

Public Comment Notice
FFY2015/SFY2016 Goals and Action Steps
for ESG and HOPWA Programs

The State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is currently preparing its FFY2015 SFY2016 Annual Action Plan for the 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan for the State fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015. The application submission periods for the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Programs will both begin in February 2015 prior to the completion of the Consolidated Plan and its submission to HUD for final approval.

As a result, DCA has prepared a draft of the FFY2015 Goals and Action Steps for each project along with other project specific requirements including the proposed methods of funding distribution and the project priorities for funding. Comments regarding these and other issues will be accepted for a 30-day period for review and consideration prior to the beginning of these application submission periods. The draft of this document can be found at:

<http://www.dca.ga.gov/communities/CommunityInitiatives/programs/ConsolidatedPlan.asp>.

Additionally, the public may contact DCA directly at (404) 327-6870 or through the TDD line at (404) 679-4915 to receive a written copy of these proposed goals and action steps.

The State encourages citizens and other interested parties to review the draft document and to submit their written comments no later than Thursday, January 8, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. All written comments should be emailed to housingplanning@dca.state.ga.us or mailed to:

FFY2014 ESG and HOPWA Goals and Action Steps
c/o Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Office of Program and Public Affairs
Attn: Tina Moore
60 Executive Park South NE
Atlanta, GA 30329-2231

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Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

Proposed Federal FY2015/ State FY2016

Goals and Action Steps for the

Emergency Solutions Grants

and

Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Programs

EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS PROGRAM (ESG)

The Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) is the recipient of the State's ESG allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). GHFA contracts with DCA to administer the ESG program for the State of Georgia.

PROCESS FOR MAKING SUB-AWARDS

Method of Distribution

As a threshold consideration, all applicants must demonstrate how their housing or service projects directly serve persons who are homeless as defined by HUD and demonstrate how the housing and services provided will improve housing stability for those persons.

Applicants must describe homeless verification methods, and how they will track outputs and outcomes (stable housing) for persons served.

Both HUD-funded and State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless (HTF)-funded ESG funds are available to nonprofit organizations (including community and faith-based organizations) and local government entities. Agencies must demonstrate collaboration with local mainstream service providers and local provider groups that are dedicated to housing and service interventions that serve persons experiencing homelessness. Agencies must also participate in HUD-mandated continuum of care planning appropriate to the jurisdiction where their activities are located.

Funding decisions will be based on a number of factors, including but not limited to, those stated below in the "Rating and Selection" section. Thresholds for project consideration generally include the eligibility of the described population to be served; the eligibility of described activities; minimum criteria for organizational capacity, community or service area need; a two-year operating and financial history with greater than \$25,000, including a completed IRS Form 990; past or projected project performance; responsiveness to timeliness and information requested; HMIS performance; as well as other relevant factors, as determined by DCA. Threshold considerations may also include any of the "Rating and Selection" criteria named in the section below.

Matching Requirements

All applicants are expected to provide at least a 100% match consisting of documented, non-McKinney resources. Match may include the value of any lease on a building, any salary paid to staff to carry out the project, and the value of the time and services contributed by volunteers to carry out the project at a rate determined by DCA. Exceptions may be considered by DCA on a case by case basis.

Deadlines and Award Authority

Application documents will be available on or about February 16, 2015. The application process, including deadlines for ESG and HOPWA funding will be announced separately, on the DCA ESG and HOPWA webpage. Funding announcements will be made by June 30, 2015. Applications submitted after the deadline established by DCA will not be considered for funding. The Commissioner of DCA or staff designated by the Commissioner shall have the authority to make awards from funds allocated by HUD or reserved by the HTF Commission. Awards are made at the sole discretion of the DCA. Funding decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

Application Notice and Submission Requirements

DCA will solicit information about application submission and application development workshops by email from every person on the “contacts” mailing list associated with its homeless projects. Notices will also be emailed to representatives of local government representatives, local Continuums of Care, regional commissions, DCA Office of Regional Services, and other groups with local and regional interests. Notice will be published on the DCA website, and all persons receiving notice will be asked to share the notice with others within the state, their region or their community with an interest. Application development workshops will be held in at least two (2) locations around the state. Multiple webinars will be conducted by DCA staff to provide applicants with remote assistance with the application process.

Rating and Selection

A competition for funds will be implemented that will include, but not be limited to, the threshold criteria named in the “Method of Distribution” section, as well as other considerations such as project location related to demonstrated need, participation in collaborative networks and planning processes, and cost benefit analysis and recidivism rates for currently funded projects, etc. Lower scoring applications may not be funded.

General funding decisions for all agencies will be based upon:

- Geographical location;
- Past performance (outputs/outcomes);
- Past performance with DCA agreements, DCA ESG policies and rules, Federal/state/local laws, regulations, policies;
- Compliance and past performance with Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) requirements. Family violence agencies must demonstrate performance through the HUD format Annual Performance Report in ALICE or other equivalent database recognized by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee;
- Need based on data derived from the Homeless Point in Time Count conducted by DCA and its partners or the local Continuum of Care;
- Project strategy;
- Organizational structure, operating processes, and capacity;

- The extent to which the organization operates under the authority of a diversified, involved, volunteer, community-based board of directors;
- Professional management;
- The consistency of the organization's identity or its mission to the provision of homeless services;
- The consistency to which the organization utilizes networks and partnerships within the community to avoid duplication of housing and services;
- Participation in meetings and other activities of the appropriate local Continuums of Care;
- Direct cash match provided for ESG activities;
- The value of other non-cash contributions;
- The priorities established by the local Continuum of Care;
- Sound operating procedures, accounting policy and controls;
- Organizational and financial policy, stability and capacity; and,
- Location in an ESG entitlement jurisdiction which receives federal ESG funds directly from HUD. These jurisdictions include: City of Atlanta, Augusta-Richmond County, City of Savannah, Clayton County, Cobb County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, and Gwinnett County.

DCA staff will use a points system during application review to ensure that the limited pool of funding received is used in the most effective way possible. Individual scores by project may be assessed for completeness of the application; past performance relevant to the project type; implementation strategy (narrative describing need, clients served, local coordination, goals, outputs, outcomes, etc.); procurement of outside resources; the extent to which projects result in increased housing stability for clients; organizational development and experience; budgeting and financial reporting; efficient and effective use of HMIS; adherence to DCA Housing Support Standards (HSS), and other relevant factors. Applicants requesting funds for multiple projects may receive funds for some, but not all, projects.

In addition to all other federal, state and local laws and regulations, all activities must be implemented in full compliance with pertinent HUD ESG Program regulations published at 24 CFR §576.

Local Approval

In accordance with Federal law governing the ESG program, all nonprofit applicants must obtain approval(s) from appropriate local government jurisdictions. While coordination and collaboration is always expected, if not required, local government approval is not needed for projects proposed by instrumentalities of the state, including community service boards and public housing authorities. For nonprofits, approval is only needed from the jurisdiction in which the principle site of the central service location is located. All approvals must be made in formats prescribed by DCA. Documentation of approval, or at a minimum the initiation of the approval process, must be included in the application. Applications from nonprofits for projects that do not adequately address local approval may be rejected for threshold considerations.

Collaboration

Applicants must participate in Continuums of Care (CoC) appropriate to their project(s). There are nine CoCs in Georgia. Applicants must also participate in coordinated

intake/assessment, referral, and case management systems established by the local CoC(s) within their service area in order to provide, in conjunction with other providers, appropriate housing and supportive services to better enable homeless persons to achieve success and end their homelessness. The expectation is that each sub-grantee or its community partner: a) assesses consumer needs and barriers to housing stability; b) seeks the prevention of homelessness for non-homeless consumers, c) works to move homeless individuals into rapid re-housing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or other affordable housing appropriate to the needs of the consumer; d) documents and tracks referrals to housing and service providers; and e) tracks participant progress and outcomes, including post-discharge follow up contacts recorded in HMIS. Organizations will be required to document these efforts through DCA's HMIS implementation in partnership with Pathways Community Network Institute. Family violence agencies may not participate in HMIS, but instead, must document these efforts through an alternative method as previously described. Sub-grantees must also adhere to DCA's published Housing Support Standards (HSS). Information regarding these Standards and how to implement them can be found on the DCA website at the following link:

<http://www.dca.ga.gov/housing/specialneeds/programs/HousingSupportStandards.asp>

Minimum Compliance Criteria

Applications must be submitted electronically on forms provided by DCA and according to the schedule established by DCA. The applicant must provide required certifications and provide all supporting documentation requested by DCA. Each applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of DCA that it complies with Federal, State and local laws and regulations, and that it is capable of carrying out applicable programs. All returning sub-grantees must be in substantial compliance with existing DCA agreements. DCA reserves the right to sanction individuals and organizations with a history of non-compliance.

Funding Guidelines

Subject to final federal appropriations, approximately \$3.3 million dollars is expected to be available for projects funded under the HUD ESG program. The HTF Commission has reserved approximately \$1.5 million dollars available for the HTF ESG program. Grants awarded in this funding cycle will have a duration of two years, however, the second year of funding is awarded conditionally based on project performance and funding availability from both HUD and the State HTF Commission. DCA will reserve a minimum of 65% of Federal funding to be spent within the Balance of State ESG Entitlement area.

The following amounts have been established as guidance for funding requests. All of the "Rating and Selection" factors, including distribution by "Eligible Service Area" will be considered in evaluating funding requests. DCA will make minimum grant awards of \$20,000 for all eligible activities except HMIS, Project Homeless Connect, and Hotel/Motel Voucher grants to agencies serving the Balance of State ESG Entitlement jurisdiction. DCA will make minimum grant awards of \$40,000 for all eligible activities except HMIS, Project Homeless Connect, and Hotel/Motel Voucher to agencies outside the Balance of State ESG Entitlement jurisdiction.

Maximum grant amounts are as follows:

- Emergency Shelter - \$50,000 per project
- Transitional Housing - \$40,000 per project
- Essential Services - \$50,000 per project
- Short- and Medium-Term Rental Assistance and Stabilization Services - average costs per family/household will vary by region according to rent reasonableness and fair market rents for the area and approval by DCA
- Project Homeless Connect - \$2,000
- HMIS - \$25,000

Required Written Standards

DCA requires that each sub-grantee establish and consistently apply policies and procedures for each ESG project according to the minimum standards set by HUD and the specific standards established by the local Continuum of Care in which the project exists.

In addition, the Balance of State ESG Entitlement (Entitlement) will work with the Balance of State CoC to establish standards for all projects in the geographic area, including ESG projects.

At a minimum, written standards for **ALL PROJECTS** will include:

1. Standard policies and procedures for evaluating eligibility.
2. Policies and procedures for coordination among emergency shelter providers, essential services providers, homelessness prevention, and rapid rehousing assistance providers; other homeless assistance providers; and mainstream service and housing providers (*see* § 576.400(b) and (c) for a list of projects with which ESG-funded activities must be coordinated and Integrated to the maximum extent practicable);
3. Participation in HMIS or ALICE or an equivalent database for family violence providers as determined by the CJCC. The sub-grantee must ensure that data on all persons served and all activities assisted under ESG are entered into the Pathways Compass HMIS. If the sub-grantee is a victim service provider, the agency may use ALICE, to collect client-level data over time (*i.e.*, longitudinal data) and generate unduplicated aggregate reports based on the data.

Additional standards for STREET OUTREACH:

1. Standards for targeting and providing essential services related to street outreach:

ESG Guidelines v2, August 2013 Page 27

Additional standards for EMERGENCY SHELTER:

1. Policies and procedures for admission, diversion, referral, and discharge by emergency shelters, including standards regarding length of stay, if any, and safeguards to meet the safety and shelter needs of special populations, [*e.g.*, victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and individuals and families who have the highest barriers to housing and are likely to be homeless the longest].

2. Policies and procedures for assessing, prioritizing, and reassessing needs for essential services related to emergency shelter:

ESG Guidelines v2, August 2013 Page 27

Additional standards for PREVENTION and RAPID RE-HOUSING:

1. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing assistance;
2. Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent and utilities costs, **if any**, each project participant must pay while receiving homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance;
3. Standards for determining how long a particular project participant will be provided with rental assistance and whether and how the amount of that assistance will be adjusted over time, **if at all**
4. Standards for determining the type, amount, and duration of housing stabilization and/or relocation services to provide, including the limits, **if any**, on the homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing assistance that each project participant may receive, such as the maximum amount of assistance, maximum number of months in the project; or the maximum number of times the project participant may receive assistance.

ESG Guidelines v2, August 2013 Page 27

DESCRIPTION OF COC

The Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC) is made up of 152 counties, both urban and rural. Jurisdictions in Georgia outside of the Georgia BoS CoC include: Athens-Clarke County, City of Atlanta, Augusta-Richmond County, Cobb County, Columbus-Muscogee County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, and City of Savannah. All other jurisdictions are included within the BoS CoC.

The collaborative applicant for the Continuum is the Department of Community Affairs. The collaborative applicant has an established Governance Charter and is establishing a coordinated assessment system to enable homeless households to access the best fit intervention available. It is anticipated that this will be implemented in the next 9-12 months.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

DCA has established the primary goal of reducing the number of unsheltered homeless individuals and families. The information contained below outlines goals, strategies and performance measures to be utilized for all ESG sub-recipients.

Overall Goals

1. Reduce the number of unsheltered individuals and families, as established in the Homeless Point in Time Count, within the BoS ESG Entitlement. Since 2011, the number of unsheltered households has decreased by 25%. This goal will continue to be achieved by placing emphasis on high utilization of emergency shelters and transitional housing beds. This will be measured in HMIS. In addition, the Entitlement will:
 - a) Right-size length of stay for clients in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects. Length of stay should generally be no longer than 90 days for shelters and one year for Transitional Housing. Currently, length of stay for emergency shelter projects is 30 days on average and 190 days on average for transitional housing projects. This factor will be measured in HMIS.
 - b) Increase placements into permanent housing for homeless individuals and families from Emergency Shelter and Transitional housing each year. This factor will be measured in HMIS.
2. Prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless – either unsheltered or sheltered. Follow-up checks will be made at three months and six months post-discharge to ensure that households assisted do not become homeless.
3. Maintain or increase the percentage of individuals and families remaining housed for three months. In 2014, 94% of prevention and rapid re-housing participants leaving for permanent destinations remained for 3 months. This will be measured in HMIS by using our recidivism methodology.

Performance Measurements

ESG projects with different eligible activities will require different assessment standards. DCA diligently works with sub-recipients to ensure a level of HMIS data completeness by which an accurate evaluation of project performance can continually be measured. DCA has established baselines for performance measure criteria, such as increases in cash income and non-cash benefits during project enrollment.. DCA will review all available data annually to evaluate performance.

*For Emergency Shelter projects, overall performance will be measured based on the following standards:

1. An overall bed utilization rate of 80%.
2. The average length of stay of the households served should be no longer than 60 days.
3. An increase in the percentage of discharged households that secure permanent housing at exit each year.
4. An increase in the percentage of households that increase cash and non-cash income during project enrollment.

For Transitional Housing projects, overall performance will be measured based on the following standards:

1. An overall bed utilization rate of 80%.
2. The average length of stay for households served should generally be no longer than nine months. An increase in the percentage of discharged households that secured permanent housing at exit each year.
3. An increase in the percentage of households that increase cash and non-cash income during project enrollment.

For Rapid Re-Housing projects, overall performance will be measured based on the following standards:

1. An increase in the percentage of discharged households that secured permanent housing at project exit each year.
2. An increase in the percentage of discharged households permanently housed three months after exit.
3. An increase in the percentage of households that increase cash and non-cash income during project enrollment.

For Homelessness Prevention projects, overall performance will be measured based on the following standards:

1. An increase in the percentage of discharged households that maintained permanent housing at project exit each year.
2. An increase in the percentage of discharged households permanently housed three months after exit.
3. An increase in the percentage of households that increase cash and non-cash income during project enrollment.

For Street Outreach projects, overall performance will be measured based on the following standards:

1. An increase in the number of contacts with unduplicated individuals made during outreach.
2. An increase in the percentage of discharged households that access permanent housing.
3. An increase in the percentage of households that increase cash and non-cash income during project enrollment.

*Projects serving the chronically homeless, or chemically dependent clients, or shelters with minimal barriers to entry may be held to different standards than projects providing other levels of assistance.

CONSULTATION WITH COC

Allocation of ESG funds each year

The Georgia Balance of State Entitlement (BoS Entitlement) staff hosts annual discussions with the Continua of Care (CoCs) concerning the needs of each Continuum. The Continua are asked to rank the eligible activities according to their local need, and submit these to the BoS Entitlement. This local priority ranking is reflected in the BoS Entitlement's scoring of applications and award recommendations.

In addition, BoS Entitlement stakeholders - such as the CoC leads, local government officials and non-profit organizations serving the homeless - will meet with Entitlement staff to review the Entitlement's vision and plans for the forthcoming year.

Developing the performance standards for, and evaluating the outcomes of, projects and activities assisted by ESG funds

Due to improved HMIS data completeness, the Entitlement established a baseline for ESG sub-recipients during the past year. With the established baseline the Entitlement was able to analyze performance measures for Fiscal Year 2013 against Fiscal Year 2014. Principal successes in 2014 over 2013 were:

- increases in income during project enrollment for emergency shelter, transitional and rapid re-housing projects,
- increases in mainstream benefits during project enrollment for emergency shelter, transitional housing, prevention, and rapid re-housing projects,
- increases in exits to permanent destinations for emergency shelter, transitional housing and rapid re-housing projects, and
- an increased number of households remaining in permanent housing three months after discharge for rapid re-housing.

Developing funding, policies, and procedures for the operation and administration of the HMIS

The Georgia HMIS Project is a statewide collaborative effort to implement HMIS across eight of the nine Georgia Continua of Care. The Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) is the Lead Agency for the Georgia HMIS Project, the Balance of State Continuum of Care and the Balance of State ESG Entitlement. DCA administers the programs of the GHFA.

The Steering Committee is made up of representatives from each of the eight Continuum of Care, the DCA HMIS Project Manager, and Pathways Community Network Institute (our HMIS vendor). The role of the steering committee is to oversee HMIS implementation and prioritize enhancement requests for DCA as the HMIS Lead Agency.

As the administrative agent of the HMIS lead agency, DCA is responsible for soliciting feedback from agencies and stakeholders and communicating that feedback to the Steering Committee. Within this, DCA also meets with Entitlement staff to review funding priorities, operating policies and procedures and operational issues and reports on this feedback to the Steering Committee.

DCA also runs monthly conference calls for all CoC and local Entitlement leads and partners with Pathways Community Network Institute to hold an HMIS annual conference in which both Entitlement and Continuum staff present and lead discussions.

The HMIS budget includes funding for a Data Services Specialist specifically focused on providing training and improving data quality for programs funded by the DCA ESG program. This funding and these efforts have been integral in providing a basis for evaluation of the ESG project.

ESG Housing and Service Goals

Through the ESG program, the State expects to be able to provide assistance to a number of persons through the following types of assistance:

Federal FY2015 ESG GOALS	
Activities	Persons Assisted
Outreach assistance	675
Rapid Re-Housing assistance	2,000
Homeless Prevention assistance	650
Housing assistance (emergency shelter and transitional housing)	16,000

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS PROGRAM (HOPWA)

The Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) is the recipient of the State's HOPWA allocation. GHFA contracts with DCA to administer the HOPWA program for the State of Georgia..

Method of Distribution

The State anticipates receiving \$2,204,852 from HUD to implement HOPWA activities. The HOPWA Program provides resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of low-income persons with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and persons in their family. HOPWA funding is provided through sub-grants to nonprofit agencies (project sponsors) within the communities. These agencies are responsible for designing their own program rules and policies for their programs; however, their program policies and design must be within the scope of HOPWA regulations and guidance from HUD and DCA.

By formula, HOPWA funds are allocated to eligible states and Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Areas (EMSAs) that meet the minimum number of cumulative AIDS Cases. States and metropolitan areas coordinate use of HOPWA funds with their respective Consolidated Plans, a collaborative process, which establishes a unified vision for community development actions. In Georgia, HUD provides HOPWA formula funds to two (2) other government entities in addition to DCA. HOPWA eligible metropolitan areas receive their HOPWA allocations directly from HUD and have specific guidelines and separate processes not included within the State's program. Subject to availability of funds, and on a second priority basis, programs operating within the Atlanta and Augusta EMSAs may be eligible to receive GHFA HOPWA funds. Applicant must also show a presence in the Balance of State.

The first and largest formula recipient in Georgia is the City of Atlanta. Atlanta receives a formula share for the Atlanta EMSA and makes numerous sub-grants within the following twenty-nine (29) counties: Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Jasper, Lamar, Meriwether, Morgan, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton. In the Atlanta EMSA, Living Room performs intake and assessment, and assists people living with HIV/AIDS and their families or partners to access housing and service programs. For more information, contact the Living Room at (404) 382-8991 or by email at livingroomatl@aol.com. You may also contact Mr. Richard Willis for Grant Administration questions at the City of Atlanta at rdwillis@atlantaga.gov or (404) 330-6112 x 5062.

The smallest recipient is the Augusta-Richmond County government. Augusta-Richmond County receives a formula share for four (4) Augusta MSA counties, including Burke, Columbia, McDuffie, and Richmond. For more information on Augusta's programs, contact Ms. LaSandra Corley of Augusta-Richmond County at (706) 821-1797 or by email at lcorley@augustaga.gov.

The State of Georgia currently funds nine (9) regional programs. Sponsors and areas covered are listed below:

Georgia HOPWA Project Sponsors and Area of Coverage

<u>Sponsor Name</u>	<u>Regional Location</u>	<u>Contact Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Action Ministries, Inc.	Northeast Georgia	Ms. Alison Poole apoole@actionministries.net	(404) 219.5718
AIDS Athens, Inc.	Athens	Ms. Olivia Long olivia@AIDSathens.org	(706) 542.2437
Comprehensive AIDS Resource Encounter, Inc. (CARE)	Jesup/Dublin	Mr. Jeff Johnson Jeff_care2013@yahoo.com	(912) 530.8078
Homeless Resource Network, Inc.	Columbus	Ms. Liz Dillard-Alcantara Liz@homelessresourcenetwork.org	(706) 571.3399
Laurens County Board of Health	Dublin	Ms. Sarah J. McRae Sarah.mcrae@dph.ga.gov	(478) 274.7605
Living Room, Inc.	Northwest Georgia	Mr. Chuck Bowen chuck.bowen@livingroomatl.org	(678) 536.8979
Lowndes Co. Board of Health (a/k/a South Health District 8-1)	Valdosta	Ms. Terri Ball teball@dhr.state.ga.us	(229) 245.8711 x207
River Edge CSB	Macon	Ms. Danielle Jordan djordan@river-edge.org	(478) 742.5190
Union Mission, Inc. (Savannah)	Savannah	Ms. Ayana Eady aeady@unionmission.org	(912) 230.0123 x1409

Compliance Criteria

Local government entities are eligible to apply for HOPWA funds. To the extent determined under State law by DCA, private, secular or faith-based nonprofit organizations are also eligible to apply for funds. Nonprofit organizations must demonstrate collaboration with local mainstream service providers and local homeless provider groups. Generally, it is the intent of the State to make all non-construction activities eligible under the HOPWA program, subject to the program purpose and eligible beneficiaries. Sponsor administrative costs are limited to 7% of the grant amount.

Sub-grantees must comply with the HUD HOPWA Program Regulations at 24 CFR Part 574, as amended. DCA Program requirements include, but are by no means limited to, the following:

- 1) Costs requested for reimbursement via automatic deposit by DCA must be “reasonable and justifiable,” and are only eligible to the extent that they are consistent with the program approved by DCA.
- 2) All funds will be reimbursable to sub-grantees based upon actual program expenses with supporting documentation (retained by sub-grantee).

- 3) Expenses are only eligible to the extent that they benefit “eligible persons” under the HOPWA program, as defined herein.
- 4) Environmental - All grants are subject to environmental review in accordance with the federal regulations governing HOPWA programs.
- 5) All grants to non-profit organizations are subject to the administrative requirements and cost principals outlined in OMB Circulars A-110 and A-122. These requirements for local governments are outlined in 24 CFR, Part 85 and OMB Circular A-87.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities are those named in current HUD regulations (24 CFR 574.300) for the HOPWA Program that include, but are not limited to, the following: housing, housing or fair housing information, rental assistance (including shared housing), homelessness prevention, supportive services (to include health, mental health, assessment, drug and alcohol, day care, personal assistance, nutritional services, etc.), general case management, housing operating subsidies, and technical assistance.

Selection Process and Application Submission Requirements

Applications will be solicited through a Notice of Funds Availability of State HOPWA Application Guidelines for the Federal FY2015/State FY2016 Program Year. This notice will be emailed to known HIV/AIDS service and housing providers, public health departments, local governments, and other interested parties. Faith-based organizations have full access to the selection process as described in regulations and within the application. Applications must be submitted on forms provided by DCA. The applicant must also provide required certifications and provide all supporting documentation requested by DCA. Each applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of DCA that it is in compliance with Federal, State and local laws and regulations, and that it is capable of carrying out applicable programs. DCA may require additional information during the review process and applicants are expected to comply with these requests.

DCA will hold **HOPWA Application Q&A Sessions in Athens, Atlanta and Macon**. Additional information including date, location and time will be provided via email through the Notice of Funding Availability scheduled to be released in February 2015.

Deadlines and Award Authority

Application documents will be available on or about February 16, 2015. The application process, including related deadlines will be announced on the DCA HOPWA webpage. Funding announcements will be made by June 30, 2015. Applications submitted after the deadline established by DCA will not be considered for funding. The Commissioner of DCA or staff designated by the Commissioner shall have the authority to make funding awards.

Please direct questions regarding this process to Phillis Thomas at 404.679.0651 or by email phillis.thomas@dca.ga.gov or Whitney Mitchell at 404.679.0564 or by email whitney.mitchell@dca.ga.gov.

NOTE: Federal FY2015 funding authority is still pending authorization by Congress. Award announcement may be delayed pending budget authorization by Congress.

Requirements for Georgia HOPWA applicants and project sponsors are:

- The HOPWA program is the only Federal Program dedicated to addressing the housing needs of persons with HIV/AIDS. DCA has implemented a number of changes to HOPWA reporting requirements that strengthen the focus on consumer outcomes
- Absent disabilities, the HOPWA TBRA Program must be a time-limited comprehensive program not to exceed five years designed to prevent homelessness and to help low-income people with HIV and AIDS to live independently. The HOPWA applicants must submit policies and procedures for this program during the application process. Policies and procedures must provide consideration for persons with a disability or other extenuating circumstances that will require ongoing assistance beyond five years.
- Consumers participating in the HOPWA Program must receive the support of a qualified case manager whose primary responsibilities are to assist clients with accessing a variety of services, including Housing Choice vouchers and support services; providing clients with appropriate referrals; assisting clients in the development of a Housing Stability Plan; following-up with clients, as needed; maintaining detailed case notes, records, correspondence and telephone logs; and using a case tracking system for maintenance and follow-up. Job descriptions must be submitted with your application.
- Within fifteen (15) days of the start of any HOPWA assistance, the consumer with the help of the HOPWA case manager, will develop and commit to an individualized Housing Plan. The primary goal of the Housing Plan is to assist the consumer in maintaining independence from HOPWA at the end of the time-limited assistance. Documentation of efforts to help the clients to maintain affordable housing must be maintained in the client's file. The HOPWA provider reserves the right to refuse further assistance if the consumer does not demonstrate an effort to implement all or a portion of his or her Housing Plan.
- Succession planning is the organized process of identifying key leadership positions within each department and developing employees within your organization to assume these positions. It is a comprehensive plan to address both current and future leadership needs while maintaining the existing principles. DCA believes succession planning to be important as it ensures smooth changeover of business responsibilities from incumbent leaders to their succeeding competent personnel, thus ensuring that the organization can continue to succeed especially when key positions need to be filled. To begin the process of succession planning, an organization's leadership team/Board of Directors should identify key leadership positions by evaluating the impact of each position regarding achievement of strategic goals and objectives. This Board approved succession plan must be submitted with application.

Compliance with House Bill (HB) 87

Georgia State Law (House Bill (HB) 87, the "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011" signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal on May 13, 2011, for contracts signed on or after July 1, 2011) requires DCA and GHFA to only contract with entities that are

registered with the e-verify program and to obtain an affidavit from the entity certifying participation in the e-verify program. Any subsequent subcontractors (or subcontractors of subcontractors) utilizing DCA or GHFA funds must also participate in the e-verify program and must provide a sworn Affidavit with the e-verify I.D. number. A copy of O.C.G.A. 13-10-91 is on the DCA website for reference. DCA-funded organizations must complete and execute a "*Contractor Affidavit under O.C.G.A. § 13-10-91(b)(1).*" Note that this Affidavit must be executed by the person that executes the DCA HOPWA application. It is necessary also that any subcontractors (and subcontractors of subcontractors) utilizing funds under the Agreement provide (to you, and then from you to DCA) the "*Subcontractor Affidavit under O.C.G.A. § 13-10-91(b)(3).*"

Federal Reporting Requirements

Important notice regarding mandatory federal reporting requirements: The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 requires sub-recipients receiving federal funds to register with Dun and Bradstreet (D & B) to obtain a D-U-N-S number and complete or renew their registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). To find information on how to obtain a D-U-N-S number and register in CCR, please visit the following websites:

- http://www.grants.gov/applicants/request_duns_number.jsp
- and
- www.ccr.gov/startregistration.aspx

Completing these registration processes is free, but may take up to 10 days to complete. A D-U-N-S number and confirmation that your agency is active in CCR is required as part of this year's application. No awards will be made without this information.

Compliance with Fair Housing Laws

All HOPWA project sponsors are expected to comply with the fair housing requirements including all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Title 42, United States Code Sections 12101–12213) and implementing regulations at Title 28, CFR, Part 35 (States and local government sub-grantees) and Part 36 (public accommodations and requirements for certain types of short-term housing assistance).

Maximum Grant Amounts and Funding Factors

There are no minimum and maximum funding amounts established for this program in Federal FY2015, and there are not predetermined funding amounts by type of assistance. Applicants are advised to scale their requests based on housing need for eligible persons, organizational capacity, funding history, the types of activities proposed, number of counties served, participation in state or regional referral networks, and other relevant factors as determined by the applicant and DCA. For HOPWA, as a first priority, funding will be limited to programs located within the State's 126 county entitlement area. Subject to availability of funds, and on a second priority basis, programs operating within the Atlanta and Augusta EMSAs may be eligible to receive GHFA HOPWA funds.

Applicants can submit an application requesting funding for Operations, Housing Assistance, Service Activities, and Administrative Costs. Project sponsor administrative costs are limited to 7% of the grant amount.

Community Facilities, Off-site Housing Assistance, and Supportive Service funding decisions and funding amounts will be based upon the following factors:

- The availability of other HOPWA providers within the service area;
- Performance Outcomes;
- Consistency with local need, conformance to local plans, and service delivery strategy;
- Other funding for programs available to the applicant from Federal, State and local government sources;
- Amount of funds requested, prior award amounts and prior utilization of funds;
- Degree of compliance demonstrated during DCA monitoring visits or in desk audits;
- Relative quality of housing or standards for services to be provided;
- Participation in the State's collaborative HMIS initiative (encouraged for HOPWA-only projects, but not "required");
- Level of service (numbers of persons, hours of service, etc.);
- Standard costs for housing and services;
- Value of applicant's contributions (cash and in-kind);
- The complexity or nature of the request;
- Organizational development and capacity;
- The extent to which the organization operates under the authority of a diversified, involved, volunteer, community-based board of directors;
- Professional management;
- The consistency of the organization's identity or its mission to the provision of homeless or HIV (as applicable) services;
- The extent to which the organization utilizes networks to avoid duplication of housing and services;
- Participation in the activities of the appropriate local Continuum(s) of Care;
- Sound operating procedures, accounting policy and controls, including a completed IRS Form 990 for the most recent fiscal year of the organization; and,
- Organizational and financial policy, stability and capacity.;

All applicants are encouraged to provide 50% of the cost of each program with other cash, in-kind services or donations. The matching requirement may be waived at the discretion of DCA on a case-by-case basis. Awards are made at the sole discretion of the DCA. Funding decisions are final and not subject to appeal. Applications must be approved by appropriate local government jurisdictions. Incomplete or ineligible applications, including applications that do not adequately address local approval(s) and consolidated plan certification(s), may be returned unprocessed.

Funding determinations under the HOPWA program are made using a "threshold" method for selecting sub-grantees. Applicants must meet a capacity test, and funding decisions for all nonprofit agencies shall also be based upon the following factors: the complexity or nature of the request; organizational development and capacity; the extent to which the organization operates under the authority of a diversified, involved, volunteer, community-based board of directors; professional management; the consistency of the organization's identity or its mission to the provision of HIV/AIDS (as applicable) services; the extent to which the

organization utilizes networks to avoid duplication of housing and services; participation in appropriate Continuums of Care; sound operating procedures, accounting policy and controls; and organizational and financial policy, stability and capacity. An additional “threshold” measure applies under the HOPWA program. Under HOPWA, relative need is examined and new applicants are denied funding when they propose to duplicate services within a service area where HOPWA programs are already being carried out by eligible sponsors.

Funds will generally cover the period beginning on July 1, 2015 and ending on June 30, 2016. If all contract conditions are met, payments to recipient organizations will be made on a reimbursement basis. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by DCA staff.

HOPWA project sponsors will be expected to provide performance information (goals and actual outputs) for all activities undertaken during the operating year supported with HOPWA funds. Performance is measured by the number of households and units of housing that were supported with HOPWA or other federal, state, local, or private funds for the purposes of providing housing assistance and support to persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. HOPWA sub-grantees must also report the source(s) of cash or in-kind leveraged federal, state, local or private resources used in the delivery of the HOPWA program and the amount of leverage dollars. Project sponsors must also meet Federal, State financial, and other reporting requirements

All activities must be conducted in full compliance with program regulations published at 24 CFR §574, as well as all Federal, State and local laws and regulations.

All records created as a result of the submission of an Application to participate are subject to disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Act and the applicant expressly consents to such disclosure. The Applicant agrees to hold harmless the the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs against all losses, costs, damages, expenses, and liability of any nature or kind (including but not limited to attorney’s fees, litigation and court costs) directly or indirectly resulting from or arising out of the release of any information pertaining to the Applicant’s submission of an Application and implementation of any activities as a result of funding under this program, pursuant to a request under the Georgia Open Records Act.

Agencies receiving HOPWA funds must maintain (for a four-year period) financial records sufficient to ensure proper accounting and disbursing of amounts received from HOPWA funds and make the records available to HUD or DCA for inspection.

ESG and HOPWA sub-grantees are strongly encouraged to document disability at first encounter as HUD places preference for persons with disabilities in its Continuum of Care programs. DCA’s current disability verification format (required for DCA S+C programs) is on-line at the following link:

http://www.dca.ga.gov/housing/specialneeds/programs/documents/2_DCA_Disability_Verification_REV02_12.doc.

In general, HUD defines a person with disabilities as a household composed of one or more persons at least one of whom is an adult who has a disability. A person shall be considered to have a disability if he or she has a disability that: (i) Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration; (ii) Substantially impedes the individual’s ability to live independently;

(iii) Could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions; and (iv) is either (A) a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, posttraumatic stress disorder, or brain injury; (B) a developmental disability, as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002); or (C) the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.

HOPWA Housing Goals and Projected Outcomes

Through the HOPWA program grant awards, the State expects to be able to provide HOPWA housing assistance to a total of 546 households through the following types of housing assistance (the number will not match the total housing goal by type of assistance due to the anticipation of some households receiving more than one type of assistance):

FFY2015 HOPWA HOUSING GOALS	
Activities	Households Assisted
Short-term rent, mortgage and utility assistance to prevent homelessness	191
Tenant-based rental assistance	150
Units provided in housing facilities that are being leased or operated with HOPWA funds	125
Permanent Housing Placement	80
Total	546

Monitoring

DCA monitors the Sub-grantee’s participation in the Program to ensure compliance with program regulations promulgated by HUD at 24 CFR, Part 574 for HOPWA programs designed to benefit persons with HIV related needs. Effective oversight and monitoring recipients is an important function of DCA.

Efforts connected with HOPWA have continued strengthening existing programs through, in part, diversification of housing programs within sponsor agencies, and renewed and targeted monitoring efforts. Sub-grantees receiving HOPWA funding, will receive an on-site monitoring visit each contract year. After each monitoring visit is complete, DCA will send correspondence documenting findings and/or concerns, project accomplishments, areas of deficiencies and technical assistance needs, these areas will be highlighted in the report and serves to confirm issues discussed during the on-site monitoring review process and to give sub-grantees notice of deficient areas requiring attention.

DCA relies upon thorough application review and reimbursement of funds expended in lieu of advancing funds. Desk audits are often performed at DCA to test compliance. On-site monitoring, therefore, is largely limited to eligibility of beneficiaries and a comparison of program records with the programmatic claims of the applicant.