Reporting Requirements:

1. Each grantee must submit two kinds of reports to the Office of Homelessness Prevention: the DCA created Monthly By-Name Outcomes Report tracking tool and the other via AWARDS Secure Messaging.

The DCA-created Monthly By-Name Outcomes Report shall include but is not limited to:

- i. The total number of admissions.
- ii. Date admitted into the Homelessness Outreach and Engagement for each household.
- iii. Date discharged from the Homelessness Outreach and Engagement for each household.
- iv. Outcome at discharge (type of prevention, type of Outreach and Engagements, and number of exits from homelessness).



- v. 3-month date of check-in with discharged household.
 - vi. 3-month date outcome for discharged household.
 - vii. 6-month date of check-in with discharged household.
 - viii. 6-month date outcome for discharged household.
 - ix. 9-month date of check-in with discharged household.
 - x. 9-month date outcome for discharged household.
 - xi. Total number of discharged households and average financial assistance provided and:
 - xii. Total families with children discharged and average financial assistance provided.
 - xiii. Total discharged families disaggregated by race and average financial assistance provided.
 - xiv. Total discharged families disaggregated by age and average financial assistance provided.
 - xv. Total discharged families with at least one household member reporting / having a disability and average financial assistance provided.
 - xvi. Total families with children discharged disaggregated by citizenship status.
 - xvii. Total discharged single households disaggregated by race and average financial assistance provided.
 - xviii. Total discharged single households disaggregated by citizenship status.
 - xix. Total discharged single households disaggregated by gender and average financial assistance provided.
 - xx. Total discharged singles disaggregated with at least one household member reporting / having a disability and average financial assistance provided.
2. The Monthly By-Name Outcomes Report shall include progress towards the following goals:
- i. 50% of all admissions diverted homelessness.
 - ii. 75% of diverted households shall remain diverted for 6 months (did not return seeking shelter).
 - iii. Of those diverted and who return seeking shelter, 50% are diverted again.
3. Quarterly reporting in SAGE due by the 15th of each month following the end of the quarter.



4. Monthly By-Name Outcomes Report (dating from the first day of the month to the last day of the month) in the template provided by the Office of Homelessness Prevention - Outreach and Engagement and due to the Office of Homelessness Prevention by the close of the seventh (15th) day of each month.
5. Monthly By-Name Outcomes Report meetings and monthly trainings of every contractual month.
6. Recorded attendance of staff, including supervisors and leadership, at training, meetings, case conferences, and presentations mandated by the Homelessness Outreach and Engagement Initiative must be maintained by the grantee.