



**Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**  
**For Housing Navigation FY2026**

I.	Background .....	3
II.	HOME-ARP Qualifying Populations .....	3
III.	Purpose .....	3
IV.	Funding and Awards Available .....	4
	Grant Terms.....	4
	Review Process and Timeframes .....	4
V.	NOFO Requirements .....	5
	Eligible Applicants .....	5
	Application Limitations .....	6
	Rating Factors .....	6
VI.	NOFO Application Timeline.....	6
VII.	Submission Requirements.....	7
	NOFO Application Submission Requirement .....	7
	Application Submission Overview.....	7
VIII.	Evaluation Process and Prioritization .....	7
	Operational Support.....	8
IX.	Eligible & Ineligible Activities .....	8
	Eligible Activities and Uses.....	8
	Ineligible Activities and Uses .....	8
X.	Funding Guidelines.....	9
	Participant Requirements.....	9
XI.	Evaluation Process and Prioritization .....	10
	Program Narrative.....	10
	Prioritization .....	10
	Rating Factors .....	11
	1. Experience, Budget & Mission Alignment (15 Points) .....	15

2. Project Vision & Operational Capacity (10 Points)..... 15

3. Project Design, Housing Stability Strategy & HOME-ARP Integration (10 Points)..... 16

4. Households Served & Program Scale (5 Points) ..... 16

5. Partnerships & Collaboration (Excel Workbook + Narrative) (5 Points)..... 17

XII. Post-Award Requirements and Submissions..... 19

XIII. Federal Cross-Cutting Compliance ..... 20

XIV. Non-Binding NOFO/Reservation of Rights ..... 20

XV. Fund Disbursement, Monitoring, and Reporting ..... 20

XVI. Georgia Open Records Act and Program Accessibility ..... 21

    Georgia Open Records Act..... 21

    Accessibility ..... 21

Appendix I – Definitions ..... 22

Appendix II – Eligible Activity Breakdown ..... 24

## I. Background

---

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP)<sup>1</sup> into law, which provided over \$1.9 trillion in relief to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under section 3205 of the law (P.L. 117-2), Congress provided \$5 billion to the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) to reduce homelessness and increase housing stability. The State of Georgia was allocated \$85,783,376 in HOME-ARP funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop and construct affordable rental housing and non-congregate shelters and assist with supportive services, through 2030. These activities must primarily benefit qualifying individuals and families who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or in other vulnerable populations. For more on these qualifying individuals, otherwise known as qualifying populations or QPs, see information from the HUD Exchange. In its approved HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, available here<sup>2</sup>, DCA plans to allocate over \$4.5 million of HOME-ARP funds toward Housing Navigation. More DCA information on the HOME-ARP program is available here.

## II. HOME-ARP Qualifying Populations

---

HOME-ARP funds must be used primarily to benefit individuals or families from the following Qualifying Populations (“QPs”):

- “Homeless,” as defined in section 103(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a));
- “At-risk of homelessness,” as defined in section 401(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of (42 U.S.C. 11360(1));
- “Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking,” as defined by HUD; and/or
- “Other populations” where providing supportive services or assistance under section 212(a) of NAHA (42 U.S.C. 12742(a)) would prevent the family’s homelessness or would serve those with the greatest risk of housing instability.

## III. Purpose

---

The purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) is to announce the availability of a cost reimbursement grant for the use of housing navigation through the federal HOME-ARP Program. HOME-ARP funds may be used to provide a broad range of supportive services to qualifying households including housing navigation. A description of the available Housing Navigation Services funded can be found in Appendix II of this NOFO.

Through this NOFO, DCA seeks to expand the availability statewide of quality supportive services to better serve Georgia’s residents in the greatest need of resources. This aligns with DCA’s goal to internally align new and existing resources to expand services to better serve residents along the housing continuum.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>

<sup>2</sup> <https://dca.georgia.gov/affordable-housing/housing-development/home-investment-partnership-program-home/home-american>

## IV. Funding and Awards Available

---

Projects awarded under this NOFO will be eligible to receive a funding award in the form of a cost reimbursement grant that requires projects to pay for costs associated with the project upfront and allows DCA to reimburse these expenses ("Cost Reimbursement Grant"). Once the grantee has spent their own funds on budgeted and approved expenses used for project costs, documentation must be submitted (e.g., invoices, receipts, and draw request form) to request reimbursement.

DCA anticipates awarding grants through this NOFO for a total of up to \$4.5 Million to be spent through 2030 - depending on application quality and the dollar amount requested.

DCA reserves the discretion to allocate and award additional funding from sources listed above and others, as available, applicable, and aligned with DCA's allocation authority.

### Grant Terms

Grant Minimum: **\$100,000** per applicant

Grant Maximum: **\$400,000** per applicant

Grant Term: One-year contracts with the option of renewal for compliant organizations.

All Housing Navigation Applications should meet the following criteria:

- Funds used to provide Housing Navigation Services that can serve the four QPs of the HOME ARP program without preference to any particular population.
- DCA and the service provider will establish a written agreement/contract for funding to ensure program compliance, record keeping, and payment processes related to services provision. HOME-ARP services to be provided must be pre-determined and stated in the written agreement.

DCA will use HOME-ARP housing navigation dollars to support one application type: new projects that demonstrate capacity to provide housing navigation and support services. It is required that the applicant demonstrates that they have at minimum 1.0 Fulltime Employee (FTE) dedicated to the project.

### Review Process and Timeframes

DCA will review housing navigation applications that serve geographies within the GA Balance of State COC\* as a priority application and once all applications have been reviewed, DCA will begin making initial award commitments to competitively qualifying applications. DCA will then review all applications within a HOME-ARP Participating Jurisdiction (PJ) (see Appendix I for the definition of the HOME-ARP Participating Jurisdiction) once the application submission period has closed.

All Applications will be reviewed starting on **April 3rd, 2026**.

All applicants must reach a **minimum score of 70%** of the Maximum Rating Percentage to be awarded.

**\*Please note that applicants who reside in the BOS COC but are also a PJ with HOME ARP will not be considered as a priority applicant.**

The applications will be awarded in order of highest to lowest score. Funding requests may be adjusted to maximize the number of awards issued.

## V. NOFO Requirements

---

### Eligible Applicants

Housing Navigation applicants must meet the following criteria:

For all organizations:

1. Have a minimum of one (1) year of satisfactory experience assisting one or more of the Qualifying Population households in the State of Georgia for review by DCA in its sole discretion;
2. If available, be an active member of the local Coordinated Entry System in which the service will be provided and compliant with Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting requirements of the local CoC;
3. If not already a member, commit to utilizing the State's approved Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as evidenced by entering client level data including HUD's universal data elements and maintaining strong data quality.
4. Ensure there is no conflict of interest between any member, founder, contributor or individual associated with the organization
5. Have standards of financial accountability that conform to 24 CFR 84.21, Standards of Financial Management Systems, and provide the most recent financial audit;
6. Nonprofit applicants must meet the requirements listed above and meet the following criteria:
  - a. Meet one of the two structures below:
    - i. Must be organized and existing in the State of Georgia (as evidenced by a Certificate of Existence from the Georgia Secretary of State, dated no more than thirty (30) days prior to the application date); or
    - ii. Be organized and existing under the laws of another state and be qualified to do business in Georgia (as evidenced by a Certificate of Existence from the other state's Secretary of State dated no more than thirty (30) days prior to the application date and by a Certificate of Authorization to do business in Georgia from the Georgia Secretary of State dated no more than thirty (30) days prior to the application date).
  - b. Have an IRS designation under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the federal tax code. A 501(c)(3) non-profit applicant may not submit an application until they have received their determination from the IRS. A 501(c)(4) non-profit applicant must provide documentation satisfactory to DCA, in its sole discretion, that the non-profit has filed the necessary materials with the IRS and received a response from the IRS demonstrating 501(c)(4) status.
7. Subject to providing additional verification documentation at DCA's discretion.

## Application Limitations

DCA reserves the right to utilize the resources listed and/or additional DCA resources, if available, to maximize award efficiency as circumstances necessitate. DCA will evaluate each Application to determine the feasibility of usage of the proposed funding in support of the respective programs. DCA reserves the discretion to make any number of awards or no awards, under this NOFO, based on the proposed project and application feasibility. Requests from applicants exhibiting significant capacity concerns regarding any requirement set forth in this NOFO will not be awarded. Applicants must be in good standing with DCA's Housing Divisions – both Housing Assistance and/or Housing Finance – regarding any DCA and GHFA grant funding or loans and not have received a temporary suspension from receiving federal funds.

## Rating Factors

Rating Factor Category	Maximum Rating Percentage
Agency Experience	30%
Strength of Project Concept, Partnerships, and Services Plan Budget	45%
Data-Informed Local Need and Experience with Underserved Populations	10%
Leveraging Funding	10%
Balance of State CoC Prioritization (outside HOME ARP PJs)	5%

## VI. NOFO Application Timeline

---

### NOFO Published

February 27, 2026

### NOFO Review

#### Application Q&As:

March 10, 2026 - 11:30am – 1:30pm (Atlanta, GA)  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs  
60 Executive Park S. NE Atlanta, GA 30329  
Conference Room 302

March 17, 2026 – 11:30 – 1:30pm (Macon, GA, Virtual)  
River Edge Behavioral Health  
175 Emery Highway Macon, GA 31217

March 24, 2026 – 11:30 – 1:30 pm (Virtual)

#### All State Application Deadline:

April 3, 2026

#### Application Reviews:

April 3, 2026 – May 1, 2026

### NOFO Award Announcements

All Award Announcements: May 4, 2026  
Required Implementation Date: July 1, 2026

Participants should review the above timeline when submitting an application under this NOFO. The NOFO timeline is subject to change, and DCA may impose additional deadlines. DCA will maintain regular communication with applicants or awardees about the projected timeline.

## VII. Submission Requirements

---

### NOFO Application Submission Requirement

Every application should include the following for competitive review:

- JotForm Submission
- Rating Factor criteria as noted in the Application:
- Required Supporting Documents:
  - Overall Housing Navigation Plan
  - Leveraged Funds Calculations
  - Project Budget
  - Board Member Worksheet
  - Program Staffing Worksheet
  - Organizational Documents (i.e. 990 Form, Nonprofit Status, etc.)

Each successful applicant may request up to ten percent (**10%**) of its total award for Administrative Costs.

### Application Submission Overview

- Completed NOFO Applications containing the above-required documentation will be accepted through the JotForm Portal until the submission deadline of April 3, 2026, at 5:00pm EST.
- Applications for Housing Navigation Funding will be evaluated based on the feasibility and completeness of the proposed services to support the project.
- Following submission, Applicants must accept and promptly respond to any DCA request for communications, meetings, documentation, or information requested in conjunction with the Application review.
- Awarded Applications will be notified by DCA via email by May 4, 2026.

## VIII. Evaluation Process and Prioritization

---

Applications will be evaluated based on the feasibility and completeness of the proposed project and Application, in conjunction with the competitive factors and priorities listed in this section, and with each program's respective evaluation priorities and Rating Factors as set forth in this NOFO. Feasibility reviews include concerns related to funding source applicability and availability. Completeness concerns relate to

information submitted to evidence the Rating Factors stated below, and other requirements stated in this NOFO.

## Operational Support

Projects must adequately plan for financial and organizational health while delivering supportive services. DCA will review the financial feasibility of the activity in the context of the organization to determine the appropriate amount of funds. All projects that receive an award under this NOFO are subject to the following:

- Projects will need to show feasibility throughout the compliance period for services, pursuant to program requirements;
- DCA will provide only enough funds for the requested activity, alone or in combination with other governmental assistance, that is necessary to provide quality supportive services without duplication.

After its initial review, DCA may contact each Applicant to discuss concerns of feasibility and completeness. Applications that cannot address and meet DCA's concerns of feasibility and completeness at that time may not be selected for awards under this NOFO.

Applicants must accept and promptly respond to any DCA request for documentation, or information requested in conjunction with the Application and DCA's review. Applicants will not be able to submit additional materials after initial application unless specifically requested by DCA.

## IX. Eligible & Ineligible Activities

---

### Eligible Activities and Uses

For the purposes of this NOFO, the following supportive services will be allowed:

- McKinney-Vento Supportive Services under HOME-ARP are adapted from the services listed in section 401(29) of McKinney-Vento.
- Allowable Supportive Services: as outlined in Appendix II that support Housing Navigation.

### Ineligible Activities and Uses

Under McKinney-Vento Supportive Services and Homelessness Prevention, HOME-ARP Supportive Services Program funds may not be used for the following:

- Mortgage loan payments;
- Pet deposits;
- Late fees incurred if grantee does not pay agreed rental subsidy by agreed date;
- Payment of temporary storage fees in arrears;
- Payment of past debt not related to rent or utility; and
- Financial assistance cannot be provided to a Program Participant who is receiving the same type of assistance through other public sources.
- Financial assistance also cannot be provided to a Program Participant who has been provided with replacement housing payments under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 USC 4601 et seq.) and its implementing regulations

at 49 CFR part 24, or Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 USC 5304(d) and its implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 42, during the period of time covered by the replacement housing payments.

Homeowner assistance and related services, including:

- Costs for the provision of services related to mortgages and homeownership to existing homeowners are also not eligible under HOME-ARP.

Under Housing Counseling, HOME-ARP Supportive Services Program Funds may not be used for the following:

- Resolving or preventing mortgage delinquency, including, but not limited to default and foreclosure, loss mitigation, budgeting, and credit;
- Home maintenance and financial management for homeowners, including, but not limited to: Escrow funds, budgeting, refinancing, home equity, home improvement, utility costs, energy efficiency, rights and responsibilities of homeowners, and reverse mortgages.

Ineligible Legal Costs:

- Legal services for immigration and citizenship matters and issues relating to mortgages are ineligible costs.
- Retainer fee arrangements and contingency fee arrangements are ineligible costs and prohibited under HOME-ARP-SS.

***Any ineligible costs paid using HOME-ARP funds must be repaid in accordance with the requirements of the program noted in the Supportive Services Program Manual.***

## X. Funding Guidelines

---

HOME-ARP Federal guidance is found [here](#). The following funding requirements and limitations apply:

- **Compliance Period:** Will be finalized in the written agreement. DCA is anticipating one-year contracts with an optional second-year renewal for compliant organizations who continue to demonstrate the financial need. Ultimately, renewal is subject to DCA's discretion.
- **Geography:** Eligible Projects will be prioritized in jurisdictions that are not located within other HOME-ARP Participating Jurisdictions (PJs). See the Evaluation Process and Prioritization Section starting on page 10 for more details.

### Participant Requirements

- **Overview**
  - Referrals to the program must be available to the community and involve multiple referral sources. These sources should include the local Continuum of Care (CoC) and/or Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) agencies, as well as organizations serving Emergency Housing Voucher recipients.
  - All participants must meet one of the four HOME-ARP qualifying population definitions
  - Participation is low barrier with fewer restrictions on acceptance into the program.
  - All participants must be provided a participation agreement without language or riders that would not ordinarily be found in a standard participation agreement.

- Additional Services must be available and accessible to participants and offered in a manner designed to support housing stability and self-sufficiency. Acceptance of services is voluntary and not a condition of any housing assistance. Any service provider must utilize a harm-reduction approach.
- Participant Screening
  - To ensure assistance for as many households that qualify, the service provider must implement low-barrier participant screening procedures. Templates and training will be provided to support these requirements.
  - Additionally, the organization’s participant selection plan must use the criminal screening procedures that align with assistance requirements and not impose additional requirements.
- Participant Waitlist: The organization must use a participant waitlist when selecting qualifying households for participation of HOME-ARP funds in the chronological order of their application.
- Service Plan: This NOFO recognizes organizations that have developed a robust commitment, capacity, and competency in providing service coordination for households with unstable housing conditions. The purpose of the service plan is to assure DCA that the Applicant provides supportive services for all four HOME-ARP Qualified Populations when services are needed. See Rating Factors beginning on page 10 for additional details.
- Termination Prevention: Organizations must implement a termination prevention plan and utilize processes only as a last resort. Prevention may include options for search and referral support to alternatives, if necessary, to avoid participants becoming homeless and displaced. Prevention and/or termination plans must be included in the household’s participation file.

## XI. Evaluation Process and Prioritization

---

### Program Narrative

Every Application should submit a Program Narrative that outlines the activity(s) concept and design, populations proposed to be served, number of households to be served, activity(s) design features unique to populations being served, and how the proposed project will best meet the needs of the community. The Program Narrative should also include the project’s commitment to accept all corresponding federal regulations and requirements.

The Grant Application is found at the [JotForm Housing Navigation Application Portal](#). The required documents will be noted in the application. The Grant Application is also linked on The Housing Navigation Program webpage [here](#).

### Prioritization

To reinforce DCA’s efforts to support its internal programming, the following conditions will be prioritized:

- Location
  - Housing Navigation Locations outside of the HOME-ARP Participating Jurisdictions already receiving HOME-ARP Funding, noted in Appendix I.
- Activities – as noted in Appendix II
  - Dedication of at least one full-time staff member to providing Housing Navigation Services
    - Applicants must indicate that they are willing to hire or otherwise dedicate a full-time staff member to providing housing navigation services

- Financial Assistance Costs
  - Applications must be specific regarding how the funds will be spent, including administrative and operational procedures to make payments. Include the amount of people in the area in need of funding as well as total households to be served. Back up information will be required.
- Exemplary experience executing activity/program spending and compliance with other grants
  - Service Plans that demonstrate immediate spending and the capacity to support a reimbursable grant. This includes leveraging funding from existing funding sources including government funding (federal, state, and local), and cash and non-cash contributions.
- Ability to provide housing search services in conjunction with housing navigation services

## Rating Factors

The following information will be considered when reviewing the submitted applications.

Rating Factor	Primary Information DCA is Reviewing
<p><b>Agency Experience</b> (30% Impact Percentage)</p> <p>New project applicants must sufficiently describe experience administering federally funded grants, and submit the most recent financial audit, IRS Form 990, and list of current board members. New project applications that do not demonstrate capacity to carry out project may be rejected by the review team.</p>	<p>Summarize the applicant agency's history, organizational background and experience in providing housing and/or service for persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness. What is the mission of the organization? Does your agency have a recent strategic plan that was approved by the Board of Directors and outlines the agency's goals? How does this NOFO fall in line with those agency goals? Describe your agency's organizational structure and staff experience administering similar programming. Describe the population served previously, outline the services provided, provide evidence of experience mentioning any relevant program models or partnerships that demonstrate expertise while highlighting years of experience and staff expertise. Share outcomes and impacts including metrics where applicable and case examples (without violating privacy) to illustrate impact. Include how you determine participant eligibility and the amount of assistance to give based on the funding source, how you address program participant challenges, how you coordinate and partner with other service organizations that may refer program participants to your organization, or you can refer to them, and how you maintain relationships with the participant to prevent unnecessary early termination.</p> <p>Demonstrate that the Applicant has experience leveraging resources and compliance requirements similar to the HOME-ARP funds being proposed in the application. Examples of resources that will be considered include local funding, ESG, CoC, CDBG, SAMHSA, etc.</p>
<p><b>Strength of Project Concept, Partnerships and Service Plan/Budget</b></p>	<p>Describe your project concept in detail and the inclusion of the HOME-ARP activity(s) in your Housing Navigation Application. List the partnerships included in your Plan in the Excel Workbook and demonstrate that your partners have experience administering programs for vulnerable individuals and families as well. Your narratives and data in your application should</p>

<p>(45% Impact Percentage)</p> <p>New projects should adequately describe how project will reach full operational capacity, clearly outline the project with proposed outcomes, describe target population, outline number of households to be served. And provide a clear description of a plan to address housing and support needs of the participants.</p>	<p>include the experience of the applicant and service partner(s) with a proposed Service Plan and Budget for the duration of the activity, any formal or informal commitments to collaboration and services, funding agreements, and extent of mission alignment.</p> <p>This narrative should express your vision for the project, your understanding of the impact it will have on the community, how the project will reach full operational capacity, and how each of the bullet points below contribute to that impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant informed – Describe how your project concept, management practices, etc. were informed by people with lived expertise, as well as incorporating “Increased Accessibility”, including any assistive technology, that serve the participating population.</li> <li>• Local support – Describe evidence of local community support, including any letters from local government officials, minutes from community meetings, or evidence of alignment with local plans (i.e. Comprehensive Plan, GICH plan, Homelessness plan).</li> <li>• Referral partnerships – list the agencies who will refer Housing Navigation participants i.e. Coordinated Entry, agencies serving Emergency Housing Voucher Recipients, and other direct referral pathways for each of the four qualifying populations, as evidenced by an MOU.</li> <li>• Service provider partnerships – Describe the services and partnerships for proposed participants when they face challenges that need additional assistance than what your organization can provide. Include any additional community partnerships that contribute to serving the proposed resident population.</li> <li>• Indicate the type and frequency of services that will be available. State the organization(s) that will provide services and include the organization(s) name, address, email address, and phone number.</li> <li>• Implementation Schedule – Provide the proposed schedule for the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ date participants can apply for services; and</li> <li>○ date services will be available for participants to receive</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Describe the unmet Data-Informed Local Need and how this project will fill that need</b></p> <p>(10% Impact Percentage)</p>	<p>Applicants must describe the level of unmet need for the proposed activity within their service area for the four qualifying populations. The narrative must use relevant public data (e.g., Point-In-Time Count, Housing Inventory Count, U.S. Census data, and other credible sources) to estimate the gap between available services and the number of vulnerable individuals intended to be served. Applications must clearly demonstrate data-informed local need supporting vulnerable populations. Additional Data can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty rates/Homelessness trends</li> <li>• Cost Burdened Households</li> <li>• Existing services and system capacity</li> <li>• Internal waitlists or documented unmet demand</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leveraging Funding</b></p>	<p>Provide information regarding the existing third-party funding commitments dedicated to the proposed project where applicable, including local</p>

(10% Impact Percentage)	government funding and other existing awards. Describe the dollar value of each of these commitments and the resulting commitment per service. Please provide a percentage of the overall cost for which funding has been leveraged already. Explain how funds complement each other. Highlight efficiency and impact explaining how leveraging funds allows you to do more than one funding source allows you to achieve. Include in-kind contributions and demonstrate long-term sustainability. Points will be awarded according to the ranked percentage of committed leveraged funding to the total service cost.
<b>Balance of State Prioritization</b> (5% Impact Percentage)	Priority will be given to applicants serving counties located in the Balance of State that are not a PJ already receiving HOME ARP funding from HUD; including the City of Albany, Athens-Clarke County, City of Atlanta, Augusta-Richmond County, Columbus-Muscogee County, Macon-Bibb County, City of Savannah, Clayton County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, Gwinnett County, and Cobb County.

**Scoring Rubric Housing Navigation**

**Grant Application Scoring Criteria**

**Agency Experience**

Maximum: 30 Points

Applications will be evaluated based on clarity, organizational capacity, financial documentation, program experience, and alignment with the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

1. Application Clarity & Completeness (6 Points)

Evaluates organization, responsiveness, and completeness of submission.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-1 (Not Competitive)</b>	Response is unclear, disorganized, or incomplete. Multiple required questions unanswered.
<b>2-3 (Fair)</b>	Response lacks clarity in several areas. Some required questions are unanswered or insufficiently addressed.
<b>4-5 (Good)</b>	Response is generally clear and organized. Most questions answered with only minor areas needing clarification.
<b>6 (Excellent)</b>	Response is clear, well-organized, concise, and fully addresses all required questions.

2. Organizational Capacity & Governance (6 Points)

Evaluates staffing, structure, board composition, and overall operational readiness.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-1 (Not Competitive)</b>	Organizational capacity is not demonstrated. Governance structure unclear.
<b>2-3 (Fair)</b>	Organizational capacity partially demonstrated but lacks detail. Board composition unclear or limited diversity.
<b>4-5 (Good)</b>	Adequate capacity demonstrated. Board is active and functional. Organizational structure supports program implementation.

<b>6 (Excellent)</b>	Strong operational capacity clearly demonstrated. Board consists of volunteer and diverse members. Systems and leadership structure clearly support successful implementation.
----------------------	--

3. Financial Stability & Documentation (6 Points)

Evaluates financial health and submission of required documentation (e.g., financial statements, IRS Form 990).

<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>0-1 (Not Competitive)</b>	Required financial documents missing or incomplete. Significant concerns regarding financial stability.
<b>2-3 (Fair)</b>	Financial documentation is partially complete or outdated. Some concerns or inconsistencies present.
<b>4-5 (Good)</b>	Financial statements and IRS Form 990 submitted and current. No major concerns identified.
<b>6 (Excellent)</b>	Financial statements and IRS Form 990 are current, complete, and demonstrate strong fiscal health. Applicant demonstrates sound financial management systems.

4. Program Experience & Federal Funding Experience (6 Points)

Evaluates applicant's history administering similar programs and managing federal funds.

<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>0-1 (Not Competitive)</b>	No demonstrated experience administering similar programs or federal funds.
<b>2-3 (Fair)</b>	Limited or indirect experience. Concept appears sound but would require technical assistance.
<b>4-5 (Good)</b>	Demonstrated experience implementing similar programs. Experience managing grant funds evident.
<b>6 (Excellent)</b>	Strong, documented experience administering similar programs and federal funds. Demonstrates compliance capacity and successful past performance.

5. Program Design, Target Population & Community Impact (6 Points)

Evaluates alignment with NOFO priorities, clarity of program design, and projected impact.

<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>0-1 (Not Competitive)</b>	Program does not align with NOFO requirements. Target population unclear. Households to be served not specified or unrealistic.
<b>2-3 (Fair)</b>	Program concept is partially aligned but contains notable design gaps. Target population generally defined. Impact unclear.
<b>4-5 (Good)</b>	Program outlined sufficiently with minor unanswered questions. Target population aligns with funding priorities. Proposed number of households appears reasonable and impactful.
<b>6 (Excellent)</b>	Program design is comprehensive and well-developed. Clearly aligned with NOFO requirements. Target population clearly defined and appropriately aligned. Proposed number of households demonstrates strong and measurable community impact.

**Total Possible Points: 30**

Category	Points
Application Clarity & Completeness	6
Organizational Capacity & Governance	6
Financial Stability & Documentation	6
Program & Federal Funding Experience	6
Program Design & Community Impact	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

**Grant Application Scoring Criteria**

***Strength of Project Concept, Partnerships, and Service Plan/Budget***

Maximum: 45 Points

1. Experience, Budget & Mission Alignment (15 Points)

Evaluates organizational capacity, fiscal alignment, mission alignment, and readiness to administer HOME-ARP Supportive Services and/or Housing Navigation activities.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-5 (Limited)</b>	Minimal description of organizational or partner experience administering similar programs. Budget is unclear, incomplete, or misaligned with proposed activities. Limited or no documentation of collaboration agreements. Weak evidence of mission alignment.
<b>6-11 (Adequate)</b>	Applicant and partners demonstrate relevant experience serving vulnerable populations. Budget generally aligns with service activities and funding period but lacks detailed justification. Some documentation of collaboration or funding agreements included. Mission alignment described but not strongly evidenced.
<b>12-15 (Excellent)</b>	Demonstrates strong, documented track record administering comparable programs. Detailed service plan and budget clearly aligned with proposed activities across the full funding period. Budget narrative provides clear justification of costs. Includes MOUs, commitment letters, or formal agreements. Demonstrates strong mission alignment and coordinated implementation strategy among partners.

2. Project Vision & Operational Capacity (10 Points)

Evaluates clarity of vision, anticipated community impact, and readiness to reach full operational capacity.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-3 (Limited)</b>	Vision unclear, overly broad, or not tied to demonstrated community need. Community impact minimally described. Lacks realistic path to operational

Score Range	Criteria
	readiness. Timeline, staffing, and infrastructure planning vague or incomplete.
<b>4–7 (Adequate)</b>	Vision articulated with general understanding of community need. Community impact described but lacks measurable indicators. Provides basic timeline and explanation of staffing and infrastructure to reach capacity.
<b>8–10 (Excellent)</b>	Compelling, clearly defined vision grounded in demonstrated community need. Anticipated impact is specific and measurable. Includes detailed and realistic plan for achieving full operational capacity (staffing, systems, partnerships, benchmarks, timeline). Demonstrates sustainability planning beyond the grant period.

### 3. Project Design, Housing Stability Strategy & HOME-ARP Integration (10 Points)

Evaluates service model design, housing stability approach, and integration of eligible HOME-ARP activities.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0–3 (Limited)</b>	Project design poorly defined. Housing barriers and stabilization strategies insufficiently addressed. Target population unclear. Limited or no integration of HOME-ARP eligible activities. Outcomes not identified.
<b>4–7 (Adequate)</b>	Service model described with basic detail. Housing barriers and stabilization strategies addressed at a general level. Target population identified. Outcomes stated but not clearly measurable or strongly aligned with activities. Basic explanation of HOME-ARP activity inclusion.
<b>8–10 (Excellent)</b>	Well-developed and clearly articulated service model. Comprehensive housing navigation and stabilization strategy with individualized and trauma-informed approaches. Clearly defined target population and eligibility criteria. Specific, measurable outcomes aligned with community need. Strong, intentional integration of HOME-ARP Supportive Services and/or Housing Navigation activities into program design.

### 4. Households Served & Program Scale (5 Points)

Evaluates clarity, feasibility, and justification of projected households served.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0–1 (Limited)</b>	Number of households not specified or unrealistic given staffing, funding, and service intensity.
<b>2–3 (Adequate)</b>	Identifies number of households to be served. Limited explanation of how staffing and budget align with projected outputs.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>4-5 (Excellent)</b>	Clearly specifies number of households to be served. Demonstrates realistic alignment between staffing, funding, service intensity, and projected outputs. Provides clear justification or data-based rationale for projections.

5. Partnerships & Collaboration (Excel Workbook + Narrative) (5 Points)

Evaluates strength of partnerships and coordination capacity.

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-1 (Limited)</b>	Partnerships unclear, undocumented, or weakly defined. Limited evidence of experience serving vulnerable individuals or families.
<b>2-3 (Adequate)</b>	Partnerships identified in required Excel Workbook. Basic description of roles and prior experience. Some evidence of coordination.
<b>4-5 (Excellent)</b>	Strong, clearly defined partnerships documented in Excel Workbook and narrative. Roles clearly articulated. Demonstrates experience serving vulnerable populations. Includes formal or informal commitments (MOUs, letters of support) and defined coordination processes.

Category	Maximum Points
Experience, Budget & Mission Alignment	15
Project Vision & Operational Capacity	10
Project Design, Housing Stability Strategy & HOME-ARP Integration	10
Households Served & Scale	5
Partnerships & Collaboration	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

**Grant Application Scoring Criteria**

**Data scoring**

Maximum: 10 Points

Score Range	Criteria
<b>0-2 (Not Competitive)</b>	Little or no data provided. Fails to describe unmet need or quantify service gaps. No clear connection between proposed activity and local population needs. Assertions are unsupported.

<b>3–5 (Fair / Needs Improvement)</b>	Some data presented but limited in scope, outdated, or not clearly analyzed. Minimal attempt to estimate service gaps. Limited explanation of how proposed activity responds to identified need.
<b>6–8 (Good / Adequate)</b>	Relevant and generally current public data used (e.g., PIT, Census, HIC). Reasonable estimate of service gap provided. Demonstrates understanding of vulnerable populations and local housing challenges. Identifies existing services and capacity constraints.
<b>9–10 (Excellent)</b>	Comprehensive, current, and well-analyzed data clearly demonstrates significant unmet need. Uses multiple credible sources (PIT, HIC, Census, local data). Clearly quantifies service gap between need and available resources. Includes poverty, homelessness trends, cost-burdened households, existing services, and documented internal waitlists. Strongly connects data to proposed activity and target population. Demonstrates a clear, data-driven rationale for funding.

**Grant Application Scoring Criteria**  
**Leveraged Funding & Sustainability**  
Maximum: 10 Points

<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>0–2 (Not Competitive)</b>	Little or no information is provided regarding third-party funding. No clear dollar values, no identification of funding sources, and no calculation of leveraged percentage. No documentation of commitment status. Fails to describe how funds complement one another. No evidence of in-kind contributions or sustainability plan.
<b>3–5 (Fair / Needs Improvement)</b>	Some third-party funding sources identified, but information is incomplete, unclear, or undocumented. Dollar values may be missing or not clearly tied to services. Leveraged percentage is modest (generally under 30–40%) or not clearly calculated. Limited explanation of how funds work together. Minimal description of in-kind contributions or long-term sustainability.
<b>6–8 (Good / Adequate)</b>	Clearly identifies multiple committed funding sources (including local government and/or existing awards where applicable) with documented dollar values. Provides a reasonable calculation of commitment per service and leveraged percentage (generally 40–74% of total service cost). Includes in-kind contributions with assigned value. Explains how funding streams complement one another and improve efficiency. Demonstrates a viable sustainability strategy beyond the grant term.
<b>9–10 (Excellent)</b>	Comprehensive and well-documented description of all existing third-party commitments, including local government funding, foundation awards, and other secured resources. Clearly states dollar value of each commitment, allocation per service, and precise leveraged percentage (typically 75%+ of total service cost). Demonstrates strong financial leverage and strategic braiding of funds. Clearly explains how funding sources complement one another, eliminate duplication, expand service capacity, and increase impact beyond what any single source could achieve. Includes significant and well-valued in-kind contributions. Presents a strong, credible long-term sustainability plan showing organizational stability and diversified revenue

	streams. Points within this range should reflect the ranked percentage of committed leveraged funding relative to total service cost.
--	---

**Grant Application Scoring Criteria**

***Balance of State Prioritization – 5 Points***

Maximum: 5 Points

Applicants will be given 5 points if serving counties located in the Balance of State that are not a PJ already receiving HOME ARP funding from HUD. Participating Jurisdictions include the City of Albany, Athens-Clarke County, City of Atlanta, Augusta-Richmond County, Columbus-Muscogee County, Macon-Bibb County, City of Savannah, Clayton County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, Gwinnett County, and Cobb County.

Score Range	Criteria
0	If in a PJ already receiving HOME ARP Funding
5	If in a Balance of State Location

## XII. Post-Award Requirements and Submissions

---

DCA will require the following for all awarded Applications:

- Additional DCA requested services information, such as updates to service budgets or plans.
- Participants must accept any DCA request for meetings, participation site visits, or other engagements in association with the Application.
- Applicants must make acceptable assurances to DCA that it will comply with the requirements of the applicable funding program(s) during the entire period between selection and conclusion of all activities, and throughout the entire compliance period.
- Applicants must comply with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and other requirements now or hereafter in effect. The Applicant is responsible for ensuring the proposed program, activities, goals, and timetables comply with all federal, state, or local laws, regulations and other requirements.
- Areas covered by the applicable laws and regulations include, but are not limited to, Non-Discrimination and Equal Access, Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Accessibility, Contracting and Procurement; Environmental, Lead Based Paint, Acquisition and Relocation, Financial Management, Labor Standards and Immigration, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, As Amended, Title VIII of Civil Rights Act of 1968, Affirmative marketing in accordance with 24 CFR 92.351, Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, Georgia Fair Lending Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Procurement Standards at 24 CFR 85.36, 24 CFR Part 84, and OMB Circular A-110, HOME Program Conflict of Interest Provisions.
- Awardees must update and complete the JotForm Housing Navigation Application provided in the NOFO Application Package and submit it with the other required documentation.
- Provide an updated overview of experience and expertise to serve the Qualifying Populations.

## XIII. Federal Cross-Cutting Compliance

---

Applicants must comply with all applicable federal or state laws, regulations and other requirements now or hereafter in effect, including all those contained and referenced in this NOFO, including but not limited to requirements stated below and in Section XV. The Applicant Team is responsible for ensuring the proposed project complies with all federal or state laws, regulations and other requirements. Depending on the fund source, federal cross-cutting requirements and compliance may include:

- Federal Procurement Requirements. As noted in 2 CFR 200 - General procurement requirements for recipients, other than states.
- Language Access Plan

## XIV. Non-Binding NOFO/Reservation of Rights

---

The intent of this NOFO is to fund as many Applications identified as complete and feasible based upon, programmatic funding applicability and availability. Until a final contract is signed between parties, applications and awards to this NOFO are not to be considered a commitment or contract in any way. GHFA expressly reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all applications and to make any number of awards under this NOFO, including the discretion to make no awards.

In connection with this NOFO, GHFA reserves the right to:

1. Cancel this solicitation at any time
2. Reject any or all Applications
3. Waive minor deficiencies and informalities
4. Request additional information from individuals or firms prior to final selection
5. Make adjustments to Applications based upon feasibility and funding availability
6. Change the schedule of events or cancel any funding program without any financial obligation for services provided or out-of-pocket expenses incurred, or any other obligation to the underwriters
7. Reject any Application or cancel any commitment of funds if it is determined that the disbursement of funds poses an undue risk to GHFA
8. Reject Applications that will likely have a negative impact on existing residents

## XV. Fund Disbursement, Monitoring, and Reporting

---

If GHFA awards funds under this NOFO, GHFA will disburse funds throughout the activity period in conjunction with funding pursuant to any award. Absent an approved alternative disbursement schedule, GHFA will disburse funds approximately once every additional 25% of the contract is complete. With few exceptions, DCA will disburse funds only for activities already incurred and supported by required documentation determined by the approved activity noted in the written agreement. DCA will require regular monitoring and submissions.

Participants must submit requested information related to federal reporting requirements to the DCA Housing Navigation Team.

## XVI. Georgia Open Records Act and Program Accessibility

---

### Georgia Open Records Act

The Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. §§ 50-18-70 et. seq.) requires that public records be open and available for inspection by any member of the public. As such, any Application submitted in response to this NOFO is subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. By submitting a response to this NOFO, proposing entities acknowledge that this NOFO is subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. Any participant submitting an application must hold DCA and GHFA harmless for any actions taken resulting from the release of public records associated with this NOFO.

### Accessibility

DCA is committed to providing all persons with equal access to its services, programs, activities, education, and employment regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. Please contact [HOMEARP@dca.ga.gov](mailto:HOMEARP@dca.ga.gov) if any reasonable accommodation(s) are required.

# Appendix I – Definitions

---

**Extremely Low-Income (ELI) Households** are households whose annual incomes do not exceed 30 percent (30%) of the median family income of a geographic area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

**Low-Income (LI) Households** are households whose annual incomes do not exceed 50 percent (50%) of the median family income of a geographic area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

**Participating Jurisdictions (PJ) already receiving HOME-ARP Funding from HUD.** The following are PJs that received their own HOME-ARP Funding and are not in the Georgia Balance of State PJ.

- City of Albany
- Athens-Clarke County
- City of Atlanta
- Augusta-Richmond County
- Columbus-Muscogee County
- Macon-Bibb County
- City of Savannah
- Clayton County
- DeKalb County
- Fulton County
- Gwinnett County
- Cobb County

**Qualified Populations (QP)** are specific to the HOME American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) program. The program requires that funds be used to primarily benefit qualifying populations (QPs).

- QP1: Homeless – the definition of homeless includes Literally Homeless, those at Imminent Risk of Homelessness, and Homeless under other Federal Statutes.
- QP2: At-Risk of Homelessness – this population is defined as having an income below 30% of AMI, lacks sufficient resources to prevent immediate homelessness (as described in QP1 above), and meets one of seven at-risk conditions. For example:
  - Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
  - Living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
  - Living in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals.
  - Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application
- QP3: Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking
- QP4: Other Populations
  - Other families requiring services or housing assistance to prevent homelessness defined as households who previously met criteria “homeless” as defined in 24 CFR 91.5 and received time-limited assistance to become housed and are now in need of additional housing

assistance or supportive services to avoid becoming “homeless” (as defined in 24 CFR 91.5) again; OR

- Other populations with the greatest risk of housing instability where:
  - The household’s annual income is below 30% AMI and they are experiencing severe cost burden (i.e., paying more than 50% of monthly household income toward housing costs); OR
  - The household has an annual income that is less than or equal to 50% of the area median income and they meet one of the seven “At Risk of Homelessness” conditions.

HUD has developed a tool to increase understanding of QP criteria while providing definitions in an at-a-glance format. Some definitions have been truncated. This document should use this product in conjunction with CPD-21-10 Section IV for full technical definitions when needed. The Tool can be found here: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HOME-ARP-Qualifying-Populations-At-A-Glance.pdf>.

## Appendix II – Eligible Activity Breakdown

---

This information can be found directly from CPD Notice 21-10:

### **Eligible Costs for McKinney Vento Supportive Services and Homelessness Prevention Services**

Eligible costs for supportive services under either of these two categories include costs associated with the following services:

#### Childcare

The costs of childcare for program participants, including providing meals and snacks, and comprehensive and coordinated developmental activities, are eligible. The childcare center must be licensed by the jurisdiction in which it operates in order for its costs to be eligible. The following conditions also apply:

- Children must be under the age of 13 unless the children have a disability.
- Children with a disability must be under the age of 18.

#### Education Services

The costs of improving knowledge and basic educational skills are eligible costs including:

- Instruction or training in consumer education, health education, substance abuse prevention, literacy, English as a Second Language, and General Educational Development (GED).
- Screening, assessment, and testing; individual or group instruction; tutoring; provision of books, supplies, and instructional material; counseling; and referral to community resources.

#### Employment Assistance and Job Training

The costs of establishing and/or operating employment assistance and job training programs are eligible, including classroom, online and/or computer instruction, on-the-job instruction, services that assist individuals in securing employment, acquiring learning skills, and/or increasing earning potential. The cost of providing reasonable stipends to program participants in employment assistance and job training programs is also an eligible cost.

- Learning skills include those skills that can be used to secure and retain a job, including the acquisition of vocational licenses and/or certificates.
- Services that assist individuals in securing employment consist of:
  - Employment screening, assessment, or testing;
  - Structured job skills and job-seeking skills;
  - Special training and tutoring, including literacy training and pre-vocational training;
  - Books and instructional material;
  - Counseling or job coaching; and
  - Referral to community resources.

#### Food

The cost of providing meals or groceries to program participants is eligible.

#### Housing Navigation Services

- Helping clients identify and visit potentially available units during the housing search, helping to find a unit that meets your disability-related needs, assisting with transportation and directions to properties, assisting with the completion of rental applications and forms, and helping to expedite the leasing process for clients.
- Identifying properties in the organization's service area with rental units available to clients

- Connecting households with supportive and financial services in order for households to secure and maintain housing
- Assisting clients with the move-in process once they have signed a lease

#### Housing Search and Counseling Services

Costs of assisting eligible program participants to locate, obtain, and retain suitable housing are eligible. Services are:

- Development of an action plan for locating housing;
- Housing search;
- Tenant counseling;
- Securing utilities;
- Making moving arrangements;
- Outreach to and negotiation with owners;
- Assistance submitting rental applications and understanding leases;
- Assessment of housing for compliance with HOME-ARP requirements for TBRA assistance and financial assistance for short-term and medium-term rental payments;
- Assistance obtaining utilities; and
- Tenant counseling;
- Mediation with property owners and landlords on behalf of eligible program participants;
- Credit counseling, accessing a free personal credit report, and resolving personal credit issues; and
- Payment of rental application fees;
- Other Housing counseling costs, as defined in 24 CFR 5.100, funded with or provided in connection with grant funds must be carried out in accordance with 24 CFR 5.111.

Please Note: When Housing Navigation Providers provide housing services to eligible persons that are incidental to a larger set of holistic case management services, these services do not meet the definition of Housing counseling, as defined in 24 CFR 5.100, and therefore are not required to be carried out in accordance with the certification requirements of 24 CFR 5.111.

#### Life Skills Training

The costs of teaching critical life management skills that may never have been learned or have been lost during the course of physical or mental illness, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, substance abuse, and homelessness are eligible. These services must be necessary to assist the program participant to function independently in the community. Life skills training includes:

- budgeting of resources and money management, household management, conflict management, shopping for food and other needed items, nutrition, the use of public transportation, and parent training.

#### Outreach Services

The costs of activities to engage qualified populations for the purpose of providing immediate support and intervention, as well as identifying potential program participants, are eligible.

- Eligible costs include the outreach worker's transportation costs and a cell phone to be used by the individual performing the outreach.
- Costs associated with the following services are eligible: initial assessment; crisis counseling; addressing urgent physical needs, such as providing meals, blankets, clothes, or toiletries; actively connecting and providing people with information and referrals to homeless and mainstream programs; and publicizing the availability of the housing and/or services provided within the PJ's geographic area.

### Transportation

Eligible costs are:

- The costs of program participant's travel on public transportation or in a vehicle provided by the PJ or subrecipient to and from medical care, employment, childcare, or other services eligible under this Notice;
- Mileage allowance for service workers to visit program participants and to carry out housing inspections;
- The cost of purchasing or leasing a vehicle in which staff transports program participants and/or staff serving program participants;
- The cost of gas, insurance, taxes, and maintenance for the vehicle;
- The costs of PJ or subrecipient staff to accompany or assist program participants to utilize public transportation; and
- If public transportation options are not sufficient within the area, the PJ may make a one-time payment on behalf of a program participant needing car repairs or maintenance required to operate a personal vehicle, subject to the following:
  - Payments for car repairs or maintenance on behalf of the program participant may not exceed 10 percent of the Blue Book value of the vehicle (Blue Book refers to the guidebook that compiles and quotes prices for new and used automobiles and other vehicles of all makes, models, and types);
  - Payments for car repairs or maintenance must be paid by the PJ or subrecipient directly to the third party that repairs or maintains the car; and
  - PJs or subrecipients may require program participants to share in the cost of car repairs or maintenance as a condition of receiving assistance with car repairs or maintenance.

Please Note: DCA will establish policies and procedures surrounding payments for the cost of gas, insurance, taxes, the one-time payment for car repairs or maintenance described above, and maintenance for vehicles of program participants. Such costs must be limited to program participants with the inability to pay for such costs and who, without such assistance, would not be able to participate in eligible services under CPD Notice 21-10, Section VI.D.4.c.i.

### Case Management

The costs of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to meet the needs of the program participant(s) are eligible costs. PJs and subrecipients providing these supportive services must have written standards for providing the assistance. Eligible costs are those associated with the following services and activities:

- Conducting the initial evaluation, including verifying and documenting eligibility, for individuals and families applying for supportive services;
- Counseling;
- Developing, securing, and coordinating services;
- Using a centralized or coordinated assessment system that complies with the requirements of Section V-2 of this Notice;
- Obtaining federal, State, and local benefits;
- Monitoring and evaluating program participant progress;
- Providing information and referrals to other providers;
- Providing ongoing risk assessment and safety planning with victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking;
- Developing an individualized housing and service plan, including planning a path to permanent housing stability; and

- Conducting re-evaluations of the program participant's eligibility and the types and amounts of assistance the program participant needs.

#### Landlord/Tenant Liaison

Costs of liaison services between property managers/owners and program participants are eligible HOME-ARP costs and may include:

- Landlord outreach;
- Physical inspections and rent reasonable studies as needed to secure units;
- Rental application fees and security deposits for clients, in accordance with the financial assistance costs requirements
- Mediation services for housing issues that may arise between owner, property manager, or other residents and clients;
- Coordination or assistance with the provision of other HOME-ARP eligible services to assist clients to maintain permanent housing.

#### Services for Special Populations

HOME-ARP funds may be used to provide services for special populations, such as victim services, so long as the costs of providing these services are eligible under this section. The term victim services means services that assist program participants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking including services offered by rape crisis centers and domestic violence shelters, and other organizations with a documented history of effective work concerning domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.

#### Financial Assistance Costs

HOME-ARP funds may be used to pay housing owners, utility companies, and other third parties for the following costs, as applicable:

- **Rental application fees:** Rental housing application fee that is charged by the owner to all applicants.
- **Security deposits:** A security deposit that is equal to no more than 2 months' rent. This assistance is separate and distinct from the provision of financial assistance for First and Last Month's rent provided under this section and cannot be used to duplicate those costs.
- **Utility deposits:** HOME-ARP funds may pay for a standard utility deposit or initiation fee required by the utility company or owner (if owner-paid utilities are provided) for all program participants for the following utilities:
  - Gas
  - Electric
  - Water
  - Sewer
- **Utility payments:** HOME-ARP funds may pay for up to 24 months of utility payments per program participant, per service, including up to 6 months of utility payments in arrears, per service. A partial payment of a utility bill counts as one month. This assistance may only be provided if the program participant or a member of the same household has an account in his or her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make utility payments. Eligible utility services are gas, electric, water, and sewage. No program participant shall receive more than 24 months of utility assistance within any 3-year period.
- **Moving costs:** HOME-ARP funds may pay for moving costs, such as truck rental or hiring a moving company. This assistance may include payment of temporary storage fees for up to 3 months, provided that the fees are accrued after the date the program participant begins receiving

assistance under this section of the Notice and before the program participant moves into permanent housing. Payment of temporary storage fees in arrears is not eligible.

- **First and Last month's rent:** If necessary to obtain housing for a program participant, HOME-ARP funds may be used to make a pre-payment of the first and last month's rent under a new lease to the owner at the time the owner is paid the security deposit for the program participant's tenancy in the housing. This assistance must not exceed two month's rent and must be tracked for purposes of determining the total short- and medium-term financial assistance for rent that the program participant may receive. This assistance is separate and distinct from financial assistance for Security Deposits provided under this section and cannot be used to duplicate those costs.
- **Payment of rental arrears:** HOME-ARP funds may be used for a one-time payment for up to 6 months of rent in arrears, including any late fees or charges on those arrears, if necessary for the household to maintain their existing housing or, for those without housing, if necessary to remove a demonstrated barrier to obtaining housing.

#### Short-Term and Medium-Term Financial Assistance for Rent

Subject to the following conditions, a partner organization may provide a program participant with short-term or medium-term financial assistance for rent, provided that the total financial assistance provided, including any pre-payment of first and last month's rent as described above, does not exceed 24 months of rental payments over any 3-year period.

- Short-term means up to 3 months.
- Medium-term means more than 3 months but not more than 24 months.
- The organization may make rental payments only to an owner with whom the organization has entered into a financial assistance agreement for rental payment. The financial assistance agreement must set forth the terms under which rental payments will be provided, including the requirements that apply under this Notice. The financial assistance agreement must provide that, during the term of the agreement, the owner must give the organization a copy of any notice to the program participant to vacate the housing unit or any complaint used under State or local law to commence an eviction action against the program participant. The owner must serve written notice upon the program participant at least 30 days before termination of tenancy specifying the grounds for the action. Each financial assistance agreement that is executed or renewed must comply with the requirements in 24 CFR 92.359.
- The organization must make timely payments to each owner in accordance with the financial assistance agreement. The financial assistance agreement must contain the same payment due date, grace period, and late payment penalty requirements as the program participant's lease. The organization is solely responsible for paying late payment penalties that it incurs with non-HOME-ARP funds.
- Rental payments cannot be provided unless the rent does not exceed the Fair Market Rent established by HUD, as provided under 24 CFR part 888, and complies with HUD's standard of rent reasonableness, as established under 24 CFR 982.507.
- Each program participant receiving financial assistance for rental payments must have a legally binding, written lease for the rental unit, unless the assistance is solely for rental arrears. The lease must be between the owner and the program participant. Where the financial assistance is solely for rental arrears, an oral agreement may be accepted in place of a written lease, if the agreement gives the program participant an enforceable leasehold interest under state law and the agreement and rent owed are sufficiently documented by the owner's financial records, rent ledgers, or canceled checks. New leases must have an initial term of 1 year unless a shorter period is agreed upon by the program participant and owner. The lease requirements in 24 CFR 92.359 apply to this financial assistance.

- Organizations must establish requirements to prevent the provision of short- or medium-term financial assistance for rent for the same period for which a program participant is receiving rental assistance or living in housing provided with ongoing assistance (such as project-based rental assistance or operating subsidies).
- If a program participant receiving financial assistance for short- or medium-term rental payments under this section meets the conditions for an emergency transfer under 24 CFR 5.2005(e), HOME-ARP funds may be used to pay amounts owed for breaking a lease to effectuate an emergency transfer. These costs are not subject to the 24-month limit on rental payments.

**Ineligible costs** - *Financial assistance cannot be provided to a program participant who is receiving the same type of assistance through other public sources. Financial assistance also cannot be provided to a program participant who has been provided with replacement housing payments under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 USC 4601 et seq.) and its implementing regulations at 49 CFR part 24, or Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 USC 5304(d) and its implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 42, during the period of time covered by the replacement housing payments.*

**Eligible Costs Associated with Housing Counseling under 24 CFR 5.100 and 5.111**

Costs associated with housing counseling services as defined at 24 CFR 5.100 and 5.111 are eligible under HOME-ARP. As homeowner assistance and related services are not eligible HOME-ARP activities, costs for the provision of services related to mortgages and homeownership to existing homeowners are also not eligible under HOME-ARP. If a program participant is a candidate for homeownership, costs associated with pre-purchase homebuying counseling, education and outreach are eligible under HOME-ARP. Eligible costs are those costs associated with the services listed in 24 CFR part 214 and include, but are not limited to:

- Staff salaries and overhead costs of HUD-certified housing counseling agencies related to directly providing eligible housing counseling services to HOME-ARP program participants;
- Development of a housing counseling workplan;
- Marketing and outreach;
- Intake;
- Financial and housing affordability analysis;
- Action plans that outline what the housing counseling agency and the client will do to meet the client's housing goals and that address the client's housing problem(s);
- Follow-up communication with program participants.