



Department of Public Safety
Minnesota Office of Justice Programs

2024 – 2025 TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM GRANTS

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview

1.1 General Information

- Grant Name: Transitional Housing Program Grant (THP)
- [Minnesota Office of Justice Programs \(OJP\) Website](#)
- Open for Applications: October 10, 2023
- Application Due Date: November 28, 2023

1.2 Program Description

The purpose of this request for proposals is to fund community-based nonprofits and/or tribal government programs that wish to start up a transitional housing program (THP) or increase the number of supported households in their currently operating transitional housing program. The funding supports transitional housing for survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault experiencing housing instability. Grant funds may not be used to provide temporary or extended stay emergency shelter.

This grant program is designed to increase transitional housing options in Minnesota for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Funding may be used to support various models including site-based, scattered-site, healing-focused housing, etc. Organizations serving Black, Indigenous, and peoples of color (BIPOC), cultural communities and traditionally underserved populations are strongly encouraged to apply.

For purposes of this grant, housing instability includes the following:

- Any individual, unaccompanied youth or family that is:
 - Without a permanent place to live that is fit for human habitation;
 - Fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence and/or sexual assault; or
 - Doubled up or couch hopping.

1.3 Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

It is State of Minnesota policy to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in making competitive grant awards. See Executive Order [19.01](#).

The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. See [OGM Policy 08-02](#).

1.4 Funding and Program Dates

Funding

Funds are authorized by Minnesota Session Laws of 2023, Chapter 52, Article 2, Section 3, Subd. 8.

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Up to \$712,500 is available for application for a 23-month grant period. Final award amounts may be lower than requested. It is anticipated OJP will award up to 4 applicants, with awards amounts ranging between \$200,000 - \$400,000 for the 23-month grant period. At this time this is a cost reimbursement only grant, however an advance may become available depending upon internal DPS approval processes. It is anticipated renewal applications will be available for the subsequent grant period starting January 1, 2026.

Program Dates

This is a 23-month grant period, from February 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025.

1.5 Eligible Applicants

Community-based non-profit agencies and tribal governments are eligible to apply. Nonprofit applicants must be registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State.

1.6 Questions, Technical Assistance, and Information Sessions

Please submit any questions regarding this RFP by email to danielle.lindner@state.mn.us. Answers will be posted on the Transitional House Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the [OJP website](#) within 7 days of receipt.

RFP Information Sessions

OJP will offer two online information sessions that include time for questions and answers. In each session staff will provide a brief overview of the Transitional Housing Program, walk through the RFP and application requirements, give an overview of the application review process, and then address any questions. While not required, prospective applicants are encouraged to participate in at least one information session. Questions and answers from both webinars will be posted in the FAQ on the OJP Website.

Session I: Friday, October 13, 2023 9:00-10:30am - [Registration Required](#) via Zoom

Session II: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 1:00-2:30pm - [Registration Required](#) via Zoom

If you need a reasonable accommodation, such as language interpretation, to attend, please email Danielle.lindner@state.mn.us.

RFP Part 2: Program Activities and Requirements

2.1 Required Program Activities

The following program activities are required for funded transitional housing programs.

- Staffing to support all survivors. Every survivor in the transitional housing program must be assigned to a case manager who coordinates services.

- Housing units and services are offered to survivors for 1 to 36 months (sometimes longer), depending on their needs.
- Aftercare and follow-up services are provided upon leaving the THP.
- Support to survivors through agency programming or through referral for the following services:
 - a) Employment assistance
 - b) Education assistance
 - c) Housing advocacy
 - d) Economic assistance
 - e) Physical, chemical and mental health services
 - f) Access to mainstream benefits including but not limited to MN Family Investment Program (MFIP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medical Assistance (MA), General Assistance (GA), etc.
 - g) Children’s services, including childcare (if the THP serves parents with children)

2.2 Program Requirements

Commitment to Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Provide an accessible, welcoming, and respectful service environment. Provide services in a culturally sensitive and respectful way that honors and values diverse life experiences for those seeking services, and for program staff, leadership, and advisory boards. OJP asks programs to make efforts to diversify their leadership, staff, and board membership to include persons from diverse communities and populations, including people who have been impacted by crime.

Commitment to Using a Trauma-informed Approach

Provide services in a way that recognizes, understands, and responds to the effects of trauma experienced by survivors. A trauma-informed approach emphasizes physical, mental, and emotional health and safety, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. Services need to be flexible to respond to the impact of different types of traumas and on meeting survivors’ self-defined needs toward recovery and healing. For more information:

<https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/4-supporting-victims/41-using-a-trauma-informed-approach/>

Confidentiality

Programs are prohibited from disclosing, revealing, or releasing personally identifying information or information collection in connection with services utilized, requested, or denied unless: (1) the service participant has signed a release of information, (2) a law mandates disclosure, or (3) a court has ordered disclosure. Releases must be unique to the individual survivor and circumstances, be voluntary, and cannot be presented as routine practice.

Voluntary Services

Participation in supportive services must not be required of survivors, but funded programs must ensure services are offered, available, and accessible.

Program Evaluation

Applicants need to evaluate their transitional housing program to understand its effectiveness. This may include victim satisfaction or other surveys, needs assessments, or other activities that help to improve delivery of services.

2.3 Program Design

Transitional housing is often a critical service for survivors of violence, allowing them to safely escape an abusive partner or other unsafe conditions. There is more than one way to structure transitional housing models and rent processes. Structures vary based on program mission, funding streams, and service population.

Additionally, programs will need to develop policies and procedures for program operation. Programs are not required to get referrals through coordinated entry, though it is strongly recommended. To learn more about program development with examples see the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) Transitional Housing Toolkit [here](#).

Transitional Housing Models

1. Scattered-Site (Increasingly the most common model; this model allows for the survivor to possibly remain in the unit once the financial assistance has ended, therefore eliminating the need to relocate again.)
 - Survivors live in a rental unit in the community.
 - Survivor holds the lease in their own name.
2. Site-Based
 - a. Clustered Site
 - Program owns or rents a building with apartment units in a common location.
 - Survivor lives in program owned or rented units for a specific period while they find permanent housing.
 - b. Communal Living
 - Similar to a shelter design – may have separate/private bedrooms but share common space such as bathroom, living room, dining room, kitchen, etc.

Additional Considerations for Housing Models:

- It is important that other programs such as shelters be sufficiently separate from the transitional housing program offered by the grant recipient to allow for separate and distinct policies governing each type of program. For example, the transitional housing units could

be on a specific floor or section within a building or in a separate building on the same property.

- Transitional Housing is not an extended shelter stay.
- Regardless of the model used, transitional housing programs should be providing a longer-term housing option for survivors while helping them to obtain and/or maintain permanent housing.
- Sometimes survivors have obstacles that prevent them from holding a lease. A THP needs to provide options that meet survivors' needs and result in the ability to access permanent housing.
- For scattered-site models, it is highly recommended the unit be inspected prior to the survivor signing the lease. Guidance will be provided to funded programs, as needed.
- If the program will operate as a landlord/property manager, the following should be considered:
 - Compliance with relevant federal, state, and local laws and health and safety codes (including, but not limited to: [fair housing](#), [VAWA](#), and [ADA](#) will apply.
 - Landlord/Tenants rights and responsibilities. Learn more [here](#).
 - The balance between property management and case management/service delivery. It is highly recommended programs identify separate staff for these two roles or programs may choose to hire a property management company to provide property management services. Funded programs will receive additional guidance, as needed.

Transitional Housing Rent Structures

- Survivors enter a lease with a landlord/property manager. Program provides a portion of rent, as rental assistance, paid directly to the landlord.
- Building/unit lease is in program's name and program is responsible for payment of the rent. Program creates sub-lease or rental agreement for survivors and survivors pay a portion of the total cost of rent to the program.
- Program owned and operated. Program creates sub-lease or rental agreement for survivors and survivors pays a portion of the total cost of rent to the program.

Additional Considerations for Rent Structures:

- Rent collected from survivors is program income and must be put back into the transitional housing program to be used for assistance to survivors in the future and/or for program expenses in running a transitional housing program.
- All rent structures mentioned should never require survivors to pay more than 30 percent of their income in rent while enrolled in the THP. Programs may choose to use an amount less than 30%.

- Programs are encouraged to utilize existing tools in determining rent cost maximums. Additional guidance will be provided to funded programs, as needed.

2.4 Additional Requirements for Awarded Applicants

Through the course of the grant period, the following will be required of awarded programs:

- Monthly cohort meetings with awarded applicants.
- Completion of Violence Free Minnesota (VFMN) Housing 101 Training series (to be launched fall 2023).
- Additional Housing Specialist training, as opportunities arise.

Cohort meetings will include discussion and support on the following activities:

- Developing relationship/participation in local Continuum of Care (CoC) to include information on coordinated entry (CE) and comparable database requirements.
- Enrolling with DHS to become a [Housing Stabilization Services](#) provider.
- Landlord engagement activities.
- Best practices related to transitional housing programs.
- Engaging people with lived experience to inform program design and operation.
- Other topics identified by cohort participants, as needed.

RFP Part 3: Application Process and Instructions

3.1 Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted using the [e-grants](#) web-based system by 4:00 pm on November 28, 2023. See the [e-grants Application Completion Guide](#) for assistance navigating e-grants. Applications cannot be submitted after this time. No paper submissions will be accepted.

3.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via e-grants, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) online grants management system. [E-grants](#) can also be accessed via the [Office of Justice Programs](#) website.

If you have never applied for a grant with the Office of Justice Programs, create a user account by clicking on the purple “New User” option in the login box in the upper right corner of the e-grants website and follow instructions to fill out the profile. Contact the e-grants Helpdesk at 1-800-820-1890 if you have login issues.

3.3 Terms and Conditions, Grant Program Guidelines, OJP Grant Manual

As part of submitting this application in e-grants the applicant agency agrees to the applicable Terms and Conditions of OJP Grantees for applicants as well as the [Grant Program Guidelines](#). These address federal and state requirements such as worker's compensation, civil rights, affirmative action, and data privacy. By agreeing to these in e-grants the applicant is confirming that they can make these commitments. Applicants are encouraged to print and review these documents with the appropriate agency staff prior to submitting the application in e-grants. If selected for funding, the grantee will need to submit required certifications. Grantees agree to follow the [OJP Grant Manual](#), which provides basic information on policies and procedures for grant administration. These documents become, by reference, part of the formal grant contract agreement.

3.4 Application Content

The application consists of the following required parts; any missing part will prevent the application from submission. Applications that do not answer all questions will not score well in the review process.

Project Information Form

Input this information directly into the form in e-grants and it will be used as the cover sheet for the application. You will need:

- Contact information for the Fiscal Agent. (This is the agency named in the grant contract and responsible for the administration of the grant.)
- The fiscal agent's federal and state identification numbers.
- Contact information for the person/s responsible for programming, financials, and contracts.
- Brief program description and geographic information.

Narrative (70 points)

Address the following questions in a 5-6 page maximum Word or PDF document with $\frac{3}{4}$ " margins, single-spaced and with a 12-point font size. Proposals are scored based on your responses to these questions. Organize your proposal by labeling and numbering responses; providing an answer for each topic and answer in the order they are asked. **Please note:** Narrative documents that do not follow this format do not score well in this review process. Do not include any additional pages or supplemental materials; these will not be provided to reviewers. When ready to submit, **upload the narrative as an attachment in e-grants.**

1. Organizational Overview (15 Points)

- Provide a brief description of agency's mission and history.
- Describe how transitional housing programming fits with your agency's overall programming. If your agency does not have a history of providing transitional housing, share how you will build capacity and demonstrate a strong understanding of the program.
- Describe any history of providing housing services or housing assistance.

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- Share your agency's experience with current or past grant management.
- State the percentage of leadership staff, board of directors and staff as who identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), or are representative of cultural communities or other traditionally underserved populations. Explain how the percentage is or is not proportional to the clients served by the agency.

2. Planning Process (10 Points)

- Describe the population for whom THP services will be provided.
- If targeting services for a traditionally underserved population(s), describe relevant experience your agency has working with this target population(s).
- Describe how survivors with lived experience with housing instability have been consulted in the development of the THP and/or will be consulted as the program is implemented.

3. Program Design (15 Points)

- State if this programming is new start-up programming or an expansion to existing THP services.
- Describe the transitional housing model(s) and rent structure(s) to be implemented. For those proposing site-based clustered or communal programs, briefly describe the building(s) to be used (see Part 2, Transitional Housing Models, pg. 6)
- Describe the staffing you will use. Include proposed case load size, total number of staff FTEs, staffing hours, staff role, etc.

4. Transitional Housing Services (20 Points)

- Explain how you will ensure services provided will be survivor-centered, trauma informed, and based in harm reduction.
- Describe any unique program aspects in your program design such as traditional healing practices, culturally specific services/activities, survivor led feedback sessions, peer support groups, trauma informed healing, etc.
- Describe how survivors will have access to the required services listed in Part 2, 2.1, *Program Activities and Requirements*. List each activity (a-g), and whether the activity will be offered by your agency or provided through a referral.
- Describe how you will provide follow-up and aftercare services after discharge to assist in preventing a return to homelessness.

5. Evaluation (10 Points)

Program evaluation helps programs understand, verify, or increase the effectiveness of programming. It can also provide data to highlight the program's impact. Additionally, it will build capacity to evaluate programs and/or projects in the future.

- Describe how you will evaluate your transitional housing program.

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- Describe the tools you will use.
- Describe how feedback from program participants will be used to improve your programming.

Work Plan/Outcomes (20 Points)

Applicants must complete a work plan **with at least 3 goals**. The work plan will be used as a roadmap throughout the life of the grant and used as the basis for reporting. The work plan allows you to describe the day-to-day activities. **Download the work plan template from the Work Plan form in e-grants and make a copy of the template for each goal.**

The plan will outline specific activities to achieve the goal, frequency of the activities, a timeline, and who will be responsible to carry out the activities. You will also include intended outcomes and how you will measure the success of the each. **Upload the completed work plan into the Work Plan form within the e-grants application.**

Budget (10 Points):

Your budget should be consistent with your narrative and work plan, making it clear how each of the activities will be funded. The budget will cover a 23-month period and all expenses must be listed and directly chargeable to the grant. When estimating costs, please show your calculations by including quantities, unit costs and other details. Only include grant funded expenses in the budget descriptions.

Enter budget information directly into e-grants. **All expenses under this RFP should be budgeted as STATE funding (not federal)**. Directions for navigating e-grants to enter your budget are in the [e-grants Application Completion Guide](#) on pages 5 and 6. Additionally, the [Transitional Housing Program Budget Development Guidelines](#) will show you examples and specific requirements for each of the line items. See the [Transitional Housing Program Budget Allocation Guide](#) for allowable expenses under this RFP. **Budget line items may include:** Personnel, Payroll Taxes and Fringe, Contract Services, Travel and Training, Program and Office Expenses, Building Expenses, Indirect Costs, and Direct Client Assistance. Not all line items need to be used.

Staffing considerations:

- Staff positions identified in budget must be clearly linked to activities in the work plan.
- Grant staff funded at less than 100% FTE with Transitional Housing Program funds must keep detailed time tracking records of hours worked on grant activities.

Organizational Financial Information Form

This Information will be entered into e-grants form.

1. *OJP Grantee Status (active grant in last 12 months or not)*
2. *Fiscal Information*
 - A. Accounting basis.
 - B. Organization's Fiscal year time-period.

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- C. Total revenue last completed fiscal year.
- D. Total federal expenditures (only from federal sources) last completed fiscal year.
- E. How often financial document are produced.
- F. Nonprofits only: Most Recent IRS Form 990.
- G. Date and status of annual financial filing
- H. Nonprofits only: Upload evidence of good standing with the Secretary of State
- I. Allocation method document (if applicable)

3. *Financial Document*

Upload the financial document(s) applicable to your organization:

- Agency with annual revenue under \$50,000
 - Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
 - Statement of Activity (Income and Expense Statement)
- Agency with total annual revenue of over \$750,000, but with federal expenditures less than \$750,000
 - Certified Financial Audit
 - Certified Financial Audit Management Letter
 - Corrective Action Plan (if applicable)
- Agency that spent \$750,000 or more in federal funds during fiscal year
 - Single Audit
 - Single Audit Management Letter
 - Corrective Action Plan (if applicable)
- Audit Information
 - Name of Auditors
 - Type of Audit
 - Description of Audit Findings

4. *Administrative Systems*

Answer yes or no to the following statements:

- Our organization has had an instance of misuse or fraud in the past 36 months.
- Our organization has current or pending lawsuit against the organization.
- Our organization is currently designated as a high risk grant recipient by the federal government.
- Current principals (defined as a public official, a board member or staff with the authority to access funds provided by this agency or determine how funds are used) have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.
- We have separate accounts for different programs/revenue sources to prevent co-mingling of funds.
- Our organization uses a daily time tracking log for each position being paid using multiple sources of funding.
- Our organization has a paid bookkeeper.
- Our organization has an approval process that requires multiple approvals before funds can be expended.
- Our organization has written policies and procedures for accounting, purchasing and payroll.

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- Our organization's accounting system can identify and track grant program-related income and expenses separate from all other income and expenses.
 - We can easily retrieve original receipts for expenses that are reimbursed by the grant.
 - Our Board of Directors meets at least every month.
 - Our organization has a Conflict-of-Interest Policy.
5. *Grant Management Experience*
- We have had more than one administrative turnover in the past 12 months (defined as anyone involved in working on or managing grants)
 - Select an option that applies to your organization:
 - Monitored funding and completed reporting for non-federal and/or only federal grants
 - Monitored funding and completed reporting for only non-federal grants
 - Monitored funding and completed reporting for contracts but not grants
 - No prior experience monitoring and reporting for contracts and/or grants

Application Checklist

An application must include the following to be forwarded for review:

(e-grants will not let the application be submitted if any of these are missing)

1. **Project Information form**
2. **Narrative** - Addressing questions listed above must be uploaded
3. **Work Plan** - Addressing the items requested must be uploaded
4. **Budget** - Calculations must be included
5. **Indirect Documentation Form** (if including indirect costs in budget)
6. **Organization Financial Information**

RFP Part 4: Application Review Process

This is a competitive application process. A review committee made up of community members will read and rate applications using a 100-point scale. The reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendations. A copy of the review form will be on the OJP grants page.

A final staff review will consider geographic locations, coordination with other federal, state, and local funding and past grantee performance. Timeliness and completeness of past grant financial and progress reporting is also considered. The Commissioner of Public Safety will make the final funding decisions and award notification will be by email to applicants.

RFP Part 5: Post Award Requirements

- **Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Financial Review.** In accordance with state and federal grant management policies it is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them. State policy requires states to conduct a financial review

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prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher to any organization. The necessary information for these is provided in the financial information form in the application.

- **Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement.** The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic development and equality.

To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296-2600 or go to the [OEP website](#).

- **Grant Contract Process.** After being selected for funding, OJP staff will work with the applicant to negotiate a final budget. The formal grant contract consists of the Grant Agreement, the Terms and Conditions, the Program Guidelines, as well as the work plan and budget. The Grant Agreement will be initiated, signed by grantee and OJP, and once fully executed it is then a legally binding agreement. Grant agreements not signed within 30 days of receipt may be canceled.
- **Progress Reporting.** Grantees will be required to submit quarterly data and regular narrative reports in a prescribed manner.
- **Grant Payments.** This is a cost reimbursement grant however this may change to allow an advance – this is yet to be determined and will be communicated to award applicants prior to the start of the grant period. Grantees will only be paid for eligible expenses (after the grant contract is fully executed) that are incurred and are consistent with the negotiated budget.
- **OJP Grant Manual.** Grantees, grantee subgrants and contracts agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual as part of the application process. The manual is a resource for how our office manages grants and covers topics such as grant administration policies, program modification policies, general accounting requirements, etc. [OJP Grant Manual](#)
- **Expiring Grant Funds.** A portion of the total grant award will expire on June 30, 2025. See the Special Conditions page of the grant contract for details.

- **Grantee Orientation.** Grant award recipients will be required to have a representative, or representatives of the organization receiving the award, attend a future OJP grantee orientation session.

RFP Part 6: Right of Cancellation

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.