



MISSISSIPPI HOME CORPORATION

EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS PROGRAM

2024

APPLICATION MANUAL

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OVERVIEW

The Emergency Solutions Grants program was designed to improve administrative efficiency and enhance response coordination and effectiveness in addressing the needs of homeless persons. The ESG program will provide funding to non-profits to assist individuals experiencing homelessness or persons at risk of homelessness to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.

BACKGROUND

The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH ACT) consolidates three of the separate homeless assistance programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act into a single grant program, revised the Emergency Shelter Grants program (ESG) and renamed the program the Emergency Solutions Grants program (ESG). The HEARTH Act also codifies into law the Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process. The Continuum of Care program established by the HEARTH ACT and the new consultation requirements found in 24 CFR Part 91 states that ESG recipients consult with CoCs when allocating ESG funds to carry out eligible activities.

The change in the program's name, from Emergency Shelter Grants to Emergency Solutions Grants, reflects the change in the program's focus from addressing the needs of homeless people in emergency shelters to assisting people to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates funds by formula grant to eligible states and units of general-purpose local government for the administration of the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program. ESG funds will be distributed statewide to eligible local units of government that operate existing homeless shelters and private non-profit organizations that demonstrate the capacity to provide homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance. **Local units of government are not eligible to submit applications on behalf of non-profit agencies.**

HUD provides general oversight of the regulatory guidance and directions the program should follow. This allows recipients to create their own rules required to implement a program if those rules do not violate the overall intent of the program. Mississippi Home Corporation has chosen to implement stricter regulations based on the funds allocated and the timeliness necessary for implementation of the program. **Organizations interested in applying for ESG funds must adhere to the directives that MHC has provided.**

The Governor designated Mississippi Home Corporation ("MHC" or "Corporation") to administer the Emergency Solutions Grant in Mississippi, effective July 1st, 2015.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS/ PRIORITIES/ OBJECTIVES

HOME together is focused on federal strategies that will support states and communities to make homelessness a rare, brief, and one-time experience that will sustain that success once achieved. That focus is reflected in its structure.

Ensure Homelessness is a Rare Experience

Objective 1.1: Collaboratively build lasting systems that end homelessness

- Build momentum behind a common vision
- Understand the size and scope of the problem
- Reduce fragmentation
- Drive cost-effective solutions

Objective 1.2: Increase capacity and strengthen practices to prevent housing crises and homelessness

- Reduces the prevalence of risk of housing crises
- Reduce the risk of homelessness while households are engaged with or transitioning from systems
- Target assistance to prevent housing crises

Ensure Homelessness is a Brief Experience

Objective 2.1: Identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible

- Identify every individual and family
- Coordinate comprehensive strategies
- Use HMIS and other data sources to build and maintain active lists of people experiencing homelessness

Objective 2.2: Provide immediate access to low-barrier emergency shelter or other temporary accommodations to all who need it

- Provide access to low-barrier emergency shelter
- Provide access to service-enriched, long-term temporary accommodations when needed and appropriate

Objective 2.3: Implement coordinated entry to standardize assessment and prioritization processes and streamline connections to housing and services

Objective 2.4: Assist people in moving swiftly into permanent housing with appropriate and person-centered services

- Expand access to new and existing affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness
- Connect people to rapid re-housing
- Connect people with the most intense needs to permanent supportive housing
- Link people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to

housing services

Ensure Homelessness is a One-Time Experience Objective 3.1: Prevent Returns to Homelessness through Connections to Adequate Services and Opportunities

Sustain an End to Homelessness Objective 4.1: Sustain Practices and Systems at a Scale Necessary to Respond to Future Needs

MHC's GOALS

MHC collaborates with Continuum of Care (CoC) agencies and develops strategic goals guiding the use of ESG funds. The goals and priorities are:

1. Achieve the federal goals stated in *Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* and accomplish ambitious goals related to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead vs L.C.*:
 - a. End and sustain an end to homelessness among veterans (funding sources have been defined by VA and SSVF but needs in this population may be addressed using HOME, CoC, and ESG, though could be eligible)
 - b. End and sustain an end to chronic homelessness (the partnerships between ESG, HOME, National Housing Trust Fund, CoC and CHOICE could help achieve this goal while also accomplishing *Olmstead* goals as the populations often overlap homeless persons living with mental illness)
 - c. End and sustain an end to homelessness among families and youth (CoC resources, HOME TBRA, HOME units, National Housing Trust Fund, ESG shelter operations for domestic violence shelters, shelters for women and children, runaway and homeless youth programs, and children's shelters willing to address trafficking, ESG rapid re-housing, and prevention coupled with appropriate services)
 - d. End homelessness among unaccompanied youth.
 - e. End homelessness among all other individuals including developing systems to prevent homelessness among high-risk populations.
2. Create standards within the CoCs to ensure that ESG and CoC programs align with the goals, utilize evidence-based practices, and promote coordination. Outcomes expectations will be defined and measured by HMIS reports and site visits. The CoCs will work together to create statewide CoC expectations and standards.
3. MHC will consider measurable outcomes, service delivery standards and models, and clearly stated actions by a grantee to meaningfully collaborate with the CoC and other service organizations in local communities during the ESG application review. Sub-recipients are required to participate in local Coordinated Entry, HMIS, or compatible database for Domestic Shelters only, PIT, and CoC committee work. MHC will also

consider agencies' impact on homelessness, including serving those most in need (chronically homeless and the disabled population), the provision of case management to include

4. The CoCs' HMIS systems will continue to coordinate efforts and provide data to the community, HUD, and MHC. The HMIS data over time, coupled with the PIT counts, will inform the goals and strategies to achieve those goals at a local level. Funding will align with data-driven goals.
5. MHC, CoCs, and ESG-funded agencies will coordinate with the Department of Mental Health and Community Mental Health Centers regarding Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACT Teams) and other community-based services with newly created housing options.
6. Create a system to ensure that all homelessness is rare, brief, and non-reoccurring. Prevent homelessness among individuals released from institutional settings (ESG outreach services and homeless prevention services coupled with CoC resources, CHOICE, and reentry programs can prevent this high-risk population from entering into homelessness upon discharge from institutionalization)

Expenditure limits. The 2024 ESG program significantly changes amounts that can be expended within certain program categories:

- Not more than 60% of the fiscal year grant may be used for emergency shelter and street outreach activities.
- Not less than 40% of the fiscal year grant must be used for homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing and/or HMIS activities.
- Subject to the cost principles in OMB Circulars A-87 (2 CFR 225) and A-122 (2 CFR 230) and other requirements in this part, employee compensation and other overhead costs directly related to carrying out emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing and HMIS are eligible costs of these program components. These costs are not subject to the expenditure limit for administrative activities.
- Indirect Cost: Applicants are allowed to charge indirect costs to the ESG grant using the 10 % de minimis rate. Agencies are encouraged to review HUD's Indirect Cost Toolkit for CoC and ESG programs before electing to use indirect cost.

ESTIMATED ALLOCATION/ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The 2024 One-Year Action Plan is based on the allocation of **\$2,302,659.00**. Mississippi Home Corporation published in the Federal Register. This allocation is from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

ESG 2024 Estimated Allocation Categories

PROGRAM CATEGORIES	APPROXIMATE %	ALLOCATION*
Emergency Shelters**	Not more than 60%	\$913,458
Street Outreach		\$10,000
Rapid Re-Housing Assistance	Not less than 40%	\$754,325
Homelessness Prevention		\$407,259
HMIS		\$67,617
Administration		\$150,000
TOTAL ALLOCATION		\$2,302,659.00

** MHC reserves the right to adjust the amount designated for any program category based on the demand created by the applications and to meet programmatic and budgetary requirements.*

*** Emergency Shelter Category funds may be awarded to a non-profit (sub-recipient) that does not own (or run) a shelter for the purpose of paying for hotel/motel vouchers when no appropriate emergency shelter is available with caveats.*

**** No administrative costs are allowed for grant recipients.*

Funding Caps

When applying for ESG funding, agencies can request between **\$75,000 and \$500,000**. **However, it is important to note that the caps do not ensure that your agency will receive the exact amount requested.** The final amount awarded depends on the available funds and the number of agencies receiving funding. **As a result, it is possible for agencies to receive less than \$75,000 in their contract award.**

Two-Year Applications

Applications will be accepted for one or two-year grant cycles. To be considered for a two-year cycle application, you must be a previously funded MHC ESG agency in “good standing.”

Two-year grant applicants must provide a budget, match, and expenditure report for the current program year (2024-2025) only. A new budget proposal will be collected during FY 2025 grant cycle.

Two-year grant applicants are subject to annual evaluations, an end-of-FY grant close-out report, and CAPER. Agreeing to a two-year contract means agreeing to spend at least 90% of your first-year allocation by the end of that grant year. Two-year application approval does not guarantee that your agency will be funded in the same capacity during the second grant year. A new budget and supporting documentation will be evaluated with a first-year monitoring report and ranked competitively to determine the second-year funding amount. Evaluate your agency's capacity to meet funding deadlines before considering a two-year term.

The ESG application must be completed in its entirety as it is related to the agency's proposed project.

ESG Recaptured Funds

The Corporation may recapture funds previously awarded to an ESG recipient. The Corporation may reallocate any recaptured funds in any eligible category and reallocate them to any eligible applicant. Requests for supplemental funds will be considered on a case- by-case basis with funds granted only in those instances where the Corporation can readily determine that additional funding is justified. Grant award limits are not applicable when considering the allocation of these funds. MHC may recapture funds previously awarded to an ESG recipient for reasons such as failure to satisfy timeliness of the implementation of the project, failure to comply with contractual conditions, or failure to complete project closeout. Recaptured or de- obligated ESG funds may be used to supplement Administration, supplement existing projects which may require additional funds, fund other eligible applicants, or fund ESG eligible

activities.

Additional information about MHC's recapture process may be found in the program's policy and procedure manual.

Application Submission Date

The ESG application submission date is **August 19, 2024 to September 20, 2024, no later than 4:00 p.m.**

Applications must be submitted to Mississippi Home Corporation, Attn: Tamara Stewart and Vickie Palfrey, 735 Riverside Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39202. No applications will be accepted after 4:00 p.m. MHC's time clock will be used for meeting the submission deadline.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The three Continua of Care (Mississippi Balance of State (BOS) CoC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition CoC, Central Mississippi CoC) and their member homelessness services provider organizations (to include faith-based organizations), and non-entitlement local units of government that operate existing homeless shelters and/or homeless programs, and non-profit agencies that operate existing homeless programs are eligible to submit applications in the ESG Program. Local units of government are not eligible to submit applications on behalf of non-profit agencies. Non-profit organizations within the City of Jackson will be eligible to submit applications in the street outreach, homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing, shelter and HMIS categories.

Pursuant to 24 CFR 576.406, faith-based activities, organizations that are religious or faith-based are eligible, on the same basis as any other organization, to receive ESG funds. Neither the Federal Government nor a State or local government receiving funds under ESG shall discriminate against an organization based on the organization's religious character or affiliation. Organizations that are directly funded under the ESG program **may not** engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization as part of the programs or services funded under ESG. If the organization conducts these activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded under ESG, and participation **must** be voluntary for program participants. Any religious organization that receives ESG funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs, provided that the religious organization does not use direct ESG funds to support any inherently religious activities.

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must provide “dollar for dollar” matching funds. Pursuant to 24 CFR Part 576.201 and 42 U.S.C. 11375, the ESG program requires that ESG funds provided by HUD be matched (cash and in-kind) with an equal amount of funds from other sources.

Matching contributions may be obtained from any source, including any Federal source other than the ESG program, as well as state, local, and private sources.

- In order to meet the matching requirement, the matching contributions **must** meet all requirements that apply to the ESG funds provided by HUD.
- The matching contributions **must** be provided after the date that HUD signs the grant agreement.
- To count toward the required match for the recipient’s fiscal year grant, cash contributions must be expended within the expenditure deadline in 24 CFR Part 576.203.
- Contributions used to match a previous ESG grant **may not** be used to match a subsequent ESG grant.
- Contributions that have been or will be counted as satisfying a matching requirement of another Federal grant or award may not count as satisfying the matching requirement of this section.

Requirements for using cash and noncash contributions to match ESG grant:

- Cash expended for allowable costs as defined in OMB Circulars 2 CFR Part 225 and 2 CFR Part 230 of the recipient or sub-recipient.
- Cash donations and cash receipts from sale of donated items (thrift store), however, there may not be any duplication of this transaction, i.e., clothing donated and then sold through Thrift Store would be a duplication if counted both times.
- Noncash contributions may include but are not limited to real property, equipment, goods, or services. The value of any real property, equipment, goods, or services is determined by the cost, -the recipient or sub-recipient had to pay for them with grant funds, or if the activity represents indirect costs; and value may also include the purchase value of any donated building.

Calculating the amount of noncash contributions:

- Calculating noncash contributions: the value or fair market value of any donated material or building (this source can only be utilized as match one time), the value of any lease on a building.

- Services provided by individuals must be valued at rates consistent with those ordinarily paid for similar work in the sub-recipient's organization. If the sub-recipient does not have employees performing similar work, the rates must be consistent with those ordinarily paid by other employers for similar work in the same labor market (at a **minimum rate of \$7.25 per hour**).

THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS

1. The applicant is an eligible applicant
2. Nonprofits must submit proof of good standing with the Secretary of State for Mississippi.
3. The application is fully completed
4. The applicant is registered with sam.gov and provides a unique entity identifier (UEI).
5. Applications submitted by a non-entitlement local unit of government must include a copy of the Resolution authorizing the submission of their application. The Resolution must be adopted by the local unit of government and must be signed and dated by the local unit of government's Chief Elected Official.
6. Applications submitted by private non-profit organizations that are operating **existing** homeless shelters must include a copy of the authorizing Resolution. The Resolution must be adopted by the non-profit organization's Board and must be signed and dated by the President of the Board.
7. Applications from private non-profit organizations that are operating existing homeless shelters must also include a letter from the local unit of government approving the submission of the application. The letter must refer to the current ESG program year for which the application is being submitted and is signed by the Chief Elected Official.
8. **Match requirement must be documented in the application. The matching amount must be equal to the amount of ESG funds being requested.** Matching contributions may be obtained from any source, including any Federal source other than the ESG program, as well as state, local, and private sources: the value or FMV of any donated material or building (this source can only be utilized as match one time); the value of any lease on a building; any salary paid to staff to carry out the program and the value of the time and services (at a **minimum rate of \$7.25 per hour**) contributed by volunteers to carry out the program.

If the match includes funds from other services or the value of the time and services contributed by volunteers to carry out the program, applicants must provide a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding, or an Agreement, or a letter of support from the entities providing match. This documentation must identify the **match type, match amount**, and must cover the **current grant program year** time period for this application cycle.

If a facility is used as match, a current appraisal (less than two years) of the facility must be included with the application.

If the value of any lease on a building is used as match funds, a copy of the lease showing the lease amount must be included.

If donated materials are utilized as match, documentation from the donor indicating the type of materials and their value and the date or proposed date of the donation must be submitted in the application.

Match exemptions. Applications will be accepted from agencies that have the capacity to provide ESG services in their community but are unable to meet the match requirements. Up to \$100,000 of a State's fiscal year grant is not required to be matched; therefore, MHC is passing this benefit to subrecipients that are least capable of providing the match contributions and to encourage new applications. The match in its entirety must equal the grant request amount. MHC will select up to three agencies to split the \$100,000 match exemption.

9. Applicants **must not have any unresolved audit or monitoring findings associated with the ESG program.**
10. Applicants must disclose any loan or grant received from MHC for which MHC has issued a letter of **findings associated with the use of an** MHC operated program. Applicants must provide evidence that findings have been resolved. MHC may disqualify the applicant from consideration for funding based on this information. Findings may include, but is not limited to, failing to submit required reports.
11. Any application that has been prepared by an application preparer that is involved in a pending debarment or suspension proceeding before a state or federal agent **shall not** be reviewed until such time as the debarment proceeding has been finally resolved. No person who is involved in a suspension or debarment proceeding shall be allowed to administer an ESG project until such time as the suspension or debarment process finding is resolved.
12. Homeless participation. If a sub-recipient is unable to meet the participation of homeless individuals' requirement in section 416(d) of the McKinney-Vento Act, the sub-recipient need not obtain approval of a formal waiver so long as the sub-recipient develops a plan to consult with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering and making policies and decisions regarding any facilities, services or other assistance that receive ESG funding.
13. Applicants that have demonstrated through experience the ability to provide rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services to program participants within their service areas will be given additional consideration for funding.

14. Section 3 Summary Report Form HUD 60002 must be submitted if necessary.
15. The applicant must have program-specific audit if they expended \$750,000 or more in Federal awards during the last fiscal year (CFR §200.501).
16. The applicant must submit a copy of their Most recent Single Accounting Audits for the past two years.
17. The applicant must have program-specific audit if they expended \$750,000 or more in Federal awards during the last fiscal year (CFR §200.501). Certified Organization Audit/Financial Statements for the past two years
 - Copy of OMB 2 CFR 200 Audit (Required if \$750,000 in aggregate Federal funds expended), OR
 - Financial statements prepared or audited by a CPA
18. The applicant must be able to provide their audits, financial statements, and tax forms (IRS 990) for the last two years. IRS Form 990: Non-profit applicants: include a copy of IRS form 990 (Informational Tax Return of Organizations Exempt from Income Tax), or an explanation of why your organization has not been required to complete such a form.
19. Completion of the Risk Assessment Questionnaire. Submission of the Risk Assessment certification if applicable.

Section 416(f) of the McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the HEARTH Act requires that projects receiving funding under the ESG program must participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The data collected is essential to measuring what works and what doesn't. Accurate HMIS data will enable HUD to gain a more informed understanding of the problems of homelessness in our communities; the Continuum(s) of Care will assist in the participation of HMIS. Any applicant applying without the HMIS confirmation will be ineligible for the 2024 ESG funding cycle, with no exceptions. Domestic Violence (DV) service providers must use a comparable database that meets Data Standards and must collect all the Universal Data Elements.

The CoCs are eligible applicants for any services that can be provided in all ESG categories. ESG applicants must be an active participating member in good standing of a Continuum of Care and documented as such in the application. Consultation with the CoCs will occur through not only standard means of public hearings and public comment solicitation, but also one-on-one communications during the public comment period as well as throughout the year.

REPORTING

Recipients of the ESG program **are required to submit** a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) each year, covering the reporting period from July 1 to June 30. The CAPER may include data from multiple ESG program years and must align with the latest HMIS Data Standards. Recipients are required to submit accomplishment data through the Sage HMIS Reporting Repository (Sage) and provide their financial CAPER report directly to MHC within the designated submission window, typically between July and August.

It is crucial that all information reported in the CAPER is accurate and truthful. To ensure the accuracy of CAPER data, agencies must collect and enter information into HMIS correctly. The CAPER report should reflect services that have actually been provided. Therefore, applicants should not be marked as "in-program" unless they are actively receiving services.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

A. Eligibility Prescreening Review

MHC will review applications to determine if all required documentation is included in the application packet. Failure to submit all required documentation by the deadline will result in elimination from consideration of funding.

B. Deficiencies

Applications that meet the prescreening eligibility requirements will be reviewed for completeness. Applicants may be contacted for clarification of the information presented in the application.

C. Ranking of Applications

Applications will be evaluated and scored based on the Grant Review Scoring Guide.

APPLICATION SCORING GUIDE

Factors	Max Score	
Capacity and Experience	15	New ESG applicants' maximum points =
Need or Extent of Problem	15	
Collaboration Partnership	10	
CES and HMIS/Data monitoring	10	
Past Performance /Program Evaluation	5	
Program Plan & Project Description	20	
Program Goals	10	
Financial Controls & Budget	15	
Total	100	95

Capacity and Experience 15 points

In the application, points are given to agencies that have experience with administering federal grants. Max points can be obtained if the agency has ten or more years of experience in administering federal grants, has experienced key staff overseeing their grants, has sufficient staff to operate the program, and has the financial capacity to operate a reimbursement grant.

Agencies can describe their capacity and experience on the “**Application Info**” tab, the “**Project Budget**” tab, and the “**Attachment A**” tab in the ESG PY24 application.

Agencies’ past ability to manage federal grant funds and program services to include the following will be considered understanding Capacity and Experience:

- Monitoring results
- Request for Cash processes
- Understanding and appropriately implementing federal and state regulations
- Completing training
- Meeting expenditure quarterly and contracted benchmarks

Need or Extent of Problem 15 points

In the application, points are given to agencies who have identified a need for services in their coverage area. Max points will be given to agencies that use appropriate data to describe the needs their proposed program will address clearly.

Agencies can describe the need and extent of the problem their proposed program will address on the “**Program Description**” tab and the “**Needs Analysis**” tab in the ESG PY 24 application.

Program Description- In the application:

- Describe the proposed program.
- If a returning applicant, describes the length of time the program has operated.
- Describe how the proposed program will operate in detail. The description should include how clients are referred and what types of services are provided from entry to exit of the proposed program.
- Describe your agency's client intake procedures, evaluation, and the determination of case management needs for each client. Describe efforts to lower barriers for clients.

Needs Analysis- In the application:

- Describe the needs of the community and/or service area and how the need was determined. Include, but not limit to:
 - Local and national data supporting the need;
 - Statistical data and information from a Needs Assessments; and
 - Statistical data from other sources
- Describe the expected level of need (measured by VI-SPDAT) of the

- clients
- Describe how the proposed program will fulfill these needs; agency priorities; expected length of time in ESG for individuals and families; expected movement through the system for individuals and families.

Collaboration Partnership 10 points

In the application, points will be given to agencies who clearly describe and provide evidence of their community partnerships. Max points will be given to agencies with strategic and meaningful partnerships that have goals to improve outreach efforts and housing stability among the target population.

Agencies **must provide Memorandums of Understanding/Agreements and letters of support from** partnering agencies. Applicants are encouraged to partner and coordinate with other agencies to increase services and to consider the need for transportation and income as it is relevant for housing stability. Additionally, agencies can describe their strategic partnerships on the “**Program Info...**” tabs in the ESG PY24 application.

Collaboration- In the application:

- Provide a description of outreach efforts.
- Describe any coordination of services with other homeless programs.
- Describe partnerships and collaborations established with other organizations, agencies, volunteer services, and funders to operate the proposed program effectively.
- Describe how the services provided through these partnerships help to meet the needs of the client and promote self-sufficiency

CES and HMIS/Data monitoring 10 points

In the application, points will be given to agencies that use HMIS or other HUD acceptable databases. These agencies must demonstrate their ability to provide accurate data in data reports and participate in their local Coordinated Entry System (CES). Agencies can describe their use of HMIS and participation in CES on the “**Project Info ESG Components**” tab, Section C- HMIS. Additional information will be obtained from the CoC regarding the agency’s participation and HMIS data quality.

Reporting

The HEARTH Act requires that ESG Subrecipients participate in HMIS as well as all HUD data collection requirements. ESG Subrecipients must comply with HUD's standards on participation, data collection, and reporting requirements. Victim service providers are prohibited from utilizing HMIS but must use a comparable database. The comparable database must produce unduplicated and aggregated reports, including the CAPER. Please describe how your agency ensures compliance with HMIS or comparable data requirements, data entry, and data quality standards as well as ESG CAPER data requirements.

Past Performance/Program Evaluation 5 points

In the application, points will be given to agencies based on their past performance. Agencies can describe their past performance on the “**Past Performance**” tab in the application. Additionally, the agency’s performance in past MHC awards will be considered including agencies’ ability to meet the terms of their contract, past monitoring results, and history of de-obligation.

Past Performance

- In the application, describe previous performance utilizing ESG funds (if applicable); discuss the number of individuals/households served and the outcome (i.e. permanent housing, increased income).

Program Plan & Project Description 20 points

In the application, points will be given to agencies who have a well-developed plan for providing services and transitioning applicants to housing stability and self-sustainability. Using the questions listed on the “Program Info ESG” tabs, agencies can describe their experience with homeless housing programs, their housing stability plans, their community partnerships, their housing outreach efforts, and their discharge strategies. Agencies can describe their program plans on the “**Program Description**” tab, and “**Project Info**” tab in the application.

Program Description (10 pts)- In the application:

- Describe the proposed program.
- Identify the need and describe how the proposed program can provide resolution.
- Describe how the proposed program will operate in detail. The description should include how clients are referred and what types of services are provided from entry to exit of the proposed program.
- In the description include evidence-based best practices that are being used.

Project Info (10 pts per tab)- In the application:

- Describe your experience with the population.
- Describe how your requested services will be used to promote stability.
- Describe employment efforts (provided directly or through partnerships)
- Describe community coordination of services.
- Identify methods to recruit landlords. Points will be given if you have existing partnerships with Developers and Tax Credit properties.
- What are your case management and discharge practices?

Program Goals - 5 points

In the application, points will be given to agencies whose program goals are clearly described and are in line with the National Strategic Goals-HOME and MHC goals and ConPlan.

Agencies can describe their goals on the “**Proposed Outcomes**” in the application.

Proposed Outcomes and Goals

- In the application, describe the impact that will result from the program being funded including, but not limited to, the following, as applicable:
 - Increased accessibility to affordable housing.
 - Overall reduction in number of persons who experience homelessness.
 - Reduction in the length of homelessness.
 - Reduction in returns to homelessness.
 - Increased employment and income growth for persons who are experiencing homelessness.
 - Average length of time between intake and assistance given.
 - Other goals and objectives of your program
- In the application, describe what processes are in place for tracking program outcomes.
- In the application, describe how the proposed program outcomes and performance is/will be measured.

Financial Controls -10 points

In the application, agencies are marked on their financial controls and feasibility to manage the ESG reimbursement grant. Agencies can describe their financial controls on the “**Match Funds**” tab, the “**Program Budget**” tab, and the “**Budget Summary**” tab in the application.

Financial Information

- In the application, describe your organization’s financial control system and procedures. Include an explanation of how ESG funds will be monitored to ensure dollars are spent in a timely manner and how funds will be applied and tracked against eligible activities. Include a description of the draw and reimbursement process.
- In the application, describe budgeting priorities/activities to stretch ESG funds through the grant period.
- In the application, describe the sources of funds that are available for the proposed program; describe matching funds; discuss how funding sources will be used if ESG is not funded.

SELECTION PROCESS

The ESG funds will be awarded based on the final points of the ESG Grant Review Scoring Guide. **Applicants must score at least 75% out of 100 points.** MHC reserves the right to adjust the amount awarded based on the amount of funds available and based on the demand created by the applications submitted. MHC will email all applicants a letter with the funding decision. In addition, proposed outputs, and outcomes, along with a CoC-approved outcome evaluation and performance standards, will be incorporated into contracts as performance outcome measurements for applicants selected as sub-recipients. See the policy procedure manual for information on outcome measurements. Other factors that are considered with an application includes experience, internal controls, partnerships, capacity, past performance, finances, other. MHC uses a z-score ranking system that considers total funding request along with all other factors to determine a funding recommendation amount.

- MHC board makes the final decision of agencies selected and funding amounts.

SHELTER AND HOUSING STANDARDS

Pursuant to 24 CFR 576.403, HUD requires the following for lead-based paint and minimum standards:

Lead-based paint remediation and disclosure: The Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. 4821-4846), the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 (42 U.S.C. 4851-4856), and implementing regulations in 24 CFR part 35, subparts A, B, H, J, K, M and R apply to all shelters assisted under ESG program and all housing occupied by program participants.

Listed below are the **minimum standards** that an emergency shelter **must** meet for an applicant to receive funding according to the shelter and housing standards.

Structure and Materials: The shelter building **must** be structurally sound to protect residents from the elements and not pose any threat to health and safety of the residents.

Access: The shelter **must** be accessible in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (20 U.S.C. 794) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 8; the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.) and implement regulations at 24 CFR part 100; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 1213 et seq.) and 28 CFR part 35; where applicable and there **must** be a second means of exiting the facility in the case of an emergency or fire.

Space and Security: Except where the shelter is intended for day use only, the shelter **must** provide each program participant in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.

Interior Air Quality: Each room or space within the shelter/facility **must** have a natural or mechanical means of ventilation. The interior air must be free of pollutants at a level that might threaten or harm the health of residents.

Water Supply: The shelter's water supply **must** be free of contamination.

Sanitary Facilities: Each program participant in the shelter **must** have access to sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, are private, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.

Thermal-Environment: The shelter/facility **must** have any necessary heating/ cooling facilities in proper operating condition.

Illumination and Electricity: The shelter/facility **must** have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and support health and safety. There must be sufficient electrical sources to permit the safe use of electrical appliances in the shelter.

Food Preparation: Food preparation areas, if any, **must** contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner.

Sanitary Conditions: The shelter **must** be maintained in a sanitary condition.

Fire Safety-Sleeping/Common Areas: There **must** be **at least one** working smoke detector in each occupied unit of the shelter facility. Where possible, smoke detectors **must** be located near sleeping areas. The fire alarm system **must** be designed for hearing-impaired residents. All public areas of the shelter **must** have **at least one** working smoke detector. There **must** also be a second means of exiting the building in the event of fire or another emergency.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Emergency Solutions Grant is comprised of five (5) program components: emergency shelter, street outreach, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing assistance and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Mississippi Home Corporation has elected to make funding available in all components for ESG:

- Emergency Shelter
- Street Outreach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Rapid Rehousing, and
- HMIS

A. Emergency Shelter Component

ESG funds may be used for costs of providing maintenance (including minor repairs), rent, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, utilities, food, furnishings, and supplies necessary for the operation of the emergency shelter. ESG funds may also be used to provide *essential services* and *case management* to homeless families and individuals in emergency shelters. Case management includes the cost of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to meet the needs of the program participant is an eligible expense. The maximum allowable case management/staff cost will be reimbursed up to **fifty percent (50%) of the total amount of the grant award**.

The transportation costs of travel by outreach workers, social workers or other service providers are eligible, provided this travel takes place during the provision of services. If service workers/case managers use their own vehicle, travel is reimbursable at the current **federal mileage rate**; the cost of gas, insurance, taxes, and vehicle maintenance is also an eligible expense for agency vehicles used for ESG purposes. Another eligible cost includes program participant's travel on public transportation.

B. Street Outreach

ESG funds may be used for costs of providing essential services necessary to reach out to unsheltered homeless people; connect them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services; and provide urgent, non-facility-based care to unsheltered homeless people who are unwilling or unable to access emergency shelter, housing, or an appropriate health facility. Case management is essential to assessing housing and service needs, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to meet the needs of program participants. These essential services and staff cost are maximized at **fifty percent (50%) of the total amount of the grant award**.

C. Homelessness Prevention Component

ESG funds may be used to provide housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and/or medium-term rental assistance necessary to prevent an individual or family who is "at risk" of moving into an emergency shelter or other place as described in the homeless definition. Case management is a critical element in the delivery of this service, the maximum allowable case management/staff cost will be reimbursed up to **fifty percent (50%) of the total grant award**. Travel for case management is reimbursable at the current **federal mileage rate**. This assistance may be provided under the "at risk of homelessness" criteria and **the program participant must have an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the area as determined by HUD**. The costs of homelessness prevention are eligible because the assistance is necessary to help the program participant regain stability in the program participant's current housing or move into other housing and achieve stability in that housing. Homelessness prevention must be provided in accordance with the housing relocation and stabilization requirements. These requirements are for short-term rental assistance up to three (3) months. Medium-term rental assistance is assistance for more than 3 months but not more than 24 months of rent. Payment of rental arrears

consists of a one-time payment for up to six (6) months in arrears, including any late fees on those arrears. Case managers must reassess eligibility monthly.

Eligibility for this service requires that a current signed lease between the program participant and the landlord or property owner be in place. The program participant must also have a signed **typed eviction notice** from the landlord or property owner.

In other words, the eviction notice can be a letter/notice from the landlord, property owner or an official legal court document. The document must minimally:

- ✓ Identify the ESG applicant and unit where the applicant is the leaseholder,
- ✓ Indicate the date applicant must leave their housing; and
- ✓ Be signed and dated by the owner/landlord or court.

The MHC also requires the following documentation be provided in addition to the eviction notice:

- ✓ An affidavit of arrears (MHC form) completed and signed by the owner/landlord and
- ✓ A rental payment ledger must be provided by the landlord or property manager.

The ESG applicant (program participant) and the lessee (tenant) must be the same. A person who is listed as “in the household” cannot make application for ESG assistance unless that person is a party to the lease agreement and utilities.

D. Rapid Re-Housing Component

ESG funds may be used to provide housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and/or medium-term rental assistance necessary to help a homeless individual or family move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Case management is a critical element in the delivery of this service, the maximum allowable case management/staff cost will be reimbursed up to **50% of the total grant award**. Travel for case management is reimbursable at the current **federal mileage rate**. This assistance may be provided to program participants who meet the criteria under the homeless definition or are living in an emergency shelter or other place as described in the homeless definition. Rapid re-housing must be provided in accordance with the housing relocation and stabilization requirements. These requirements are for short-term rental assistance up to three (3) months. Medium-term rental assistance is assistance for more than 3 months but not more than 24 months of rent. Payment of rental arrears consists of a one-time payment for up to six (6) months in arrears, including any late fees on those arrears. Case managers must reassess eligibility monthly.

E. HMIS Component

Section 416(f) of the McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the HEARTH Act requires that projects receiving funding under the ESG program must participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The data collected is essential to measuring what works and what doesn't. Accurate HMIS data will enable HUD to gain a more informed understanding of the problems of homelessness in our communities; the Continuum(s) of Care will assist in the participation of HMIS. **Any applicant applying without the HMIS confirmation will be ineligible for the 2024 ESG funding cycle, with no exceptions.** Also, in accordance with Sections 402(f) and 413(b) of the McKinney-Vento Act, ESG recipients are to consult with CoCs on procedures for the administration and operation of HMIS.

REMEDIAL ACTIONS AND SANCTIONS

Remedial actions and sanctions for failure to meet the ESG program requirement will be designed to prevent a continuation of the deficiency; mitigate, to the extent possible, its adverse effects or consequences; and prevent its recurrence through the following actions:

- MHC may instruct the recipient to submit and comply with proposals for action to correct, mitigate, and prevent noncompliance with ESG requirements including:
 - ✓ Preparing and following a schedule of actions for carrying out activities affected by the noncompliance, including schedules, timetables, and milestones necessary to implement the affected activities.
 - ✓ Establishing and following a management plan that assigns responsibilities for carrying out the remedial actions.
 - ✓ Canceling or revising activities likely to be affected by the noncompliance, before expending ESG funds for the activities.
 - ✓ Reprogramming ESG funds that have not yet been expended from affected activities to other eligible activities.
 - ✓ Suspending disbursement of ESG funds for some or all activities.
 - ✓ Reducing or terminating the remaining grant of sub-recipient and reallocating those funds to other sub-recipients; and
 - ✓ Requiring match contributions before or as withdrawals are made from the recipients' ESG grant.
- MHC may suspend payments to the extent HUD deems it necessary to preclude further expenditure of funds for affected activities.
- MHC may remove the recipient from participation in reallocations of funds.
- MHC may deny matching credit for all or part of the cost of the affected activities

and require the recipient to make further matching contributions to make up for the contribution determined ineligible.

- MHC may place conditions on future grants.
- MHC may take other remedies that are legally available.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Sub-recipients are required to carry out their projects in accordance with the regulations for the Emergency Solutions Grants Program, McKinney-Vento/HEARTH Act, Title IV (42 U.S.C. 11371) and 24 CFR 576.

The ESG program shall be governed by MHC's 2024 application package; the Program Description; MHC's recommended policy and procedure manual, agencies policy and procedure manual, 24 CFR 576 and any subsequent changes, additions, clarifications, requirements, or assurances issued by MHC or HUD that relate to the program.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read MHC's ESG Policy and Procedures Manual which is available at <https://www.mshomecorp.com/federal-programs/esg/>.

If questions or interpretation of any rule, requirement, or regulation arise, MHC's or HUD's decision shall be final.

During the review of the applications, MHC shall verify information for accuracy and determine feasibility and readiness of the project. This review may result in disqualification of an application.

During the review of the 2024 ESG application, MHC reserves the right to adjust the amount of the request. This adjustment will be based on verification of cost, availability of other funds and the availability of ESG funds.

A site visit does not imply that an applicant will be funded.

Exceptions to minimum and maximum grant amounts may be allowed by MHC.

Anyone receiving ESG funds must comply with 24 CFR Part 570, Equal Opportunity and Fair Housing, Affirmative Marketing and MBE/WBE requirements. In order to comply, the applicant must at a minimum meet the requirements set forth in the regulations and/or MHC's plan.

MHC may recapture funds previously awarded to an ESG recipient for reasons such as failure to satisfy timeliness of the implementation of the project, failure to comply with contractual conditions, or failure to complete project closeout. Recaptured or de-obligated ESG funds may be used to supplement Administration, supplement existing projects which may require additional funds, fund other eligible applicants, or fund ESG eligible activities.

In order to minimize displacement in accordance with 24 CFR Part 576.408, Displacement, Relocation and Acquisition, applications which include permanent displacement of any resident **will not** be accepted.

Applications must contain documentation evidencing a firm commitment of matching

funds. The matching amount must be equal to the amount of ESG funds being requested. The match amount may include funds from other sources; the value or fair rental value of any donated material or building (**this source can only be utilized as match one time**); the value of any lease on a building; any salary paid to staff to carry out the program of the recipient; and the value of the time and services (**at a minimum rate of \$7.25 per hour**) contributed by volunteers to carry out the program of the recipient. If match includes funds from other sources or the value of time and services contributed by volunteers to carry out the program, applicants must provide a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement, or a letter of support from the entities providing match. This documentation must identify the match type, match amount and must cover the grant Program Year period for the 2024 application cycle.

If a facility is to be used as matching funds, a recent appraisal (**less than two years**) of the facility must be included with this application package. If the value of any lease on a building is to be used as matching funds, a copy of the lease information indicating the lease amount must be included with this application. If donated materials are to be utilized as match, documentation from the donor indicating the type of materials and their value and the date or proposed date of the donation must be submitted in the application.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

All sub-recipients will be required to comply with certain federal and state requirements. The following briefly describes major requirements that may apply:

McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the HEARTH ACT: 24 CFR Parts 91 and 576

This Act authorized the ESG Program, all applicable provisions of the Act shall be adhered to by recipients. The ESG Program broadens existing emergency shelter and homelessness prevention activities and to add short- and medium-term rental assistance and services to rapidly re-house homeless people.

- ESG funds from each federal fiscal year (i.e. the allocation and any reallocated funds from the particular federal fiscal year appropriated) will be closed out when all program requirements have been met.
- Each applicant must establish and maintain sufficient records to enable MHC and HUD to determine whether the ESG requirements are being met of **24 CFR Part 576.500, Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements**.
- Applicants must comply with the requirements of **24 CFR Part 576.404, Conflict of Interest**. The conflict-of-interest provisions under this section (24 CFR Part 576.404(b) (1) apply to any person who is an employee, agent, consultant, officer, or elected or appointed official of the recipient or its sub-recipients. No person just mentioned who exercises or has exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to activities assisted under the ESG program, or who is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information with regard to activities assisted under the program, may obtain a

financial interest or benefit from an assisted activity; have a financial interest in any contract, subcontract, or agreement with respect to an assisted activity; or have a financial interest in the proceeds derived from an assisted activity, either for him or herself or for those with whom he or she has family or business ties, during his or her tenure or during the one-year period following his or her tenure. **MHC has no waiver under the conflict of interest provision.**

- The federal requirements of **24 CFR Part 576.408, Displacement, Relocation, and Acquisition**, concerning relocation must be followed at all times when a unit to be rehabilitated is occupied prior to the beginning of construction of rehabilitating the unit.
- Affirmative outreach. The recipient or sub-recipient must make known that use of the facilities, assistance, and services are available to all on a nondiscriminatory basis. If it is unlikely that the procedures that the recipient or sub-recipient intends to use to make known the availability of the facilities, assistance, and services will be to reach persons of any particular race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, or disability who may qualify for those facilities and services, the recipient or sub-recipient must establish additional procedures that ensure that those persons are made aware of the facilities, assistance, and services. The recipient and its sub-recipients must take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with persons with disabilities including, but not limited to, adopting procedures that will make available to interested persons. Consistent with **Title VI and Executive Order 13166**, recipients and sub-recipients are also required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons.

HEARTH ACT – This Act consolidates, and amends three separate homeless assistance programs carried out under Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance (42 U.S.C. 11371) into a single grant program designed to improve administrative efficiency and enhance response coordination and effectiveness in addressing the needs of homeless persons and revises the Emergency Shelter Grants program and renames it as the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program.

The Civil Rights Act – This Act provides that no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the recipient receives federal financial assistance. The recipient shall also administer all programs and activities relating to housing and community development in a manner to affirmatively further fair housing.

Age Discrimination Act of 1975 – This Act states that no person on the basis of age shall be subject to discrimination, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of any program or activity for which the recipient receives federal funds.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – This Act provides that no person shall be denied due to physical or mental handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity for

which the recipient receives federal funds. **HUD’s regulations at 24 CFR part 8** apply to the ESG program accessibility requirements under Subpart C – Program Accessibility. Grantees are required to provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities in order to enable program participants with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate in the program or activity.

National Environmental Policy Act and 24 CFR Part 58 – This act provides for the identification of environmental impacts of proposed projects utilizing federal funds. This includes the preparation of environmental assessments and, where necessary, environmental impact statements.

Lead-Safe Housing Regulation – Under this Act the construction or rehabilitation of residential structures or non-dwelling facilities commonly used by children under seven years of age with federal assistance is subject to regulations contained in 24 CFR Part 58.

Government-Wide Restriction on Lobbying – This Act ensures that no federal funds will be paid for influencing or attempting to influence an office or employee of any agency or Member of Congress in conjunction with awarding of any federal contracts, grants, loans, etc.

Executive Order 11246 – This Order and the regulations issued pursuant to 24 CFR Part 130 and 41 CFR Chapter 60, provides that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in all phases of employment during the performance of federal and federally assisted construction contracts.

Section 3 – Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, 12 U.S.C. 1701(u) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 135 apply, **except that homeless individuals have priority over other Section 3 residents in accordance with Section 576.405(c)**. To the maximum extent practicable, the recipient or sub-recipient **must** involve homeless individuals and families in constructing, renovating, maintaining, and operating facilities assisted under ESG, in providing services assisted under ESG, and in providing services for occupants of facilities assisted under ESG. This involvement may include employment or volunteer services.

Confidentiality – 24 CFR 500(x)(i)(2) The recipient and its sub-recipients must development and implement written procedures to ensure:

- ✓ All records containing personally identifying information (as defined in HUD’s standards for participation, data collection, and reporting in a local HMIS) of any individual or family who applies for any/or receives ESG assistance will be kept secure and confidential.
- ✓ The address or location of any domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking shelter project assisted under the ESG will not be made public, etc.
- ✓ The address or location of any housing of a program participant will not be

made public, etc.

- ✓ The confidentiality procedures of the recipient and its sub-recipients must be in writing and must be maintained in accordance with this section.

Period of record retention for each fiscal year of ESG funds is the greater of 5 years or as specified in this section 24 CFR 576.500(y)(1)(2)(3).

Audit Requirements - The OMB's Circular 2 CFR 200.501 requires that a state, local government or non-profit organization expending \$750,000 or more a year in total cumulative Federal funds must have a Single Audit made in accordance with the Single Audit Act. A copy of the audit report must be received by MHC no later than nine months following the end of the grant recipient's fiscal year in which the Federal funds were expended.

If less than \$750,000 in total cumulative Federal funds were expended within the fiscal year, and any of the funds were received through MHC, an acceptable MHC Funding Certification Form (for that year only) shall be submitted. It must be received by MHC no later than nine months following the end of the grant recipient's fiscal year in which the Federal funds were expended, and no sooner than the end of the same fiscal year.

Cost Principles - Subject to the cost principles in OMB Circulars 2 CFR 225 and 2 CFR 230 and other requirements in this part, employee compensation and other overhead costs directly related to carrying out emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing and HMIS are eligible costs of these program components. These costs are not subject to the expenditure limit for administrative activities.

Procurement – 24 CFR 85 outlines the standards and guidelines for the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services to ensure that they are obtained as economically as possible through an open and competitive process, and that contracts are managed with good administrative practices and sound business judgment

Procurement of Recovered Materials – The recipient and its contractors must comply with Section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.