



# Request for Proposals (RFP)

## HOME-ARP Funds – Supportive Services

*Released on April 12, 2024*

### Background

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use – often in partnership with local nonprofit groups – to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable and attainable housing for rent or homeownership. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively for this purpose. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) manages HOME, and the Community Development Department administers these funds on behalf of Tarrant County.

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provided \$5 billion to assist individuals or households who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations (“Qualifying Populations”) by providing housing, rental assistance, supportive services, and non-congregate shelter, to reduce homelessness and increase housing stability across the country. These grant funds are administered through the HOME program as HOME-ARP. More details regarding the requirements for the use of these funds can be found in [Notice CPD-21-10](#) (the “Notice”).

The Tarrant County Community Development team reached out to more than 100 community stakeholders, including those representing Qualifying Populations (QPs), to gain feedback on how the HOME-ARP funds should be spent through surveys, stakeholder interviews, stakeholder call sessions, a human-centered design workshop, and public participation. This feedback was used to create the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan (the “Plan”), which was submitted and approved by HUD in 2023. The Plan outlined several uses, including \$4,000,000 for supportive services, which Tarrant County will work with community partners to carry out the eligible activities as outlined in this RFP.

### Funding Announcement and Eligible Costs

Tarrant County announces the availability of up to \$4,000,000 in federal funding under the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) American Rescue Plan (ARP) to provide supportive services for residents residing within Tarrant County, outside the city limits of Arlington, Fort Worth,

and Grand Prairie. Proposals are being solicited for eligible costs of providing supportive services associated with McKinney-Vento and Homelessness Prevention supportive services to QPs.

## Eligible Costs for McKinney-Vento Supportive Services and Homelessness Prevention Supportive Services

Eligible costs for supportive services under McKinney-Vento and Homelessness Prevention include costs associated with the following services. For details about each, please refer to HUD Notice CPD-21-10.

- **Childcare** – the costs of childcare for program participants, including providing meals and snacks, and comprehensive and coordinated developmental activities for children under the age of 13<sup>1</sup>, are eligible. The childcare center must be licensed by the jurisdiction in which it operates for its costs to be eligible.
- **Education services** – the costs of improving knowledge and basic educational skills are eligible costs, including instruction or training in consumer education, health education, substance abuse prevention, literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), and General Educational Development (GED). This includes screening, assessment, and testing; individual group instruction; tutoring, provision of books, supplies, and instructional material; counseling; and referral to community resources.
- **Employment assistance and job training** – the costs of establishing and/or operating employment assistance and job training programs are eligible, including classroom, online and/or computer instruction, on-the-job instruction, services that assist individuals in securing employment, acquiring learning skills, and/or increasing earning potential. The cost of providing reasonable stipends to program participants in employment assistance and job training programs is also an eligible cost.
  - Learning skills include those skills that can be used to secure and retain a job, including the acquisition of vocational licenses and/or certificates.
  - Services that assist individuals in securing employment consist of employment screening, assessment, or testing; structured job skills and job-seeking skills; special training and tutoring, including literacy training and pre-vocational training; books and instructional material; counseling or job coaching; and referrals to community resources.
- **Food** – the cost of providing meals or groceries to program participants is eligible.
- **Housing search and counseling services** – costs of assisting eligible program participants to locate, obtain, and retain suitable housing are eligible. Services are:
  - Development of an action plan for locating housing;
  - Housing search;
  - Tenant counseling;
  - Assistance obtaining and securing utilities;

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<sup>1</sup> Children with a disability must be under the age of 18 rather than 13.

- Making moving arrangements;
  - Outreach and negotiation with owners;
  - Mediation with property owners and landlords on behalf of eligible program participants;
  - Assistance submitting rental applications and understanding leases;
  - Assessment of housing for compliance with HOME-ARP requirements for tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) in Section VI.C of the Notice and financial assistance for short- and medium-term rental payments provided under Section VI.D.4.c.i.(R) of the Notice;
  - Credit counseling, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit issues;
  - Payment of rental application fees; and
  - Other housing counseling costs, as defined in 24 CFR 5.100, funded with or provided in connection with grant funds must be carried out in accordance with 24 CFR 5.111.
- **Legal services** – eligible costs are the fees charged by licensed attorneys and by person(s) under the supervision of licensed attorneys, for advice and representation in matters that interfere with a qualifying individual or family’s ability to obtain and retain housing.
    - Eligible subject matters are child support; guardianship; paternity; emancipation; legal separation; orders of protection and other legal remedies for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and stalking; appeal of veterans and public benefit claim denials; landlord-tenant disputes; and the resolution of criminal warrants; landlord/tenant matters, provided that the services must be necessary to resolve a legal problem that prohibits the program participant from obtaining permanent housing or will likely result in the program participant losing the permanent housing in which the program participant currently resides.
    - Services may include client intake, receiving and preparing cases for trial, provision of legal advice, representation at hearings, and counseling.
    - Fees based on the actual service performed (i.e., fee for service) are eligible if the cost would be less than the cost of hourly fees. Filing fees and other necessary court costs are also eligible. If the subrecipient is a legal services provider and performs the services itself, the eligible costs are the subrecipient’s employee’s salaries and other costs necessary to perform the services.
  - **Life skills training** – the costs of teaching critical life management skills that may never have been learned or have been lost during physical or mental illness, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, substance abuse, and homelessness are eligible. These services must be necessary to assist the program participant to function independently in the community. Life skills training includes: the budgeting of resources and money management, household management, conflict

management, shopping for food and other needed items, nutrition, the use of public transportation, and parent training.

- **Mental health services** – eligible costs are the direct outpatient treatment of mental health conditions that are provided by licensed professionals.
  - Mental health services are the application of therapeutic processes to personal, family, situational, or occupational problems to bring about positive resolution of the problem or improved individual or family functioning or circumstances. Problem areas may include family and marital relationships, parent-child problems, or symptom management.
  - Services are crisis interventions; counseling; individual, family, or group therapy sessions; the prescription of psychotropic medications or explanations about the use and management of medications; and combinations of therapeutic approaches to address multiple problems.
- **Outpatient health services** – eligible costs are the direct outpatient treatment of medical conditions when provided by licensed medical professionals including:
  - Providing an analysis or assessment of a program participant’s health problems and the development of a treatment plan;
  - Assisting program participants to understand their health needs;
  - Providing directly or assisting program participants to obtain and utilize appropriate medical treatment;
  - Preventive medical care and health maintenance services, including in-home health services and emergency medical services;
  - Provision of appropriate medication;
  - Providing follow-up services; and
  - Preventive and non-cosmetic dental care.
- **Outreach services** – the costs of activities to engage qualified populations for the purpose of providing immediate support and intervention, as well as identifying potential program participants, are eligible.
  - Eligible costs include the outreach worker’s transportation costs and a cell phone to be used by the individual performing the outreach.
  - Costs associated with the following services are eligible: initial assessment; crisis counseling; addressing urgent physical needs, such as providing meals, blankets, clothes, or toiletries; actively connecting and providing people with information and referrals to homeless and mainstream programs; and publicizing the availability of the housing and/or services provided within the PJ’s geographic area.
- **Substance abuse treatment services** – eligible substance abuse treatment services are designed to prevent, reduce, eliminate, or deter relapse of substance abuse or addictive behaviors and are provided by licensed or certified professionals. The costs include:
  - Program participant intake and assessment;
  - Outpatient treatment;
  - Group and individual counseling;

- Drug testing;
- Inpatient detoxification and other inpatient drug or alcohol treatment are ineligible.
- **Transportation** – eligible costs are:
  - The costs of program participant’s travel on public transportation or in a vehicle provided by the PJ or subrecipient to and from medical care, employment, childcare, or other services eligible under the Notice;
  - Mileage allowance for service workers to visit program participants and to carry out housing inspections;
  - The cost of purchasing or leasing a vehicle in which staff transports program participants and/or staff serving program participants;
  - The cost of gas, insurance, taxes, and maintenance for the vehicle, subject to specific rules set forth in the Notice;
  - The costs of PJ or subrecipient staff to accompany or assist program participants to utilize public transportation; and
  - If public transportation options are not sufficient within the area, the PJ may make a one-time payment on behalf of a program participant needing car repairs or maintenance required to operate a personal vehicle, subject to specific rules set forth in the Notice.
- **Case management** – the costs of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to meet the needs of the program participant(s) are eligible costs. PJs and subrecipients providing these supportive services must have written standards for providing the assistance. Eligible costs are those associated with the following services and activities:
  - Conducting the initial evaluation, including verifying and documenting eligibility, for individuals and families applying for supportive services;
  - Counseling;
  - Developing, securing, and coordinating services;
  - Using a centralized or coordinated assessment system that complies with the requirements of this Notice;
  - Obtaining federal, state, and local benefits;
  - Monitoring and evaluating program participant progress;
  - Providing information and referrals to other providers;
  - Providing ongoing risk assessment and safety planning with victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking;
  - Developing an individualized housing and service plan, including planning a path to permanent housing stability; and
  - Conducting re-evaluations of the program participant’s eligibility and the types and amounts of assistance the program participant needs.
- **Mediation** – these funds may pay for mediation between the program participant and the owner or person(s) with whom the program participant is living, provided that the mediation

is necessary to prevent the program participant from losing permanent housing in which the program participant currently resides.

- **Credit repair** – these funds may pay for credit counseling and other services necessary to assist program participants with critical skills related to household budgeting, managing money, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit problems. This assistance does not include the payment or modification of debt.
- **Landlord/tenant liaison** – costs of liaison services between property managers/owners and program participants are eligible HOME-ARP costs and may include:
  - Landlord outreach;
  - Physical inspections and rent reasonable studies as needed to secure units;
  - Rental application fees and security deposits for clients, in accordance with the financial assistance costs requirements;
  - Mediation services for housing issues that may arise between owner, property manager, or other residents and clients; and
  - Coordination or assistance with the provision of other HOME-ARP eligible services to assist clients to maintain permanent housing.
- **Services for special populations** – these funds may be used to provide services for special populations, such as victim services, so long as the costs of providing these services are eligible under this section. The term victim services means services that assist program participants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking including services offered by rape crisis centers and domestic violence shelters, and other organizations with a documented history of effective work concerning domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.
- **Financial assistance costs** – these funds may be used to pay housing owners, utility companies, and other third parties for the following costs, as applicable:
  - Rental application fees as charged by the owner to all applicants;
  - Security deposits – a security deposit that is equal to no more than two (2) months' rent. This assistance is separate and distinct from the provision of financial assistance for the first and last month's rent provided under this section and cannot be used to duplicate those costs.
  - Utility deposits for gas, electricity, water, and/or sewer.
  - Utility payments – may pay up to 24 months of utility payments per program participant, per service, including up to six (6) months of utility payments in arrears, per service. A partial payment of a utility bill counts as one (1) month. This assistance may only be provided if the program participant or a member of the same household has an account in his or her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make utility payments. Eligible utility services as gas, electric, water, and/or sewer. No program participant shall receive more than 24 months of utility assistance within any three- (3-) year period.
  - Moving costs – these funds may pay for moving costs, such as truck rental or hiring a moving company. This assistance may include payment of temporary storage fees

for up to 3 months, provided that the fees are accrued after the date the program participant begins receiving assistance under this section of the Notice and before the program participant moves into permanent housing. Payment of temporary storage fees in arrears is not eligible.

- First and last month's rent – if necessary to obtain housing for a program participant, these funds may be used to make a prepayment of the first and last month's rent under a new lease to the owner at the time the owner is paid the security deposit for the program participant's tenancy in the housing. This assistance must not exceed two (2) month's rent and must be tracked for the purposes of determining total short- and medium-term financial assistance for rent that the program participant may receive. This assistance is separate and distinct from financial assistance for security deposits provided under this section and cannot be used to duplicate those costs.
- Payment of rental arrears – these funds may be used for a one- (1-) time payment of up to six (6) months rent in arrears, including any late fees or charges on those arrears, if necessary for the household to maintain their existing housing or, for those without housing, if necessary to remove a demonstrated barrier to obtaining housing.
- **Short- and medium-term financial assistance for rent** – subject to the following conditions, a PJ may provide a program participant with short- or medium-term financial assistance for rent, provided that the total financial assistance provided, including any prepayment of first and last month's rent as described above, does not exceed 24 months of rental payments over any three- (3-) year period.
  - Short-term means up to three (3) months.
  - Medium-term means more than three (3) months, but not more than 24 months.
  - The PJ may make rental payments only to an owner with whom the PJ has entered into a financial assistance agreement with for rental payment.
  - Other specificities as set forth in the Notice.

## Ineligible Costs

Legal services for immigration and citizenship matters for issues related to mortgages and homeownership are ineligible. Retainer fee arrangements and contingency fee arrangements are prohibited.

Financial assistance cannot be provided to a program participant who is receiving the same type of assistance through other public sources. Financial assistance also cannot be provided to a program participant who has been provided with replacement housing payments under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 USC 4601 et seq.) and its limiting regulations at 49 CFR Part 24, or Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 USC 5304(d) and its implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 42 during the period of time covered by the replacement housing payments.

## Monitoring

Tarrant County will conduct monitoring reviews in accordance with the Notice. Tarrant County may contract additional reporting requirements in alignment with Audit, Budget and Risk Management, and/or Community Development needs and objectives as detailed in the Subrecipient Agreement. Subrecipients must cooperate fully in any review conducted by Tarrant County, its authorized representatives, and/or the federal government. If it is determined corrective actions must be taken, Tarrant County will request a written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) detailing actions that will be taken to remedy the deficiencies.

## Funding Details

This RFP will allocate \$4,000,000 in HOME-ARP funds. Award amounts may vary depending on eligible applications submitted.

All grant funding will be paid on a monthly reimbursement basis within 30 days of an approved invoice. Specific grant terms for selected proposals will be negotiated and outlined in a Subrecipient Agreement. No funds will be disbursed without the execution of a legally binding written agreement that complies with HOME-ARP requirements.

## Additional Considerations

Please note this is not a comprehensive list of all project requirements; however, it does provide guidance on some common components. Applicants should review this list carefully to ensure they will be able to comply prior to applying for funding.

- **Use of HOME funds** – the written agreement describes the amount and uses of the HOME-ARP funds, the tasks to be performed, the services to be provided, and include a budget. The written agreement cannot agree to provide HOME-ARP funds after the end of the HOME-ARP budget period.
- **Records and Reports** – the agreement specifies the records that must be maintained and the information or reports that must be submitted to assist the PJ in meeting its recordkeeping and reporting requirements under the Notice. The subrecipient must provide data to be reported to federal systems on a quarterly basis, by the 30<sup>th</sup> day after the end of each calendar quarter, on the number of QP households served, including race and ethnicity, household size, and household type of the households assisted.
- **Duration and Disbursement of Funds** – the agreement specifies the duration of the agreement, and state that disbursement of funds under the agreement may not be requested until the funds are needed. Tarrant County disburses funds on a monthly reimbursement basis only. All reimbursement requests must be submitted at least 90 days prior to grant expiration.



- **Compliance with HOME-ARP Program Requirements** – the agreement must comply with HOME-ARP program requirements for the HOME-ARP supportive services activities as described in the Notice.
- **Repayments** – any HOME-ARP funds that are used for costs that are not eligible under the Notice, or are later deemed ineligible, must be repaid back to Tarrant County, and reimbursed to HUD.

## Contents of the Proposal

To receive full consideration for funding, proposals must include Exhibits A (Request Summary Form) and B (Statement of Certification) included in this document, as well as clearly answer all the narrative questions outlined in the Selection Criteria. Additional documentation is welcome and encouraged and should be included, as appropriate.

File names should be in the following form: YYMMDD\_HOME-ARP\_ProjectName\_FileDescription (e.g., 230701\_HOME-ARP\_HarvardCourt\_Budget).

Please provide a jump drive with all contents of your proposal to: Tarrant County Community Development, Attn: Marguerite Allen, Assistant Director, 2501 Parkview Dr., Ste. 420, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

The organization must be available and able to present the proposal to Tarrant County staff if requested. This presentation would cover topics related to the proposal and may be expanded.

## Selection Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Please ensure each of these items are addressed in the proposal. Applicants are encouraged to include qualitative and quantitative data, as well as letters of support in their proposals. Proposals must score at least 75 points to be considered for funding.

### Quality of Proposal – 30 Points

Applicants should include a detailed narrative describing their supportive services program, including how many households will be served directly using HOME-ARP funds and how they will be determined to be QPs. Applicants should include a timeline for the expenditure of funds<sup>2</sup>, the geographic area to be served<sup>3</sup>, staffing requirements, how records will be collected and maintained, and quality control efforts. Additionally, applicants should describe how they will develop, implement, and maintain written procedures specific to the program and in alignment

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<sup>2</sup> Not to exceed two (2) years.

<sup>3</sup> Must be within Tarrant County, outside the cities of Arlington, Fort Worth, and Grand Prairie.

with the Notice. Quantitative and qualitative data, supporting documentation, and sample client files are encouraged.

During the Consultation Process, stakeholders identified childcare, housing searches and rehousing costs, and job training as critical needs. Transportation, substance abuse treatment, health services, and financial assistance were also highly ranked. Up to 10 points in this category may be awarded for supportive services programs that address these challenges.

### Financial Feasibility – 15 Points

Proposals should provide a detailed budget, including contingencies as expected or necessary. Sources and uses should be identified and be efficient in the use of HOME funds. Budgets should be detailed and clearly identify any funding shortfalls.

Applicants should describe what the implications would be if the proposal does not receive full funding as presented, including whether the program would move forward. Additionally, applicants should describe how unexpected costs will be covered and/or remedied.

### Organizational Capacity and Experience with Federal Funds – 15 Points

Tarrant County is seeking proposals showcasing organizational capacity and extensive experience with federal funds and the services outlined in the RFP. A summary of past projects is welcomed and encouraged. Applicants should have adequate capacity with diverse skillsets. Tarrant County is looking for applicants that have a strong interest in continuing to provide services in the community after HOME-ARP funds have been exhausted.

Applicants should include organizational charts, staff resumes, leadership (including Boards of Directors, if applicable), and operating budgets for each partner entity involved in the project.

### Community Impact – 10 Points

The proposal should include a narrative that showcases a positive impact on the community in alignment with the purpose of HOME-ARP funds. Applicants are encouraged to include qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate positive performance as well as metrics demonstrating the return on investment.

### Community Engagement – 10 Points

Applicants are required to communicate with Tarrant County residents, neighborhood organizations, community members, elected officials, city staff, Tarrant County staff, and other partner agencies throughout the process. Applicants should outline how they will meet this objective.

### Economic and Community Inclusion (e.g., DBEs/HUBs) – 10 Points

Tarrant County is committed to promote full and equal business opportunity for all businesses to supply the goods and services needed to support the mission and operations of county government and seeks to encourage the use of certified historically underutilized businesses (HUBs), also

known as disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs). It is the policy of Tarrant County to involve certified HUBs to the greatest extent feasible in the procurement of goods, equipment, services, and construction projects while maintaining competition and quality of work standards.

Commissioners Court has established a 20 percent (20%) good faith target goal for Tarrant County. Applicants should outline how they will meet this target in their proposal.

## Project Readiness – 10 Points

Tarrant County requires that all supportive services start within 90 days of an executed written agreement and finish in 24 months. To ensure timeliness, applicants should evidence adequate staff capacity, financial capacity, internal controls (including procedures), workflows, clear responsibilities, and an implementation strategy.

Proposals should clearly indicate how each of these objectives has been met and anticipate any potential roadblocks to readiness.

## Invalid Proposals

Submission of proposals from all qualified applicants is encouraged. Proposals will be automatically rejected for any of the following:

- Proposal is not for an eligible activity;
- Proposal is not in alignment with Tarrant County's Action Plan, as amended;
- Applicant is not in good standing with local governments;
- Applicant has unresolved monitoring issues or has been found to be in noncompliance with any federal, state, or local grant or loan program requirements in the last five (5) years that has not had a resolution;
- Proposal is incomplete or does not meet the submission requirements; or
- Proposal includes false, misleading, or inaccurate information.

Additionally, Tarrant County also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and/or to fund only a portion of a proposal.

## Additional information

The prospective applicant certifies by submission of their proposal that neither it nor its principals are presently disbarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal, state, or local department or agency. Any party conducting business with HOME funds as part of the eligible activities cannot be listed on the federal debarred list of contractors. The online debarred list can be found on the System Award Management (SAM) website: <http://www.sam.org>. Any agencies currently out of compliance with any Tarrant County contracts are ineligible to apply.

## Questions

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Marguerite Allen, [meallen@tarrantcountytx.gov](mailto:meallen@tarrantcountytx.gov).

# Exhibit A | Request Summary Form

Please print or type your responses below.

<b>Organization Name</b>	
<b>Organization Address</b>	
<b>Organization Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)</b>	
<b>Organization Tax ID #</b>	
<b>Contact Name</b>	
<b>Contact Email</b>	
<b>Contact Phone</b>	
<b>Date of Application Submittal</b>	
<b>Project Category/Description</b>	
<b>Total Project Cost/Proposal Budget</b>	
<b>HOME-ARP Funding Request (% of Proposal Budget)</b>	
<b>Uses of HOME-ARP Funds</b>	
<b>Proposal Timeline, incl. Start Date</b>	
<b># of Households Assisted</b>	

# Exhibit B | Statement of Certification

I hereby certify that all statements I have provided on this application and in the attachments herein are true; that I am authorized to sign this application and to make these statements on behalf of the applicant organization and that the organization understands that any representation which leads to the improper allocation and expenditure of public funds may result in legal action against the organization for retrieval of any such funds and appropriate penalties.

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Signature

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Title

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Printed Name

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Date