



2023-2024 CRITICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF ENERGY, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

FEBRUARY 2023

APPLICATION DUE BY MARCH 24, 2023



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2023-2024 Critical Assistance Program Information

Program Description

The Critical Assistance program provides homeless prevention assistance to low-to-moderate income households in areas of the state that are not served with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant, state-funded Homeless Prevention program, or other program funds. Households served are at or below 80 percent of County Median Income (CMI), with the majority below 30 percent of CMI. This assistance consists of a one-time rent payment, utility payment, security deposit, mortgage payment or property tax payment to prevent the client from becoming homeless. Utility payments can include home safety-related repairs such as water heaters and septic tanks, if all other resources have been exhausted.

The Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) will award all grant funds under this competitive process to one (1) applicant agency who has the capacity to assist the neediest clients in all areas of the state, outside of Dane, Milwaukee, and Racine counties, for whom a one-time payment would prevent homelessness.

The most qualified applicant agency will agree to provide a single point of contact statewide for Critical Assistance beneficiaries to apply for funds and receive award determinations and assistance payments. Other programs provide most of the homeless prevention funding available through DEHCR.

The grant award includes funds to support homeless prevention activities, such as eligibility determination and other costs associated with administering the Critical Assistance program. The total amount of funding available through this application is **\$282,800**. Applicant agencies should apply for the entire amount available. The contract period will be from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 and is renewable for one year, subject to grantee performance.

Eligible Activities

Critical Assistance funds may be used for the following homeless prevention activities:

1) Rent Assistance

The grantee may make a one-time rental payment, with the client showing capacity to make future rent payments.

2) Utility Payment Assistance

The grantee may provide utility payment assistance in instances when non-payment of utility costs will lead to eviction and homelessness. Eligible assistance includes heat, electric and water costs. Other forms of utility assistance must first be considered before Critical Assistance funds are used for this purpose.

3) Security Deposits

The grantee may provide security deposit assistance to renters after other homeless prevention assistance sources of assistance are considered.

4) Mortgage Assistance

The grantee may assist homeowners with a one-time payment of principal and interest on a mortgage loan that is in arrearage. The homeowner must show the ability to make future payments.

5) Property Tax Assistance

The grantee may assist homeowners with a one-time property tax payment for a property tax arrearage. The homeowner must show the ability to make future payments.

6) Administrative Costs

The grantee may use up to 15 percent of the award for administrative costs to support housing assistance activities, including staff salaries and administrative expenses.

Payments are made directly to landlords, mortgage holders, local units of government (property tax payments) or utility companies.

Application Requirements

The following entities may apply for the Critical Assistance program:

- A governing body of a county, city, village, or town
- An elected governing body of a federally recognized American Indian tribe or band in the state of Wisconsin
- A housing authority
- A nonstock corporation that is organized under [ch. 181](#) and that is a nonprofit corporation, as defined in [Wis. Stat. § 181.0103\(17\)](#)
- A cooperative organized under [ch. 185](#) or [193](#), if the articles of incorporation, articles of organization, or bylaws of the cooperative limit the rate of dividend that may be paid on all classes of stock
- A religious society organized under [ch. 187](#)
- An organization operated for profit

Reports

Monthly expenditure reports will be required. Expenditure reports shall be emailed to DEHCR Fiscal and the Critical Assistance program manager on or before the due date, stipulated by the Division.

A final expenditure report for the contract period is due no later than 60 days after the contract ends.

Audit Requirements for State-Funded Awards

Applicant agencies that receive state funds during the fiscal year, shall comply with the requirements set forth in the State Single Audit Guidelines issued by the Department. Audit reports are due to the Department within the earlier of 30 calendar days after receipt of the auditor's report(s), or nine months after the end of the audit period.

Please review the [Department of Administration's Single Audit Compliance Supplement](#) for details on submission of the reporting package.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation

DEHCR requires the applicant agency receiving Critical Assistance funds must participate in the statewide HMIS. The awarded applicant agency should contact the Institute for Community Alliance for assistance in getting started in Wisconsin's HMIS.

Grant Awards

Recommendations of eligibility for a Critical Assistance award will be made by administrative review and presented to the DEHCR administrator for approval. The Division reserves the right to negotiate the grant amount, authorize budget items and specific program content with eligible applicant agencies prior to entering into a grant agreement. All aspects of this application will become contractual obligations. All funds must be expended during the contract year and cannot be carried forward into the following year.

Notice of Non-Approval and Rights of Applicants

Each applicant agency whose proposal is reviewed by DEHCR staff shall receive written notice of the determination of approval or non-funding of the proposed project.

Each applicant agency whose project has not been approved for an award shall be given an opportunity to discuss the reasons for non-funding or may write requesting the reasons for the decision. The DEHCR representative will clarify the reasons for the grant award decision.

Appeal Process

- The appeal must include the name of the application and a short summary of why the applicant is appealing the decision.
- The appeal must be filed with the Division Administrator within 30 business days of the date of the denial letter.
- The Division Administrator will review the application and will decide whether to reverse the denial decision.

- If the Division Administrator denies the appeal, the applicant must file an appeal with the Secretary's Office within 30 days from the date of the appeal decision.
- The Secretary's Office will review the application and will make a final determination.

2023-2024 Critical Assistance Application Instructions

Introduction

Please review this information before completing the application.

Applicants that have questions about completing the Critical Assistance application may contact the Critical Assistance program manager by phone at (608) 261-7013 or by email at Dana.Wallace1@wisconsin.gov. For questions regarding HMIS, please email the Institute for Community Alliances.

Application Submission

All applications must be submitted by email to DOASupportiveHousing@wisconsin.gov and the Critical Assistance program manager. The applicant agency will receive a confirmation email once their application has been submitted.

The application email **must** include the following attachments:

- 1) 2023-2024 Critical Assistance application (PDF version), including responses to all questions and budget tables
- 2) SAM.gov eligibility status

The closing date for the receipt of all applications, under this solicitation, will be **Friday, March 24, 2023 at 11:59 pm**.

Unless requested by the Division, no additional information will be accepted from an applicant agency after the deadline for the submittal of applications.

Application Format

It is **strongly recommended** that applicant agencies utilize the Microsoft Word version of the 2023-2024 Critical Assistance application. Write responses to the questions within the textboxes of the application. Applicant agencies must submit a PDF version of the Critical Assistance application with all questions answered and all attachments included.

Review the Critical Assistance application in its entirety before proceeding with the final submission.

Cover Page

Applications must use the cover page from the 2023-2024 Critical Assistance application template as the cover of the applicant agency's application.

Applicant Information

The following items must be included for an application to be considered eligible for funding:

- Applicant agency's name
- Physical address of the primary office location
- Mailing address for the purchase order and reimbursement
- Applicant agency's UEI number
- SAM.gov proof checkbox
- Critical Assistance program manager contact information: Provide the name, title, phone number, and email of the person who prepared the application, and can answer questions related to the information contained in the application.
- Official authorized signatory contact information: Provide the name, title, phone number, and email of the person who has the authority to approve and sign the application.
- Client referral contact information: Provide the name, title, phone number, and email of the person who individuals and households can be referred to.
- Agency website link

Funding Request

Include the total amount of program and administrative funds requested in the Critical Assistance application. The total amount of funding available for Critical Assistance activities and administrative costs is **\$282,800**. **Since one applicant agency will be selected for Critical Assistance funding, the entire amount available must be requested.**

Submittal Authorization

An official authorized to sign for the applicant and to sign the contract must execute the submittal authorization.

Officials authorized to sign include:

- President of the Board of Directors of a non-profit organization
- Chief elected official of a local unit of government
- CEO/President of an organization for for-profit organizations

Application Questions

Complete the check box questions and answer the narrative questions within the text of the application.

Narrative Questions

Information provided in these sections will help DEHCR understand what the applicant agency's capabilities are, what is being planned with the Critical Assistance funds, the population(s) that will be served, and why this service area needs assistance.

Racial Equity Questions

DEHCR is dedicated to increasing racial equity across the state of Wisconsin and particularly doing so in all programs receiving DEHCR administered funds. Complete all check box questions and answer the narrative questions within the text of the application.

Practices, Policies, Procedures and Documentation

The following practices, policies, procedures, and documentation are required of each grantee:

- Signing authority documentation
- Accessibility practices and resources
- No faith-based activity requirements
- Client termination policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Conflict of interest policy
- Non-discrimination policy for clients and employees
- Drug free workplace policy
- Anti-lobbying requirements
- Recordkeeping and retention

Financial Management Questions

Maintaining clear records and tracking each funding source separately is required by DEHCR. Complete all check box questions within the text of the application.

Budget Information

The budget form in this section should include the total costs and revenues for the applicant agency's entire Critical Assistance program. This section provides information on the funds the applicant agency is requesting and other related funding sources. All figures should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

Proposed Critical Assistance Program Operating Budget

Before completing this section, the applicant agency must determine all other available resources that will be utilized with the Critical Assistance funding being requested. This includes other resources, such as program income. No more than 15 percent of the Critical Assistance funds requested may be allocated towards administrative costs.

Complete the budget table by identifying the following:

- Amount of Critical Assistance funds being requested for each program activity
- Amount of program income/revolving loan funds that will be used in direct combination with the requested Critical Assistance funds
- Amount of other funding that will be used in direct combination with the requested Critical Assistance funds
- Total operating budget for the Critical Assistance program
- Estimated number of households that will be assisted based on income levels
- Total amount of administrative funding being requested

Critical Assistance funds allocated to each program activity are considered estimated totals. Budget amendments are not required for funding changes between program activities.

Budget Justification

Answer both narrative questions within the provided textboxes.

Program Income/Revolving Loan Funds

Complete this section if the applicant agency operates a revolving loan fund generated from Critical Assistance funds. Program income retained (from repaid security deposits, for example), must be kept in a separate account and expended on Critical Assistance program costs, with up to 15 percent allowed for administrative costs.

Critical Assistance Program Assurances

A signed copy of these assurances must accompany the applicant agency's Critical Assistance application. The assurances will be in effect for the full 12-month duration of the contract.

Appendix

All applicant agencies must provide documentation from SAM.gov that they are not in a period of debarment/suspension or in ineligibility status (i.e. have no active exclusion records). To be eligible to receive Critical Assistance funding, this documentation **must be included** in the submission email.

Notice of the Right to Withdraw

The Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources reserves the right to amend, modify, or withdraw this application package and any of the grant program instructions or procedures contained herein. The Division may exercise such right at any time without notice and without liability to any applicant agency or other parties for their expenses incurred in the preparation of a proposal or otherwise.