

Minnesota Prairie County Alliance

2020

Request for Information (RFI) For Housing Support

Setting Types:

Board and Lodge

Board and Lodge with Special Services

Supportive Housing

Long Term Homeless Supportive Housing

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1. Introduction

General Background

Minnesota Prairie County Alliance (MNPrairie) provides extraordinary human services that build safety, health, and well-being in the communities of Dodge, Steele, and Waseca Counties. MNPrairie is a county human services agency created through a joint powers agreement that provides the full array of public human service programs. Public human services provided through MNPrairie include income and health care assistance such as healthcare coverage, cash, and food assistance, childcare assistance, and child support; social services such as adult protection, chemical dependency assessments, mental health, elderly, and disability supports; child welfare, child protection, licensing for foster care, adoption, and family child care.

This Request for Information (RFI) is to identify potential providers and proposed locations as options to consider for the housing models (Models 1-4) listed below in Section 2. This RFI does not apply to Corporate Foster Care, Family Foster Care, or Customized Living settings.

Housing Support is a State-funded program that provides an income supplement each month to pay for housing. They cover what a participant would need, at a minimum, to live in the community. Housing Support can pay for rent, utilities, and household furnishings. In some cases, Housing Support can pay for food, support services, or both.

To receive a Housing Support payment, a person must meet eligibility requirements. These requirements include being over the age of 65, blind, or over the age of 18 and disabled according to the criteria used by the Social Security Administration or other criteria established in the Housing Support statute (MN Statutes chapter 256I). Also, there are income and asset maximums. County human services departments are responsible for determining individual eligibility. Both families and singles are eligible for this funding.

The Housing Support rate is a monthly payment paid directly to a provider of housing on behalf of the eligible person. Housing Support settings include adult foster care (family and corporate), board and lodging establishments, customized living settings, assisted living, and supportive housing. This RFI does not apply to Corporate Foster Care, Family Foster Care, or Customized Living settings. It only applies to the models listed in below in Section 2. The Housing Support rate currently is \$922.00 (\$934.00 on 7/1/20), which covers all room and board costs, including any costs for laundry supplies, utilities, and damages. If the person does not have any reportable income, payment of this amount is paid entirely by the state. If the person is working or has countable assets, the resident may have to pay a portion of this rate out of their funds, with the state paying for the remaining portion.

A supplemental service rate may be included in the contract to eligible providers when approved by MNPrairie. If a Proposer is requesting consideration for a supplemental service rate, a detailed budget must be provided as an Attachment to the RFI. MNPrairie's availability of supplemental service rate beds is limited for Board & Lodge settings and require a Special Services Registration with the Minnesota Department of Health. However, there is not this limitation for Long-Term Homeless Supportive Housing. The Supplemental Service Rate is up to \$482.84 per bed for identified and explicit services requested by MNPrairie. These services must

meet each participant's identified needs and may include but are not limited to providing/assisting with transportation, arranging meetings and appointments for and with the participant, arranging medical and social services which focus on the participant's disability and needs, medication reminders, locked medication, up to 24-hour supervision, and case management services with written monthly documentation. These services and accompanying documentation will be provided to MNPrairie on an annual basis or as otherwise requested.

Upon MNPrairie review and approval, Housing Support providers must enter into a standardized agreement with MNPrairie County Alliance. The Housing Support Agreement assures minimum quality standards for settings across the state and across setting types. The Agreement can be terminated by the state, county, or provider with notice. The state can immediately terminate a Housing Support agreement when the health or welfare of persons is in jeopardy.

2. Models

Model 1 – Group Setting Board and Lodge

- This model provides housing for smaller groups, ideally for 5-6 participants in a homelike setting with shared spaces, such as living rooms, dining rooms, or kitchens. One-bedroom per person (preferred by MNPrairie) or shared bedrooms (depending on the size of the bedroom and participants served).
- The building/facility must qualify to receive a board and lodge license from the applicable health licensing entity and meet zoning requirements. If a supplemental service rate is requested and approved by MNPrairie, then a board and lodge with a special services license from the MN Department of Health is also required.
- Three meals a day are provided with at least one being a hot group meal served by the staff to ensure direct resident contact daily. The amount spent on food per person per month must be at least \$192.00.
- Staff is present, on site, at least once daily and have the ability to be contacted in case of emergency or urgent resident issues.
 - If a supplemental service rate is requested, in the RFI response, the Proposer must thoroughly describe the additional service package offered. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.

Model 2 - Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Singles

- Rental housing is independent; it includes a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.
- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection for each unit before resident move-in and turn the document into MNPrairie.
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. One entity may be qualified to provide both components. Models that involve collaboration between two or more providers of services (e.g., an existing property management company with vacant units' partners with a service provider) are considered. The supplemental service rate funds the service coordination.

- MNPrairie implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building, determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the participant and property management. Minnesota Tenant and Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- A limited amount of on-site supervision is provided. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- Each household/participant has a unit that includes food preparation and sleeping space.
- The service provider must utilize the Coordinated Entry System to identify participants.

Model 3 – Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Families:

- Rental housing is independent; it includes a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.
- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection in each unit and turn the document into the MNPrairie
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. Although one entity may be qualified to provide both components, the models that involve collaboration between two or more providers of services (e.g., an existing property management company with vacant units partners with a service provider) are considered. The supplemental service rate funds the service coordination.
- MNPrairie implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building, determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the participant and property management. Minnesota Tenant Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- A limited amount of on-site supervision is provided. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring the resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- Each household/participant has a unit that includes food preparation and sleeping space.
- The service provider must utilize the Coordinated Entry System.

Model 4 Community Scattered Site – Supportive Housing for participant receiving waiver-funded services (Supplemental Service Rate not applicable)

- Rental housing is independent through a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.

- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection for each unit and turn the document into the MNPrairie
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. Collaboration between the service provider and property management is required. Waiver funds, as allowable, pay for service coordination.
- MNPrairie implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building. This is determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the participant and property management. A guardian can also hold the lease. The lease cannot be with a service provider if the participant is on a waiver.
- Minnesota Tenant Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- Some on-site supervision is provided. Responses should specify how they intend to determine the number and type(s) of services provided.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- All requirements of provider-specific licensing must be met (such as 245D or 203).
- All 245D services must be delivered in a setting that meets the Minnesota definition of *Own Home* in the Community Based Services Manual.

Financial information specific to Model 2, 3 and 4

- Upon receipt of each monthly Housing Support payment, the service provider shall promptly:
 - Issue payment to the property management per the lease agreement.
 - Unless included in the rent payment, issue payment in full for the following utilities: gas, electricity, phone, water, and trash.
 - Assist the participant in purchasing other required household goods with the remainder of the fund.
 - If the provider is receiving a Supplemental Service Rate, the service provider shall have a written plan which identifies the specific services provided to the participant during the month including a 24-hour emergency plan of care.

3. Staffing and Provider Qualifications

Background Studies

Providers of Housing Support must initiate background studies per MN Statute 245C for the following individuals:

- Controlling and managing individuals as defined in the Human Services Licensing Act (Minnesota Statutes, chapter 245A); and
- All employees and volunteers who have direct contact (provide face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, consultation, or medication assistance) with recipients,

and those who have unsupervised access to recipients, their personal property, or their private data.

The provider must assure, and have documentation that before providing any direct service, all individuals required to have a background study as per the requirements listed above, have a notice stating either that:

- 1) The individual is not disqualified under MN Statute 245C.14; or
- 2) The individual is disqualified, but the individual has been issued a set-aside of the disqualification for that setting under MN Statute 245C.22.

Minimum Staffing Qualifications

Minimum provider qualifications are required for settings whose only license is Board and Lodging, and for unlicensed settings. Before or upon hire, the provider must ensure (and provide documentation upon MNPrairie request) that all individuals/staff that provide face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, consultation, or medication assistance) with recipients meet the following minimum requirements:

- Have at least **one** of the following:
 - A course of study in a health or human services-related field leading to a bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, or associate's degree; or
 - One year experience with the target population served (can include being a member of the target population served); or
 - Experience as a Minnesota Department of Human Services certified peer specialist; or
 - Meets requirements of unlicensed personnel in licensed home care settings
- Have a valid driver's license appropriate to the vehicle if transporting participants
- Complete two online trainings:
 1. Vulnerable Adult Mandated Reporting from the department; and
 2. Housing Support Orientation (when/if offered by DHS)

4. General Rules

RFI Overview

This Request For Information (“RFI”) is an invitation to submit a proposal to MNPrairie. It is not to be construed as an official and customary request for bids or guarantee of contract approval, but as a means by which MNPrairie can facilitate the acquisition of information regarding contracts for Housing Support services. Any proposal submitted is a suggestion to review and possibly negotiate, it is not a bid. These contents of this RFI are subject to revision or cancellation by MNPrairie in its sole and absolute discretion with the most current version of the RFI found on the MNPrairie website at www.MNPrairie.org.

Proposers interested in obtaining a Housing Support agreement or expanding services are required to complete the application below. When submitting a proposal, Proposers must follow the specific format. A response is given within 90 days of application submission with an initial review date of July 1st, 2020, and then ongoing.

Proposers can email applications and questions to Ruth.Lee@MNPrairie.org. Proposers are encouraged to make their submissions well in advance of the proposal due date.

Ownership of Materials Submitted

Information submitted becomes the property of MNPrairie. All information, including detailed rate information, is held in confidence during the review and selection process. After that, the information is public.

The information included in response to the RFI follows Section 13.591 of Minnesota statutes governing data practices. Also, "security information," "trade secret information," or "labor relations" information *is classified as described in Minnesota Statutes 13.37, Subd.1.*

Proposal Submission Notices

- MNPrairie is not responsible for costs incurred by any person or agency responding.
- MNPrairie expressly reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFI at any time and to reject all responses.
- MNPrairie reserves the right to request additional information or a meeting with potential candidates at any stage in this process, including visiting proposed locations.
- There is no guarantee of referrals or compensation for non-occupied beds.

5. Evaluation and Selection

Evaluation Panel and Evaluation Criteria

After review of each proposal, MNPrairie may immediately issue a Housing Support Agreement to a successful Proposer based on the evaluation criteria. It may also establish a list of Proposers for further consideration and ask to provide additional information including but not limited to financial statements. Issuing contracts and requesting the information is at the sole discretion of MNPrairie.

Projects that are in alignment with the MNPrairie's mission and vision have priority. The mission and vision are found on www.MNPrairie.org. Projects that promote links among affordable housing, transit, employment, community resources, and supportive services also receive priority. Expansion requests may take into consideration the following: the prior record of services, partnerships, fiduciary responsibilities, and program quality.

Other selection criteria include:

- Project results in housing opportunities not now provided or provided on a limited basis as compared to the county-determined need.
- Proposers demonstrate knowledge of local community supports.
- Proposers demonstrate knowledge of Housing Support, including eligibility requirements, quality standards, provider qualification, and reporting.
- The project has low barriers to entry.
- Proposers have experience helping others increase self-sufficiency.
- Services meet state statute for the proposed model.
- The supervision plan meets the expectations outlined in the program model.

- Services and housing listed in the budget are fiscally responsible and appropriate.
- All proposed projects are in Dodge, Steele, or Waseca Counties.
- The timeline supports full operations within six months of the approval to enter into a Housing Support Agreement.

