
Sponsor: Housing Stability

Meeting Date: 12/14/2021

Title: Grant Award from Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for Homework Starts with Home

File Number: 2021-671

Background and Rationale:

In 2018, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA), in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative initiated a project called Homework Starts with Home. The effort is part of the State of Minnesota Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. It is intended to support collaborative efforts between schools, housing organizations, and local governments to identify, engage, and stabilize students and their families who are experiencing homelessness. At development of the project, it was decided that the local government agencies who were the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) grantees would have the role of being the grant recipient and administrator of resulting contracts; in partnership with Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care (COC), the Housing Stability department presently serves as the FHPAP grantee.

Target populations for the grant are families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness and have children who are in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 academic programs or youth (with or without children of their own) without a parent or guardian who are eligible for an academic program through grade 12 and who are facing housing instability. Priority was given in the grant selection process to students or families who are currently homeless, students who are themselves custodial parents, students with significant educational deficits, families with children in grade 5 or younger, and students experiencing homelessness without their parents or guardians.

MHFA led the grantee selection process and Solid Ground in partnership with Lutheran Social Services was selected. Housing Stability along Heading Home Ramsey CoC Governing Board serve as the respective grant administrators and Advisory Council. As the FHPAP grantee, Housing Stability wrote letters of support and agreed to accept the funds to pass through to Solid Ground. The county will receive a total of \$444,700 to pass through as a direct contract action to Solid Ground. Solid Ground will in turn be the lead of the area Homework Starts with Home collaborative which includes Solid Ground, Lutheran Social Services, and Saint Andrews Community Resource Center, and the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative, with Solid Ground navigations services being the only action funded through the contract.

These funds help support the broader Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care strategic priorities to prevent and end homelessness in the county. A memorandum of agreement between the county and the providers will be jointly developed clarifying roles and responsibilities. Housing Stability will be responsible for the administration of grant activities and resulting agreements; this is done as an in-kind contribution for the CoC.

For more information about Heading Home Ramsey CoC, please visit www.headinghomeramsey.org <<http://www.headinghomeramsey.org>>

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Ratify the Housing Stability Department sponsored submittal of the Solid Ground Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Homework Starts with Home application.
2. Accept a grant award from and approve a grant agreement with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for the period of October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023 in the amount of \$444,700.
3. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the grant agreement.
4. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and execute amendments to agreements and contracts in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Reinhardt, seconded by Commissioner McGuire.
Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Carter, Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

By: 

Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board