
THE CITY OF TROY: EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG) COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING PROCESS

BACKGROUND

Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) of 2020, COVID-19 Relief funds were allocated to the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program to help America's low-income families and most vulnerable citizens in the wake of the pandemic. COVID-19 Relief funding was distributed through two allocations, the first round was awarded to States and Cities through the existing ESG grant formula in order to expedite the process of disseminating the funds. The second allocation of funding is based on a new formula looking at need due to the COVID crisis.

FIRST ALLOCATION

Under the first allocation of COVID-19 Relief funding the City of Troy received \$539,890 for eligible ESG activities. In order to draw down these funds, the City of Troy was required to submit a plan to HUD identifying key partners and service providers, specific services and activities, and the amount of money per eligible ESG activity. Though the CARES Act eliminated requirements for local planning and procurement standards applied to annual ESG funding process, the City of Troy considered it essential to work closely with Rensselaer County Homeless Services Collaborative (RCHSC) homeless service providers to determine community needs.

ESG COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING ALTERNATE REQUIREMENTS

- No match requirement
- No spending cap on Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach
- Up to 10% of the grant can be spent on Administrative activities
- Income eligibility 50 percent AMI for Homelessness Prevention
- Allows deviation from applicable procurement standards
- Citizen participation/consultation requirements not required (although must publish how the allocation will be used on Government web site)
- No minimum period of use for Emergency Shelters
- May not require program participants to receive treatment or perform any other prerequisite activities as a condition for receiving shelter, housing, or services

HOW THE FIRST ALLOCATION WAS DETERMINED

The RCHSC Executive Committee convened to discuss the process for developing a recommendation to the City of Troy on funding allocations. The Executive Committee determined that an assessment of community needs by program-type would be conducted through service provider lead workgroups to develop both short-term and long-term needs. The results would be presented to the RCHSC Board for review and approval prior to submission to the City of Troy. The Executive Committee decided to focus ESG COVID-19 Relief funding to three ESG eligible program types: Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing, and Homeless Prevention. Homeless Prevention services was identified to have the greatest anticipated need.

The number of workgroups corresponded to the number ESG eligible program types. Each workgroup convened at least one meeting in which they collaborated on a draft budget per eligible activity. The RCHSC Board reviewed and finalized the budget. The RCHSC ESG COVID-19 Relief funding recommendation was presented to and tentatively approved by the City of Troy.

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS

Representatives from the following organizations participated in the funding recommendation (next to the organization indicates the part of the process to which they were involved)

1. Joseph's House & Shelter (Executive Committee, Board, and Workgroups: Emergency Shelter and Rapid Rehousing)
2. Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY (Executive Committee, Board, and Workgroups: Homeless Prevention)
3. Unity House of Troy (Executive Committee, Board, and Workgroups: Emergency Shelter and Rapid Rehousing)
4. Catholic Charities Housing (Executive Committee and Board)
5. The Roark Center (Workgroup: Homeless Prevention)
6. YWCA of the Great Capital Region (Board and Workgroups: Homeless Prevention)
7. St. Paul's Center (Board and Workgroups: Emergency Shelter and Rapid Rehousing)
8. Troy Area Unity Ministries (Board and Workgroup: Homeless Prevention)
9. Solider On (Board)
10. Troy Housing Authority (Board)

ELIGIBLE ESG COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING ACTIVITIES

Eligible Program Type	Purpose	Eligible Costs
Emergency Shelter	Essential services	Case management, childcare, education services, employment assistance and job training, outpatient health services, substance abuse treatment services, transportation, and services for special populations.
Emergency Shelter	Shelter operations	Maintenance, rent, repair, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, utilities, relocation, and furnishings.
Homeless Prevention	Housing relocation and stabilization services and short and/or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to prevent the individual or family from becoming homeless if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Annual income of the family is below 30% of median family income. 2) Assistance is necessary to help program participants regain stability in their current permanent housing or move into other permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. 	Utilities, rental application fees, security deposits, last month's rent, utility deposits and payments, moving costs, housing search and placement, housing stability case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, emergency financial assistance to avoid eviction and credit repair.
Rapid Re-Housing	Housing relocation and stabilization services and short and/or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to help individuals or families living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.	Utilities, rental application fees, security deposits, last month's rent, utility deposits and payments, moving costs, housing search and placement, housing stability case management, landlord-tenant mediation, tenant legal services, and credit repair.

ESG COVID-19 FUNDS DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

Below is the City's recommendation for the distribution and use of the funds per eligible activity.

Eligible Category	Amount	Percentage of Budget
Emergency Shelter	\$ 169,955.00	31.5
Rapid Rehousing	\$ 75,264.60	13.9
Homeless Prevention	\$ 254,178.65	47.1
Total Requests	\$ 499,398.25	
Administrative Costs	\$ 40,491.75	7.5

ESG-CV Funded Agencies Program Descriptions

EMERGENCY SHELTER

Joseph's House & Shelter

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Operations	COVID-19 cleaning and health supplies	\$ 5,500
Staffing (including hazard pay and training)	Half-time hazard pay for shelter staff (8 weeks)	\$ 74,500
Essential services (i.e.: childcare, legal services, education...)		
Total Budget Requested:		\$ 80,000

St Paul's Center

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Operations	Purchase additional PPE and thermometers, the cost to sanitize the shelter (8 family units, common areas, staff offices).	\$5,700
Staffing (including hazard pay and training)	Hazard pay for staff covering the shelter, 6 FTEs (excludes executive director)	\$31,255
Essential services (i.e.: childcare, legal services, education...)		
Total Budget Requested:		\$36,955

Unity House of Troy

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Operations	Cleaning supplies and other sanitary needs, such as professional cleanings, disinfectants, hand sanitizers, to maintain the cleanliness of the shelter to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.	\$7,500

Staffing (including hazard pay and training)	Hazard pay for staff that need to be in the office and to staff that provide direct care to maintain safe shelter operations.	\$45,500
Essential services (i.e.: childcare, legal services, education...)		
Total Budget Requested:		\$53,000

PREVENTION

Leal Aid Society of Northeastern New York (LASNNY)

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.-rental assistance, utility assistance)		
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	The funding will provide salary and fringe for 0.20 FTE of a Staff Attorney for legal services.	\$14,298.65
Total Budget Requested:		\$14,298.65

Unity House of Troy

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.-rental assistance, utility assistance)	Estimating 24 households with an average of \$2,550 per household for last month's rent, security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, and moving costs.	\$61,507
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	.72 FTE Case Manager and .0267 Supervisor with 25.5% fringe for eligibility screening, intakes, housing search and placement and housing stability case management.	\$22,945
Total Budget Requested:		\$84,452

YWCA

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.-rental assistance, utility assistance)	ESG funding for Homeless Prevention will be utilized to provide homeless prevention rental arrears and possible on-going rental assistance for up to 3 months for up to 25 City of Troy	\$ 53,107

	individuals/households that were directly impacted by COVID-19.	
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	ESG funding for Homeless Prevention will be utilized for one .5 FTE Housing Coordinator's salary plus 22% fringe to provide housing stabilization case management services.	Salary \$ 18,808 Fringe \$ 4,137 Total \$22,945
Total Budget Requested:		\$ 76,052

Catholic Charities Tri-County Services

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.- rental assistance, utility assistance)	Rental assistance to prevent homelessness	\$56,431
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	2 FTE for Case management with each clients.	\$22,945
Total Budget Requested:		\$79,376

RAPID REHOUSING

St Paul's Center

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.- security deposit, on-going rental assistance, utility assistance)	Security deposit, short-term rental assistance, utility assistance	\$18,360
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	.4 FTE for case management support to be provided 6-12 mos, depending on family needs. Case management services are provided to every family member.	\$19,640
Total Budget Requested:		\$38,000

Unity House of Troy

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.- security deposit, on-going rental assistance, utility assistance)	Estimating 2 households per month with an average of \$621.60 per household per month	\$14,918.20
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)	.2333 FTE with 25.5% fringe to provide program participants residing in the	\$9,296.40

	domestic violence shelter with housing search and placement and housing stability case management.	
	Total Budget Requested:	\$24,214.60

Joseph House & Shelter

Eligible Activity	Description	Budget Request
Financial Assistance (i.e.- security deposit, on-going rental assistance, utility assistance)	Rental Assistance for up to 8 households in our Rapid ReHousing Program whose income was lost to COVID-19	\$ 13,050
Staffing (i.e. - case management and housing search and placement)		
	Total Budget Requested:	\$13,050