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GRANT GUIDELINES

Housing Access for Justice Involved Individuals Pilot Program

GRANT OVERVIEW

The Housing Access for JIIs pilot grant is designed to support justice involved individuals (JIIs) with finding and obtaining housing, while also increasing the number of landlords in the selected area who are willing to rent to JIIs through targeted education and incentives. This pilot contributes to building strong and welcoming communities with its focus on increasing housing access among a marginalized population. LEO anticipates awarding two grants to separate communities between \$200,000 and \$400,000.

The grantee will need to describe how they will use the incentive dollars, capped at \$4,000 per person, for the duration of the grant period, to allow flexibility for effectiveness of services tailored to the community's needs. Suggested incentives are listed below, but the grantee may propose different ideas.

- a) sign-on bonus awarded after the first full month of a signed 12-month lease with a JII, to be forfeited if the landlord terminates the lease without cause or due process
- b) Access to a Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund
- c) Paying in whole or in part first month's rent and security deposit
- d) Providing emergency rental payment support in the event unexpected costs arise for the program participant (such as a car repair bill or large healthcare bill)
- e) Providing emergency financial support to avoid eviction ONLY if the eviction is the result of a change in landlord
- f) Any combination of the above

The RFP will require that the respondent provide a detailed list of limits, allowances, and requirements for each incentive dollar usage, and what agreements will be made between the grantee and program participants (landlords and tenants). One or more of the incentives can be used in any combination to ensure program participants obtain quality housing. The grant will be awarded to an organization with outreach targeted towards market-rate landlords, ideally with properties near public transportation and/or employment opportunities.

GRANT TIMELINE

DATE	ACTIVITY
April 3, 2025	RFP Posted
April 15, 2025	Grant Webinar
May 16, 2025	Deadline for Submission
June 13, 2025	Awardee Notified
July 1, 2025 – January 30, 2027	Grant Period

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible grant applicants include:

- Tax-exempt organizations/nonprofits, including community foundations and statewide associations.
- Local units of government (county, city, township, village, school district; any authority composed of counties, cities, townships, villages and school districts or combination of these entities).
- Federally Recognized Tribes
- Educational institutions (i.e., universities, community colleges).
- Regional planning agencies and economic or workforce development organizations

Eligible justice-impacted program participants must:

- Have a criminal history that shows up on a background check when applying for housing
 - No restrictions based on time since conviction or release from supervision (i.e., may still be on parole or probation, or may be ‘crime-free’ for 10+ years).
 - The program will serve those recently released *and* those who have been ‘crime-free’ for several years and can include successful outcomes (maintaining a 12-month lease) as contributing to reducing recidivism overall.
- Have been vetted by the service provider as someone who has sustained income and is able to consistently pay rent
- Either already know of the property they would like to rent, or are willing to work with the service provider to find a suitable property and amenable landlord
 - The property must comply with any restrictions/requirements based on the person’s criminal history
 - Preference will be given to properties close to a bus line or other public transportation
- Live within the grantee’s service area
- Have a need for housing
 - To address a large gap in housing services, this eligibility requirement will not be restricted only to people defined as technically homeless (i.e., people living with family, friends or in temporary housing do qualify). However, the respondent must provide a detailed explanation of how they will document a potential participant’s need for housing and how they define that need.
- Be willing to participate in renter trainings and financial literacy courses

Eligible landlords must:

- Have their rental property registered with the city or township and comply with local and state legal requirements for rental properties, such as:
 - Providing proof of ownership
 - Providing proof of paid local real estate taxes, fines and assessments
 - Certificate of Compliance from local inspector

- The grantee must be aware of local, state and federal housing regulations and have a system in place to document compliance
- Be willing to receive education on renting to JIs, with documentation of knowledge retention

GRANT CRITERIA

- Grantee must demonstrate a need for housing for justice involved individuals in the grantee-defined service area
- Grantee must utilize a case management system that can track and report on pilot outcomes and compare outcome data pre and post pilot implementation.
- Grantee must have a demonstrated ability of and experience providing services to (preferably housing services) and advocating for equitable treatment of justice involved individuals.
 - Respondent will be asked to provide the number of JIs they have served in previous programs, what types of services were provided, and how those services impacted the overall well-being and economic mobility of JIs, including any applicable outcome and evaluation data.
- Grantee has a plan of action for recruiting and vetting landlords willing to rent to justice involved individuals. This plan will include a budget, comply with all laws and regulations, and will have a foundation in evidence-based practices.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Number of clients served and in what capacity, options include:
 - Providing first and last month's rent (rent assistance)
 - Assisting with housing search
 - Liaising between client and landlord, including clearly defined roles and responsibilities around conflict resolution
 - Provide direct education or access to education on successful renter practices, including financial literacy, tenant responsibilities, and fair housing laws.
 - Rental and housing education provided (i.e., financial literacy classes)
- Number of clients who
 - Successfully obtained a 1-year lease or longer
 - Successfully maintained their lease for 12 months (including not recidivating)
- Number of landlords served and in what capacity
 - For example, providing a sign-on bonus, access to a risk mitigation fund, and/or direct rent payments.
 - Provide direct education or access to education on fair housing practices and myth-busting re: 'good' tenants.
 - New landlords vs. landlords who have already rented to JIs
- Total monies spent and how

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AND AWARD LIMITATIONS

- LEO anticipates awarding two grants between \$200,000 and \$400,000 for program management.
- The program will award funds on a reimbursement basis, using SIGMA.
- Grant applicants will be asked to propose how they will use the \$200,000-\$400,000 over an 18-month grant period, with a \$4,000 cap on each program participant, and a 10% cap on indirect costs.
- Examples of how the \$4,000 can be used are (but not limited to):

- Sign-on bonuses for landlords
- First month's rent + security deposit
- Access to a mitigation fund
- Emergency partial or whole rent payments
- Any combination of the above
- Grantee will be required to document how and why they use the incentive dollars for each participant.

GRANT EVALUATION, PROCESS AND SUPPORT

- While the RFP is posted, questions from bidders will be gathered and added to a FAQ document that will be posted on the PTF website.
- A webinar will take place before the grant applications are due to provide technical assistance with using the grant portal and field any questions about the grant guidelines and application.
- Proposals will first be screened for compliance with the RFP eligibility requirements and will then be considered by a Joint Evaluation Committee, comprised of individuals selected by LEO.
- Proposals will be evaluated on the following:
 - Experience of the organization
 - Capacity, commitment and ability to deliver the scope of services outlined in grant application
 - Provide services in the designated service area(s)
 - Detailed timeline outlining proposed deliverables, tasks, and timeframes
 - Plan to outreach to landlord and JII
 - Ability to provide match and/or in-kind support
 - Capacity and experience to carry out program management responsibilities
 - Provide an outcomes reporting plan
 - Program outreach and promotion
 - Budget supports goals the program
- The grantee will be supported through:
 - Monthly check-in calls
 - Monitoring of projects to ensure spenddown of budget
 - Monitoring of project to ensure on track to complete the program within the grant period

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The State of Michigan and the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, height, weight, marital status, partisan considerations, or a disability or genetic information that is unrelated to the person's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position.

To file a complaint of discrimination, please contact: LEO Equal Opportunity Officer Allen Williams at williamsa6@michigan.gov, or call (517) 231-1720 . You may also contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights at: Phone: 313-456-3700 Fax: 313-456-3701 Toll-Free: 800-482-3604 TTY: 877-878-8464 Email: MDCRServiceCenter@michigan.gov