



CITY OF WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Municipal Homeless Support Initiative

Winter Emergency Hub Competitive Grant Application

Contact Information

Michael Debrousse, Director of Planning and Development, City of Woonsocket

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Scope of Work

The City of Woonsocket plans to collaborate with Community Care Alliance (CCA) and Vida Church to operate two winter emergency hubs on nights of extreme weather including but not limited to frigid temperatures, snow storms, severe rains and hurricanes. When such a weather event occurs, CCA and Vida Church will open its winter emergency hub for the duration of the event. The location operated by CCA will be the primary hub that can hold up to 25 individuals. In cases of overflow, Vida Church will open to other individuals and will be able to hold 30-50 individuals. CCA's winter emergency hub is located at 66 Social St. in Woonsocket at their Serenity Center, a peer-run recovery center and Vida Church is located at 120 Prospect St. in Woonsocket.

Implementation Plan

The winter emergency hubs will operate day and night through the duration of the winter weather event. We anticipate that these could take place for anywhere from 1 - 5 days. Depending upon the length of each event, we will operate these "pop-up" warming centers anywhere from 5-12 times throughout the funding period. The main winter emergency hub located at Serenity will have three shifts with two staff per shift for safety. The hub located at the church will be staffed by volunteers if it is needed. Their attached letter describes their staffing plan in more detail. Individuals will be provided with breakfast, lunch and dinner, with snacks. Cots and bedding will be provided, along with warm/dry clothing for those who come in wet or inappropriately dressed for the weather. The winter emergency hubs will serve ALL populations who are homeless. These populations include BIPOC, LGBTQ+, victims of domestic violence and veterans. The area served will be Northern Rhode Island, mainly the Woonsocket and Smithfield areas.

If the City is awarded the grant, the project will start as soon as possible. The City has already prepared a contract for both subrecipients to sign. CCA and Vida Church already have staff and volunteers in place. Once we are ready to move forward, staff will be oriented for one week and



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then the hubs will be ready to be operational for the first triggering event. During each triggering event, the status of every visitor will be checked in HMIS/Clarity to ensure that they are enrolled and that their information is accurate and up-to-date with regard to both the Crisis Assessment and Housing Assessment. Of course, this will be dependent upon the approval of each visitor. Every individual will receive education about the services offered by Community Care Alliance as well as other community service providers. In particular, visitors will be connected with CCA's Safe Haven program where they can receive food, clothing, personal hygiene products, bus passes and peer recovery support. Depending upon need, individuals can get help with accessing benefits/entitlements, identification, connection to primary care and behavioral healthcare.

CCA's staff use a "Housing First" approach and focus on the aiding of the individuals in gathering their proper documentation needed in order to get permanent supportive housing. This may include copies of identification, birth certificates, award letters etc. They do this by way of coordination of care with case managers to assist with the collection of said items. In addition, clients will be assisted with applying for subsidized housing and getting on low-income housing lists as well as applying for HCV/ EHV vouchers.

Budget

Category	Title	Description	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
CCA Program Personnel					
	Temp Staff 1st Shift	Program Personnel	720	\$25.30	\$18,216.00
	Temp Staff 2nd Shift	Program Personnel	720	\$25.30	\$18,216.00
	Temp Staff 3rd Shift	Program Personnel	720	\$25.30	\$18,216.00
	Admin Support	Program Personnel	120	\$25.30	\$3,036.00
CCA Program Personnel Total					\$57,684.00
Vida Church Program Personnel					
	Temp Staff 1st Shift	Program Personnel	240	\$25.30	\$6,072.00
	Temp Staff 2nd Shift	Program Personnel	240	\$25.30	\$6,072.00
	Temp Staff 3rd Shift	Program Personnel	240	\$25.30	\$6,072.00
Vida Church Program Personnel Total					\$18,216.00



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Personnel Total	\$75,900.00
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CCA Program Expenses					
	Food	Food	25	\$300.00	\$7,500.00
	Supplies (necessary for the operation of the program/shelter)	Supplies (necessary for the operation of the program/shelter)	25	\$300.00	\$7,500.00
CCA Program Expenses Total					\$15,000.00
Vida Church Program Expenses					
		To cover the cost of heating the facility when in use.			
	Heating Expense		12	\$450.00	\$5,400.00
	Food	Food	8	\$300.00	\$2,400.00
	Supplies (necessary for the operation of the program/shelter)	Supplies (necessary for the operation of the program/shelter)	8	\$300.00	\$2,400.00
Vida Church Program Expenses Total					\$10,200.00
Program Expenses Total					\$25,200.00

Grant Total	\$101,100.00
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Please Note: The cost for “Heating Expense” under the “Vida Church Program Expenses” depends on how many times this location will be used as an overflow site. As mentioned in the application above, we anticipate needing these hubs 5-12 times during the season. However, the church may be used less as it will only be used in cases of over 25 individuals. The higher number (12) was used for calculation, but this cost could be lower.

Impact

The RI PIT count on 1/25/23 identified 1,810 individuals experiencing homelessness, with 595 in families and 1,214 individuals. Of these, 629 were chronically homeless. There were 100 veterans and 81 young adults. As of May, 2023, 347 individuals were unsheltered, with 81 new entering the system.



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Woonsocket is consistently in the top 3 or 4 cities in the state for residents entering the homeless system. Since July, 2022, CCA has placed over 300 individuals in the non-congregate shelter program because the current statewide shelter system is stretched beyond capacity. This is in addition to the 60 households that have been served within the Family Shelter in Woonsocket. Length of stay has been extended as a result of the pandemic and lack of affordable housing, which has substantially reduced the availability of affordable housing. A significant factor is that Woonsocket has the second highest unemployment rate (to Providence at 3.5%) in the state at 4.1 as of October 2023 (Department of Labor and Training, 2023). This exceeds the RI unemployment rate of 2.7% and the national average of 3.7% as of October 2023 (Department of Labor and Training, 2023). The need for regional and community housing intervention is massive. Woonsocket has the second highest number of homeless children in its schools. A Woonsocket family of 3 living at the poverty level would have to pay 66% of household income for housing at the average housing cost in the city (RI Kids Count Factbook 2021). Homelessness often results in DCYF involvement, separation of families and placement in foster care, creating or increasing trauma for both children and families. Although Woonsocket rents are relatively low compared to many other areas of the state in years past, rents have been rising in recent years- in contrast to wages. COVID has exacerbated this trend. Woonsocket has significant barriers to employment such as transportation barriers to jobs paying living wages. Unfortunately, waiting lists are long and families usually cannot move directly from homelessness into a subsidized unit. The emergency pop-up warming centers will fill the gaps left by the State's inadequate shelter capacity.

December 3, 2023

Linda Makhoulouf
RI Housing
Linda.k.makhoulouf@housing.ri.gov

Dear Ms. Makhoulouf:

Community Care Alliance is pleased to partner with the City of Woonsocket to operate a Winter Emergency Warming Center Hub to provide emergency shelter to adults and children seeking relief from extreme weather for the period of December 15, 2023 through March 1, 2024. We acknowledge our responsibilities as the following:

- Identify and hire staff and volunteers to complete the tasks of the warming center.
- Train all staff to ensure their understanding of the policies and procedures of the warming center to maintain the health and safety of all participants.
- In the event of a winter storm, mobilize identified staff/volunteers and develop a schedule for the duration of the event.
- Use all available avenues to advertise the opening of the warming center.
- Upon opening of the warming center, complete the following:
 - Admit individuals into the warming center, collecting information as required by the contract.
 - Verify that every visitor to the warming center is entered into the Coordinated Entry System and has a completed crisis assessment.
 - Review the warming center agreement and obtain a signature from all adult visitors.
 - Distribute food.
 - Assess clothing needs and provide warm, dry clothing to the extent possible.
 - Ensure that each individual has a cot, pillow, and blanket.
 - Provide resource information for Safe Haven, Hamlet Resource Hub, the Serenity Center, behavioral health resources, primary care, domestic violence supports, and more.
 - Monitor the space to identify any behavioral health needs requiring immediate attention. Coordinate with BH Link or emergency services as needed.
 - Monitor the space to ensure that the environment is welcoming and free of violence.
- Coordinate with the City to ensure that all contractual obligations are met.

Sincerely,

Michelle P. Taylor, MS, CAGS, LMHC

Michelle P. Taylor, MS, CAGS, LMHC
Vice President of Social Health Services
(401) 808-4384
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VIDACHURCH

120 Prospect St. Woonsocket, RI 02895

(401) 744-6243

PastorVal@Vida.Church

Monday, December 4, 2023

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to serve as acknowledgment that Vida Church is willing and able to participate as a warming center in the city of Woonsocket.

Mission Statement

It is our firm belief that no one should be forced to spend the night outside in freezing temperatures. Whenever extreme cold is forecast, under the direction of REMA and other state agencies, we will open to the public for those who need to seek temporary shelter. When the temperature drops, the Warming Center Program will activate. In the event of such an occurrence, volunteers will be mobilized.

Volunteer Roles:

Administrator - Ensures all teams are fully staffed, and all resources are available to them.

Street Team - putting the word out on the street during the daytime to those who'll benefit that night.

Provisions Team Lead - Responsible for maintaining we are properly stocked with supplies. Such as: Pillows, Blankets, Cots, Food, Toiletries. In charge of contacting Savini's Pomodoro, Vida's partnership with Savini's makes it easy to serve delicious hot soup for lunch or dinner. Determines the meals and snacks that will be served.

Set up Team - Help us load the amount of bedding materials into the space and set them up for use.

Evening Shift - 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. - This is the first shift that helps greet guests and set the tone for the evening.

Late evening shift. 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. - Preparation for bedtime is the main focus of this shift.



Overnight shift -12 a.m. to 4 a.m. - Monitoring a room of sleeping people while sitting quietly, volunteers can enjoy soft conversation.

Overnight and Wake-up/Clean-up - 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. Monitoring a room of sleeping people, clean-up and load-out.

Breakfast Shift - 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Manage breakfast service and clean up.

Lunch Shift - 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Coordinate lunch service and clean up.

Break Down Team - Help us store all the bedding and remaining supplies.

Laundry staff - Help with blanket and pillow cover washing at the beginning and end of a stay.

If you have any further questions, please contact Valerie Gonzalez 508-615-7243 or pastorval@vida.church.