



# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

## **DCF Funding Opportunities**

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), CHALLENGE Grant, ESG RUSH Grant (RUSH) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

RELEASE DATE: Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

RFP Closing Date: Wednesday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 12 noon

To ensure you receive full support in the submission of your proposal please ensure you have done the following:

**1. Become a BBCoC Non-Profit Partner Member**

Visit our membership page at <http://bigbendcoc.org/membership/>

Select the membership that fits your organization's needs keeping in mind that access to funding opportunities are afforded to the following membership levels; Non-Profit Partner, Business Partner and Government. You can complete your membership application and payment at the above-mentioned web link.

**2. Request to be added to the BBCoC Mailing list** for updates regarding this RFP by emailing [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org)

**3. Submit a letter of intent to apply for funding by 5pm on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025** to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org) . Letters of intent must be submitted from your organization's Board Chair or Executive Director or equivalent.

**RFP Inquiries:** Applicants shall submit all questions concerning the scope of services, eligibility and/or programmatic requirements of this funding opportunity in writing by email only and directed to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org) until noon on 7/16/25. To ensure a fair and open process, all questions submitted will be posted without attribution to the party that has submitted the question, along with BBCoC's written response as <https://bigbendcoc.org/2025-2026-bbcoc-dcf-funding-competition/>.

**Technical Assistance:** Technical assistance is available. All technical questions regarding the funding and submission process may be submitted in writing to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org).

# Request for Proposals

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## A. INTRODUCTION

The Big Bend Continuum of Care (BBCoC) is pleased to announce the availability of funding through the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) to support services for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This Request for Proposals (RFP) invites qualified nonprofit organizations and public agencies to apply for funding through the following sources:

- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
- Challenge Grant
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- ESG: Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH)

Eligible applicants must deliver services in the BBCoC service area, which includes the following counties: **Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Jefferson, Madison, and Taylor.**

Funding will support evidence-based, outcome-driven activities aligned with BBCoC's priorities to reduce homelessness, improve system performance, and increase access to permanent housing.

## B. FUNDING

A total of **\$1,201,834.20** in reimbursable grant funding is available for organizations to apply for during program year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026. Applicants may submit one proposal per organization, with the option to request funding from multiple sources. Some individual criteria such as budgets and scopes of services must be clearly defined for each funding source.

Below is a breakdown of the amount of funding available for each service category/activity: Please visit the DCF Program Guide for additional information on program eligibility and program components.

<b>A. Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)</b>	
Allowable components include Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach, Rapid Rehousing and Prevention.  The ESG program provides funding to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. engage individuals and families living on the street through case management and referral services</li><li>2. improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families and help operate these shelters by providing essential services including case management to shelter residents</li><li>3. rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families through financial assistance and housing stability case management</li><li>4. prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless through financial assistance and case management</li></ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Street Outreach: Must serve 2 individuals per month <b>Amount Available: \$39,433.38</b></li><li>• Emergency Shelter: Must serve 3 individuals per month <b>Amount Available: \$60,000.00</b></li><li>• Rapid Rehousing: Must serve 1 individual per month <b>Amount Available: \$60,000.00</b></li><li>• Homelessness Prevention: Must serve 2 individuals per month <b>Amount Available: \$60,000.00</b></li></ul>	<b>\$219,433.38 available to subrecipients</b>  <b>100% match required</b>

<p><b>B. Challenge Grant-</b></p> <p>Challenge Grant funding shall be used locally to assist those individuals or households who are homeless, or those at risk of becoming homeless. The funds may be used to assist those clients defined as homeless in section 420.621(5), Florida Statutes. The intent of the grant is to help implement the local homeless assistance plan, and to help the community reach the goals and objectives outlined in their CoC plan.</p> <p>Challenge grant allowable activities include housing and program projects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Housing Projects</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rental Assistance</li> <li>b. Hotel/Motel Vouchers</li> <li>c. Emergency Shelter Operations</li> <li>d. Case Management</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>2. Program Projects</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Covers operational and logistical needs of an innovative homeless service program such as coordinated entry and street outreach</li> <li>b. Case Management</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>3. Service Activities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Housing Stability Case Management</li> <li>b. Street Outreach</li> <li>c. Transportation Assistance</li> <li>d. Direct Client Assistance (no rental assistance)</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Projects: Must serve 8 individuals per month <b>Amount Available: \$ 200,000.00</b></li> <li>• Program Projects: Must serve 8 individuals per month- <b>Amount Available: \$125,000.00</b></li> <li>• Service Projects: Must serve 10 individuals per month <b>Amount Available: \$235,000.00</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>\$560,000.00 available to subrecipients</b></p> <p><b>3% Admin Available: \$16,800.00</b></p>
<p><b>C. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Prevention</b></p> <p>The purpose of the Homelessness Prevention Grant Program is to assist eligible families to prevent the family from becoming homeless and to maintain stable housing following the assistance from the grant.</p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention Grant may be used to pay the following costs to assist eligible families avoid homelessness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Past due rent payments, not to exceed four (4) months of rent payment.</li> <li>2. Past due utility bills, not to exceed four (4) months in arrears for electric, gas, water and sewer only.</li> <li>3. Staff and operating costs for the provision of the required case management services to be provided to the eligible families assisted.</li> <li>4. Households served must be under 200% of the poverty level as identified by HUD.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness Prevention: Must serve 1 individual/1 household per month <b>Amount Available: \$20,000.00</b></li> <li>• Case Management: Must serve 1 individual/1 household per month <b>Amount Available: 10,600.91</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>\$30,600.91 available to subrecipients</b></p>

## D. ESG - Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH)

Generally, all ESG factors apply to ESG – RUSH except for special circumstances and client eligibility. Three eligibility factors must be met:

1. Be homeless or at risk of homelessness
2. Have been residing in an area affected by a major disaster declared pursuant to the Stafford Act on or after December 20, 2019 (e.g., an area covered by DR-4673-FL, dated September 29, 2022); AND
3. Have needs that will not be served or fully met by the TSA Program (42 USC 5170b) and other existing Federal disaster relief programs (including both Federal and non-Federal cost share).

If the client is already found eligible for ESG prior to the disaster, households are not required to re-qualify as homeless or at risk of homelessness for assistance under RUSH.

The ESG RUSH program provides funding to:

1. engage individuals and families living on the street through case management and referral services
2. improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families and help operate these shelters by providing essential services including case management to shelter residents
3. rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families through financial assistance and housing stability case management
4. prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless through financial assistance and case management

- Street Outreach: Must serve 2 individuals per month  
**Amount Available: \$75,000.00**
- Emergency Shelter: Must serve 5 individuals per month  
**Amount Available: \$100,000.00**
- Rapid Rehousing: Must serve 2 individuals per month  
**Amount Available: \$ 100,000.00**
- Homelessness Prevention: Must serve 2 individuals per month  
**Amount Available: \$100,000.00**

**\$375,000.00  
available to  
subrecipients**

## C. ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be either:

- A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in good standing; or
- A unit of local government.

All nonprofit applicants must be registered with the **System for Award Management (SAM)** and have a publicly searchable profile. Applicants unable to complete SAM registration before the deadline must provide evidence of initiation via email to **info@bigbendcoc.org**. Award decisions will be contingent upon full SAM registration.

## Minimum Qualifications

Applicants must:

- Submit a complete application by the deadline.
- Demonstrate fiscal capacity to manage multiple contracts and funding streams.
- Maintain liquid cash reserves to support at least two months of project operating costs as all grants are reimbursable.

## D. LOCAL PRIORITIES

BBCoC prioritizes proposals that:

- Rapidly connect individuals and families to **permanent housing**.
- Provide **appropriate services** to underserved populations
- Support long-term **housing stability** through effective case management and service coordination.

Additional priority is given to programs that demonstrate a clear impact on:

1. Reducing **chronic homelessness**.
2. Decreasing the **average length of homelessness**.
3. Lowering **recidivism rates** (returns to homelessness).

## E. BEST PRACTICES AND SERVICES APPROACH

### Streamlined Access Approach

Programs should minimize entry requirements and reduce barriers to participation. This includes:

- Not requiring sobriety or participation in treatment services as a condition of service.
- Limiting paperwork and avoiding strict eligibility rules that delay or deny service.
- Using assessments to tailor services to individual needs rather than screen out participants.

Termination of services should only occur in response to immediate safety concerns and should include plans for future re-engagement.

### Immediate Housing Placement Model

Applicants should follow a model that prioritizes prompt placement into permanent housing. Key components include:

- Offering housing without prerequisites such as employment, treatment compliance, or background checks.

- Viewing stable housing as the starting point for improving overall well-being.
- Providing supportive services after housing to help maintain long-term stability

## **Supportive Care Approach**

Programs must operate with an understanding of how prior adversity can affect individuals. This includes:

- Acknowledging the potential impact of past experiences on behavior and needs for staff and clients.
- Embedding this awareness into program policies and daily practices.
- Fostering an environment that prioritizes safety, choice, and personal growth.

## **F. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Continuum of Care Participation**

The BBCoC is a collaborative of service providers and other community stakeholders who are committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the Big Bend area of Florida. As a condition of award, grantees must commit to participation in BBCoC Networking Meetings, Coordinated Entry, HMIS Committee Meetings and Needs Assessment and Planning Committee meetings, and are encouraged to participate in other BBCoC activities including BBCoC Membership and Board Meetings.

### **2. Coordinated entry System (CES) Participation**

The BBCoC Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a community-wide system through which people experiencing homelessness can access the crisis response system in a streamlined way. Individuals and families in need of housing interventions enter the CES through 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 this Rapid Rehousing/Rental Assistance program through the CES case staffing process. BBCoC also requires that any funded provider through BBCoC 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 the 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 the provision of housing and other services to homeless individuals and families and people at risk of homelessness on a community-wide basis. The BBCoC uses the PromiSE HMIS implementation with the software vendor being Wellsky. All clients, programs and services provided are to be tracked using this community-wide data system. Grantees will be expected to budget for HMIS user licenses and provide or plan to purchase computing equipment adequate for accessing and entering HMIS data. Applicants are responsible for adhering to all applicable laws with regard to safeguarding the personal information of the persons they serve. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform BBCoC in the narrative section(s) of their response to this RFP or any restrictions to which they are subject that may preclude them from entering client data into the HMIS. For additional information about BBCoC's HMIS Policies and procedures go to <http://bigbendcoc.org/hmis/> .



#### 4. Reporting

Grantees will be responsible for ensuring that all HMIS data, as well as any data requested by all funders and governing agencies, is collected accurately by all staff and subcontractors, to the extent permitted by laws that govern each service type. Grantees will be expected to provide monthly invoices, status reports, roll-up reports as well as expenditure supporting documentation and receipts no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month following service delivery. Grantees are expected to monitor their data quality through Annual Performance Reports and CAPER reports to ensure monthly reporting is accurate.

## G. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 1. Required Forms

The Application and Budget Template can be accessed at <https://bigbendcoc.org/2025-2026-bbcoc-dcf-funding-competition/>. Use of the Application and Budget Template provided is mandatory. There is a requirement to submit a Budget Narrative (within the Budget Template) explaining the plan for staffing costs (including individual positions that will be supported by the grant), operations costs, a list of estimated cost for equipment to be purchased with grant funds.

### 2. Submission Dates and Times

- a. Each entity desiring to submit a proposal is required to submit a letter of intent to apply to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org) no later than 5pm on **July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**. This letter of intent should cover all the funding types, counties, and populations in which the organization plans to apply for funds.
- b. Proposals will be accepted no later than **12 noon Eastern Time, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025**. Please consult the BBCoC DCF RFP Funding 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.

### 4. Technical Considerations

- a. Application Forms must be completed using the most up-to-date version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, available for free download at <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>.
- b. Applicants with disabilities in need of reasonable accommodations in order to access and/or submit the Application Form may send a Reasonable Accommodation Request to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org). BBCoC suggests that Reasonable Accommodation Requests be submitted at least 10 days prior to the submission deadline.
- c. 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 nature. In the event of unforeseeable difficulties during the submission process, applicants must notify BBCoC by email at [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.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 BBCoC Executive Committee and will be final.

## H. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

### 1. Evaluation

All complete applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by the BBCoC Application and Project Performance Review Committee (PRC). Only those meeting the minimum qualifications and aligning with eligible activities will proceed to scoring. Final funding levels may be negotiated based on performance, capacity, and available resources.

Applications must receive a score of **80 or higher** to be considered for funding. Only the top-scoring applications will be recommended by the PRC to BBCoC Executive Committee for final approval and funding.

### 2. Evaluation Matrix

FACTOR	CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
Program Overview	Provide a detailed description of each proposed project.	15
Experience and Capacity	Describe your organization's history working with the target population and managing similar programs.	10
Partnerships and Coordination	Competent leadership and service strategies. Collaboration with BBCoC and partners.	10
Alignment with Local Priorities	Alignment with BBCoC goals to reduce homelessness, serve vulnerable populations, and increase housing access.	15
Service Provision Model	Use of Coordinated Entry, HMIS, and commitment to streamlined access, immediate housing placement and Supportive Care models.	15
Measurable Goals and Objectives	Specific, measurable goals and objectives with a clear plan to track and evaluate progress for each project.	15
Financial Capabilities	Ability to manage funds, demonstrate liquidity, and track expenditures accurately.	10
Budget	Provide a detailed budget on Budget template	10
	<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>100</b>

## I. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### Inquiries

All questions must be submitted in writing via email to [info@bigbendcoc.org](mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org) no later than noon on 7/14/25. Responses will be posted publicly (without identifying the submitter) on the RFP website.

### Objections

Applicants who wish to object to any RFP terms must submit written objections no later than noon on 7/14/25. Failure to do so constitutes a waiver of objection.

## **Modifications and Updates**

BBCoC may issue updates or modifications to the RFP. Applicants are responsible for checking <https://bigbendcoc.org/2025-2026-bbcoc-dcf-funding-competition/> regularly and incorporating any changes before submission. Those who submit a Letter of Intent will receive email alerts.

## **Errors and Omissions**

Applicants must notify BBCoC promptly of any discrepancies or questions about the RFP content. BBCoC is not responsible for correcting application errors or omissions after submission.

## **Financial Responsibility**

Applicants are responsible for all costs associated with preparing and submitting a proposal. Submitted proposals become the property of BBCoC and may be shared with DCF and BBCoC Board for evaluation and administration purposes.

## BBCoC DCF RFP Funding Timeline

**2025-2026**

### Attachment A

DATE	TASK	DETAILS
June 25, 2025	RELEASE OF RFP	RFP noticed BBCoC membership and non-profit member agencies. RFP posted to <a href="https://bigbendcoc.org/2025-2026-bbcoc-dcf-funding-competition/">https://bigbendcoc.org/2025-2026-bbcoc-dcf-funding-competition/</a> .
June 30, 2025 10:00 am Eastern	Informational Call	<p>An informational call will be hosted by BBCoC to answer any questions about Funding and RFP process with potential applicants.</p> <p>TEAMS Link: <a href="#">Click here to Join Meeting</a> Meeting ID: 222 180 981 112 3 Passcode: aR9JN3rT</p> <p>Call in Number: 323-618-1840</p>
<b>July 2, 2025 5:00 pm Eastern</b>	<b>LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY DUE</b>	Letter of intent to apply to be submitted on company letter head, from the organization board chair or executive director. Letter to include the specific activity categories and population served in which the organization plans to apply and be submitted to <a href="mailto:info@bigbendcoc.org">info@bigbendcoc.org</a> .
<b>July 16, 2025 12 noon Eastern</b>	<b>RFP SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b>	<b>ALL PROPOSALS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED on time. No late submissions will be accepted.</b>
July 17-18, 2025	BBCoC Application and Project Performance Review Committee (PRC) to review projects	BBCoC staff to review all proposals to ensure that required information is part of the proposal. The PRC review and score only completed proposals. PRC will submit any clarifying questions to BBCoC staff to have applicants provide responses in writing, if applicable, for evaluation and scoring.
July 21, 2025	PRC to convene and evaluate, score and rank proposals	PRC will form a recommendation based on proposal scores to be submitted to BBCoC Executive Committee
July 22, 2025	BBCoC Executive Committee to review and accept the PRC recommendation.	BBCoC Executive Committee will review and vote on the PRC recommendation proposals and award amounts.
July 23, 2025	BBCoC staff issue notices of awards to Applicants	
July 24-July 31, 2025	BBCoC staff work with Grantees to execute contracts for funding	Agency staff must be available to assist with the execution of contracts.
August 1, 2025	<b>All service activities under this funding begin with contracted grantees</b>	



## Vision For Use of DCF Funding

### Attachment B

#### **REDUCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS THROUGH HOUSING-FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS**

Our top priority is to reduce the number of chronically homeless individuals, both unsheltered and residing in emergency shelters. Given rising housing costs and limited affordable options, we will prioritize evidence-based strategies—specifically, Rapid Rehousing as a key first step—to support transitions into permanent housing and long-term stability. Providers are encouraged to use a housing-first approach and tailor wraparound services that promote self-sufficiency and minimize barriers to entry.

#### **IMPROVING ACCESS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES**

We recognize that many rural areas in our eight-county Continuum of Care are underserved and face unique barriers such as geographic isolation, limited provider presence, and lack of transportation. A parallel funding priority is to increase service coverage in these rural counties by onboarding new, locally connected providers. BBCoC will fund a dedicated staff position to offer technical assistance, support new provider development, and guide partners through the procurement and compliance process. This investment aims to build capacity across the entire CoC and ensure equitable access to services.

#### **STRENGTHENING DISCHARGE PLANNING FROM INSTITUTIONS**

BBCoC will work with hospitals, jails, and behavioral health facilities to embed trained provider staff who can engage individuals at risk of homelessness during the discharge planning process. This strategy is critical to reducing recidivism of homelessness and ensuring timely referrals to Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Rehousing resources. These partnerships will help intercept homelessness before it occurs and support more coordinated exits from institutions.

#### **CENTERING LIVED EXPERIENCE IN OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

Street Outreach teams will be strongly encouraged to recruit and employ individuals with lived experience of homelessness. Peer-based approaches build immediate trust and rapport with individuals experiencing homelessness, resulting in more effective engagement, advocacy, and service navigation. This practice also reflects our broader commitment to inclusivity, empowerment, and leadership development within the homelessness response system.

#### **EXPANDING CASE MANAGEMENT AND HOUSING NAVIGATION CAPACITY**

To meet the rising demand for assistance and to improve housing outcomes, Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing programs should increase staffing in the form of Housing-Focused Case Managers and Housing Navigators. These roles are essential to providing individualized support, connecting clients with available housing opportunities, and administering timely financial assistance. Strengthening this frontline capacity ensures that clients receive sustained support throughout the rehousing process.