

Shelter Program Interim Report

Introduction

The 2019-2021 supplemental budget appropriated \$60 million of home security funds for local governments to increase homeless emergency shelter capacity. The timing was strategic as cities across the state were wrestling with the Martin versus Boise Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling on how to ensure shelter availability in their jurisdictions. As Commerce began developing guidelines and an application for the new Shelter Program, the Pandemic hit our state. Commerce granted \$20 million from this program to county governments to support the immediate need to shelter people in isolation and quarantine housing and expand shelter capacity to meet social distancing requirements. The COVID Emergency Housing Grant expires on Dec. 31, 2020. Commerce will return any remaining Home Security Fund balance to the Shelter Program to be made available to grantees.

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Formula

Jurisdictions eligible to apply for funds included:

- Counties
- The largest city in each county
- Cities with more than 25,000 residents

Nonprofits and tribal governments were not eligible to apply directly but were eligible subcontractors of local governments. Because every community in the states needs shelter capacity, Commerce set aside funds by formula for each county and larger city in the state, divided by population.

Jurisdictions that submitted a joint application from more than 50% of the county's eligible applicants were awarded 25% more funds than jurisdictions that applied alone. Joint applications needed to include signatures of concurrency from each of the jurisdictions applying jointly, and applicants were awarded a single contract that can be subcontracted to other jurisdictions and organizations. After initial awards to applicants are made, any remaining funds will be distributed proportionately to the joint applicants.

Program Overview

Commerce intends for communities to use equitable and creative approaches to develop or expand shelter programs and bring people inside with a goal to exit participants to permanent housing quickly. Programs are expected to enact strategies to ensure racially equitable access and racially equitable outcomes at exit and ensure shelter rules and policies do not include unnecessary pre-conditions for receiving shelter and avoiding exits to unsheltered homelessness for participants. Shelter services are oriented toward bringing people inside and achieving housing stability, especially using diversion strategies and connecting participants to mainstream resources.

Response

Nearly all 21 applicants submitted joint applications. Programs are planning to implement a range of project types, including:

- Adding beds to traditional congregate emergency shelters and non-congregate shelters
- Using the shelter funds in combination with other funding sources to remodel or acquire property to create new shelter beds
- Leasing local hotel beds
- Constructing temporary shelter sites using tiny shelters, portables, Conestoga trailers and weatherized tents

Outreach to Nonresponsive Counties

Commerce sent the Shelter Program application and notices about the application to several distribution lists, including the Washington State Association of Counties and the Association of Washington Cities. Because of the newness of the grant type and additional planning requirement, we offered support via a national homeless housing technical assistance provider. Twenty-one of 39 county governments submitted applications.

Commerce surveyed the nonresponsive counties to understand the barriers to applying. More information in Appendix A.

Projects

Project Allocations

As of Oct. 2020, \$37,922,420 is contracted to the 21 counties that applied to the program. The remaining balance of \$2,077,580 plus any remaining funds from the COVID Emergency Housing Grants that expire on Dec. 31 will be added back into the program and made available to current grantees.

Project Descriptions

There are 45 Shelter Program projects in 21 counties funded by this program. More information on locations, number of beds and populations served is in Appendix B.

Appendix A: Washington Shelter Grant Response Survey

Report From the Technical Assistance Collaborative

In September of 2020, the Washington Department of Commerce requested that Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) reach out to counties that did not submit a response to the recent Shelter Grant funding opportunity. This outreach aimed to collect feedback and compile themes related to why these communities chose not to apply for the funding.

Summary of Feedback

Below is a summary of the feedback we received from county staff concerning why some communities did not apply for the Shelter Grant funding. The feedback is in four overarching themes.

No Department or Staff Dedicated to Shelter or Housing

Several county contacts expressed that they were likely not the right person to be talking with TAC, but they were unsure of who would be. Many of the contacts provided were staff from substance use, behavioral health, mental health, or public health departments within the counties. Several indicated that they did not know about this funding opportunity but that they would not have been the person or department to push the application forward or manage the funds even if they had known. Several said that their counties did not have staff or departments dedicated to housing or homelessness issues. One contact was unsure as to whether they had emergency shelter in the county at all. TAC also heard that the counties would not be the entity to apply for this type of funding in many rural communities. Instead, it would be a local nonprofit such as a community action agency. It was unclear whether those nonprofit entities had received the information about this funding opportunity. Some counties reported that they had not received any information or outreach about the opportunity and did not know about it.

Some Counties Assumed Another County Would Apply on their Behalf

TAC heard that many small counties often do not apply for funding opportunities independently but instead rely on other counties to apply for funding to cover their jurisdiction/geographies. More than one county staff contact reported that they had not heard of the Shelter Grant but assumed that another county would have applied for it and included them in the application. For example, non-profit housing providers in Walla Walla County typically includes Columbia and Garfield Counties in their applications.

Limited Capacity to Manage Grants

More than one county expressed that they are reluctant to apply for new funding opportunities because they are a small department in a rural area with limited grant management capacity. Past difficulty with meeting grant management requirements seemed to inform this viewpoint. More than one county indicated that the amount of funding available to them was not enough to make it worth the administrative burden of managing the funds.

Limits on shelter rules

More than one county expressed that their community was not interested in the funding because of the stipulation that any shelter funded could only require rules and policies narrowly focused on maintaining a safe environment. One community expressed that local elected officials were not in favor of a shelter limited to rules focused on safety, which led to both the county and the largest city in that county choosing not to apply. Another county expressed that they had tried operating accessible shelters in their community, and it did

not work because of the level of support needed for those program participants. Lastly, one county pointed out that the original legislation that designated the Shelter Grant funds did not include language about shelter rules and that if the opportunity had been based solely on the legislative requirements, they would have moved forward with an application.

Process

Commerce staff provided TAC with a list of 14 counties across Washington that had not applied for the Shelter Grant. TAC conducted this outreach during the first two weeks of October. TAC was successful in connecting with five of the fourteen counties listed.

- Nine counties responded to outreach
- Outreach was by phone if numbers were provided and with email follow-up request for a callback

Appendix B: Shelter Program Data by County

Table 2: Snapshot of Shelter Program Data by County - 10/2020

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
Benton-Franklin Domestic Violence Services of Benton and Franklin Counties	Throughout county	Existing	11/1/2020	\$582,600	10	Fleeing DV	Area motels and private market housing units	\$1,571,502
Benton-Franklin Safe Harbor Support Center	Kennewick	Existing	TBD	\$907,200	4	Youth ages 13-18	Emergency shelter, shared bedrooms and living areas	
Chelan-Douglas TBD	Wenatchee	New	All beds by 1/2022	\$470,772	30	Chronically homeless	Emergency shelter, congregate, new construction	\$642,636
Clallam Serenity House	Port Angeles	Existing	4/2021	\$402,894	20	Single adults	Emergency shelter, congregate w/ cots, adding 40x50 addition to existing shelter	\$402,894
Clark TBD	TBD	New	12/1/2020	\$2,589,311	40	N/A	Emergency shelter, private rooms, acquiring property	\$2,589,311

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
Grant-Adams HopeSource	Moses Lake	Existing	12/31/2020	\$523,375	20	N/A	Emergency shelter, separate units within a multi-family apartment complex	\$523,375
Grays Harbor TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$197,264
Island South Whidbey Homeless Coalition	Central Whidbey Island	New	12/31/2020	\$449,591	35	N/A	Emergency shelter, combination of congregate and non-congregate, acquiring property	\$449,591
Jefferson Bayside Housing and Services	Port Hadlock	Existing	12/8/2020	\$189,087	8	N/A	Hotel rooms (site operated by Bayside)	\$169,087
King Snoqualmie Valley Shelter Services	Various eastside locations	New	12/31/2020	\$1,134,376	20	N/A	Leased hotel units	\$11,800,578
King Snoqualmie Valley Shelter Services	TBD	New	12/31/2020	\$1,107,200	21	N/A	Temporary shelter site, pallet units (small independent sleeping units)	
King TBD	Kirkland	New	12/31/2020	\$923,880	19	Households with children	Leased hotel units	

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
King TBD	Shoreline	New	12/31/2020	\$3,270,400	60	Households with children	Emergency shelter, acquiring property	
King TBD	Renton	New	12/31/2020	\$249,612	5	Households with children	Emergency shelter, lower level of a church	
King TBD	Renton	New	12/31/2020	\$2,068,160	39	N/A	Temporary shelter site, tiny houses	
King TBD	Various south King County locations	New	12/31/2020	\$2,101,230	38	N/A	Leased hotel units	
King TBD	Bellevue	New	12/31/2020	\$945,720	19	N/A	Leased hotel units	
Kitsap TBD	TBD	New	12/31/2020	\$1,209,600	60-80	Single adults w/ behavioral health needs	Emergency shelter, acquiring property	\$1,431,674
Kittitas HopeSource	Ellensburg	New	12/31/2020	\$246,846	10	N/A	Multi-family apartment complex, acquiring property	\$246,846
Lewis TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$421,287

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
Mason Community Lifeline	Shelton	New	10/1/2020	\$344,428	21	Single adults, particularly households fleeing violence and young adults	Emergency shelter, non-congregate and congregate, funding remodel of existing temporary shelter space	\$344,428
Pacific TBD	South Pacific County	New	12/31/2020	\$76,717	3	N/A	Temporary shelter site, RV placed at RV park	\$76,717
Pierce Low Income Housing Institute	TBD	New	11/1/2020	\$2,449,550	50	N/A	Temporary shelter site, tiny houses	\$4,708,464
Pierce TBD	East Pierce County	New	11/1/2020	\$1,533,870	30	Single adults	Emergency shelter, congregate	
Pierce The Rescue Mission	Tacoma	Existing	10/1/2020	\$725,044	36	Single adult women	Emergency shelter, congregate	
Skagit Skagit Valley Hospitality Association (Friendship House)	Throughout Skagit County	New	12/31/2020	\$684,829	12	All, prioritizing households with children	Leased hotel units	\$684,829
Snohomish TBD	Edmonds, Lake Stevens, Lynwood, Marysville	New	10/1/2020	\$843,320	15	N/A	Leased hotel units	\$4,339,548

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
Snohomish The Salvation Army	TBD	New	10/1/2020	\$2,403,239	50	N/A	Emergency shelter, congregate, funding remodel of VOA building	
Snohomish Interfaith Association of NW Washington	Everett	New	8/1/2020	\$357,840	6	Households with children	Emergency shelter, congregate	
Snohomish TBD	Everett	New	12/1/2020	\$735,149	20	N/A	Pallet shelter units	
Spokane (City) TBD	TBD	New	11/1/2020	\$2,731,100	43	Young adults	Emergency shelter, congregate, acquiring property	\$2,731,100
Thurston Family Support Center of South Sound	Olympia	Existing	12/1/2020	\$627,520	10	Households with children	Emergency shelter, non-congregate (four self-contained units)	\$1,514,893
Thurston Interfaith Works	TBD	Existing	2/1/2020	\$887,373	38	Chronically homeless	Emergency shelter, congregate	
Walla Walla Walla Walla Alliance for the Homeless	Walla Walla	Existing	10/31/2020	\$329,694	6	N/A	Temporary shelter site, Conestoga huts	\$329,694
Whatcom Lighthouse Mission	Bellingham	Existing	8/1/2020	\$730,512	110	Single adults, some households with children	Emergency shelter, congregate, renovating existing space	\$1,194,211

County Grantee/ Provider Organization	Project Location	New or Addition to Existing Project	Occupancy Date	Project Funding	Beds Funded	Target Population	Project Type	Total County Award
Whatcom TBD	TBD	New	12/1/2020	\$463,699	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$1,194,211
Yakima Yakima Union Gospel Mission	Yakima	Existing	12/1/2020	\$11,682	90	Single adults	Temporary shelter site, barrack-style military tents	\$1,356,671
Yakima Yakima Union Gospel Mission	Yakima	Existing	12/1/2020	\$178,203	10	Households with children	Temporary shelter site, building classroom-style portable, separate units	
Yakima Grace City Outreach	Yakima	Existing	12/1/2020	\$1,010,594	28	Single adults	Temporary shelter site, building classroom-style portables, congregate	
Yakima Rod's House	Yakima	Existing	9/15/2020	\$156,192	8	Young adults	Emergency shelter, congregate	