

## System Innovation Grant – Shelter to Housing Project

Building Changes has made \$372,000 available in King County to support families residing in publicly funded shelters to either quickly access permanent housing or to address housing barriers. Funds have been announced to shelter providers and contracting will be led by Building Changes. All publicly funded shelter programs have agreed to participate.

Shelter Re-Housing Funds are intended to support shelter programs to assist families whose only barriers to accessing permanent housing may be limited move-in assistance (payment of security deposits and/or 1<sup>st</sup> month's rent) AND to assist all other families to address any other housing barriers that will support a more rapid transition out of shelter.

The community is committed to the success of families experiencing homelessness and the providers working with them. The following guidelines are intended to provide a framework for these flexible funds while empowering providers and families to think through creative options to support each family's housing stability.

### Evaluation:

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Shelter providers will be asked to maintain basic record-keeping of spending for future planning purposes, including:

- Number of families that receive assistance
- Type of assistance provided
- Amount of assistance provided

Building Changes and FHI staff will also collect feedback through a brief narrative report (3-4 questions), Learning Circles, and/or surveys.

All other evaluation efforts will be tracked through HMIS through existing, system-level evaluation efforts. For the purposes of this System Innovation Grant, outcomes monitored will primarily include:

- Shelter lengths of stay
- Overall episodes of homelessness
- Exits to permanent housing
- Number of households that exit to alternative homeless housing programs, including referral lag (the time it takes for a family to move from shelter to an alternative housing program facilitated through Family Housing Connection)

Evaluation outcomes (to include costs and impact) will be considered in future planning efforts of public and private funding partners. Lessons learned may be incorporated into future funding rounds in order to support successful strategies identified in this project.

### Roles & Responsibilities:

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The following stakeholders will provide input and guidance to the development of implementation strategies:

- Public & Private funding partners
  - Support project implementation and evaluation efforts
  - Identify future strategies and funding levels to support promising practices identified with this project
- Local Shelter providers
  - Utilize funds within the guidelines of the project
  - Elevate implementation successes and challenges during peer learning opportunities

- Building Changes is the administrator and grantor of these funds. Building Changes will complete the following:
  - Implement an application process for Shelter to Housing Project
  - Contract directly with each agency (to include a fiscal review)
  - Provide guidance and oversight to the implementation of the project, to include:
    - Evaluation efforts
    - Participation in Shelter Learning Circle
- Committee to End Homelessness, Family Homelessness Initiative: FHI led the convening of partners to support the development of the project proposal submitted to Building Changes. Throughout the implementation FHI staff will:
  - Provide support through the LOI and contracting process
  - Provide guidance and oversight to the implementation of the project, to include:
    - Evaluation efforts
    - Facilitation and coordination of Shelter Learning Circles

## **Guidelines:**

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- Agencies eligible to access Shelter Re-Housing Funds include:
  - Publicly funded shelter programs that participate in the Letter of Intent process administered by Building Changes
- Funds will be administered once for two years (January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016)
- Eligible costs include:
  - Housing application fees
  - Security and/or utility deposits
  - First and last month's rent
  - Fees to conduct background checks and credit screening to assist in the early identification of barriers to housing
  - Rental arrears (recommended cap of \$2500)\*
  - Utility arrears (recommended cap of \$1000)\*
  - Fees associated with securing identification records (photo IDs, birth certificates, etc.)
  - Moving costs (truck rental, etc.)
  - Relocation costs for families to return to their community of origin should they have safe, alternative housing options available to them
  - Household costs (such as food costs in the form of grocery cards, transportation assistance, utility assistance and/or rent payment) in order to leverage a family's existing support networks or alleviate the household costs of a host family
    - These funds must be directly related to a family's housing plan and/or option
  - Other assistance to remove barriers to either employment or housing as identified by the household
  - Emergency childcare assistance
  - Other costs as approved by Building Changes
- These funds cannot be used for:
  - Payment of active warrants
  - Parking or other moving violations
  - Furniture
  - Security deposits and move-in costs for Transitional Housing
- Programs are encouraged to connect families to mainstream or community resources for further assistance as needs are identified
- Programs will tailor assistance to each family based on their unique housing needs and goals

- Each family will be supported to identify the assistance they want/need in regaining housing from shelter
- Shelter staff will work with all families to complete a Housing Stability Assessment and Plan to identify barriers to permanent housing
- Shelter staff will support families to attain permanent housing directly
- Shelter providers are required to record all assistance provided (from these funds) on the Spending Matrix provided by Building Changes
- All forms and policies will be posted at: [www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness](http://www.kingcounty.gov/familyhomelessness)

\*Considering limited nature of funds, providers are encouraged to utilize other resources to supplement payments from Shelter to Housing SIG. Recommended caps align with Rapid Re-Housing for Families Pilot but may be tailored to each family's unique situation.