

2016 Renewal Project Narrative

INSTRUCTIONS (3 points for following application instructions)

Answer the questions below. Submit the 2016 Renewal Project Narrative by email to amber.lewis@iowa.gov by Friday, June 24th, 2016. Please only include this project narrative, not the introductory plan items on pages 1-4 of this document. Please be concise in your responses. Using 12-point font, one-inch margins, and single-spacing, most responses should be no more than ½-page.

HMIS Project Applicants, answer Questions 1 and 2, then skip to Question 13 and continue through Question 21. All other Renewal Project Applicants, answer Questions 1 – 20.

Points possible: 100

APPLICANT NAME AND LOCATION

Organization Name: *Cedar Valley Friends of the Family*

Project Name: *Northeast Iowa Permanent Housing Program*

Project Name as it is listed on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC): *Northeast Iowa Permanent Housing Program*

Type of Project (PSH, RRH, TH, SSO, HMIS): *PSH*

Federal DUNS Number: *84-506-2777*

Address: *PO Box 784 Waverly, IA 50677*

Contact Person: *Ben Brustkern, Executive Director*

E-mail & Phone: *ben@cvfriendsofthefamily.org; 319-352-1108 x 207*

Secondary Contact Person: *Carrie Dunnwald, Housing Director*

Email & phone: *carrie@cvfriendsofthefamily.org; 319-352-1108 x 102*

Is your organization registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM)? *Yes*

AGENCY AND PROJECT SUMMARY (3 points)

- 1) Provide a brief introduction to your agency. **(1 point)**

The mission of Cedar Valley Friends of the Family (CVFF) is to “provide safe shelter, confidential support, and housing assistance to individuals and families in crisis due to homelessness, domestic violence, and sexual assault.” CVFF has been providing crisis services since 1992. It was started by Church Women United and began as a crisis hotline. Over the years, the agency expanded and we currently provide victim services and safe shelter in 14 counties. Services include safe emergency shelter and rapid re-housing assistance. In 1999 Turning Point Rural Housing Project began and provides assistance to 20 households throughout nine counties of northeast Iowa. In 2011 CVFF’s Northeast Iowa Permanent Housing Program was started for homeless families and individuals with

disabilities. Throughout 2014 and 2015, both housing programs transitioned to implementing the Housing First model and a priority based waitlist. In 2016 CVFF was awarded funding for two new programs, a human trafficking grant to provide services and education in 14 counties, and the Rapid Housing Initiative of North Iowa to provide PH-RRH services in 5 counties of north central Iowa. CVFF currently employs 23 full-time staff.

2) Provide a description that addresses the entire scope of the proposed project. (2 points)

CVFF's Northeast Iowa Permanent Housing Program (NEIPHP) provides leasing and utility assistance as well as one on one case management services in nine Iowa counties: Allamakee, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek. NEIPHP offers 17 scattered site rental slots, two of which are reserved for homeless veterans. The program serves individuals and families experiencing homelessness with high barriers to housing, and has a disabling condition that prevents them from being fully self-sufficient. The program is geared towards survivors of domestic violence/sexual assault, but is open to any homeless individual or family. Barriers to housing are initially assessed through the use of the VI-SPDAT 2.0 and prioritized according to homeless situation and length of time homeless.

The NEIPHP's goals include keeping participants permanently housed, increasing overall income, and connecting with mainstream resources. Social security benefits, DHS benefits, Community Action Programs, child support and alimony are all examples of resources staff assist in connecting participants with, as appropriate. Through the use of the assessment instrument, the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT), Housing Support Specialists (HSS) are able to better determine the amount and types of barriers and assist participants in identifying needs and goals. HSS's meet participants in their homes each week to work on identified case plan goals, teach them life skills, and connect them with appropriate community resources. Other areas of focus are educating participants in both tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities, addressing housing needs, disability needs and employment barriers. Budgeting, cleaning, parenting, nutrition and household maintenance are examples of life skills that can be addressed and adjusted to meet each participant's needs, as identified by the participants through Motivational Interviewing (MI).

Housing Support Specialists are trained in and have implemented MI with participants. As a strength-based communication tool, MI is used to ensure the relationship between staff and participants are collaborative, strengthen the participants' own motivation and commitment to change, and assist them in self-identifying goals. Motivational Interviewing is designed to decrease participants' resistance and lead to greater participant accountability and motivation. By implementing this structure, participants maintain stable housing longer and make strides in decreasing barriers.

CONTINUUM OF CARE PARTICIPATION (10 points)

3) Annual Performance Report (APR) Submission:

- a. What is your project's operating year end date? 11/30/2015

- b. APRs are due to HUD 90 days after the end of a project's operating year. On what date did you submit your most recently completed APR to HUD? 2/1/2016
 - c. On what date did you forward a copy of your APR to the Iowa Finance Authority? 2/1/2016
 - d. Did your project meet the 90 day requirement? Yes If an extension was granted or if HUD's E-snaps system was unavailable to complete your APR, describe this. For either an extension or E-snaps being unavailable, submit documentation to verify this. **(2 points if within 90 days or an acceptable extension granted or E-snaps unavailable; no points if not)**
- 4) Local Collaboration: How does your local region plan and collaborate together regarding homelessness? If your local region has an organized planning group, what is it called? How does your agency participate? **(3 points)**

CVFF currently leads 4 regional planning groups throughout the nine counties served by this project. Leading the regional planning groups consists of being the chair and secretary of these groups, coordinating meetings and community networking to increase participation. Carrie Dunnwald, Housing Director, leads three of the local groups-the Buchanan County Homeless Council, the Cedar Valley Homeless Coalition (covering Bremer, Butler, and Chickasaw Counties), and the Northeast Iowa Housing and Homeless Alliance (covering Allamakee, Clayton, Howard, and Winneshiek counties). These groups all meet on a monthly basis. Elizabeth Martin, Housing Support Specialist, is currently developing a new coalition covering Fayette County. This group meets quarterly. The focus of all four groups include developing a coordinated entry system, raising community awareness on homelessness in the area, identifying and addressing gaps in services, and ending homelessness in each community.

- 5) Has any representative of your program been an active participant in the Iowa Council on Homelessness? (Note that anyone can participate in council meetings even if not a voting member.) Briefly describe. **(3 points)**

Cedar Valley Friends of the Family currently has three active, voting members on the Iowa Council on Homelessness: Ben Brustkern, Carrie Dunnwald, and Kristine Harris. Ben's term expires in 2017 while Carrie and Kristine's terms expire in 2016. All three are on designated committees and actively participate in both the bi-monthly and designated committee meetings. They will continue to attend all meetings as assigned.

- 6) Has any representative of your program been an active participant in Iowa Council on Homelessness committees and working groups? Briefly explain. **(2 points)**

Ben serves as the co-chair of the Council, chair of the Nominating committee, and is an active member of the Executive committee. He will be transitioning to the chair of the council on July 1, 2016. Ben also participates in the Progressive Engagement/Coordinated Intake committee. Carrie is the co-chair of the Progressive Engagement/Coordinated Intake committee and an active member of the Policy and Planning committee. Carrie was a member of the sub-committee that developed the Best Practices through the State Public Policy Group and the Council and continues to be

involved in that committee. Kristine is an active member of the CoC committee. All three intend to continue their active participation in their designated committees.

BUDGET AND CAPACITY (14 points)

- 7) HUD Grant Monitoring: Check the box to describe any HUD CoC Project monitoring results during the current program year and the previous two program years (select only ONE option): **(2 points)**
- No monitoring visits from HUD **(2 points)**;
 - Monitoring visit(s) from HUD with no findings or concerns **(2 points)**;
 - Monitoring visit(s) from HUD with fewer than three findings or concerns, all of which have been resolved in the time requested by HUD **(1 point)**;
 - Monitoring visit(s) from HUD with more than three findings or concerns, and/or findings or concerns that were not resolved in the time requested by HUD **(no points)**.
- 8) Will the amount requested for Administration Costs in the E-snaps Project Application be less than or equal to 7% (or the amount listed on the GIW)? **Yes/No** (circle) **(1 point for “yes”; no point for “no”)**
- 9) Is your agency drawing down CoC funds from HUD at least quarterly? **Yes/No** (circle) **(1 point for “yes”; no point for “no”)**
- 10) Spending history: Provide your project’s spending history as follows. All information should reflect the most recently-completed operating year for which an APR has been submitted: **(10 points)**
- a. Project operating year end date: 11/30/2015
 - b. Amount of grant: \$199,760
 - c. Total funds expended: \$199,760
 - d. Funds remaining (unexpended funds): \$0
 - e. Unexpended funds percentage (d) / (b): 0% **(10 points if funds were fully expended (0% unexpended); 9 points if up to 1% of funds are unexpended; 8 points if up to 2% of funds are unexpended; 7 points if up to 3% of funds are unexpended, and so forth down to zero points if 10% or more of funds are unexpended)**

PRIORITIZATION: PROJECT TYPE, CHRONICALLY HOMELESS, LITERALLY HOMELESS, & HOUSING FIRST (34 points)

- 11) Indicate the project type. Select only **ONE** (this should match your earlier project type indicated). **(9 points)**

Permanent Supportive Housing **(9 points)**

- Rapid Rehousing (**9 points**)
- Transitional Housing exclusively for DV, youth, or substance abuse (**4 points**)
- Transitional Housing for the general homeless population (**no points**)
- Supportive Services Only (**no points**)

The Iowa Balance of State CoC has adopted HUD CPD 14-012, Notice on Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in PSH:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3897/notice-cpd-14-012-prioritizing-persons-experiencing-chronic-homelessness-in-psh-and-recordkeeping-requirements/>. For PSH projects, also note that the Iowa Council on Homelessness voted in 2015 to require all PSH projects to prioritize all beds available through turnover to the chronically homeless.

12) Open the 2016 Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) for the Iowa Balance of State; this will be available online here when the competition has opened: (**2 points**)

<http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Home/DocumentSubCategory/107>, in the section for the 2016 Competition. (If your project is not listed in the HIC, explain why not.)

- a. Which row on the HIC lists your project? Row 15
- b. How many total beds are listed for your project (Column U)? 30
- c. How many total beds are for chronically homeless (dedicated or prioritized) (Column L) 30
- d. What is HIC utilization rate (Column V) 100%

13) Answer the following as applicable (answer only (a) OR (b)): (**3 points**)

- a. PSH projects:
 - i. Given the answers to the above question, what is your project's percentage of beds committed to the chronically homeless? (**1 point**) 100%
 - ii. How many beds does your project anticipate being made available through turnover in the upcoming grant year? (**1 point**) 3
 - iii. How many beds made available through turnover is your project committing to chronically homeless in the upcoming grant year (should be 100%)? (**1 point**) 100%
- b. For non-PSH projects:
 - i. What specific steps is your agency taking to increase the number of PSH beds for the chronically homeless in your community? (**3 points**)

As a second priority population for CoC programs, HUD encourages communities to serve adults, youth, and families who are unsheltered and those accessing emergency shelter, before serving persons experiencing other forms of homelessness.

14) Prioritizing those who are unsheltered or accessing emergency shelter: (**10 points**)

- a. Based on your most recently submitted program year APR, what is the total number of participants that entered your program? 13 adults entered during the grant year (**1 point**)
- b. Based on your most recently submitted program year APR, how many participants entered the program as unsheltered or from an emergency shelter?

11 (3 unsheltered, 8 from emergency shelter. The other two were fleeing DV.
(1 point)

- c. Based on your responses above, what is the percentage of participants that entered your program unsheltered or from emergency shelter (b/a)? 85% (8 points for 100%; 7 points for higher than 95%; 6 points for higher than 90%; 5 points for higher than 85%; 4 points for higher than 80%; no points for lower than 80%)

HUD encourages programs to follow Housing First practices. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and HUD offer several resources regarding Housing First:

- *Housing First/Rapid Rehousing Webinar:*
http://usich.gov/media_center/videos_and_webinars/hud-and-usich-core-principles-of-housing-first-and-rapid-re-housing-webinar.
- *Housing First Checklist:*
http://usich.gov/usich_resources/fact_sheets/the_housing_first_checklist_a_practical_tool_for_assessing_housing_first_in.
- *HUD's SNAPS In Focus, "Why Housing First:"*
<https://www.hudexchange.info/news/snaps-in-focus-why-housing-first/>.

- 15) (a) Has the project removed the following barriers to accessing housing and services? Check the box next to each item to confirm that your project has removed (or never had) barriers to program access related to each of the following (select all that apply): (10 points total)

- Having too little or no income (all projects should check this; the Iowa Council on Homelessness voted in 2015 to prohibit CoC-funded projects from screening applicants out due to too little or no income); (1 point)
- Active or history of substance abuse; (1 point)
- Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions; (1 point)
- Fleeing domestic violence (e.g., lack of a protective order, period of separation from abuser, or law enforcement involvement). (1 point)
- None of the above (click this if all of these barriers still exist). (no points)

(b) Does the project ensure that participants are not terminated from the program for the following reasons? Select all that apply. **Please also attach a copy of the project's termination/appeals policy; no points may be awarded in this section if the policy is not included, or if the policy includes contradictory information.**

- Failure to participate in supportive services; (1 point)
- Failure to make progress on a service plan; (1 point)
- Loss of income or failure to improve income; (1 point)
- Being a victim of domestic violence; (1 point) or
- Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found in the project's geographic area. (1 point)

Termination of Participation

- A. HUD regulations give the Permanent Housing Program authority to terminate assistance to a participant who violates program requirements. Participants will receive and sign written individual program participation agreements. Reasons for termination will be clearly defined. Termination of assistance will occur after in-depth review of the individual situation by the assigned caseworker and approval of Cedar Valley Friends of the Family Housing Director.
- B. If a participant is struggling to follow the expectations listed in the written agreement and it is leading to the participant being at-risk of losing their housing, the participant will be given a "Breach of Contract" 10-day notice. This notice will inform the participant of the reasons housing is at risk and a time frame to address the concerns listed. If the participant does not address the concerns as stated in the letter, they may be given a termination letter or may be given the opportunity to voluntarily withdraw from the program.
- C. Assistance may be reinstated for a participant whose assistance was previously terminated. Six months following termination, if the former participant still meets program eligibility requirements, is able to reapply for assistance.
- D. In terminating assistance to a participant, Cedar Valley Friends of the Family and Permanent Housing Program must guarantee that a formal process is followed which recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance to due process of law. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:
 - 1. Written notice to the participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination;
 - 2. A review of the decision, in which the participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before the Executive Director; and
 - 3. Prompt written notice of the final decision to the participant.
- D. If a formal appeal or grievance is filed, the Appeal Review Team will make a determination to ensure the Cedar Valley Friends of the Family grievance procedure was followed.
- E. Caseworkers or any other personnel working in the Permanent Housing Program are required to refer participant complaints to the Housing Director.
- F. Any questions regarding the grievance procedure, as it relates to the Permanent Housing Program, will be considered by Cedar Valley Friends of the Family Executive Director.

Excerpt from Participant Agreement:

- _____ 16) I understand I may be exited from the program for the following reasons:
- a) If my utilities get shut off due to not paying my bill
 - b) If I am evicted from my current residence
 - c) If I don't report my income
 - d) If I don't have any contact with my caseworker for 30 days or more
 - e) If I receive a "Breach of Contract" 10-day notice and don't address the concerns listed
 - f) If I engage in criminal activities that may or may not put my housing at-risk
 - g) If I falsify paperwork (i.e. support service requests)
 - h) If I am offered permanent housing (i.e. Section 8) and do not take it.

(c) Verify that the project's termination policy clearly matches with the responses above. (1 point for Yes; no point for No) **Yes** /No

PERFORMANCE (36 points)

In July 2014, HUD released “Systems Performance Measures: An introductory guide to understanding system-level performance measurement.” The guide can be found at this link: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/System-Performance-Measures-Introductory-Guide.pdf>.

Two measures determined by HUD to be key in permanently exiting homelessness are:

- **The percentage of adults who obtain or increase employment or non-employment cash income over time.**
- **The percentage of participants who obtain or increase non-cash mainstream benefits.**

16) Identify whether the project includes the following activities: **(10 points)**

- Transportation assistance is provided to clients to attend mainstream benefit appointments, employment training, or jobs? **(2 points)**
- Use of a single application form for four or more mainstream programs? **(2 points; all programs should mark yes as Iowa has this available to all)**
- At least annual follow-ups with participants to ensure mainstream benefits are received and renewed? **(2 points)**
- Project participants have access to SSI/SSDI technical assistance provided by the applicant, a subrecipient, or partner agency? **(2 points)**
- The staff person providing the technical assistance completed SOAR training in the past 24 months? **(2 points)**

17) For all supportive services available to participants, indicate who will provide them, how they will be accessed, and how often they will be provided: **(10 points)**

Assessment of Service Needs	Applicant	Quarterly
Assistance with Moving Costs	Non-Partner	As needed
Case Management	Applicant	Weekly
Child Care	Non-Partner	As needed
Education Services	Applicant	As needed
Employment Assistance and Job Training	Applicant	As needed
Food	Applicant	As needed
Housing Search and Counseling Services	Applicant	As needed
Legal Services	Non-Partner	As needed
Life Skills Training	Applicant	Weekly
Mental Health Services	Applicant	As needed
Outpatient Health Services	Applicant	As needed
Outreach Services	Applicant	Monthly

Substance Abuse Treatment Services

Applicant	▼	As needed	▼
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Transportation

Applicant	▼	As needed	▼
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Utility Deposits

Non-Partner	▼	As needed	▼
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18) Outcomes and costs per outcome. Complete **ONE** of the following charts as applicable. (16 points; 2 points for each response)

For Permanent Supportive Housing projects:

Services provided by the project, including any unique characteristics of population served.	Total annual cost of providing these services (total project budget).	Amount of annual CoC funds requested for these services.	Describe/define a unit of service. Include whether a unit is an individual or household and indicate a measurable outcome (i.e., one person assessed and provided a supportive housing unit with services).	Number of individuals/ households who exit to or maintain permanent housing through the project (total funding).	Number of individuals/ households who exit to or maintain permanent housing with the CoC funds.	Method used to determine costs described. Include any indirect costs and how those were calculated.	Method used to determine exits to permanent housing.
<p><i>Following Housing First methods, the Housing Support Specialists (HSS) are able to get participants stably housed quicker, as there are flexible program requirements and minimal prerequisites. Once stably housed, a Service Prioritization Decision Assessment Tool (SPDAT) assessment can be completed with participants to help them identify goals and areas of need to help them stabilize mentally and physically, therefore breaking down employment barriers. The HSS's also assist participants in decreasing employment barriers through completing mock interviews, building resumes, and utilizing Motivational Interviewing (MI). With the use of MI,</i></p>	<p>\$234,909</p>	<p>\$202,312</p>	<p><i>CVFF defines a unit as a rental slot. There are 17 available rental slots that can be used by individuals or families throughout the 9 counties. SPDAT assessments are completed at a minimum of every 6 months after obtaining housing, and are re-evaluated monthly during in-home visits. Measureable outcomes include exits to permanent housing, obtained some level of employment, increase in overall household income, connections to at least one mainstream resource, length of time from homeless to housed, and increase in life skills and informal support. Data is collected through the SPDAT assessment, intake and discharge information, and the APR.</i></p>	<p><i>29-20 remained and 9 exited to permanent housing</i></p>	<p><i>29-20 remained and 9 exited to permanent housing</i></p>	<p><i>Costs include leasing and utility assistance for participants, salaries and benefits to staff dedicated to the project (2.5FTE and a portion of other administrative staff), transportation, supportive services including educational, mental health, and substance abuse services, outreach, life skills, case management, and housing services. Indirect costs include % of</i></p>	<p><i>Exits to permanent housing are verified by HSS's at program exit.</i></p>

<p><i>participants are able to identify their strengths and abilities. When the participants do this they begin to recognize their potential and have sought ways to gain self-employment income. The HSS's also assist participants with following through with the SSI/SSDI application and appeal processes. HSS's obtain accurate information to make appropriate referrals regarding other mainstream resources and sources of cash income the participants can try to access, such as child support, alimony, and FIP and assist in the application processes.</i></p>						<p><i>space and utilities of main office and 6% of the administrative budget</i></p>	
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