

Application Deadline: Friday, April 30, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. CT**Overview**

According to a 2018 Wilder Study (Study), the percentage of homelessness continues to climb across the state, including on tribal reservations. Children, youth, and seniors make up half of the homeless population on reservations and many are experiencing chronic, long-term homelessness (77%). Doubling up is a commonly used strategy to avoid homelessness, but often these arrangements are unstable and result in overcrowding conditions. The Study also reported that Indigenous people experiencing housing instability often endure chronic physical and mental health challenges. Much like other Minnesota communities, the need for affordable housing and supportive services far outpace available resources.

Tribal nations have reported challenges in being able to effectively plan and develop their local homeless response system, and coordinate with neighboring Continuum of Care (CoC) regions and state homeless programs due to staff constraints and limited financial resources. Although the involvement of tribal nations in various statewide efforts to prevent and end homelessness is critical, resources have not been designated to help tribal staff participate in and coordinate with these collective efforts.

This is likely to change, however, with the *Tribal Access to Homeless Assistance Act*, which was signed into law in December 2020. This law makes tribes eligible to participate in CoCs and allows them access to resources that serve tribal members living on tribal land. It also allows them to receive federal funding for planning related activities.

Minnesota Housing supports tribal nations in pursuing this resource but recognizes it only provides partial support for tribal staff to participate in and coordinate with collaborative efforts to prevent and end homelessness. Due to this fact, Minnesota Housing, in accordance with Minnesota Statute 462A.05, is making available additional funding to tribal nations so that they can more fully participate in these activities.

The Tribal Nations Planning Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) allows tribal nations to apply for funding to achieve the following planning activities:

- Reduce homelessness among Indigenous people
- Increase system coordination so that people can better access resources
- Enhance strategies to increase resources
- Enhance collaborative partnerships with the state of Minnesota

Available Funding

Minnesota Housing anticipates awarding up to \$100,000 in one-time funding, which is available for the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. Minnesota Housing may select up to two applicants, with a maximum award of \$50,000 per grantee.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include federally recognized tribes within the state of Minnesota. Preference will be given to applications that can demonstrate:

- Collaborative efforts among multiple tribes to address homelessness
- Experience managing state funding
- Current participation in statewide homeless efforts including but not limited to, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Coordinated Entry (CE), and those associated with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

Eligible Planning Activities and Eligible Uses

These funds must be used to achieve the four required planning activities:

- **Reduce homelessness among Indigenous people**
 - Develop strategies, service models, and best practices to reduce homelessness
- **Increase system coordination so that people can better access resources**
 - Establish stronger partnerships with schools, jails/prisons, health care organizations, and veteran service providers to provide holistic services
 - Enhance outreach strategies to at-risk and homeless households who are unsheltered
- **Enhance strategies to increase resources**
 - Research potential funding sources for services and financial assistance to at-risk and homeless households including mainstream, employment, and income services
 - Develop strategies to secure funding and services
- **Enhance collaborative partnerships with the state of Minnesota**
 - Create strategies and processes that strongly connect and align with [Heading Home Together: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#) and state homeless designated programs
 - Develop collaborative strategies in data quality, monitoring, evaluation, policy/procedures/standards areas

Eligible uses of funds include:

- Staff salaries and benefits

- Technology (including HMIS administrative fees)
- Travel
- Training
- Supplies
- Audit/accounting
- Other expenses, as approved in writing by Minnesota Housing

Collaborative/Partnership Expectations

The planning activities outlined in this RFP will be best achieved through effective collaborations with both tribal and non-tribal partners in the region. Grantees will either already have, or work to create, high functioning groups with established processes and structures so that the members can effectively deliver the proposed outcomes. Grantees will be expected to collaborate with other stakeholders in their region(s), such as CoCs and state partners.

Reporting and Administrative Requirements

- Quarterly progress and expenditure reports
- Annual narrative report
- Participation in the state’s annual monitoring and financial reconciliation process

Minnesota Housing reserves the right to hold or discontinue funding disbursements if a grantee fails to accomplish the planning activities or fails to comply with funding agreements. Quarterly funding reimbursement will occur upon approval of submitted expenditure reports.

Diversity and Inclusion

All grantees must serve diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. We expect grantees to work toward decreasing barriers in how populations access the homeless response system in their regions and to work toward increasing positive outcomes for diverse populations. This includes clear and well-developed processes to collect data and make decisions. Diverse populations include:

- Cultural, racial, and ethnic communities
- LGBTQI communities
- People with disabilities
- Veterans
- Others who are identified by the region and approved in writing by Minnesota Housing

Review Criteria

This is a competitive application process. Applications will be reviewed and scored by a review committee comprised of Minnesota Housing staff, other state agency staff, and community reviewers with knowledge of homeless programs. Recommendations will be presented to the Minnesota Housing board for approval. The award decisions of Minnesota Housing are final and not subject to appeal.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

Minimum threshold criteria:

- The application must be submitted by the deadline via the submission method noted below.
- The application must be complete and include all required application checklist items.

Preferences:

- Collaborative efforts among multiple tribes to address homelessness
- Experience managing state funding
- Current participation in statewide homeless efforts including, but not limited to, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Coordinated Entry (CE) and those associated with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

The following criteria will be used to score applications that satisfy the minimum threshold criteria:

- **Needs and Capacity** – 30 points

A competitively written application will clearly:

- Provide an estimated number of the region's homeless population, citing recent and relevant data sources to substantiate that number
- Describe how the Tribal Nations Planning Grant funds will help coordinate the existing homeless-related programs and services
- Explain how the Tribal planning body has the infrastructure to support discussions, decision-making, and implementation of the planning activities
- Demonstrate a history of collaborative work with other homeless-related planning bodies in the region and a commitment to continue to do so in the future

- **Diversity and Inclusion** – 10 points

A competitively written application will clearly:

- Identify the homeless population
- Further identify subpopulations who may be experiencing homelessness at disproportionate levels, including but not limited to:
 - Cultural, racial, and ethnic communities

- LGBTQI communities
- People with disabilities
- Veterans
- Others who are identified by the region
- Describe how these subpopulations will be included to create low barrier access to the region’s programs and services

• **Planning Activities – 60 points**

The four activities include:

- Reduce homelessness among Indigenous people
- Increase system coordination so that people can better access resources
- Enhance strategies to increase resources
- Enhance collaborative partnerships with the state of Minnesota

A competitively written application will clearly:

- Describe how the specific actions being proposed tie directly to each planning activity
- Identify key staff involved in the actions and what their qualifications are that make them best suited for that role
- Explain what data is being collected and used
- Provide specific and measurable outcomes/deliverables
- Provide a realistic project timeline
- Provide a reasonable budget with clear justification for the proposed spending categories

Category	Maximum Score
Needs and Capacity	30
Diversity and Inclusion	10
Planning Activities	60
Total:	100

NOTE: Funding selections will not be solely based on the application score. The review committee will evaluate the application scores in conjunction with the Agency’s strategic priorities. All decisions are at Minnesota Housing’s sole discretion. Additionally, Minnesota Housing reserves the right to request proposal revisions during the due diligence phase, which is after Minnesota Housing board approval but before the Grant Contract Agreement is executed.

Application Timeline

Date	Activity
Friday, April 2, 2021	RFP posted via the Minnesota Housing website and eNews
Wednesday, April 7, 2021	Minnesota Housing holds an RFP information session (more information below)
Friday, April 30, 2021	Applications due by 4:30 p.m. CT (refer to the Submission Instructions section below)
Thursday, May 27, 2021	Minnesota Housing staff recommends selections to Minnesota Housing's board
Wednesday, June 2, 2021	Selected grantees notified; due diligence phase begins
Monday, June 7, 2021	Mandatory due diligence training for all selected grantees
Thursday, July 1, 2021	Due diligence approved and contract starts
Thursday, June 30, 2022	Contract ends

Minnesota Housing will hold an RFP information session on **Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. CT** via GoToWebinar: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/220890100866544654>. After registering, a confirmation email will be sent with information about how to join the webinar.

The information session will provide an overview of RFP content and allow time for questions. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) from the session along with other questions will be posted on or around April 14, 2021 and April 23, 2021, with a deadline for submission of final questions to Minnesota Housing on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. CT.

Application Checklist

Applicants must use the required application form and include all the required information/documentation. Applicants are encouraged to be clear and concise in the presentation of information. The total length of the application must not exceed 10 pages (minimum font size is 12). Do not submit other materials that are not requested (letter of support, photos, brochures, etc.). Unrequested materials will not be reviewed.

All of the following checklist items must be submitted to be considered for funding:

- Application
- Application Signature Page (wet, digital, and electronic signatures will be accepted)
- Planning Budget

If you have questions regarding the checklist items, contact the designated point of contact found at the end of this document.

NOTE: If an applicant is selected for funding, Minnesota Housing will require the following due diligence items be submitted no later than **Tuesday, June 15, 2021:**

- **Signed Grant Contract Agreement** (provided by Minnesota Housing)
- **Board Resolution:** A signed original, or signed and certified, copy specific to the Grant Contract Agreement that designates authorized signatories, authority to enter into a contract and that references the requested and/or awarded amount.
- **Certificate of Insurance with Employee Dishonesty/Crime Coverage** in the amount of at least one-eighth of the total amount of the funding amount.
- **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization Form** for a new applicant that has been selected, or if the current EFT on file needs updates.
- **Certificate of Good Standing** issued by the Minnesota Secretary of State Office within 30 days (a screen shot is also an acceptable form of evidence).
- **Work Plan:** The selected applicant will be required to complete and submit a work plan on a template provided by Minnesota Housing. The purpose of a work plan is to describe changes to the application as a result of the final award amount and requirements.
- **Final Budget:** A final budget reflecting the awarded amount and any allocation or amount changes to the lead agency or subgrantees.

Applicants awarded funding must have all due diligence items submitted and approved, and the Grant Contract Agreement fully executed, which includes both the applicant's and Minnesota Housing's signatures, before costs can be incurred and reimbursed or grant funds can be expended.

Submission Instructions

Upload application materials to the online [Multifamily Secure Upload Tool](#) **no later than 4:30 p.m. CT on Friday, April 30, 2021** to be considered for funding. Within the Secure Upload Tool, submit items to mhfa.app@state.mn.us. Upload required documents in the original format; do not convert the documents into PDF or other formats except for the signature page of the application. Review the [Upload Tool Instructions](#) for more information.

NOTE: Submitted applications are considered final; late and incomplete applications may not be considered unless the omission is deemed immaterial, which will be determined at Minnesota Housing's sole discretion. Minnesota Housing may request additional information or clarification. The applicant will be responsible for all costs incurred related to applying for this RFP.

Per the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, responses submitted by a grantee are private or nonpublic until the responses are opened. Once the responses are opened, the name and address of the grantee and the amount requested is public. All other data in a response is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process, which for the purposes of this grant, is when all grant agreements have been fully executed. After a granting agency has completed the evaluation process,

all remaining data in the responses is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in [Section 13.37 of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act](#). A statement by a grantee that the response is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the response.

Contractual Requirements

An applicant awarded funding under this proposal will be required to:

- Complete a Grant Contract Agreement with Minnesota Housing outlining the scope of services to be provided. The selected applicants may also be responsible for completing proposal revisions, a work plan and/or other exhibits that will become an attachment to the Grant Contract Agreement.
- Maintain financial records for a minimum of six years after the contract has ended that document the use of all grant funds. Minnesota Housing, at its sole discretion, may request to review the accounting and documentation of such records at site visits or at other times.
- Maintain client records for at least six years after the contract term has ended. File documentation for client records must include: An application/intake form, a signed [HMIS Data Privacy Notice](#) for all household members over 18, a signed Tennessee warning that lists Minnesota Housing, a signed Releases of Information (ROI) form indicating all entities that may be contacted, proof of eligibility, and case notes. Minnesota Housing, at its sole discretion, may request to review the accounting and documentation of such records at site visits or at other times.
- Complete and submit by required due dates all interim and final reports in a template provided by Minnesota Housing.
- Use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect the required data elements and to complete reports to be submitted to Minnesota Housing.
- Have a Conflict of Interest policy and take necessary steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interests. All suspected, disclosed, or discovered conflicts of interest must be reported to Minnesota Housing in a timely manner.
- Comply with applicable contracting and bidding requirements noted in the Grant Contract Agreement.
- Comply with all Affirmative Action and non-discrimination requirements noted in the Grant Contract Agreement.
- Comply with [Minn. Stat. §201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for employees and for the public served by the grantee.

Questions

Questions can be directed to the designated point of contact for this RFP: Ji-Young Choi at 651.296.9839 or ji-young.choi@state.mn.us.

No other staff are authorized to respond to questions from potential applicants. All questions and answers will be posted to Minnesota Housing's [website](#).