

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Department of Community and Economic Development Interoffice Memorandum

Date: August 14, 2024
To: Michael G. Colon, President of City Council
From: Sara Satullo, Deputy Director of Community Development
Re: Emergency Solutions Grant Application

We respectfully request Bethlehem City Council's consideration of a resolution authorizing the City of Bethlehem to apply for up to \$1.5 million of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) on behalf of Lehigh Valley's homelessness service providers, who are represented by the Lehigh Valley Regional Homeless Advisory Board (RHAB).

In recent years, the City of Allentown has submitted the ESG application on behalf of RHAB services providers and then administered the funding to awardees. This year's ESG application has a quick turnaround, and Allentown is unable to coordinate the application due to staffing turnover in the team that usually applies for and administers the grant.

The RHAB requested the City of Bethlehem to act as the applicant for this collaborative application on behalf of RHAB service providers. The City would act as a pass through for this grant funding if awarded.

ESG is a federal grant providing funding to assist with the rapid rehousing of homeless persons, street outreach, homelessness prevention, and emergency shelter activities. Funds may also be used to support the maintenance of a homeless management information system (HMIS) and administration. This program is authorized by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009. Only local governments are eligible to apply.

ESG funds may be used for any single activity or combination of eligible activities as outlined below:

- Rapid Rehousing
- Street Outreach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Emergency Shelter
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Administration

As ESG is one of the only federal source of homelessness prevention funding available for service providers, it is essential that the region has a submission in 2024. Otherwise, the Lehigh Valley will lose needed funding at a time where we have seen a 110% increase in unsheltered homelessness.

In 2023, the City of Allentown was awarded \$300,000 on behalf of six service providers. PA DCED has the discretion to only partially fund certain applicants and only fund portions of their application. We anticipate requesting up to \$1.5 million on behalf of 12 service providers, but we know all of those requests will not be funded.

We appreciate City Council's consideration of this request to apply for ESG funding from PA DCED on behalf of RHAB homelessness service providers. Applications are due August 30, 2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-_____

Resolution of the City of Bethlehem (“Applicant”) authorizing the filing of an Application for funds with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH) enacted into law on May 20, 2009, authorized the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has received ESG program funds and is making these funds available to units of local governments for eligible homeless services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bethlehem desires to submit an application to DCED for ESG Program funds to provide homeless services or on behalf of other entities to provide homeless services.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Bethlehem City Council that:

1. The proposed projects include homeless prevention; street outreach; rapid rehousing; emergency shelter; Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and administration to be funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania ESG Program meet the ESG interim rule requirements at §24 CFR 576 are eligible and approved.
2. The City of Bethlehem on behalf of VETBEDS; The Lehigh Conference of Churches; The Salvation Army; Third Street Alliance; Unidos Inc.; ProJeCt of Easton Inc; Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering Inc.; SELF!LV; Valley Youth House; New Bethany, Inc., (Subgrantees) is authorized and directed to execute an ESG Program application up to \$1.5 million to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.
3. The Subgrantees will assume the responsibility for securing the required matching amount of project funds or request a waiver of match funds to DCED.
4. The City of Bethlehem and/or its Subgrantees will reimburse the Commonwealth for any expenditure found to be ineligible.
5. The City of Bethlehem is authorized to provide such assurances, certificates, and supplemental data or revised data that DCED may request in connection with the application.

Sponsored by _____

ADOPTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2024.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk