

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

**Department of Housing Workforce Solutions
(HWS)**

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM

Phase 41 (01/01/2024 – TBD)

Completed applications must be submitted to:

**Department of Housing
and Workforce Solutions (HWS)**

**NO LATER THAN
Wednesday, February 7, 2024
5:00 p.m. PST**

Email to:

EFSP@rivco.org

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Housing Workforce Solutions (HWS) is requesting applications on behalf of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) Local Board for the County of Riverside. The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to identify nonprofit organizations and local government agencies, known as Local Recipient Organizations (LROs), to provide services for EFSP Phase 41.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS LISTED IN THIS RFA. **Late or incomplete applications will be considered ineligible for scoring. Only complete applications will be scored.**

The EFSP Local Board and its designated representatives reserve the right to amend or modify the requirements of this RFA as necessary and to negotiate with applicants regarding services and costs, as well as to cancel, in part or in its entirety, this RFA if it is in their best interest to do so. This RFA does not commit the EFSP Local Board to award a contract or to pay costs incurred in response to this request.

Agencies should be aware that EFSP funding from one year to the next is neither automatic, nor guaranteed. Each year the EFSP Local Board Review Committee evaluates and scores all eligible applications submitted and makes allocation decisions based on the most effective and efficient delivery of emergency services across the county. **Applicants must not regard EFSP funding as part of their annual operational funding base, but as supplemental funding to meet specific emergency needs. This RFA references two types of applicants:**

- 1. New Applicants:** Qualified organizations that have never been funded or were not funded in the previous phase/year. This includes agencies that were new and were awarded funding in Phase 39, ARPA-R, and 40 and agencies that submitted an application for funding and were not selected for an award.
- 2. Returning Award Recipients:** Qualified organizations that have received EFSP funding in previous 3 completed phases (37, 38, CARES).

The minimum grant amount that can be requested by any organization is \$5,000 per supervisorial district. The maximum grant amount that can be requested by any new organization that has never been funded or was not funded in the previous 3 completed Phases is not to exceed \$20,000 per supervisorial district. All other organizations may apply for a maximum amount of \$50,000 per supervisorial district.

New or Returning Applicant	Minimum request per supervisorial district	Maximum request per supervisorial district
New Applicants	\$5,000	\$20,000
Returning Award Recipients	\$5,000	\$50,000

Under no circumstances is the EFSP Local Board bound to award any organization the amount requested. The amount of a grant to be awarded to an organization shall be determined by the Selection Process and Scoring Criteria described in this document.

All questions regarding this document should be directed to the County of Riverside Department of Housing and Workforce Solutions at EFSP@rivco.org.

2.0 SPENDING PERIOD

The spending begin date for all funded jurisdictions will be January 1, 2024, and the last spending end date option that Local Boards may select will be no later than TBD.

3.0 ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The EFSP National Board regulations and the EFSP Local Board policy identify the activities listed below as eligible expenses. Each category is intended to meet specific emergency needs for food and shelter. EFSP funding can be requested to support one or more of the following activities:

3.1 Emergency Shelter – (*Hotel or Motel Vouchers*)

Applications should address helping people who are without resources and experiencing a housing crisis with no appropriate on-site shelter available. Costs must be reasonable. A 90-days maximum stay per person is allowed one time in a twelve-month period. The agreement(s) with the hotel or motel **must** be included with the application. Failure to include a copy of the hotel or motel agreement(s) will result in the application being declared “incomplete” and not able to be scored.

3.2 Mass Shelter

Applications should address assisting people who are without resources and experiencing a housing crisis with no means of securing temporary shelter, to include inclement weather shelter, if not in a hotel or motel. Mass shelter is defined as five beds or more in one location. The bed night per diem rate is \$12.50.

3.3 Emergency Rent/Mortgage Assistance

Applications should address assisting people with emergency rent or mortgage assistance. The rent/mortgage assistance is limited to up to 90 days (three months) rent or mortgage payment per phase. The LRO should verify that there is evidence the person requesting assistance can resume rent payments to avoid eviction after assistance is received.

3.4 Emergency Food

Applications for food should address helping people who are without resources to secure food. Food can be provided through hot/cold meals, distribution of food boxes, bags or sack lunches, or vouchers/gift cards for use at restaurants or grocery stores. The per diem rate (per person) for hot/cold served meals is \$3.00.

3.5 **Utility Assistance**

Applications should address assisting people with utility assistance. The utility assistance is limited to up to 90 days (three months) for clients per phase if it is necessary to prevent disconnection of services. The LRO should verify that there is evidence the person requesting assistance can resume payments to avoid disconnection after assistance is received.

3.6 **Administrative Costs**

Up to 2% of your total EFSP grant can be allocated toward administrative costs. This can include payroll and/or office supplies used to administer the EFSP program.

Note: this cost is only eligible for the Local Board Contact: HWS

4 **EFSP GUIDELINES**

- 4.1 Collaborative, multi-organization/agency applications from a group of service providers serving the same community or communities are eligible for consideration. These applications should clearly identify the organization/agency, which will serve as fiscal agent/lead.
- 4.2 Applicants should be prepared to assist any qualifying individual or family seeking assistance in their designated Supervisorial District in need of emergency food and/or shelter.
- 4.3 Funding is not intended to make up for budget shortfalls or to be considered a separate line item in an annual budget.
- 4.4 EFSP funds should supplement an existing project. The funds are not to start new projects or to stop a project from closing.
- 4.5 EFSP funds cannot be used to replace federal, state, or city grant contracts.
- 4.6 Agencies must be financially able to front all the funding since payment may not come until later into the project.
- 4.7 Funding is open to all organizations helping hungry and homeless people and is not intended to solely support Local Board member agencies or local government.
- 4.8 Funded service providers are required to comply with local ordinances.
- 4.9 Matching funds must be documented and included in the Project Application.

5 **TIMELINE/IMPORTANT DATES**

5.1 Release of Request for Application	Wednesday, January 3, 2024
<p>5.2 Technical Assistance Training (Mandatory for New Applicants and previously awarded recipients with new staff members/changes)</p> <p>Department of Housing and Workforce Solutions (HWS) Microsoft Teams meeting Join on your computer, mobile app or room device Click here to join the meeting Meeting ID: 249 490 484 467 Passcode: LMbP7Z Download Teams Join on the web</p>	<p>Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. PST</p>
5.3 Questions and Answer Period Ends	<p>Wednesday, January 31, 2024 5:00 p.m. PST</p>
5.4 Deadline to Submit Application to EFSP@rivco.org	<p>Wednesday, February 7, 2024 5:00 p.m. PST</p>

6 APPLICATION STANDARDS

- 6.1 All proposals must be submitted in accordance with the standards and specifications contained within this RFA and Attachment A - Project Application to be considered for funding.
- 6.2 HWS shall not pay any costs incurred or associated in the preparation of this or any proposal or for participation in the procurement process.
- 6.3 Project Application and Attachments are divided into four parts, each part must be completed by ALL Applicants. Each Phase 41 applicant must submit the required parts of the application to be eligible for award consideration. No handwritten copies will be accepted.
- 6.4 Submit one application that includes four PDF parts and email to EFSP@rivco.org.

 Narrative is limited to a maximum of ten (10) pages including the questions.
 Narratives exceeding ten (10) pages will not be reviewed or scored.
- 6.5 ALL agencies must submit **all** required documentation.
- 6.6 Agencies may withdraw their proposals at any time prior to the due date and time by submitting notification of withdrawal signed by the organization’s authorized agent. Proposals cannot be changed or modified after the date and time designated for receipt.

7 SUBMISSION DEADLINE

- 7.1 Project applications must be received by the Department of Housing and Workforce

Solutions (HWS) no later than February 7, 2023, **5 p.m. PST** by email delivery to EFSP@rivco.org.

7.2 Late proposals will not be accepted. Only complete applications will be scored.

8 CRITERIA FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM (EFSP) FUNDING

In order to be eligible for funding under the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 8.1 The organization must have a current non-profit 501(c)(3) status or be an agency of the government.
- 8.2 The organization must have provided emergency shelter and/or service programs for at least one year.
- 8.3 The organization must have a Unique Entity Number (UEI) number issued by SAM.gov and required associated information to EFSP.
- 8.4 The organization must be prepared to have EFSP funding directly deposited to their bank account. All payments are issued by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) only.
- 8.5 Applicants must provide written documentation to show that at least 55% of the total EFSP program budget is from other funding sources in each category.
Organizations applying for funding in multiple districts must demonstrate the financial and staffing capacity to service all the districts for which they are applying.
- 8.6 The organization is not debarred or suspended from receiving Federal funds and must provide a printout that the agency is not listed on the Excluded Parties List System at www.epls.gov
- 8.7 The organization may not use EFSP funds as a cost-match for other Federal funds or programs.
- 8.8 The organization will not charge a fee to clients for EFSP funded services.
- 8.9 The organization must have an accounting system or an approved fiscal agent.
- 8.10 The organization must have their records audited by an independent certified public accountant if receiving \$100,000 or more in EFSP funds. LROs that received EFSP Phase 39, ARPA-R, or 40, grants of \$100,000 or more must attach a copy of their most recent financial records, audited by an independent certified public accountant, to the application. LROs that received EFSP grants totaling \$50,000 to \$99,999 during EFSP Phase 39, ARPA-R, or 40, must attach a copy of the organization's annual accountant's review to its application. LROs that received

grants totaling less than \$25,000 for Phase 39, ARPA-R, or 40, must provide the same complete fiscal information that they provide to their board of directors.

- 8.11 The organization must have not received an adverse or no opinion audit.
- 8.12 The organization must have a voluntary board if private, not-for-profit.
- 8.13 The organization will, to the extent practicable, involve homeless individuals and families, through employment, volunteer programs, etc., in providing emergency food and shelter services.
- 8.14 The organization must practice religious non-discrimination. Agencies with a religious affiliation wishing to participate in the program must not refuse services to an applicant based on religion or require attendance at religious services as a condition of assistance, nor will such groups require engagement in any religious preaching in any program receiving EFSP funds.
- 8.15 The organization must practice client non-discrimination by providing assistance to needy individuals and families without discrimination (age, race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, economic status, or sexual orientation). The organization must express sensitivity to the transition from temporary shelter to permanent homes, attention to the specialized needs of homeless individuals with mental and physical disabilities or illness and facilitate access for homeless individuals to other sources of services and benefits.
- 8.16 The organization will ensure its employees, volunteers or other individuals associated with the program will not engage in any trafficking of persons during the period this award is in effect.
- 8.17 The organization will ensure its employees, volunteers or other individuals associated with the program will not use EFSP funds to support access to classified national security information.
- 8.18 Organizations applying for funding in service sites in more than one district must apply as a multi-region organization and submit one (1) application for all districts served.
- 8.19 The organization will comply with the Office of Management and 2 CFR 200 if expending \$750,000 or more in Federal funds.
- 8.20 An organization receiving more than \$100,000 in EFSP funds will comply with lobbying prohibition certification and disclosure of lobbying activities, if applicable.
- 8.21 The organization will spend all funds and close-out the program by the Local Board's selected end-of-program date and return any unspent funds to the National Board (\$5.00 or more; checks made payable to United Way Worldwide/Emergency

Food and Shelter National Board Program, 701 North Fairfax Street, Suite 310, Alexandria, VA 22314).

- 8.22 The organization is strongly encouraged to collaborate with other organizations to maximize services to clients.
- 8.23 An organization receiving EFSP funding must read and comply with the Emergency Food and Shelter Program Responsibilities and Requirements Manual, Addendum to Program Manual, and the Key Changes and Clarifications, specifically the eligible and ineligible costs section.
- 8.24 An organization receiving EFSP funding must review and comply with the Emergency Food and Shelter Program webinar material provided by National.
- 8.25 LROs that receive funding for shelter and Utility services (Rent/Mortgage, Mass Shelter, Other Shelter, and Utility Assistance) are required to participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. HMIS participation is free of charge and LROs will be provided with training and technical support. LRO's are responsible for ensuring that all required resources including computer, internet access and data entry person, necessary to participate in HMIS are available. LROs will sign the HMIS Participating Agency Agreement and adhere to the requirements identified in the HMIS Policies and Procedures.

9 **SELECTION PROCESS**

- 9.1 **Funding Priority** - The EFSP Local Board has determined that funding priorities for Phase 41 are as follows:
- a. First Priority - Housing (55%)
 - Rent/Mortgage Assistance
 - Mass Shelter
 - Other Shelter (Hotel/Motel)
 - b. Second Priority - Emergency Food (35%)
 - Served Meals
 - Other Food (Distribution/Vouchers)
 - c. Third Priority- Utility Assistance (10%)
 - Limited metered utility assistance (includes gas, electricity, water, and sewer service)
- 9.2 **Funding Allocation** - The EFSP National Board determines the amount to be distributed to jurisdictions with the highest need. The EFSP Local Board follows the National Board formula that is based upon the following areas: priority need per district, unemployment rate and other economic indicators such as: poverty rate and median income. The Local Board will allocate EFSP funds as follows: 55% of the funds will be allocated to housing, 35% of the funds will be allocated to

food, and 10% of the funds will be allocated to utility assistance. The Local Board has the discretion to modify the housing, food and utility assistance allocations based on application requests.

- 9.3 **Funding in Other Districts** - Applicants may apply for funding in any supervisorial district where they have an office or other physical presence, or in a district where they provide at least 5% of the organization's total services by service category to residents in/from that district as indicated by zip code. For example, to apply for funds in the food category the organization must have an office or service site OR have provided at least 5% of their total food services to persons in/from that district in the previous fiscal year.
- 9.4 **Scoring & Evaluation** - Only applications that passed the Threshold Review will be evaluated and scored by the Review and Evaluation Committee, comprised of non-conflicted Local Board members and volunteers from the community. Threshold Review is for compliance with the requirements of the RFA including timeliness, completeness, and submission of attachments. Applications that do not pass submission threshold are not eligible to appeal.

Applications will be scored in the following areas:

- a. Organization History/Overview
 - b. Performance Outcomes
 - c. Capacity/Program Management
 - d. Accounting and Financial Management
 - e. Compliance & Grants Management
 - f. Coordination & Collaboration
- 9.5 **Organizations that had funds reallocated** by Local Board mandate or returned funds to National as a result of gross negligence, inadequate use of funds, failure to use funds for purposes intended and any other violation of National and Local board guidelines for previous phases are not eligible to apply.
- 9.6 **Organizations that reallocated 25%** or more of their funding allocation to another LRO in either of the last three funded phases (Phase 39, Phase ARPA-R, and Phase 40) will not be eligible to apply for the next phase.
- 9.7 **Scoring Deductions** - Ten (10) points will be deducted from the total score of LROs that did not turn in required reports and documentation from the previous phases (Phase 39, Phase ARPA-R, and Phase 40) by the due date identified by either National or Local Board.

10 **Ranking and Funding**

All applications that receive a score of 70 **or above** will be considered for funding. Ranking is determined by application score and region. Final ranking and funding recommendations are submitted to the Local Board for approval, and all funding

recommendations are subject to National Board approval. The National Board directly funds all EFSP LROs.

11 Appeals Process

Only agencies that pass scoring threshold and are not selected for an award are eligible to appeal. To be considered a valid basis for appeal, the applicant must fall within one or more of the following criteria:

- New data or information relevant to the request which was not available when the original application was submitted to the Local Board;
- Misunderstanding or factual error in the Local Board's evaluation or interpretation of the agency request for EFSP funding;
- Other legal issues or concerns such as bias on the part of the EFSP Local Board; violation of established procedure; etc.

11.1 Notification of non-funding will be sent out as soon as possible after applications are received and ranked. The notification will contain specific instructions for requesting an appeal.

11.2 Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the applicant will be notified of the date and place at which to appear for the appeal to be heard. Appeals must take place in person unless otherwise stated in the notification of non-funding.

11.3 The appeals will be heard by the full EFSP Local Board at the next scheduled meeting of the Board following approval of grant recommendations. A simple majority vote is required to reverse the original recommendation. Under special circumstances, a separate Appeals Committee meeting may be called to ensure a timely appeals process.

11.4 The EFSP Local Board delegates authority to Riverside County Department of Housing and Workforce Solutions (HWS) to reestablish the rankings and grant amounts when a denial is reversed.

11.5 An official determination on the appeal will be made within 14 business days of the appeals presentation. The applicant will be notified in writing once a determination has been made.