**Rapid Resolution Housing Initiative Round 3 - Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the purpose of the Rapid Resolution Housing Initiative funds?**

These funds are to be used to meet the immediate financial needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness currently due to the COVID-19 public health crisis. These funds are for one-time/short term flexible financial assistance to help households get to safe housing. All requests must be tied to a housing plan with an identified timeline to exit homelessness.

**Who is eligible?**

Households experiencing literal homelessness as defined by Category 1 of the AHS/HUD definition of homelessness.

**How do people apply?**

The application must be completed by the service provider in conjunction with the household. Both must sign the form. The applicant must be participating in Coordinated Entry and the date of their assessment must be on the form. HMIS users need to include the HMIS ID on the application form. The application must be completed in its entirety, please do not leave sections blank. Only complete applications will be accepted and reviewed.

**How can this money be used?**

Eligible activities include:

- Up to 3 months of rental assistance, and last month’s rent for new housing
  - If used for short-term rental assistance for a long-term lease, ability to sustain rent ongoing must be a consideration
- Security deposit, including extra security deposits if required to secure housing
- Transportation costs to live with family/friends, including another region or state
  - Any costs greater than $200 should include a price comparison
- Back utility or rent payments that prevent access to new housing
  - If debt pre-dates COVID-19 (incurred prior to March 2020), the application must demonstrate that “but for” the resolution of the back debt the identified housing opportunity would not be available.
- Reducing or eliminating debt to make future rent affordable
  - This connection must be demonstrated in the budget and housing plan
- Program fees for recovery housing or other non-traditional housing option
- Offset costs for a host family or home-sharing scenario, directly paid to the host family for a commitment of housing
- Moving costs, including essential furnishings (see list of eligible items and maximum allowances)
- Utility deposits or assistance
- Other activities, so long as they are directly tied to a housing plan
- **Please note,**
  - While vouchers for specific items such as gas, food, and household items may be arranged, gift cards or gift certificates are NOT allowable expenses.
  - Any single item $5,000+ should include a price comparison.
Where do I send the application?

The following agencies are Rapid Resolution fund administrators (as of 10/1/21):

- BROC – Covers Bennington AHS District
  - Contact Sandy Bessette sbessette@broc.org; 802-445-1305
- Capstone – Covers Barre and Morrisville AHS Districts
  - Contact dawn butterfield dbutterfield@capstonevt.org; 802-477-5124
- CVOEO – Covers Burlington, Middlebury and St. Albans AHS Districts
  - Burlington and Middlebury Districts contact Travis Poulin tpoulin@cvoeo.org 863-6248
  - St. Albans AHS District contact Jess Graff jgraff@cvoeo.org 802-527-7392
- Groundworks Collaborative - Covers Brattleboro AHS District
  - Contact Jon Hoover jhoover@groundworksvt.org; 802-302-8311
- Homeless Prevention Center – Covers Rutland AHS District
  - Contact Jessica Makela jessica@hpcvt.org; 802-775-9286 ext. 206
- NEKCA – Covers Newport and St. Johnsbury AHS Districts;
  - Contact Joy Ely jely@nekcavt.org; 802-487-4021
- Springfield Supportive Housing Program – Covers Springfield AHS District (Windsor South-Windham North COC, includes some towns from Brattleboro AHS District)
  - Contact Tara Chase tchase@sshptvt.org; 802-885-3034
- Upper Valley Haven - Covers Hartford AHS District
  - Contact Jennifer Fontaine jfontaine@uppervalleyhaven.org; 802-478-1850
- VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence – Covers statewide
  - Contact Kara Casey kara@vtnetwork.org; 802-223-1302 ext. 1105

What is the role of the Fund Administrators?

The fund administrators will review the application, verify that the requirements are met, costs are reasonable and issue payment. If needed they will contact the referral agency with questions.

Do applicants have to seek assistance from other programs before applying for Rapid Resolution funds? How do the funds work together – Rapid Resolution Housing Initiative (RRHI), Vermont Emergency Rental Assistance Program (VERAP), Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP)?

There are a number of resources currently available to help Vermonter who are at-risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness. Housing Case Managers should be familiar with the eligibility criteria for each program as well as what each program will cover as allowable costs. For many eligible activities covered by RRHI there is no requirement that households seek assistance to other programs and organizations before requesting Rapid Resolution funds. There are resources available, such as utility arrears, rental assistance, and security deposits, through the Housing Opportunity Grant Program and Vermont Emergency Rental Assistance program and if a household is seeking RRHI funding for costs that may be covered through VERAP or HOP the RRHI application must address the reason behind that decision, the applicant must attest that they are not seeking funding from those sources, and the fund administrator needs to confirm.

Households CANNOT receive funding from more than one source for the same expense.
Can Households get additional assistance from Rapid Rehousing funds if needed?

Households who exit homelessness with Rapid Resolution funds may be eligible for additional financial assistance if needed to maintain housing stability. For these assists other mainstream resources and benefits should be considered first.

How much money can be requested per household?

Up to $3,500 can be requested to the fund administrator.

Up to $5,000 can be requested through the Coordinated Entry partners.

Over $5,000 must be approved by the State.