



Request for Proposals: King County Fiscal Administrator for Youth Diversion Infrastructure Project (YDIP), FY 2024-2025

Purpose & Opportunity

In Washington State, youth and young adults exiting public systems of care are at disproportionately high risk of experiencing homelessness upon exit. BIPOC and LGBTQ2+ young people are overrepresented in systems of care exits that result in homelessness. When young people do not have safe and stable housing, they are likely to experience a multitude of overlapping challenges that impact their mental, emotional, and developmental needs and opportunities. This can profoundly affect their future experiences, particularly communities of young people who have had to navigate institutions forged from a legacy of structural racism, cis-sexism, and ableism.

Diversion, a creative problem-solving approach to resolving a housing crisis, has proven effective in getting young people the assistance they need in an efficient, anti-racist, and trauma-informed way. The Youth Diversion Infrastructure Project (YDIP) applies a Centralized Diversion Fund model to support young people exiting systems of care in need of safe and stable housing through increased access to Diversion services and by centralizing flexible financial assistance (i.e. flex funds) within community-based organizations, called Fiscal Administrators.

[A Way Home Washington \(AWHWA\)](#) and [Building Changes \(BC\)](#) are seeking an organization to serve as a Fiscal Administrator for YDIP in King County for FY 2024- 2025 (King County YDIP FA). This organization will be responsible for fulfilling core activities related to managing and dispersing flex funds when community members and providers submit requests on behalf of a young person experiencing a housing crisis that can be resolved through a Diversion conversation. Additionally, this organization will serve as a key partner in elevating the importance of diverting and/or preventing young people exiting systems of care from entering the homeless response system in King County!

Background

In 2018, our state enshrined the commitment to ensure that no young person exit a system of care into homelessness ([SB 6560](#)). In 2023, after several years of participating in a multi-stakeholder effort to make greater progress towards this goal (via [HB 1905](#)), BC and AWHWA were selected to fulfill one component in this work to effectively connect young people exiting systems of care with flexible assistance to prevent or end their housing instability upon exit.

Called the Youth Diversion Infrastructure Project (YDIP), this strategy was modeled on A Way Home Washington's successful Homeless Prevention & Diversion Fund (HPDF) model, which is intended to increase communities' ability to divert young people from homelessness by making flexible funding more available to a community.

The primary strategy of YDIP is to eliminate the referral-based approach of accessing housing resources so that young people who have exited a system of care can get what they need from the providers they trust and

choose to go to for services. This is also foundational with aligning our youth prevention work with targeted strategies that focus on BIPOC and queer, trans, and gender non-conforming young people.

By applying Diversion principles of Housing-first, strengths-based approach, and creative problem-solving, this model has been successful in disrupting our “check-box” approach to looking for housing solutions. By promoting Diversion and easy access to flex funds for young people exiting systems of care (specifically the child welfare, criminal legal, and behavioral health systems) we create greater alignment, capacity, and collaboration across systems that are collectively interested in preventing homelessness for young people.

Since the launch of this model in 2023, we’ve partnered and contracted with five community-based organizations in five diverse counties (Clark, Pierce, Spokane, Yakima, and Walla Walla) to act as “Fiscal Administrators.” These Fiscal Administrators have dispersed funds to more than 300 young people in support of housing plans towards stability. Due in part to this success, BC and A Way Home Washington intend to stand up a sixth community in King County to complete this pilot phase of the project for FY 2024- 2025.

Project Overview

Scope of Work

YDIP Fiscal Administrators are the main point of contact for providers making flex fund requests.¹ They are responsible for confirming eligibility of the young person and the housing solution, and processing payments to the identified payee.

The expectation is that at least .7 FTE will be dedicated to processing requests and dispersing flex funds. The core responsibilities included in this are:

- Reviewing and processing requests:
 - Complete fund request process within 24- 72 hours of receiving request.
 - Review request and necessary supporting documentation to determine eligibility.
 - Verify payees (W-9 for landlords or tenants in shared housing/sublessor).
 - Issue and send check or initiate ACH payment.
 - Confirm payment status with payees (landlords, creditors & collection agencies, moving/storage services, etc.).
- Managing, tracking, and reporting data:
 - Review, confirm, and de-identify demographic data as needed (related to HMIS tracking).
 - Provide monthly reports reflecting data of payment requests.
 - Work with your local Continuum of Care to create HMIS enrollment process for project.
 - Access HMIS, enroll youth into HMIS (when needed), and maintain compliance with user policies and confidentiality requirements.
- Participate in onboarding and training with AWHWA.
- Keep up to date with data input, tracking, and reconciliation.
- Participate in evaluation and data-informed continuous quality improvement activities.
- Promote and manage access to the flex funds:

¹ While the organization performing functions of a Fiscal Admin may employ staff that are certified to submit requests, it is an expectation that the priority for Fiscal Admin is to ensure that flex funds are broadly accessible to the community.

- Promote access to flex funds to other community-based organizations and agencies through local networks and communication strategies (i.e., flyers, social media, local stakeholder groups and listservs, Continuum of Care partners, etc.).
- Track and communicate updates to providers/practitioners authorized to make fund requests.
- Serve as a convener and problem-solver to help support community-based organizations and agencies certified to submit requests.
- Collaborate with system of care agencies, courts, Coordinated Entry, and other potential institutions interacting with eligible young people to promote access to the model.
- Participate in a Learning Community including other Fiscal Administrators and representatives of local and statewide systems of care partners.
- Participate in project evaluation activities to identify learnings and best practices to improve, iterate, and advocate for this work.

Expectations of Project Partners

The organizations best positioned to support the system-wide focus of this project are embedded in and accountable to their communities. FAs are the connection between the three constituencies at the core of this work: young people exiting systems of care; providers and community-based agencies in King County that are supporting young people in housing crisis; and the agencies representing our publicly funded systems of care. While an FA may be providing Diversion for young people in alignment with this work and can be certified to access the YDIP flex funds, **it is critical that FA's core function is focused on receiving and processing requests, and troubleshooting eligibility questions with other agencies and organizations in the community trained in Diversion.**

While the primary activities in this body of work are administrative, the King County YDIP FA must also be able to champion the key principles that make this project possible:

- Advocate for youth-choice, steward the principles of Diversion, and employ a Housing First philosophy;
- Demonstrate a commitment to racial equity and addressing disproportionalities within youth and young adult homelessness;
- Engage in outreach to encourage community partners to be trained in Diversion and utilize flex funds;
- Act as a trusted and responsive representative to other community-based organizations and agencies working for young people, and invest in relationship-building and collaboration;
- Support and dedicate specific capacity to problem-solve and apply a continuous quality improvement (CQI) approach to project implementation and iteration; and
- Model active engagement in a Learning Community to explore and uplift learnings that emerge from the project with BC and AWHWA, other FAs, and system of care stakeholders at the local and regional level.

BC and AWHWA will provide training and support to the King County YDIP FA to understand and operationalize these principles through the policies and procedures, as well as a tailored data infrastructure and process.

Primary Objectives

In concert with the primary activities focused on processing and dispersing flex fund requests, the King County YDIP Fiscal Administrator will serve as a critical partner to promote the system-wide integration of the Centralized Diversion Fund model as a key strategy to prevent and end YYA homelessness in the County. By the end of FY 2025 (June 30, 2025), the KC Fiscal Administrator will have fulfilled these primary objectives for the pilot phase:

- Processed flex funds and served young people at a rate that demonstrates value in the model as a cost-effective community-based alternative in efforts to prevent and end homelessness for young people.
- Meaningfully contributed to community-based efforts to understand the scope and scale of YYA homelessness in King County, with a specific focus on promoting Diversion for young people exiting systems of care as a youth-centered, targeted prevention strategy that improves the capacity of our Coordinated Entry system to function effectively.
- Promoted access and utilization of flex funds with a targeted outreach and communications strategy focused on generating awareness on how to access YDIP, and encouraging utilization of flex funds.
- Created and/or strengthened relationships with other community-based organizations and By-For Organizations that do not have access to flexible funding from major homeless response system contracts but are nonetheless contributing to local efforts to prevent and end housing crises for young people (particularly BIPOC and LGBTQ2+ young people).
- Established or strengthened a relationship with at least one public agency or government partner representing a public system of care with the goal of building awareness around YDIP and alignment with the key principles described above.
- Actively participated in a Learning Community with YDIP Fiscal Administrators implementing the model in different communities across the state.
- Built and tested an internal system to provide Direct Cash assistance using YDIP flex funds to young people that would benefit from this approach, and shared learnings and needs about the internal financial and accounting systems required to facilitate youth-centered Direct Cash assistance.

Target Population

YDIP is intended to support young people experiencing housing crisis or instability upon exiting from publicly funded systems of care. “Homelessness” or “housing instability” is defined as lacking an adequate, fixed, or safe nighttime residence (including couch-surfing or doubled-up), and is self-certified by the young person seeking assistance.

Specifically, eligible youth people include:

- Young people under the age of 25 who are in need of safe & stable housing; AND
- Who have exited or are currently/imminently exiting a system of care.

Systems of care include:

- Child welfare systems/foster care;
- Juvenile detention/rehabilitation;
- Adult detention/jail;
- In-patient & outpatient behavioral health facilities;
- Select OHY-funded programs (HOPE Centers, Crisis Resolution Centers, Transitional Living Facilities (16+), Housing Stability for Youth in Courts, System of Care grants);
- Psychiatric hospitals/mental health crisis centers/substance rehab centers; and
- ERs for a behavioral health crisis.

Application Information

Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organizations, regional and statewide nonprofit housing assistance organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes, local housing authorities, and public development authorities are invited to apply. Eligible applicants must be providing services within King County, and FAs are subject to approval by the state Office of Homeless Youth (OHY).

Culturally-specific organizations or smaller organizations led and staffed by people of color and primarily serving communities of color (By-For Organizations) are strongly encouraged to apply, even if they are not currently delivering homeless and housing services. Building Changes will provide training and technical assistance as needed to support fulfillment of the primary activities.

Estimated Timeline of Activities & Notifications*

Informational Webinar	Thursday, April 18, 2024
Issue Request for Proposals	Friday, April 26, 2024
Application Due to Building Changes by 11:59 PM	Thursday, May 16, 2024
All Applicants Notified About Outcome of Their Application	Thursday, May 30, 2024
Finalist Interviews	First week of June
Contracts in Place with New King County YDIP Fiscal Administrator	June 30, 2024

*Building Changes reserves the right to revise the above timeline.

Submission Instructions

Completed applications using our [ONLINE APPLICATION FORM](#) must be received by Building Changes no later than 11:59 PM Pacific Standard Time on Thursday, May 16, 2024. All responses and materials should be prepared before beginning the online application form. Uploads submitted via the online application form must be in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Budgets must be submitted in Microsoft Excel format using the provided Budget Worksheet. Fax transmissions cannot be received by Building Changes and cannot be used for submission of proposals.

Proposals that do not follow the specified format and/or do not meet the submission requirements will not be reviewed. Late proposals will not be accepted, unless Building Changes' online form is found to be at fault, at Building Changes' sole determination.

Completed applications must include the following:

- **Completed [online application form](#) with required applicant information, application budget summary, and file uploads noted below.**
- **Budget Worksheet:** Completed Budget Worksheet in Microsoft Excel format submitted as one file upload with the online application form. Download the Budget Worksheet [here](#).

- **Application Narrative:** Written responses to all narrative questions (see below) in Microsoft Word or PDF format submitted as one file upload with the online application form.

Application Form Requirements

IMPORTANT: The following information and materials should be prepared in advance of beginning the ONLINE APPLICATION FORM. Online applications must be completed and submitted in one session. Online applications may NOT be started, saved, and resumed later for submission.

Applicants will be required to enter the following information into the online application form:

A. Applicant Information

- Organization Name and Address
- Primary Contact for Application (Name, Title, Email Address, Phone Number)
- Contact information for person submitting the application (if different from Primary Contact for Application)

Checkbox/Yes or No Questions:

- The applicant organization is a nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organization; regional/statewide nonprofit housing assistance organization; federally recognized tribe; local housing authority; or public development authority.
- The applicant organization is a culturally-specific and/or BIPOC-led and -serving organization.
- The applicant organization has Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) access.
- The applicant organization is currently involved with Coordinated Entry in their community.

B. Application Budget Summary

Total proposed YDIP operating budget not to exceed \$240,000, including the amounts of:

- Estimated Flex Fund Allocation: \$ _____
- Indirect Costs \$ _____
- Staffing Costs \$ _____
- = Total YDIP Operating Budget Request: \$ _____

Note: YDIP Fiscal Administrators will be limited to a 15% cap to cover indirect costs such as Executive Leadership and HR, equipment/supplies, occupancy costs, insurance, etc. This is not inclusive of direct staffing and supervision needed to fulfill the primary activities of the scope of work.

Additionally, the expectation is that budgets will reflect at least a 2:1 ratio of flex fund allocation to indirect and staffing costs.

Example:

- *Estimated Flex Fund allocation: \$100,000*
- *Indirect Costs \$10,000*
- *Staffing Costs \$40,000*
- = *Total YDIP Operating Budget Request: \$150,000*

The total staffing and indirect costs is \$50,000, meaning the estimated flex fund allocation to be at least \$100,000, producing a \$150,000 Operating Budget Request.

Application Budget Worksheet

Completed applications must include budgets submitted in Microsoft Excel format using the provided Budget Worksheet, which can be downloaded [here](#). The completed Budget Worksheet should be submitted as one file upload in Excel format with the online application form. Please include applicant organization name in uploaded file name. Example: "(YourOrgName)-BudgetWorksheet"

Application Narrative

Completed applications must include responses to ALL prompts and questions below. Use 12-point font and keep responses to a maximum of 6 pages total, including Executive Summary (1 page) and responses to narrative questions (5 pages). The Application Narrative should be submitted as one file upload in .DOC or .PDF format with the online application form. Please include the applicant organization name in uploaded file name. Example: "(YourOrgName)-ApplicationNarrative"

A. Executive Summary

Please provide an overview of your organization's work, and how your organization is uniquely positioned for success in the core function of receiving and processing flex fund requests for young people exiting systems of care as the YDIP King County Fiscal Administrator. Use 12-point font and limit your response to a maximum of 1 page total.

B. Narrative Response Questions

Please provide narrative responses to the questions below. Use 12-point font and limit your responses to a maximum of 5 pages total.

- 1) Please describe your current work to support young people experiencing homelessness and housing crises. Specifically describe your organization's work to center youth-choice and apply a Diversion-like approach and flexible assistance. OR, if your work doesn't currently promote the Diversion approach and/or disperse flexible assistance, please describe what aspects of your organization prepare you for success in the primary objectives.
- 2) Please describe the racial inequities in youth and young adult homelessness in King County. In your response, specifically help us understand how your agency views structural racism and discrimination as a root cause of homelessness and housing instability for young people.
- 3) Please describe what barriers QTBIPOC (Queer & Trans Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and LGBTQIA2S+ young people face in staying stably housed or accessing services in King County. In your response, specifically help us understand how your organization views cis-sexism, transphobia, and homophobia as a root cause of homelessness and housing instability for young people.
- 4) Please describe the current relationships your organization has with agencies representing systems of care in supporting young people gain housing stability—what works/has worked in that relationship; if any challenges have emerged in this relationship and what they were; and how you'd go about improving or strengthening this relationship. OR, if your organization does not currently have relationships with systems of care, please describe how you intend develop them in order to meet the primary objectives.
- 5) How does your organization build and sustain partnerships with other organizations to make a system-level impact on YYA homelessness in King County? How would these partner agencies and organizations describe partnership with your organization in this effort?