

2026-2027



Big Bend Continuum of Care

Homelessness Grant Program Guide for DCF Funding (Challenge, TANF, ESG, and ESG)

Challenge and Challenge Plus Programmatic Guidance

OVERVIEW

BBCoC will use the grant funds to fund any activity or project that is clearly and specifically identified in the written CoC Homelessness Assistance Plan. The services and housing funded through this grant must be implemented through the BBCoC's coordinated entry system as provided in s. 420.6225(5)(b) and must be designed to assess and refer persons seeking assistance to the appropriate housing intervention and service provider. All grant funds shall go to activities that directly benefit homeless persons or persons at-risk of homelessness. Activities that do not directly benefit homeless persons may include, but are not limited to, public education, training, planning, and capacity building. Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) may be claimed to be a direct benefit used only to the extent that the system is used as a case management tool to coordinate services among two or more local agencies serving the homeless person.

BBCoC is fiscally responsible for all grant funds and for ensuring that funds are expended only for eligible activities in accordance with state expenditure guidance specifically relating to agreements for recipients/subrecipients of state or federal financial assistance.

CHALLENGE PLUS ELIGIBLE POPULATIONS

In collaboration with the Community-Based Care Organizations (CBCs) and/or Managing Entities (MEs) (depending on the individual), the CoCs shall dedicate housing resources to support Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for individuals contending with substance abuse and mental health disorders who may be at-risk of or facing homelessness. Each CoC shall demonstrate linkages with behavioral health and medical providers and ensure the availability of services that include intensive case management, substance abuse and mental health treatment, medication assisted treatment services, mobile response teams, medical services, supportive employment, recovery supports and leveraging technology to deliver telehealth services.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

BBCoC authorizes a sub-provider to spend a maximum of three percent (3%) of its grant award on administrative costs. Administrative costs must be used for staff salary, benefits, or operating expenses directly related to the management and oversight of this grant.

MATCH

Sub-providers shall also document the commitment of local government or private organizations to provide matching funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to 25 percent of the grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged funds or resources, including third-party cash or in-kind contributions, are authorized only for eligible activities carried out in connection with a project in which such funds or resources have not been used as leverage or match for any other project or program.

Emergency Solutions Grants

OVERVIEW

The relevant ESG regulations are [24 CFR Part 576](#).

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program authorized by subtitle B of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11371–11378](#)). The program authorizes the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to make grants to States, units of general-purpose local government, and territories for the rehabilitation or conversion of buildings for use as emergency shelter for the homeless, for the payment of certain expenses related to operating emergency shelters, for essential services related to emergency shelters and street outreach for the homeless, and for homelessness prevention and rapid re- housing assistance.

DEFINITIONS

Homeless means:

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
 - (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
 - (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
- (2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;
- (3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
 - (i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)) or section 725 of the McKinney-

Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);

- (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;
- (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
- (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or

(4) Any individual or family who:

- (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- (ii) Has no other residence; and
- (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

At risk of homelessness means:

(1) An individual or family who:

- (i) Has an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the area, as determined by HUD;
- (ii) Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place described in paragraph (1) of the “homeless” definition in this section; and
- (iii) Meets one of the following conditions:
 - (A) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
 - (B) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
 - (C) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance;
 - (D) Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals;

- (A) Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 persons reside per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau;
 - (B) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); or
 - (C) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the recipient's approved consolidated plan;
- (2) A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under section 387(3) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a(3)), section 637(11) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832(11)), section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2(6)), section 330(h)(5)(A) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)(5)(A)), section 3(m) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m)), or section 17(b)(15) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)(15)); or
- (3) A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)), and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child or youth if living with her or him.
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Client Eligibility

Eligibility is limited to individuals and families who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, or recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family’s homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Supportive Services should be individualized and meet the needs of the participant.

In cases where a household moves to another community in Florida or another state, Case Management can be light touch.

Once per month Case Management engagement must be documented in HMIS - an engagement can be a phone call.

May require connections with CoC serving the geography where the client is moving or being referred.

When a participant requires more Case Management, creative solutions should be implemented. Connect households to mainstream benefits.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

OVERVIEW

The relevant TANF regulations are [45 CFR Part 260](#).

To be eligible for assistance under the TANF grant, families must reside with the BBCoC catchment area; have at least one household member who is a United States citizen or a lawful permanent resident; have a minor child living in the household full-time; and have a household income less than two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty level as annually published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

A minor child means a child under the age of eighteen (18); or if age eighteen (18), but not yet nineteen (19), is attending high school, a General Education Development (GED) program, a trade school, or other career training program on a full-time basis. A minor child cannot be married or divorced.

The adult who applies for the grant assistance must be either the parent, or the relative caregiver of the minor child residing in the household.

The household income means both earned and unearned income received in the month in which the family applies for assistance. Earned income is income received from employment or self-employment, including wages, salary, tips, commissions and bonuses.

Unearned income is income received for which there is no performance of work, or provision of services as an employee or self-employed person. The income of all members of the household shall be reported in determining the eligibility of the family for assistance.

The family's housing emergency shall be the result of a financial or other crisis, as documented by the lead agency, or its sub-recipient.

TANF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Sub-providers can assist with the following activities **ONLY**:

Past due rent or mortgage payments, not to exceed four (4) months of the client's rent or mortgage payment.

The providers can set a maximum dollar amount for assistance each client may be eligible to receive. However, this amount cannot be more than the total of 4 months of rent or mortgage payments.

Past due utility bills, not to exceed four (4) months of the client's arrears for electric, gas, water and sewer only. This does include reconnect fees.

The providers can set a maximum dollar amount for assistance each client may be eligible to receive. However, this amount cannot be more than the total of 4 months of past due utility bills.

Staff and operating costs for the providing mandatory case management services to clients assisted.

These are the costs of staff salaries who are providing the case management for clients assisted or operational costs associated with providing TANF assistance.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

The provider must track, monitor, and report on each family assisted for a period of at least twelve (12) months after the last date of assistance was provided to the family. The provider shall report whether the family was able to avoid homelessness, as well as whether the family remains in permanent housing at the end of the monitoring and reporting period.

BBCoC staff is responsible for making sure this information is tracked and monitored.

The goal is that 85% of the families assisted will remain stably housed the year following the last date of assistance.

Sub-providers must develop a case plan for each family that applies for assistance. For those families receiving assistance, the case plan should identify the amount of assistance the family will receive.

Documentation should include copies of check payments made, household income/size, and the follow-up info of housing stability. For families not assisted, their income should be documented along with household size.

Sub-providers must enter info on families assisted into HMIS.