



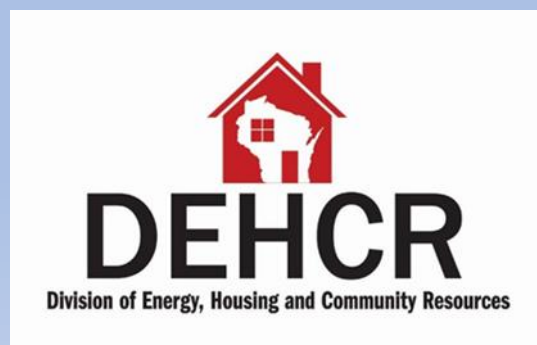
# **2023-2025 HOME TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TBRA) PROGRAM**

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

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

**APRIL 2024**

***APPLICATION DUE BY MAY 20, 2024***



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# 2024-2026 HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program Information

## Program Description

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) was created to provide federal assistance to states to produce decent and affordable housing opportunities, particularly housing for very low- and low-income households. The Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) allocates HOME funding to support the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program in non-HOME entitlement areas in Wisconsin. Agreements are awarded over a two-year performance period to provide rent assistance to individuals and families that have incomes at or below 60 percent of the County Median Income (CMI) and meet other eligibility requirements.

Because the TBRA program allows local flexibility in many program design areas, DEHCR allows grantees to develop community-specific programs. TBRA programs must comply with HOME regulations such as tenant occupancy and income requirements, unit and rent standards, and administrative performance. Grantees are subject to performance indicators, such as participation levels, affirmative outreach efforts and availability of suitable housing. As with all HUD HOME programs, the TBRA program requires a best effort to provide 25 percent match. Eligible match items cannot include a client's portion of the rent or any federal funding sources.

HOME TBRA funds shall serve individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Applicant agencies may further define more specific populations within their proposed TBRA service area(s).

## Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing

DEHCR encourages TBRA programs to adopt a Housing First philosophy and/or Rapid Re-Housing program model.

The [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#) defines 'Housing First' as follows:

Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible – and then providing voluntary supportive services as needed. This approach prioritizes client choice in both housing selection and in-service participation.

Housing First programs share critical elements such as:

- A focus on helping individuals and families access and sustain permanent rental housing as quickly as possible;
- A variety of services delivered to promote housing stability and individual well-being on an as needed and entirely voluntary basis; and
- A standard lease agreement for housing – as opposed to mandated therapy or services compliance.

[HUD](#) defines ‘Rapid Re-Housing’ as follows:

[Rapid Re-Housing] will provide financial assistance and services to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless and help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. The funds under this program are intended to target individuals and families who would be homeless but for this assistance. The funds will provide for a variety of assistance, including short-term or medium-term rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services, including such activities as mediation, credit counseling, security or utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and case management.

## Supportive Services

DEHCR requires grantees to make their best effort to provide supportive services to TBRA clients. Grantees may provide supportive services directly or contract services through another agency. Supportive services include but are not limited to case management, mental health services, transportation assistance, and life skills training.

Clients may be encouraged but *cannot* be required to participate in supportive services; as such, they cannot be terminated from a TBRA program due to non-participation in supportive services.

## Self-Sufficiency Programs

Grantees may choose to operate their TBRA program as a self-sufficiency program. For the purposes of TBRA, DEHCR defines a self-sufficiency program as:

A program whose goal is to increase clients’ earned income and reduce their dependency on public assistance by providing education, job training, counseling, and other forms of social service assistance in addition to rental assistance so that clients can acquire the skills necessary to obtain self-sufficiency.

Unlike other TBRA programs, self-sufficiency programs *may* require clients to participate in supportive services; however, clients still *cannot* be terminated due to non-participation. They may, however, be denied a renewal of their TBRA subsidy.

## Other Program Design Considerations

TBRA programs must comply with applicable HOME regulations, including unit occupancy standards, client income requirements, Housing Quality Standards (HQS), Fair Market Rent (FMR) and Rent Reasonableness standards, and administrative performance. Applicant agencies should review the [2013 HOME Final Rule](#) for more information.

## Eligible Applicant Agencies

Governmental entities and private-not-for profit agencies located in Wisconsin are eligible to apply under this TBRA application. In addition, a non-stock, not-for-profit corporation organized under Chapter 181 or a religious society organized under Chapter 187 and housing authorities are eligible.

All applicant agencies must be outside of the HOME entitlement areas and be in good standing with DOA and DEHCR (no unresolved monitoring findings, no outstanding required reports, no major audit finding, etc.). Applicant agencies must be registered with the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) and cannot be listed as a debarred contractor.

Agencies receiving HOME TBRA funds will be subject to a monitoring process conducted by DEHCR staff at least once during the performance period.

HOME TBRA funds are not available in entitlement areas that receive HUD HOME funds directly. These entitlement areas include the cities of Eau Claire, Green Bay, Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, and Racine and the counties of Dane, Milwaukee, Rock, and the Waukesha/Jefferson/Washington/Ozaukee County Consortia.

## Eligible Activities

TBRA program funds may be utilized for the following activities:

### 1) Rent Assistance

The term of rent assistance with HOME funds may not exceed 24 months; however, contracts can be renewed, subject to the availability of HOME funds. Rent assistance must not exceed the difference between the client's rent and 30 percent of the client's household income.

### 2) Security Deposits

The maximum amount of security deposit assistance per client is equivalent to two months' rent for the unit. Security deposits must be provided to clients as a grant, not a loan.

### 3) Utility Assistance

Utility assistance can only be provided to clients who are also receiving rent assistance. Grantees can define which utilities they will cover such as heat, electric, water, sewer, and trash. Phone, internet, and cable are ineligible utility expenses. Grantees define the maximum amount of utility assistance per client by setting a flat dollar cap or by paying only for certain utilities (e.g., heat/electric or water/sewer/trash).

#### 4) HQS Inspections

Grantees can charge whichever is less to TBRA program funds: \$50 per inspection (\$35 per re-inspection) plus mileage reimbursed at the current federal rate or the actual staff or contractor costs of performing the inspection.

#### 5) Household Income Determinations

Grantees can charge whichever is less to TBRA program funds: \$50 per income determination or the actual staff cost of completing the income determination. If income determinations are conducted outside a grantee's office, they may charge whichever is less for mileage reimbursement: the current federal rate or the rate at which the grantee agency reimburses for mileage.

#### 6) Administrative Costs

The grantee may use up to 10 percent of the total award for administrative costs to support housing assistance activities, including staff salaries and administrative expenses.

**Any program activity not explicitly listed in this section is ineligible.**

### Client Eligibility

Eligible clients must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Have a household income at or below 60 percent of the county median income; and
  - a. Household income should be calculated per [HUD's Part 5 income definition](#).
- (2) Be homeless or at risk of homelessness. *Agencies may determine the definition of homeless or at risk of homelessness used for the TBRA program.*

### Length of Assistance

Under Wisconsin's TBRA program, assistance can be offered for up to 24 months; however, contracts can be renewed for an additional 24 months, subject to the availability of HOME TBRA funds and eligibility re-certification. Leases cannot be signed for less than one year unless documentation shows that both the client and the landlord have agreed to a shorter lease period.

### Reports

Monthly payment requests and TBRA set-up forms will be required. Payment requests must be submitted to [DEHCR Fiscal](#) and the [TBRA program manager](#) on or before the due date, stipulated by the Division. TBRA set-up forms must be submitted to the TBRA program manager.

The final payment request and end-of-grant year report for the performance period is due no later than 60 days after the agreement ends.

## Audit Requirements for Federal-Funded Awards

**Governmental and non-profit agencies**, or their assignees, which receive federal 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, if applicable.

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

## Homeless Participation Involvement

DEHCR requires that applicant agencies receiving TBRA funds have representation of a person who is experiencing homelessness or was formerly homeless on either their Board of Directors or an equivalent policymaking entity directly responsible for writing and overseeing policy.

## Local Continuum of Care/Homeless Coalition Participation

DEHCR requires that applicant agencies receiving TBRA funds participate in the HUD-recognized Continuum of Care in the territories being served. This includes representation in the local homeless coalitions and participation in the Point in Time counts, to the maximum extent practicable.

## Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation

DEHCR requires that applicant agencies receiving TBRA funds must participate in the statewide HMIS. The applicant agency should contact the [Institute for Community Alliances](#) for assistance with Wisconsin's HMIS.

## Grant Awards

Recommendations of eligibility for TBRA funding will be made by administrative review and presented to DEHCR's administrator for approval. The Division reserves the right to negotiate the agreement amount, authorize budget items and specific program content with eligible applicant agencies prior to executing an agreement. All aspects of this application will become contractual obligations. **All funds must be expended during the two-year performance period and cannot be carried forward into the following year.**

The two-year performance period will begin on **July 1, 2024** and end on **June 30, 2026**. For renewing grantees from the 2022-2024 TBRA application cycle, this is the last year of the contract renewal period. Renewing grantees from the 2023-2025 TBRA application cycle may be eligible for one additional contract renewal period, based on satisfactory performance. New grantees may be eligible for two additional contract renewal periods, based on satisfactory performance.

Justifiable modifications may be made during the performance period only through prior consultation with, and written approval from DEHCR. Failure of the grantee to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the award.

## **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 Department may exercise such rights 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.

## **Notice of Non-Approval and Rights of Applicant Agencies**

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 agency 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 agency 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.



# 2024-2026 HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Application Instructions

## Introduction

Please review this information before completing the application.

If applicant agencies have questions about completing the TBRA application, please contact the TBRA program manager by phone at (608) 261-7013 or by email at [Dana.Wallace1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Dana.Wallace1@wisconsin.gov). For questions regarding HMIS, please email the [Institute for Community Alliances](#).

## Application Format

It is **strongly recommended** that applicant agencies utilize the Microsoft Word version of the 2024-2026 TBRA application. Write responses to the questions within the textboxes of the application. Applicant agencies must submit a PDF version of the TBRA application with all questions answered and all attachments included to be considered eligible for funding.

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

## Application Submission

All applications must be submitted as a PDF to the [DOA Supportive Housing](#) inbox and the [TBRA program manager](#). Applicant agencies will receive a confirmation email once their application has been submitted.

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

- 1) 2024-2026 TBRA application (PDF version), including responses to all questions and budget tables.
- 2) SAM registration, showing active status and no active exclusions.
- 3) Completed and signed submittal authorization (electronic signature is acceptable).
- 4) Completed and signed TBRA assurances (electronic signature is acceptable).

The closing date for the receipt of all applications, under this solicitation, will be **Monday, May 20, 2024 at 11:59 pm**.

Unless requested by the Division, no additional information will be accepted from an applicant agency after the application deadline.

## Cover Page

Applications must use the cover page from the 2024-2026 TBRA application template as the cover of the applicant agency's application.

## Applicant Information

The following items must be included for an applicant agency 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.
- Applicant agency's HMIS organization and program ID numbers.
- SAM.gov proof checkbox and status documentation.
- Applicant agency's proposed TBRA service area(s).
- TBRA 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 TBRA application.
- Client referral contact information: Provide the name, title, phone number, and email of the person who individuals and households can be referred to for assistance.
- Agency website link.

## Funding Request

Include the total amount of program and administrative funds requested in the TBRA application. No more than 10 percent of the TBRA program funds requested may be allocated towards administrative costs.

## Submittal Authorization

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

Officials authorized to sign include, but not limited to:

- President of the Board of Directors of a non-profit organization
- Chief elected official of a local unit of government

## Application Questions

### Renewing Grantees

Current TBRA grantees who are in good standing (no unresolved monitoring findings, no outstanding required reports, no major audit finding, etc.) are eligible to apply for renewal funding under this application. Renewing TBRA grantees will need to identify any proposed changes to their existing program, address homeless participation involvement, provide their program budget information, and sign the assurances. If program changes are not applicable, respond to each question with N/A.

### New Applicant Agencies

Please answer all the questions within the application.

### Narrative Questions

Information provided in this section will help DEHCR understand what the applicant agency's capabilities are, what is being planned with the TBRA 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 administrated funds. Select the check boxes and answer the narrative questions within the text of the application.

### Contractual Responsibility and Subcontracting

Indicate whether the applicant agency will provide all TBRA services directly or subcontract with outside entities. If the applicant agency plans to subcontract, please describe the services that will be contracted out and who will be responsible for completing those activities.

As the awarded applicant agency, it is their responsibility to monitor subcontractor(s) and ensure that they are adhering to all TBRA program regulations and requirements.

### 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, employees, and applicants
- Drug free workplace policy
- Anti-lobbying requirements
- Recordkeeping and retention policies

## 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

This section provides information on the TBRA funds that the applicant agency is requesting. All figures should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

### Proposed TBRA Program Operating Budget

Enter the applicant agency's estimated total expenses for operating the TBRA program. Estimate the amount of funding the applicant agency will need amongst the various bedroom sizes. No more than 10 percent of the TBRA program funds requested may be allocated towards administrative costs.

Complete the budget table by identifying the following:

- Fair market rent (FMR) standards for the proposed TBRA service area(s) for each bedroom size.
- Amount of TBRA funds being requested for each bedroom size.
- Estimated number of households that will be assisted for each bedroom size.
- Total program budget for the TBRA program.
- Total number of estimated households that will be served by the TBRA program.
- Estimated amount of funding required to conduct income determinations and HQS inspections.
- Total amount of administrative funding being requested.
- Total operational budget for the TBRA program.

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

## TBRA Program Assurances

A signed copy of these assurances must accompany the applicant agency's TBRA application. The assurances will be in effect for the full 24-month duration of the agreement.

## 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 TBRA funding, this documentation **must be included** in the application submission.