



## Office of Homeless Youth Competitive Funding 2024–2025

# Homeless Student Stability Program (HSSP) Request for Proposals FAQ

### Questions About Eligibility

**Question 1: Are we allowed to submit applications for multiple grants through DOC and Building Changes?**

Answer: Yes! You are eligible to apply for multiple grants.

**Question 2: Do we need to be a housing provider to apply for HSSP funding?**

Answer: No. For the purposes of this grant, you do not need to be a housing provider. However, you do need to provide resources that support housing stability for McKinney-Vento eligible youth.

**Question 3: Who can apply for HSSP funding?**

Answer: Eligible applicants include Local Government; Local Housing, Nonprofit Community or Neighborhood-Based Organizations; Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in the State of WA; and Regional or Statewide Nonprofit Housing Assistance Organizations.

**Question 4: Can school districts apply?**

Answer: No. This grant funding is not for school districts, private schools, or charter schools. School districts can apply for HSSeP funding through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. HSSeP grant application review for the 2023-24 school year has already closed. School districts that wish to apply for HSSeP funding can apply for the 2024-25 school year in May 2024.

**Question 5: Can Educational Service Districts apply as government agencies for HSSP funding?**

Answer: Yes. Educational Service Districts are considered local government agencies. They are not allowed to apply for HSSeP funding since they are not schools.

**Question 6: Can current HSSP grantees apply to expand their program?**

Answer: No. A current HSSP grantee cannot apply to expand their program unless it is to serve an area that is not adjacent to their services areas (e.g., from King County to Spokane).

**Question 7: Can recipients of other OHY grants apply for HSSP funding?**

Answer: Yes. Even if an organization is already a recipient of other OHY funding, they can apply for HSSP, as long as they are not a **current** recipient of HSSP funding.

## Questions About Requirements for Application

**Question 8: If we already have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a school district, do we still need to provide a letter of support?**

Answer: Yes. **You are required to submit a letter of support from the applicable school district with your proposal.** We will accept one or more letters of support from school buildings and/or school districts and/or educational service districts.

**Question 9: Is there a recommendation for a maximum or minimum number of letters of support?**

Answer: Each application must have at least one letter of support. There is no recommendation for a maximum number of letters of support.

**Question 10: Do the letters of support need to come from actual school district staff or can they come from specific schools (e.g., principals) who we would directly work with?**

Answer: Any school staff, school district staff, or Educational Service District staff may provide a letter of support.

**Question 11: Can you explain the information required for highest paid and lowest paid employees?**

Answer: In the Budget Narrative, each applicant is required to report the percentage difference in annual wages between the lowest paid and highest paid positions in your organization to highlight potential issues of pay inequity. Here is the formula to determine the percentage difference:

$$\text{percentage difference} = \frac{(\text{highest pay} - \text{lowest pay})}{(\text{highest pay} + \text{lowest pay}) \div 2} \times 100$$

**Question 12: If a community partner does not offer housing resources, do they qualify?**

Answer: Housing resources can include wrap-around services that support housing stability for children and youth experiencing homelessness. As this is a broad category of supports, we encourage community partners to apply and make a case for how their services aid in housing stability. Be creative!

**Question 13: Do organizations have to apply for the whole \$200,000 or is there a recommended amount regarding the size of the population served or size of the organization?**

Answer: Organizations are encouraged to apply for what they need. This is not dependent on the size of the organization, or the population served, but it is dependent on the organization's need and capacity to spend the funding.

**Question 14: Can you explain about the option for typing a written response or submitting a video?**

Answer: Each question for the Universal and Program Questions should be answered with a maximum of 250 words per question or a maximum of 2 minutes of video for each question. Vimeo or YouTube links will be accepted only for video responses to Universal and Program Questions. Links to images will be accepted if complimenting written or video responses. Links to other videos from Facebook and social media channels will not be accepted.

**Questions 15: What are you looking for in the Exhibit E Budget Proposal form in the last two columns that are titled *Total Requested Funding through this RFP (MAX)* and *Total Requested Funding through this RFP (MIN)*? What should we put in these columns?**

Answer: The minimum refers to the minimum amount required to operate, while the maximum refers to how much you really need.

## Questions About Requirements for Grant Implementation

**Question 16: If a school already has Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the MOU is expiring, will they need to get another MOU before the contract begins, or just before the application is due?**

Answer: The applicant does not need to have an MOU at the time the application is due. However, once an applicant has been chosen, they will need to have a signed MOU within 60 days of the contract signing.

**Question 17: If we are working with more than one district, do we need an MOU for each school district?**

Answer: At least one MOU will need to be signed. Having more than one signed MOU may benefit the narrative, but there is a requirement for at least one MOU to be signed.

**Question 18: By when do we need to have the MOU signed?**

Answer: Community partners need to have a signed MOU with a partner school district within 60 days (about two months) from the date of notification of receiving the grant award. If an MOU cannot be established, the housing provider and school districts may work with the Department of Commerce on a case-by-case basis to provide, in lieu of an MOU, a detailed accountability plan for partnership between the housing provider and the school districts.

**Question 19: Are school districts required to partner with a housing service provider?**

Answer: This grant is not for school districts! Community partners that apply for this grant must partner with school districts.

**Question 20: Do all families served have to come from partnerships with schools?**

Answer: All beneficiaries of funds from this program must be from households that include at least one student experiencing homelessness, as defined as a child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence in accordance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 through 11435.

**Question 21: If you win an award, will you have to use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)?**

Answer: Yes. HMIS training and support will be required for all grantees. You can find more information about HMIS here: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/hmis/>

**Question 22: Can recipients receive reimbursement for non-distributed items?**

Answer: No. Reimbursed items and funding need to be distributed before the period of reimbursement.

**Question 23: Do we have to partner with school districts to implement this grant?**

Answer: Yes, to apply for funding a letter of support from the applicable school district is required, and an MOU is required within 60 days of being notified of the grant award.

## General Questions

**Question 24: Will Building Changes help facilitate partnerships between organizations?**

Answer: Building Changes will provide technical assistance and facilitate opportunities for organizations to learn from each other.

**Question 25: How do we get letters of support from the school?**

Answer: Some ways you can help build partnerships with schools include building relationships with schools that have students you serve, connecting with McKinney-Vento Liaisons, and asking families that you serve.

**Question 26: What role does the school/district play in the RFP process and HSSP grant?**

Answer: HSSP intends to fund organizations and community partners to create, implement, and/or expand collaborative strategies between housing and education partners to promote housing and educational stability. School/districts are not eligible to apply for funding but can support HSSP applicants in their communities by providing a letter of support and working with them to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defining responsibilities and commitments of each party to identify, house, and support students experiencing homelessness.

**Question 27: Is there a required cap of total funding that will be awarded in this cycle of HSSP?**

Answer: Approximately \$1.45 million is available to promote housing stability for students experiencing homelessness through this HSSP funding cycle. Building Changes expects individual project requests to be up to \$200,000 for the grant period.

**Question 28: Do we have to partner with a housing service provider?**

Answer: The HSSP RFP is for community partners that are operating as resources to support housing stability and improved outcomes for students experiencing homelessness. Therefore, it is not necessary to partner with a housing service provider, although partnership can improve opportunities and outcomes.

**Question 29: Is there a list of the best contacts for each school district?**

Answer: The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has an online listing of all school district McKinney-Vento Liaisons here:

<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/access-opportunity-education/students-experiencing-homelessness/homeless-education-liaison-contact-list>

**Question 30: Is there a place to find data about students experiencing homelessness by school district in Washington State?**

Answer: Building Changes has a data dashboard and report on student homelessness in Washington State K-12 public schools here:

<https://buildingchanges.org/resources/local-data-and-outcomes/>  
<https://buildingchanges.org/resources/wa-k12outcomes-2015-2022/>

**Question 31: Is there a place where I can find a glossary of terms used in OHY competitive funding?**

Answer: OHY has a glossary for terms used in competitive funding here:

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/93cyav0d3ktqpzaof8yzauruggvo73kr>

**Question 32: How is the HSSP RFP process prioritizing equity?**

Answer: Building Changes will be working with a variety of stakeholders, including community members, government and school district staff, and Building Changes staff, to review applications. Funding requests from organizations focused on serving those most impacted, such as Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color and LGBTQIA2+ communities, will be prioritized. Geographical location will also be taken into consideration, as the hope is to be more thoughtful about distributing resources throughout the whole state.

**Question 33: Is there a list of current HSSP grantees and locations?**

Answer: Current HSSP grantees are:

- Council for the Homeless (CFTH) - Clark County
- Foundation for Youth Resiliency and Engagement (FYRE) - Okanogan County
- REACH Center - Pierce County
- TOGETHER! - Thurston County
- Yakima Neighborhood Health Services - Yakima County

You can find Building Changes' interim evaluation report on HSSP here:

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/osrph3j6fye2azel3thsf70qwcim0esh/file/1273065959495>