
Sponsor: Housing Stability

Meeting Date: 6/6/2023

Title: Minnesota Department of Revenue Local Homeless Prevention Aid

File Number: 2023-223

Background and Rationale:

Local Homeless Prevention Aid (LPHA) was created by the 2021 Legislature to help local governments ensure no child is homeless within a jurisdiction by keeping families from losing housing and helping those experiencing homelessness find housing. Counties may use the aid to fund new or existing family and/or youth homeless prevention and assistance programs.

LPHA funds target unaccompanied youth in need of an alternative residential setting AND families with children who are eligible for a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 academic program that are:

- Living in overcrowded conditions in their current housing.
- Paying more than 50% of their income for rent.
- Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Funding may be used to connect families with social services, provide rental assistance (which may exceed 24 months), and provide support and case management to improve housing stability (including housing navigation and outreach to families). In accordance with 2022 Minnesota Statute, section 477A.30 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/477A.30>), funding for this program flows from the Minnesota Department of Revenue to county human service agencies in two installments each year. The first round of funding (totaling \$10 million across all 87 counties in Minnesota) will be distributed on July 20, 2023, and the second half on December 26, 2023.

Allocations to counties are based on a formula specified in statute using data provided by the Minnesota Department of Education. The geographic distribution of the number of students identified by schools who meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness is a significant factor in that formula. Funding appropriated for this purpose totals \$20 million per year and is scheduled to sunset after payments in 2028 have been completed.

Through this funding, the Housing Stability department will be adding 2.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Housing Specialist positions. One position will be dedicated to working in partnership with schools assisting families with navigating housing programs and benefits. The other position will be devoted to assisting homeless youth.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Accept the Minnesota Department of Revenue Local Homeless Prevention Aid five-year certified funding allocation (July 2023- December 31, 2028), with the first two installments from the totaling \$2,477,234 in 2023.
2. Authorize the County Manager to create a Local Homeless Prevention Aid Project within the Housing Stability department budget.
3. Approve an increase in the personnel complement of the Housing Stability department by 2.0 Full Time Equivalent.

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

Aye: - 7: Frethem, MatasCastillo, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: 

Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board