

IHFA Housing Roundtable Updates

As an alternative to gathering in person for IHFA's regularly scheduled Housing Roundtable meetings, the following summary document offers updates regarding affordable housing activities across Idaho.

Homelessness

HUD has announced funding awards for the 2019 Continuum of Care competition. Idaho's Balance of State jurisdiction was granted renewal on all previously existing projects. One bonus project (newly proposed) was not awarded. Idaho's grants can be viewed here:

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-idaho-coc-grants.pdf>.

IHFA has joined many counterparts across the US in signing onto a letter asking HUD to forego the 2020 Continuum of Care competition. This would essentially renew all existing grants and possibly allow for a small competition for new projects. Foregoing the 2020 competition will allow all administrators and providers nationally to focus on COVID-19 measures in their communities and projects. Although, HUD has indicated their support of this approach, they have not publicly rendered a final decision on the 2020 competition.

The application period for Idaho's annual Emergency Solutions Grant funding was released during the summer of 2020. All grants have been awarded and started October 1, 2020. These funds are separate from ESG-CV funding authorized by the CARES Act.

Questions regarding homelessness funding, programming, and systems can be sent to SNAP@ihfa.org.

Housing Demand/Data

A summary of housing search and unit listing activity from www.housingidaho.com can be found [here](#).

IHFA's Market Snapshot page, which presents housing market data and trends, can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Project Finance

For an updated list of income-based or subsidized properties across Idaho within IHFA's Compliance portfolio, click [here](#).

A list of the LIHTC applications received in the September 2020 round can be found [here](#).

Rental Assistance

IHFA was awarded 38 Mainstream vouchers by HUD through a competitive process. These vouchers are dedicated to households with a member who is a person with disabilities who is non-elderly - between the ages of 18 and 61. These 38 vouchers are dedicated to households who were previously homeless and are exiting permanent supportive housing or rapid rehousing projects. There are currently vouchers open and available for use. If you are operating PSH or RRH projects or working with clients living in such projects, reach out to your local IHFA branch office to inquire about transferring the assisted household to a Mainstream voucher. We also have 50 Mainstream vouchers dedicated to individuals

existing institutions or who are homeless. Please inquire with your local IHFA branch office regarding these vouchers.

The Home Partnership Foundation

Avenues for Hope: Registration is now open through October 30th for the 10th annual campaign via www.avenuesforhope.org. The 2020 campaign will be held December 10-31. We are seeking new participating nonprofits and school districts that provide housing and/or supportive services. New campaign sponsors are also needed to help fund the \$300,000 prize pool. We have an aggressive goal to raise \$1.5M after a record-breaking campaign last year that raised \$1,321,294. 2019 funds supported 73 housing nonprofits and school districts throughout Idaho. Please direct any questions to Deanna Ward at deannaw@ihfa.org or 208-331-4756.

Fair Housing

IHFA has generated Fair Housing education and outreach materials that will be available to stakeholders across the state in November. These include posters, pocket-sized informational pamphlets, and bookmarks. IHFA will also be offering a 3-part webinar series on fair housing for housing providers, owners, managers and administrators. All Housing Roundtable contacts will receive a separate invitation to participate in the webinar series, along with a link to the online request form for free print materials.

COVID-19

IHFA has created a [COVID-19 page](#) for all COVID-19 related programs, resources, and information. This page includes guidance for homelessness providers, IHFA borrowers, mortgage lenders and brokers, Housing Choice Voucher program participants and applicants, and other housing stakeholders.

IHFA has been operating the Housing Preservation Program since the beginning of May. The program was first funded by the Home Partnership Foundation (\$250,000) and later funded by the state (\$15 million from the state's Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars from the CARES Act). The program assists renters who are unable to pay rent or utilities due to a COVID-19 related circumstance. This is a statewide program that has disbursed over \$8.5 million and has served over 3,100 households consisting of nearly 10,000 individuals. The program can be accessed on our [COVID-19 page](#) by clicking on the 'Short-term help for renters: Housing Preservation Program' dropdown. Applicants can apply [here](#) or call 1-855-452-0801. Also, advocates may assist the renter in completing their application, and landlords can apply directly. All payments are made directly to the payee (landlord or utility company). This funding is expected to be fully expended by the end of December (and funds expire December 30).

IHFA has sub-granted approximately \$3.8 million of Emergency Solutions Grant funding (from the CARES Act) to non-profit organizations across Idaho to provide housing stability for many who are currently experiencing homelessness or who are unstably housed. Funds will pay for emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, outreach and homelessness prevention activities. IHFA is currently working on identifying the use of additional ESG funds authorized by the CARES Act. If you have any questions regarding this funding, please send your inquiry to SNAP@ihfa.org. Emergency Solutions Grant and Community Development Block Grant CARES Act awards can be found [here](#).

To protect both program participants and applicants as well as IHFA staff against the spread of COVID-19, IHFA branch offices in Lewiston, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, and Twin Falls remain closed to the

public. Rental Assistance staff are still actively engaged in administering the Housing Choice Voucher and related programs by communicating with stakeholders via email and telephone, and receiving required documentation via USPS, fax, email, and on-site drop boxes. Unit inspections are being performed only on unoccupied units within 20 miles of the branch offices, for the time being. IHFA implemented numerous HUD waivers made available to allow PHAs to continue operations during COVID using alternative options such as landlord certifications in place of inspections. IHFA also implemented biennial inspections in April. The no contact operations are working well despite the unique challenges posed.

Due to COVID, HUD made special administrative funds available to housing authorities to use for regular expenses, COVID-related expenses, and for things such as I.T. upgrades and landlord incentives. IHFA chose to implement a Landlord Incentive program as one use for these funds. Over the past few years, it has become increasingly difficult for voucher holders to find units to rent. In some cases, rents are just too high and in other cases landlords have stopped accepting vouchers and had little incentive to do so with extremely low vacancy rates and inflated rents. IHFA began offering a \$500 incentive payment to Landlords for each new lease and Housing Assistance contract signed as of June 1, 2020. We plan to continue to offer this incentive until the end of the year.