



MI-506 Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County Continuum of Care REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

The Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness is accepting applications for the MI-506 CoC Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). Applications will be accepted for four different youth-dedicated project types:

1. Joint Transitional Housing - Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH)
2. Host Homes (Supportive Services Only)
3. Street Outreach (Supportive Services Only)
4. Peer Navigator (Supportive Services Only)

RFP ISSUE DATE: May 10, 2023

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 11:59pm, June 2, 2023

ESTIMATED FUNDS AVAILABLE: \$2,377,852

Submit applications to: Courtney Myers-Keaton, cmyers-keaton@hwmuw.org and cc Ronan Parmenter, rparmenter@hwmuw.org.

This RFP was last updated on 5/10/2023

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Definitions and Commonly Used Acronyms

CCP (Coordinated Community Plan): A community's blueprint that lays the groundwork for implementation of a community's vision for preventing and ending youth homelessness.

CoC (Continuum of Care): a community-based homeless assistance program planning network.

Collaborative Applicant: Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness

CE (Coordinated Entry): A standardized method for connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a geographic area.

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual.

HMIS (Homeless Management Information System): an information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and people at risk of homelessness.

HUD Homelessness Categories:

- **Category 1 (Literal Homelessness):** Individuals and families who live in a place not meant for human habitation (including the streets or in their car), emergency shelter, transitional housing, and hotels paid for by a government or charitable organization.
- **Category 2 (Imminent Risk of Homelessness):** Individuals or families who will lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days and have no other resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.
- **Category 3 (Homeless Under Other Statutes):** Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not meet any of the other categories but are homeless under other federal statutes, have not had a lease and have moved two or more times in the past 60 days and can be expected to remain unstable due to special needs or barriers.
- **Category 4 (Fleeing Domestic Violence):** Individuals or families who are fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including trading sex for housing, trafficking, physical abuse, violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation, and who lack resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing.

Pregnant or Parenting Youth: Individuals who are age 24 years or younger who are pregnant or who are the parents or legal guardians of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, and where there is no person over age 24 years in the household.

RRH (Rapid Re-housing): A program model that assists individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and to achieve stability in that housing through a combination of rental assistance, housing search and supportive services.

Trauma-Informed Care: An approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives.

Unaccompanied Youth: Persons who are age 24 years or younger, who are not part of a family with children and who are not accompanied by their parent or guardian during their episode of homelessness. This also includes two or more youth aged 24 years or younger who are presenting together as a family without children.

YAB (Youth Action Board): a group of youth included in CoC decisions, particularly on policies that relate to preventing and ending youth homelessness. Each YAB member is age 24 years or younger and all have lived experience of homelessness.

YHDP (Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program): a HUD initiative to help communities end youth homelessness through innovative strategies.

YYA (Youth and Young Adult): In this document, YYA is used to describe a person who is between the ages of 18-24 years and unaccompanied minors.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide information on the MI-506 Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Request for Proposals.

MI-506 CoC YHDP Mission/Vision Statement

We are committed to youth-led solutions to end homelessness. We envision a collaborative network of providers and services to increase viable housing options, eliminate barriers, apply equitable standards of care and make homelessness scarce among youth. Honoring the time it takes for relationships to be built, we trust youth to be the experts of their own experience.

We aim to bring together multiple disciplines and youth leadership to dismantle barriers that contribute to the cycle of homelessness. We believe housing is a basic human right and that every youth deserves access to safe, stable and affordable housing. We recognize that homelessness in our community is compounded by multiple factors including systems of oppression that have disproportionately affected marginalized youth including LGBTQIA+, Black Indigenous People of Color, Pregnant and Parenting Youth, those Fleeing Violence and Survivors of Violence, Refugees, Youth in the criminal justice system and those aging out of foster care.

We believe in gathering behind youth and young people to foster a homeless system that:

- Has a centralized resource chart.
- Prioritizes trust building, transparency and has accountability measures in place for when trust is violated.
- Provides equal access to resources equivalent to housed peers.
- Offers programs, each of which centers around the emotional needs of its participants and has staff that is equipped with emotional intelligence to serve young people in crisis.
- Prioritizes organizations that are youth-centered.
- Ends the stigma that education is superior to lived experience.
- Prioritizes awareness-building around the issue of youth homelessness.
- Assesses gaps and creates resources to fill them.
- Works alongside youth to build trust and foster relationships rooted in healthy power dynamics and equity.

Kent County Youth Homelessness Committee believes in a world where every youth has stable housing. We will accomplish this using a community-based, trauma-informed approach led by youth and young adults.

Request for Proposal Description

On behalf of the MI-506 Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), the Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness requests for proposals from service provider(s) to implement programs as defined by the Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County YHDP CCP. The CoC is seeking applications from eligible organizations to implement four projects approved by the local Youth Action Board, CoC Funding Review Committee, and CoC Steering Council. Applicants are allowed and encouraged (if there is organizational capacity) to apply for more than one project type. If an applicant decides to apply for more than one project, the applicant will need to submit separate applications for each project they are applying for. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other providers in the community. Under a collaborative model, one organization would apply as the lead applicant and the other organization(s) would be considered a sub-recipient. Agencies will be required to submit their RFP application for projects directly to Courtney Myers-Keaton, cmyers-keaton@hwmuw.org and Ronan Parmenter, rparmenter@hwmuw.org

After agencies are recommended for funds through the local ranking process, awarded agencies will enter their application into eSNAPS. If you do not have an eSNAPS account (The electronic grants management system managed by HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS)), create an account immediately.

Applicants are encouraged to consider how their project designs will address the unique needs of youth and young adults who are often at a greater risk of experiencing homelessness. These populations are:

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual young people
- Pregnant and Parenting Youth and Young Adults
- Youth and Young Adults involved in the Juvenile Justice System
- Youth involved in the Foster Care System
- Survivors of Trafficking and Exploitation
- BIPOC Youth and Young Adults
- Youth and Young Adults with Disabling Conditions

All YHDP projects funded through this RFP are required to align project design and implementation with the guiding principles outlined below. For more detailed information on the Guiding Principles, please refer to the Coordinated Community Plan.

YHDP Guiding Principles

- The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness Youth Framework and the Four Core Outcomes.

- Responding to the needs of special populations
- Positive Youth Development and Trauma-informed Care
- Family engagement
- Immediate access to housing with no preconditions
- Youth choice
- Individualized and client-driven supports
- Social and community integration
- Coordinated Entry

Background

The Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness (Coalition) invites applications under HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. [The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) awarded \\$2,477,852 for the Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC to help end youth homelessness.](#) The funding was awarded through HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). The grant allows for homeless service providers in Kent County to develop a community plan and pilot innovative approaches to end homelessness for youth and young adults.

The YHDP is a federal initiative designed to reduce the number of young adults experiencing homelessness. Its goal is to support selected communities, including rural, suburban, and urban areas across the United States, in the development and implementation of a coordinated community approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

The planning process for YHDP began with the development of a CCP (Coordinated Community Plan). The CCP identifies needs within the community and details how YHDP funding will be utilized to end instances of youth homelessness. During the development of the CCP, the CoC brought together the YAB (Youth Action Board) and a variety of community partners to ensure the CCP was driven by youth voice and evidence-based practices. The project types in this RFP were identified by the YAB and community partners as needed housing interventions in Kent County.

The \$2.47 million YHDP award includes project and planning funding for two years. If selected, each project would be awarded with the possibility of renewal annually in the HUD Continuum of Care competition. The total community \$2.47 million in YHDP will continue to be available in our community to serve only youth experiencing homelessness for the foreseeable future.

Eligibility

Eligible project applicants are, under 24 CFR 578.15, nonprofit organizations, States, local governments, and instrumentalities of State and local governments. Public housing agencies, as such term is defined in 24 CFR 5.100, are eligible without limitation or exclusion. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply for grants or to be subrecipients of grant funds.

Proposal Timeline

A Bidder's Conference will be held May 16, 2023 at 10am. The Bidder's Conference is open to any interested applicant, as well as to members of the public. More information regarding the YHDP Bidder's Conference can be found at bit.ly/3NUcclw. To be considered for this opportunity, the YHDP Application must be submitted to cm Myers-Keaton@hwmuw.org and rparmenter@hwmuw.org by June 2, 2023 at 11:59 pm. No late applications will be accepted.

Any questions regarding this RFP should be emailed to cm Myers-Keaton@hwmuw.org and rparmenter@hwmuw.org by May 31st at 12pm.

- May 10- RFP is released
- May 16- Bidders Conference
- May 10- Written Questions from interested agencies due by 5pm.
- June 2- RFP response due by 11:59pm to cm Myers-Keaton@hwmuw.org and rparmenter@hwmuw.org
- June 6-7- Projects rated and ranked by the YHDP Ranking Committee and agencies informed of project selection.
- June 12 – Appeals Due by 9am
- June 16 – Steering Council votes on recommended applications
- June 19 - Recommended applicants must enter their application for review in eSNAPS by this deadline.
- June 26 - Recommended applicants must submit any CoC requested changes to their application in eSNAPS by this deadline.

Minimum Requirements

To be considered for funding through this RFP, projects must meet or be prepared to meet the following requirements by July 2023.

- Be located and/or able to provide services to youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness in MI-506 CoC geographic area (Kent County).
- If awarded funding, agree to utilize any recommendations of the YHDP Planning Committee, YAB, Sub-committees and CoC YHDP staff on program design, including assessment tools, and implementation.
- Not be debarred from receiving federal funds and in good standing with all government and funding contracts.
- Participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Adhere to Housing First practices while serving households experiencing homelessness.
- Incorporate all YHDP values outlined in this document and the CCP into projects being implemented.
- Participate in, and accept, all new program participants referrals from the MI-506 Coordinated Entry System as outlined in the CES Policy and Procedures Manual.
- Have a process to link YYA to certified mental health professionals.
- Provide services or case management to support stable housing, permanent connections, education/employment, and social emotional well-being.
- Incorporate Positive Youth Development (PYD) into their program design and implementation.

Project Types

The Coordinated Community Plan proposes the following four project types for funding using YHDP funds. For more details about each category, refer to the Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CCP.

Permanent Housing Projects	
HUD CoC Project Type	Transitional Housing - Rapid Rehousing Joint Component Type- short to medium term assistance (up to 36 months)
Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description	<p>This project prioritizes a quick transition out of homelessness and into permanent housing by providing up to 36 months (with a special YHDP activity) of housing and supportive services. Our CoC anticipates funding multiple TH-RRH programs through the NOFO process. These programs may vary on design but will follow the key principles described in this project description. TH-RRH will offer housing either with the young person as the leaseholder or with the agency as the lease holder in a master lease.</p> <p>TH-RRH services can be project-based or scattered site housing. Projects can also incorporate shared housing to help youth sustain housing after assistance ends or according to each individual youth’s needs. Assistance for youth households (individuals and families) will be provided by helping them locate and move into permanent housing using financial assistance and housing focused services.</p> <p>While youth are in TH-RRH, they receive supportive services, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance addressing or clearing criminal background • Connection to education and training resources, including connection to financial assistance • Connection to employment • Connection to community activities or groups
Target population and number served	Youth between the ages of 18-24. Projected to serve approximately 50 youth households annually.
Target number of housing units	Approximately 50 1–2-bedroom units. Rental assistance will last between 12-36 months, depending on the needs of the youth.
Staffing	Projects should have adequate staffing, including case management and peer navigation. Staff to client ratio should be a maximum of 1:20
Projected Cost	\$1,660,000 for 2-year grant.

Outreach and Peer Navigator Supportive Services	
HUD CoC Project Type	Supportive Services Only
Project summary	<p>The YHDP has created an opportunity for communities to develop new Supportive Services Only (SSO) projects dedicated to meeting the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. SSO projects provide critical support within the homeless response system. These services should be closely connected with the youth specific coordinated entry system. Projects would provide street outreach to unsheltered YYA and peer housing navigation with the goals of connecting YYA with community supports and identifying YYA not connected to the homeless response system.</p> <p>Innovative strategies to be built into implementation include: peer support, youth led development of programs, paid YYA with lived experience staffing, culturally responsive service providers.</p>
Needs met	Increase the amount available and geographic distribution throughout the CoC of supportive services for youth.
Target Population	Youth 18 to 24 years of age and unaccompanied minors
Target number of youth served	Based on needs identified through the CCP process, projects should serve at least 75 youth annually. This number can be distributed to multiple project recipients if no applicant has the ability to serve the entire geographic area. Ideal project will have CoC wide coverage to serve regardless of youth location
Staffing	Projects will include adult and peer outreach staff and housing navigators who will directly assist youth and make connections with the homeless response system and other resources in the community. At least 1 FTE for outreach and 1 FTE for a peer navigator.
Projected cost	Approximately \$360,000 for 2-year grant for both projects

Host Homes	
HUD CoC Project Type	Supportive Services Only
Project summary	<p>Host homes are a growing, global, short-term housing intervention for young people experiencing homelessness. Host homes provide young people experiencing housing instability with affirming, stable, short-term housing for 1-6 months, wrap-around case management services, and peer support.</p> <p>The goal of short-term host homes is to provide a safe, temporary, welcoming space for up to six months where young people have time to repair their relationships with self-identified and chosen family and/or make decisions about other housing options with the support of a caring housing case manager and affirming adult mentor.</p> <p>Youth will receive support to remain stabilized in housing through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term placements for that provide time and space apart from families • Family mediation (referrals) • Family or individualized counseling • Youth will receive supports to stabilize and build skills to smoothly transition into other long-term housing options through: • Access to resource referrals to meet immediate, basic needs • Individualized counseling • Strong connection to education and employment supports • Prioritized referrals to child care for pregnant and parenting YYA • Peer support services • Social engagement opportunities with peers in other Host Homes
Needs met	Increase the amount available and geographic distribution throughout the CoC of supportive services for youth.
Target Population	Minors ages 11-17 who are literally homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness; and youth ages 18-24, including all special populations
Target number of youth served	Approximately 10 YYA annually.
Projected cost	Approximately \$250,000 for 2-year grant

As described in the CCP, specific identities and experiences can shape the unique institutional and societal obstacles to housing stability and wellbeing that YYA face. The YAB and the YHDP Planning Group have identified the following identities and experiences as being underserved within the current system and/or as benefitting from targeted or explicitly affirming project design:

- Black, Indigenous, and other youth of color

- LGBTQIA+ YYA
- Pregnant and parenting YYA
- YYA with disabilities
- YYA with experience in foster care
- YYA with experience in the juvenile legal system
- YYA with experience of fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including trading sex for housing, trafficking, physical abuse, violence
- YYA who are undocumented or refugees

YHDP-funded projects must be prepared and equipped to assist all YYA with respect, cultural humility, and appropriate resources. YHDP projects that are targeted to or explicitly affirming of a specific subpopulation must reflect that capacity in the design and implementation of the project. Examples of targeted design include:

- Staff with lived experience of homelessness that reflects the subpopulation, including both peer support and other staff roles;
- Staff training specific to the barriers, experiences, and potential unique challenges faced by the subpopulation;
- Specific language capacity;
- Internal capacity or partnerships to provide population-specific services (e.g. gender-affirming medical care, targeted legal services, trauma recovery, etc.)

Narrative Questions for Projects

Project Overview (all projects)

1. Provide a description that addresses the entire scope of the proposed project. *Please address: type of project, target population, number of units, specific services to be provided, projected outcomes, coordination with partners, how project meets community needs in its service area, and organization capacity.*
2. Provide a description that addresses how this project will follow Positive Youth Development and Trauma Informed Care.
3. How does this project help the community meet the shared vision, goals and objectives of the coordinated community plan?
4. Describe your estimated project implementation timeline; including the schedule for proposed activities, management plan and method for ensuring effective and timely completion of all work. Provide a detailed schedule of proposed activities for 60 days, 120 days, and 180 days after grant award.
5. How will the project ensure youth have choice between the component type of TH-RRH? Describe the proposed service model for the joint TH-RRH project. ***(TH-RRH projects only.)***
6. How will the project help youth move quickly into housing upon referral? ***(TH-RRH projects only.)***
7. How will the project enroll program participants with the following? ***(TH-RRH projects only.)***
 - a. Having too little or little income
 - b. Active or history of substance use
 - c. Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions
 - d. History of victimization (e.g. domestic violence, sexual assault, childhood abuse)
8. How will the project prevent program participant termination from the project for the following reasons?
 - a. Failure to participate in supportive services
 - b. Failure to make progress on a service plan
 - c. Loss of income or failure to improve income
 - d. Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found for unassisted persons in the project's geographic area
9. How will the organization prioritize youth choice in services offered?
10. Describe what support for YYA looks like once participants have moved into permanent housing? How will the project help to ensure with long-term housing stability?
11. Describe the intervention strategy to engage families and how community partnerships such as child welfare agencies, schools, youth providers, and other community service and homeless providers are incorporated into the intervention strategy?

12. Please identify the specific populations addressed in this project:
 - a. BIPOC
 - b. Foster care/justice involved youth
 - c. LGBTQ+ Gender Non-Conforming
 - d. Victims of Sexual Trafficking
 - e. Pregnant and Parenting YYA
 - f. None of the above
13. How will the project continue to involve the Youth Action Board (YAB) in the development and implementation of YHDP projects, including how YYA will be involved in the hiring plans for projects?
14. How will you help participants: 1) obtain permanent housing, 2) remain in permanent housing or exit to a stable permanent situation, and 3) access mainstream health, social, and employment resources according to their individual needs? (Examples include transportation, case management, safety plans.)
15. How will the project allow youth the ability to choose the providers and interventions that fit their needs?
16. How will the project respond to the different needs for service type, intensity, and length of supports for youth?
17. How will the project ensure YYA move to stable and safe permanent housing?
18. Describe what it means to your organization to be low barrier and housing first.
19. Does the agency commit to: using HMIS or a comparable database for this project; requiring staff to attend HMIS training annually; require staff to maintain timely data entry and excellent data quality?
20. Will the new project participate in the local Coordinated Entry Process?

Host Homes Only Project Questions

1. Describe your model for Host Homes.
2. What will your recruitment strategy be for the project?
3. What is the project's plan to identify best fit between program participants and hosts? How will the organization address conflict if it arises?
4. Describe the training model the project proposes for hosts.
5. Please describe the plan to address the sustainability of the program and the relationship between the host and participant.
6. Will the project have a plan to address guardianship/parental involvement with minors? If so, please describe.

Street Outreach and Peer Navigation Only Project Questions

1. How will you hire YYA. Describe the recruitment strategy. (If applicable)

2. Describe the project's housing-focused street outreach strategy. (If applicable)
3. Provide the compensation plan/salary range for new hires on the project.
4. What is the project's plan for professional development opportunities?
5. How will caseloads be managed?
6. Describe the Peer Navigation model. (If applicable)

Organizational Experience and Capacity

1. Describe the experience of the applicant and any sub-applicants in working with YYA and in providing housing similar to that proposed in the application. List all sub-applicants and explain why they were selected.
2. Describe your organization's (and subrecipient(s) if applicable) experience in effectively utilizing federal funds and performing the activities proposed in the application.
 - a. Describe your organization's (and subrecipient(s) if applicable) experience in leveraging Federal, State, local and private sector funds.
 - b. Describe your organization's (and subrecipient(s) if applicable) financial management structure.
 - c. Are there any unresolved HUD monitoring or OIG audit findings for any HUD grants (including ESG) under your organization?
3. Describe agency key staff positions and qualifications of individuals who will carry out the project.

Organizational DEI

1. Describe the type and number of annual trainings applicant and sub-applicant staff have undergone or will undergo related to diversity, equity, and inclusion **as it pertains to service provision.**
2. Describe whether and how the agency has implemented clear strategies for advancing racial equity in the following areas or the agency's plan to do so:
 - a. Agency has underrepresented individuals in managerial and leadership positions.
 - b. Ensuring the ability to meet language needs of the community.
 - c. Demographics of front-line staff reflect the participants served.
 - d. Review of internal policies and procedures with an equity lens and taken or will take steps to eliminate the identified barriers.
 - e. Agency has reviewed or has a plan to review program participant outcomes with an equity lens, including the disaggregation of data by race, ethnicity, gender, and/or age. If already implemented, describe findings from outcome review and steps the agency plans to take to eliminate disparities.
3. Describe the extent to which the agency incorporates participation of YYA with lived experience on the agency's Board of Directors or equivalent policymaking entity.

4. Describe whether and how the agency has implemented clear strategies to ensure the meaningful participation of YYA with lived experience within homelessness programming or the agency’s plan to do so.

Budget

Awarded applicants will receive YHDP funding for two years.

When completing the budget of this RFP, please input the **ANNUAL** amount requested. Please also include a budget narrative.

Budget Line Item	Annual Funding Request	Annual Match Requirement (25%) if applicable
Leased Units		
Leased Structures		
Rental Assistance		
Supportive Services		
Operating Costs		
Project Administration (up to 10%)		
HMIS		
Total		

Resources

Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness: www.endhomelessnesskent.org

USICH: <https://www.usich.gov/all-in/goals/youth>

HUD Exchange: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp/>

eSNAPS Log In: www.esnaps.hud.gov

eSNAPS Resources: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/e-snaps/>