



Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV) Information Sheet

Version: November 20, 2020 **Updates are highlighted**

Background

Special Emergency Solutions Grants Program funds (ESG-CV) were allocated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as authorized by the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act](#) (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136. These special ESG-CV funds are to be used to **prevent, prepare for, and respond** to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) among individuals and families who are homeless or receiving homeless assistance; and to support additional homeless assistance and homelessness prevention activities to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. These ESG-CV funds are in addition to annual 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 grants and are [subject to unique guidelines specific to CARES Act HUD guidance](#).

ESG CARES Act funds (ESG-CV) were released in two phases. In the first phase (ESG-CV1), OHCS received \$6.7 million. These funds are deployed to [Community Action Agencies \(CAAs\)](#) through an amendment to the existing Master Grant Agreement (MGA).

In the second phase (ESG-CV2), OHCS will receive approximately \$49 million dollars. OHCS sought and received flexibility in [HB 4304](#) to [allocate the second phase](#) of the CARES Act ESG-CV2 funds: \$7 million will be provided to our CAA partners, and approximately \$42 million will be allocated via a competitive process to expand the reach and scope of services provided to communities most disproportionately impacted by both COVID-19 and housing instability.

ESG-CV2 State Priorities

OHCS is working diligently to ensure that equity is integrated into the state's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. COVID-19 does not affect all communities equally, and people of color are more likely to experience disparate effects of the pandemic. This new flexibility for ESG-CV2 funds afforded through HB 4304 will allow OHCS to better address disparities by directing resources for an equitable response and recovery that includes culturally-specific organizations and services.

OHCS aims to foster an equity and racial justice oriented response under which ESG-CV2 funds are leveraged to achieve the following goals:

- Prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19, among individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or receiving homeless assistance and to support additional homeless assistance and homelessness prevention activities to mitigate the impacts created by coronavirus.
- Meet the needs of Oregon's unsheltered and high needs populations first to overcome the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on communities of color.
- Reimagine and strengthen Oregon's shelter system under a non-congregate framework to incorporate culturally-specific services, key stakeholders and adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Incorporate culturally-specific organizations to expand the homeless services network and deepen community penetration to improve services to all Oregonians.

- Utilize [Housing First](#) approaches to connect households to permanent housing and provide supportive services to increase housing retention by coordinating with other state and federal programs to optimize funds across all sources.
- Create a suitable living environment and robust system infrastructure while working with participants to end homelessness.
- Ensure efficient use of funds and effective program administration in accordance with federal rules and regulations.
- Ensure projects funded through regular ESG allocations are not interrupted.

In order to meet these goals, **collaboration and coordination** across the homeless services system is paramount. OHCS will seek to identify projects that fully incorporate key stakeholders, address the goals outlined above, and meet the requirements of ESG-CV2 funds.

What is ESG?

The Federal [Emergency Solutions Grant program \(ESG\)](#) provides funds for a variety of activities to address homelessness as authorized under the federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 and state requirements. The special ESG-CV funds are to be used to **prevent, prepare for, and respond** to the coronavirus pandemic within the categories below (please visit [24 CFR §576](#) for full program details and definitions):

- **Street Outreach** (24 CFR §576.101)
Eligible activities: Engagement, case management, emergency health services, emergency mental health services, transportation, and services for special populations including youth, young adults, and victims of domestic violence.
- **Emergency Shelter** (24 CFR §576.102)
Eligible activities: Case management and shelter operations, including onsite services (such as patient health services), renovations (rehab and conversion), maintenance, rent & utilities, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, food, furnishings, supplies, and hotel/motel vouchers.
- **Rapid Rehousing** (24 CFR §576.105)
Eligible activities: Rental assistance (arrears included), application fees, last month's rent on a new lease, security deposits, utility deposits/payments, moving costs, case management, and credit repair.
- **Homelessness Prevention** (24 CFR §576.105)
Eligible activities: Rental assistance (arrears included), application fees, last month's rent on a new lease, security deposits, utility deposits/payments, moving costs, case management, and credit repair for households at risk of homelessness or imminent homelessness. Income cannot exceed 50% AMI.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Component** (24 CFR §576.107)
- **Administrative Activities** (24 CFR §576.108)

ESG COVID-Specific Flexibilities

HUD has provided waivers, requirement relaxations, and additional definitions of federal requirements for ESG-CV funding to: expedite establishment of non-congregate shelter facilities, move households into rental units quickly, and prevent households from becoming homeless due to eviction proceedings, as well as provide the service provider with the protection of social distancing.

Please note the following CARES Act provisions that are especially pertinent to the ESG-CV funding (and please visit [HOMELESS EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS \(ESG\) COVID-19 GRANTEE GUIDANCE](#) for additional and complete information):

- The 60 percent maximum allocation spending cap on Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach activities does not apply to amounts provided under the CARES Act.
- Federal habitability and environmental review standards and requirements do not apply to temporary emergency shelters that have been determined necessary to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
- ESG-CV funding may be used for training on infectious disease prevention and mitigation and to provide hazard pay (including for time worked prior to the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for staff working directly to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. These activities are not considered administrative costs and can be charged to the budget item that covers the staff member’s duties.
- ESG-CV funds are exempt from the ESG match requirements, including 24 CFR 576.201.
- Waiving the [FMR](#) limitation on rent assistance if the unit meets the agency’s rent reasonableness standards.
- Allowance to spend additional funds on data collection.

Subrecipient Selection Process

OHCS will publicly post a Request for Applications (RFA) seeking qualified applicants. The following outlines the draft working timeline for the RFA process:

| Tentative Dates | Proposed Activity |
|--------------------|---|
| Early October | OHCS submits Substantial Amendment to HUD Portland Field Office |
| Late October | OHCS Finalizes RFA and obtains Department of Justice (DOJ) approval |
| November 20, 2020 | Post RFA on ORPIN and OHCS' website |
| December 9, 2020 | OHCS Conducts RFA pre-application webinar |
| December 27, 2020 | Application submission deadline |
| January | OHCS Completes application review/evaluation |
| January - February | OHCS Publishes notice of ESG-CV2 awards |

When the RFA is posted, OHCS will distribute this information widely. To ensure you receive this information, please sign up for [OHCS eNews](#) by selecting Agency News Releases and Housing Stabilization Division Updates. News releases will be sent out with the RFA pre-application webinar dates as well.

As the ESG-CV state recipient, OHCS is responsible for awarding funds to eligible subrecipients consistent with all HUD requirements and CV program adaptations. Eligible subrecipients must meet the definition and all requirements laid out in [24 CFR 576](#) which includes the definitions below. ***Please note: OHCS does not have the authority to fund organizations that do not meet these definitions or are not able to comply with the ESG Federal Grant Requirements.***

- *Subrecipient* means a unit of general purpose local government or private nonprofit organization to which a recipient makes available ESG funds. (Note that for-profit subrecipients are not allowed.)
- *Private nonprofit organization* means a private nonprofit organization that is a secular or religious organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and which is exempt from taxation under subtitle A of the Code, has an accounting system and a voluntary board, and practices

nondiscrimination in the provision of assistance. A private nonprofit organization does not include a governmental organization.

- *Unit of general purpose local government* means any city, county, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State; an instrumentality of a unit of general purpose local government, **including a Public Housing Authority**; or a combination of general purpose local governments recognized by HUD.

The ESG Interim Rule (24 CFR Part 576) aligns the ESG program with the Continuum of Care (CoC) program (24 CFR Part 578) to facilitate coordination and foster efficient use of resources to prevent and end homelessness. To this end, OHCS seeks to support and foster coordination and collaboration across the homeless service system inclusive of the CoCs. Applicants should seek to consult with their CoC at a minimum, and applicants can apply collaboratively with their CoCs if desired (more details to come in the RFA notice). Please find your local CoC region [here](#) and note specific CoC contact information below:

| Continuum of Care REGION | CoC Lead Contacts |
|--|--|
| OR-500 - Eugene/Springfield/Lane County CoC | Amanda.borta@lanecountyor.gov |
| OR-501 - Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County CoC | bill.boyd@multco.us ; steve.richard@multco.us ; kaytee.evans@multco.us |
| OR-502 - Medford, Ashland/Jackson County CoC | cwilkerson@accesshelps.org |
| OR-503 - Central Oregon CoC | mollyh@neighborimpact.org ; cochair@cohomeless.org ; scottc@neighborimpact.org |
| OR-504 - Salem/Marion, Polk Counties CoC | Ashley.hamilton@mwwcaa.org ; calvin.jan@yahoo.com |
| OR-505 - Oregon Balance of State CoC | jessica@caporegon.org ; calbe@caporegon.org |
| OR-506 - Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County CoC | Annette_evans@co.washington.or.us ; kgalian@caowash.org |
| OR-507 - Clackamas County CoC | abbyahe@clackamas.us |

Regional Allocations

In-line with best practices and understanding the flow of resources into each community, OHCS has announced the regional allocations. Regional allocations are determined by each CoC geographic region in order to align these funds with ongoing community efforts and planning and ensure full coverage of resources across the state. This information includes the amount of ESG-CV2 funds that will be competitively available by CoC region to position communities and interested ESG-CV2 RFA applicants to effectively plan for projects with full sight of available resources:

| Continuum of Care Region | Competitive Allocation |
|--|-------------------------------|
| OR-500 - Eugene/Springfield/Lane County CoC | \$6,758,209.00 |
| OR-501 - Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County CoC | \$3,082,591.00 |
| OR-502 - Medford, Ashland/Jackson County CoC | \$2,777,195.00 |
| OR-503 - Central Oregon CoC | \$2,396,376.00 |

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| OR-504 - Salem/Marion, Polk Counties CoC | \$5,519,336.00 |
| OR-505 - Oregon Balance of State CoC | \$15,623,148.00 |
| OR-506 - Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County CoC | \$2,992,498.00 |
| OR-507 - Clackamas County CoC | \$1,159,283.00 |

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the [OHCS ESG CV information session](#) and [accompanying slides](#) as well as sign up for [OHCS eNews](#) by selecting Agency News Releases and Housing Stabilization Division Updates. News releases will be sent out with the RFA pre-application webinar dates once available.