

N.C. Homelessness Prevention Fund

Q&A Conference Calls

Where does HPRP come from?

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) includes formula funding for a new homelessness program, a program based on nationally identified best practices. The new program is called the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). At the federal level, HPRP is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

What is the Substantial Amendment?

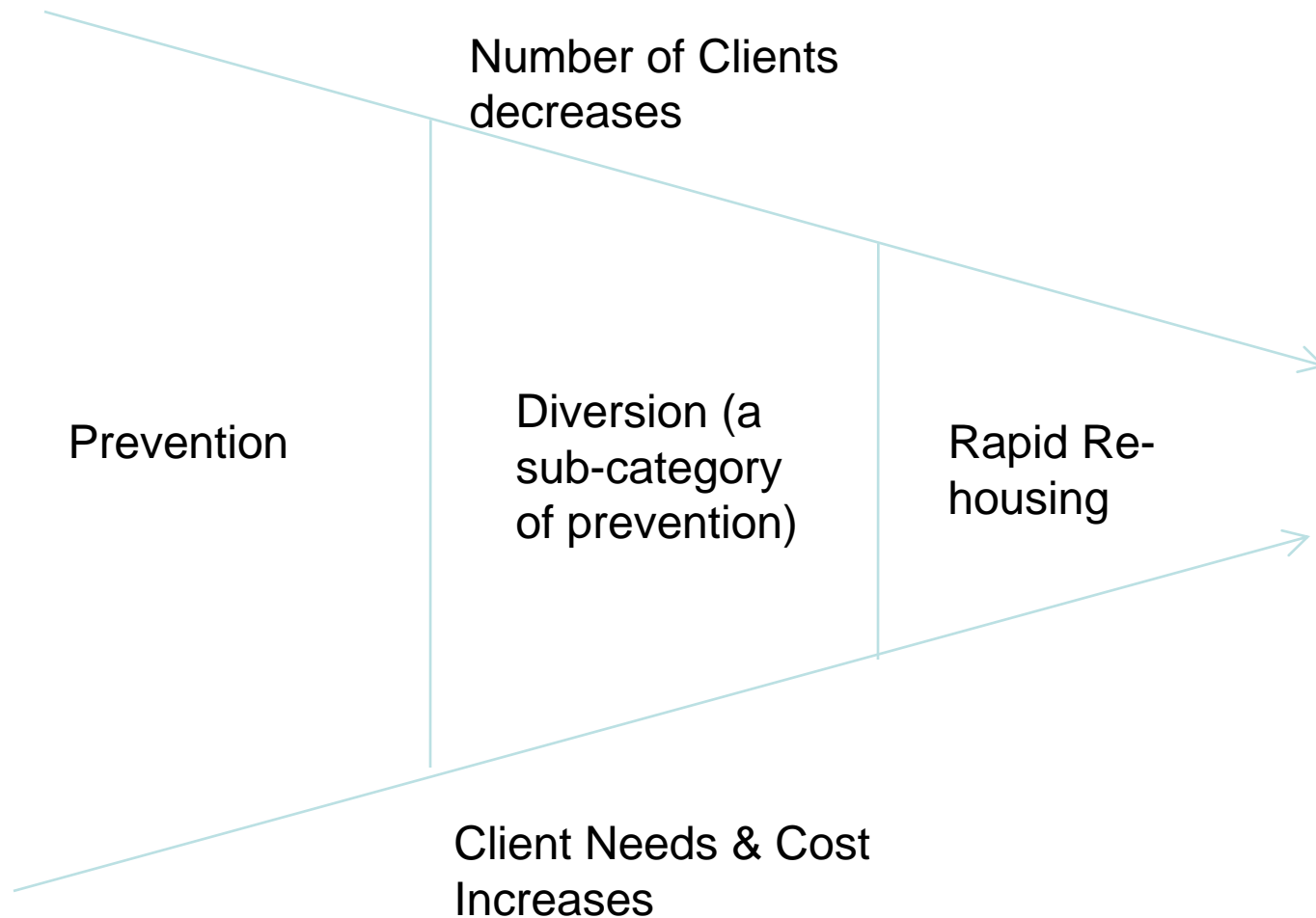
- Before the State can receive any of the allocated funds, the State must submit a plan to HUD. That plan, called a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan, answers several questions about how the State plans to administer the funds and how communities can apply, how successful applicants to the State will be monitored and general expectations for how funds will be spent.

HPRP Funds in NC


NC Total	\$29,078,387
North Carolina State Program	\$22,157,468
Asheville	\$509,460
Charlotte	\$1,930,217
Durham	\$789,101
Fayetteville	\$589,648
Greensboro	\$781,141
Raleigh	\$991,091
Wake County	\$582,164
Winston-Salem	\$748,097

- This public comment phase is about the funds allocated to the State
- Communities that received direct allocations (entitlement communities) are submitting their own substantial amendments and will have their own public comment process


HPRP: A New Approach to Homeless Services



Prevention

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- **Purpose:** To prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless.
 - First attempt is to stabilize current housing situation.
 - If current housing is not appropriate or cannot be stabilized, alternative housing is sought.
 - **Eligible Population:** Housed individuals and families at high risk of becoming homeless.
 - Households at 50% or less of Area Median Income (AMI)
 - Households with housing crisis
- Common Activities:**
- Flexible financial assistance
 - Can include up to 6 months back rent
 - Case management (offered, but not required)
 - Housing location
 - Short-term rental assistance

Prevention

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- **Length of Assistance:** One-time or short-term
 - **Common Concerns:**
 - Housed Individuals and Families often do not know where to seek help or they have trouble navigating the system.
 - There must be an outreach component in order to ensure that high risk persons are being offered assistance.
 - Frequently there is a tendency to “cherry-pick”. Therefore, targeting assistance to households with multiple risk factors will be encouraged.
 - Programs should strive to provide just enough assistance to prevent homelessness. In this way resources will serve more people and prevent more episodes of homelessness.
 - “What is the least amount of resources needed to ensure housing stability?”
 - This may mean that some psycho-social issues the household is struggling with are not dealt with by the HPRP program.

Prevention: Targeting

Income:

- At a minimum, should be targeted to people who have low incomes. HUD requires that households be at 50% or less of Area Median Income (AMI), and requires that participating agencies use HUD's Section 8 income eligibility standards.

- income limits are available on HUD's website at

Notice, p. 23 <http://www.huduser.org/DATASETS/il.html>

- Research shows that households are greatest risk of homelessness are at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI), and communities will be encouraged to target to that income group.

- (SSI/disability is approximately 15% of AMI)

Prevention: Targeting

Housing Crisis:

- Household must be in a housing crisis and have been unable to identify any subsequent housing options
- Household must lack needed resources to obtain immediate housing or maintain existing housing
 - Financial resources
 - Support network (family or friends who can serve as a protective factor)

Program Participant Information

- Sub-Grantees are responsible for *verifying and documenting* the individuals' risk of homelessness that qualifies them for receiving rental assistance.
- Sub-grantees must evaluate and *certify the eligibility of program participants at least once every 3 months* for all persons receiving more than 3 months rental assistance.
- If initial assessment determines that the household needs more intensive supportive services or long-term assistance, or if a household is not at risk of homelessness, grantees and sub-grantees should work to link them to other appropriate services.
 - What is the back door strategy for the end of your intervention with the program participant?

Risk Factors

- In general, homeless families don't look very different from other low income families
- Some groups have spent time figuring out what some of the distinguishing characteristics are.
- Risk factors help communities decide where to strategically target limited resources

Risk Factors identified by NAEH

- Have income below 15 percent of area median income
- Are families with children and are a secondary tenant (doubled up)
- Have experienced 2 or more moves in the past year
- Have a young child (under age 2)
- Are under age 24 and were in foster care at some point
- Have a prior episode of homelessness
- Have an eviction from public or assisted housing
- Have experienced domestic violence in the past 30 days
- Have missed 2 or more appointments with a caseworker
- Have a serious mental illness

Additional Risk Factors identified in HUD's published policy

- Eviction within 2 weeks
- Discharge within 2 weeks from an institution where individual has been living for more than 180 days
- Residency in housing that has been condemned
- Sudden and significant loss of income
- Sudden and significant increase in utility costs
- Substance abuse issues
- Physical disabilities, chronic health issues including HIV/AIDs
- Severe housing cost burden (>50% of income)

Additional Risk Factors identified in HUD's published policy

- Experienced homelessness within past 12 months
- Single head of household under age 25
- Current or past involvement with child welfare and/or foster care
- Resident of rental housing that has a pending foreclosure
- High overcrowding
- Past institutional care
- Recent traumatic life event
- Credit problems that preclude obtaining housing
- Significant medical debt

Additional Risk Factors

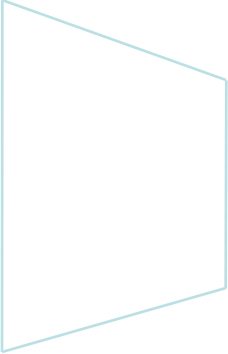
- HMIS data will be used over time to identify additional risk factors
- Some known risk factors not listed by HUD include
 - Discharge within 2 weeks from an institution where the person has been a resident for a very short period of time
 - Military service with an other than honorable or dishonorable discharge

Risk Factor Assessment

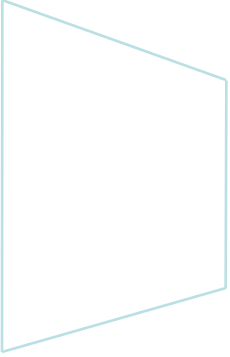
- The State is working with community partners to help identify how N.C. communities could weight the given risk factors, as well as to determine if there are additional risk factors.

Diversion

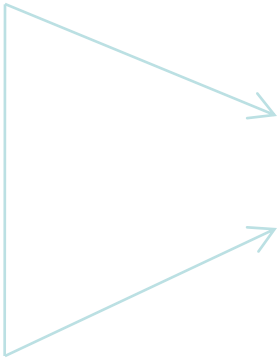
(a sub-category of Prevention)

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- **Purpose:** Diversion programs attempt to prevent homelessness for people who are seeking shelter.
 - Diversion attempts to return people to their prior living situation, if it is appropriate and safe.
 - If they cannot return, new housing is sought.
 - **Eligible Population:** Individuals and families seeking shelter
 - imminently homeless
 - showing up at the shelter door
 - called to get on shelter waiting list
 - **Targeting:** meet other Prevention targeting requirements

Diversion

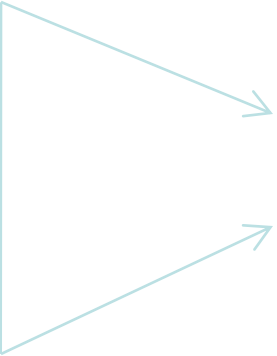
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- **Common Activities:**
 - Flexible financial assistance
 - case management (offered, but not required)
 - housing location
 - short-term rental assistance
 - **Length of Assistance:** Typically, one-time or short-term
 - **Common Concerns:**
 - Diversion should not prevent entry into shelter for people who are homeless.
 - *Preventing people from entering shelter is not the same as diverting people from shelter.*

Rapid Re-housing



- **Purpose:** Rapid Re-housing programs work with currently homeless individuals and families to help them quickly move into rental housing.
- **Eligible Population:** Individuals and families who are currently homeless
- **Targeting:** All currently sheltered or unsheltered individuals and family are eligible
- **Common Activities:**
 - Flexible financial assistance
 - case management (offered, but not required)
 - housing location
 - short-term rental assistance
 - coordination with other community resources

Rapid Re-housing

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- **Length of Assistance:** Short-term or medium-term (up to 18 months)
 - **Common Concerns:** Rapid re-housing programs must coordinate with other community resources to ensure that participants are linked to ongoing services, such as housing vouchers, intensive case management, or assertive community treatment.

HPRP Eligible Activities:

Financial Assistance

- Rental Assistance (up to 18 Months which can include up to 6 month arrears)
- Security and Utility Deposits
- Utility Payments
- Moving Cost Assistance

Flexible Financial Assistance (FFA)

- This activity includes:
 - assistance for first and last months rent
 - deposits
 - utilities
 - rental assistance for a final month at a location
 - moving cost assistance
 - other activities that will directly help a person stay in his or her current housing situation or quickly move to a new location.

FFA: Short/Medium-Term Rental Assistance

- Rental assistance is provided for up to 18 months depending on the needs of the household. Rental assistance may be deep (tenant contributes no more than 30 percent of income for rent) or shallow (subsidy pays for a smaller portion of the rent).
- Rental assistance should target people who, even if they received one time financial assistance, will likely not be able to move quickly into permanent housing.

Rent Reasonableness

- Rent assistance paid cannot exceed the actual rent cost, which must be in compliance with HUD's standard of rent reasonable.
- www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/library/forms/rentreasonablechecklist.doc

Flexible Financial Assistance

- Disbursements should be requested by the housing locator or home-based case manager
- Disbursements should be based on whether funding will help overcome an immediate barrier to entering or maintaining housing.
- National estimates are that the average grants will be approximately \$1,500, but depend greatly on the circumstances.

HPRP Eligible Activities: Relocation & Stabilization

- Case Management
- Outreach and Engagement
- Housing Search and Placement
- Legal Services
- Credit Repair

Case Management

- Case Managers work with people to ensure that their housing situation is stable and that they access the benefits and services they need for long-term self-sufficiency.
- Case managers help mediate disputes between tenants and landlords.
- Case managers refer participants to other providers that can better address other service or self sufficiency needs.
 - Assertive referral includes assisting the participant to effectively engage the other services

Housing Location

- Housing locators identify affordable housing, encourage landlords to rent to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, help negotiate good rents and lease terms, work to address credit issues with a potential tenant, and are generally available to the landlord and tenant in case there are problems.

HPRP: Eligible Activities:

Data Collection & Evaluation

- Data Collection - HMIS
- Evaluation
 - HUD evaluation
 - States and communities will be notified about how HUD will engage them in evaluation
 - Upon HUD's request, states and communities are required to participate in the HUD established evaluation process

HPRP Eligible Activities: Administrative Costs

- Accounting for the use of grant funds
- Preparing reports for submission to HUD
- Obtaining program audits
- Staff salaries associated with these costs

Administrative cost or not?

- There are many costs that are typically considered administrative costs that are not considered administrative costs in this program. Instead, they are program costs.
- Examples -
 - writing checks to landlords
 - data entry into the HMIS system
 - housing quality standard inspections

Ineligible Expenses

- Expenses that can be covered through other ARRA resources (child care, employment training)
- Mortgage Costs
- Construction or Rehabilitation
- Credit card bills or other consumer debt
- Car repair or other transportation costs
- Travel costs, food, medical or dental care and medicines, clothing/grooming, home furnishings, pet care, entertainment activities, work or education related materials
- Cash assistance

Who Applies to the State?

- Unit of Local Government
- Private non-profit (must have local government buy-in)
- Entitlement communities will be eligible to apply to the State
 - Applications should clarify what is being paid for with local dollars and what is being paid for with State dollars
 - HUD will require separate tracking and reporting for the local and State funds

Does a Applicant Have to do all Eligible Activities?

- Ideally, a community will do both Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing.
- A community that does not a shelter will likely submit for Homelessness Prevention, but not Rapid Re-Housing
- A community might also ask for Rapid Re-Housing, but not Homelessness Prevention
- Every funded sub-grantee will have to participate in HMIS and participate in all monitoring and evaluation activities

How Much \$ Should an Applicant Request?

- Request what it will take to do your program well for the three years of funding
- Applicants for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing should request between \$500,000 and \$1 M
- Applications for Homelessness Prevention without Rapid Re-Housing should request between \$150,000 and \$300,000
- Applications for Rapid Re-Housing without Homelessness Prevention should request between \$200,000 and \$300,000

Timeline

- Public Comment Phase: May 1 – May 13
- HUD will approve or disapprove the State's Substantial Amendment by July 2, 2009
 - Disapprovals must be resubmitted within 15 days of notification from HUD
- State will publish Request for Applications (RFA) in early July.
 - State will host Q&A conference call re: RFA
- Applications will be due to the State by early August.
- HUD will sign contract with the State by September 1, 2009
- State will sign contracts with sub-grantees by September 30, 2009

Are there any hints about what's likely to be in the RFA/Application?

- And OERI Work Group subcommittee is developing the RFA
- The RFA will force applicants to think through how their process will work from the consumer's perspective
 - John Q. Public calls saying he needs help. What happens with John from that point?

Are there any hints about what's likely to be in the RFA/Application?

- The RFA will include required and recommended MOAs/MOUs
 - Referrals in both directions
 - Other ARRA programs
 - Other mainstream programs
 - Services unique to your community
- Who is not at your table?

Are there any hints about what's likely to be in the RFA/Application?

- Audits – regular & program (federal, state, local) – letters to management and details if there was a finding
- Certifications – including certifying that you've read published policies/notices
- What is your backdoor strategy for households that end up needing more than 18 months of assistance?

Are there any hints about what's likely to be in the RFA/Application?

- Staffing patterns
 - For this program
 - Administrative staff
- How will you serve key target populations?
 - Households facing financial crisis connected to economic shifts
 - Persons cycling through public hospitals
 - Veterans
 - Ex-offenders

Are there any hints about what's likely to be in the RFA/Application?

- How will you comply with reporting requirements?
- How will you comply with HMIS requirements?
 - Are key players already on CHIN?
 - What's your track record of participation
 - Completeness
 - Correctness
 - Timeliness
 - If your track record isn't good
 - Are you accessing technical assistance
 - What's your plan for improvement
 - If not, what is the plan for engaging those players onto CHIN

Contact Information

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