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2019 Iowa Balance of State (IA-501) Continuum of Care (CoC) Grantee Renewal Application

APPLICANT NAME AND INFORMATION

Organization Name:	Friends of the Family
Renewal Project Name:	Rapid Housing Initiative of North Iowa
Project Name(s) as appearing in HMIS/DVIMS:	FOFIA- Rapid Housing Initiative of North Iowa (RRH) (282)
Grant Identifier:	IA0091L7D011803
Project Type:	Rapid Rehousing (RRH)
Projected number of clients to be served in renewal grant period:	40
Anticipated Renewal Amount:	184159.00
Verify current registration in federal System for Award Management:	Yes
DUNS #:	845062777
Counties Served by Project:	Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Mitchell and Worth
Address of Administrative Office:	Friends of the Family P.O. Box 784 Waverly, IA 50677
Primary Contact Name:	KarLee Kearns
Primary Contact Phone:	(319) 352-1108 ext. 102
Primary Contact Email:	karlee@fofia.org
Secondary Contact Name:	Ben Brustkern
Secondary Contact Phone:	(319) 352-1108 ext. 207
Secondary Contact Email:	ben@fofia.org

THRESHOLD ASSURANCES

Having too little or no income:	NOT a Barrier
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Having a criminal record with exceptions for state, and/or federal restrictions:	NOT a Barrier
Fleeing domestic violence (e.g., lack of a protective order, period of separation from abuser, or law enforcement involvement):	NOT a Barrier
Having (or not having) a previous address within Iowa:	NOT a Barrier
Failure to comply with HUD's 2016 Gender Identity Rule: (https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/1991/equal-access-to-housing-final-rule/)	NOT a Barrier
Failure to comply with Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Requirements including assuring non-discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and familial status and disability.	NOT a Barrier
Attach project Policies & Procedures to verify barrier statuses selected above:	https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3367170/74759947/510817417/74759947_rhi_manual.pdf

CONTINUUM OF CARE PARTICIPATION

1. a. What percentage of your clients served do you feel were referred through coordinated entry? Explain your response.	We have not pulled any clients from Coordinated Entry because the coordinated services regional leader has recently changed from FAVA to Northern Lights Alliance for the Homeless and they have not established coordinated entry in the counties served by this grant. Friends of the Family has offered to assist in the development of coordinated entry, but the current lead agency has not been receptive. In the meantime, Friends of the Family Rapid Housing Initiative has been completing VI-SPDATs with households and/or individuals referred through the crisis line and are prioritizing and pulling households and/or individuals with the highest scores first based on program openings and utilizing the following tie breakers for individuals with the same score: chronically homeless, length of homelessness, domestic violence, and veteran status. With the lack of a coordinated entry system in place we have done as much as possible to create an internal system to serve most in need.
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1. b. Describe timeline/progress of Coordinated Entry in your region. Explain your project's participation in Coordinated Entry and the steps taken to support the Coordinated Entry process in the project's region.

Friends of the Family has offered support on policies and procedures to the Coordinated Service Region leads: FAVA and Northern Lights Alliance for the Homeless. FoF is an access point for individuals and families seeking housing services in Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Floyd, Mitchell, and Worth. Friends of the Family has participated in Mason City's Homeless Coordinating Board since the RHI's program start. Friends of the Family has participated in the Mason City Mental Health Collaboration Grant and discussed Coordinated Entry with key stakeholders in the community. Friends of the Family continues to stress the importance of coordinated entry and are ready to participate once it is up and running.

2. Since January 2018, have representatives of your project attended at least three bimonthly meetings of the Iowa Council on Homelessness? Note that anyone can participate in Council meetings even if not a voting member. Posted meeting minutes must be available to verify attendance.

January 19, 2018- Ben Brustkern and KarLee Kearns
March 20, 2018- Ben Brustkern and KarLee Kearns
May 18, 2018- Ben Brustkern and KarLee Kearns
July 20, 2018 Ben Brustkern and Jessica Jepsen-Rupp

3. a. Describe professional development opportunities (conferences, meeting, trainings, webinars, etc.) related to Homelessness in which representatives of your project have participated within the last 12 months.

1. 2018 Peer to Peer Homeless Symposium, Des Moines, Iowa June 13&14- Ben Brustkern (Executive Director), Jessica Jepsen-Rupp (Homeless Resource Specialist), Genna Schilling (Housing Support Specialist), KarLee Kearns (Housing Services Manager) and William Bird (Housing Support Specialist)
2. Access Point Trainings on August 23, 2018- KarLee Kearns and Jessica Jepsen Rupp- National Alliance to End Homelessness Webinar-Closing a Case: Knowing when to end Rapid Rehousing Assistance-2018
3. National Conference on Ending Homelessness, Washington DC, July 23-25, 2018- Ben Brustkern, Kelley Schmitz (Director of Operations)
4. Iowa Housing Conference, Des Moines, IA September 5-7, 2018- Ben Brustkern and KarLee Kearns
5. Iowa Balance of State Governance Strategy Session, Des Moines, IA November 16, 2018- Ben Brustkern and Karlee Kearns

3. b. From the mentioned above, list the top three (3) most useful experiences and describe how your project implemented information gained from them?

2018 Peer to Peer Homeless Symposium - Rural homelessness and landlord recruitment - FOF continues to strengthen its plan to recruit and retain landlord partners. The symposium provided us with tips on landlord engagement. We are now creating a brochure and an outreach plan for recruiting new landlords and implementing an email publication to engage current landlords.

National Alliance to End Homelessness Webinar - "Closing a Case: Knowing when to end Rapid Rehousing Assistance" - This webinar provided guidance for staff to quickly identify when participants can maintain permanent housing without our ongoing assistance.

2018 National Conference on Ending Homelessness - FOF staff have realigned shelter services based on a presentation given by Org Code. Shelter programming has shifted to be housing-focused, which has led to a decrease in the average length of shelter stay. We were able to identify key training for shelter staff in de-escalation, harm reduction, and case management.

4. a. In the past year, describe your agency's activities/engagement/involvement with one or more local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) about implementing a homeless admission preference in their written policies for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) or Public Housing programs:

Friends of the Family met with North Iowa Regional Housing Authority's new executive director, Justin Scotts, to discuss implementing a preference list. Justin is currently in the process of updating North Iowa Regional Housing Authority's policies and agreed to add a homeless admission preference to their policies. Implementation of a homeless preference will move homeless families and individuals to the top of the Section 8 list. Friends of the Family's Executive Director is on the Iowa Northland Regional Housing Authority (INRHA) Board of Directors and has begun conversations with board members and the Executive Director about INRHA implementing a homeless preference. The topic of a homeless preference will continue to be discussed within the INRHA board meetings and FOF will use leverage as a board member to push a written policy towards a homeless preference.

4. a. Please attach documentation to verify, such as an email chain or meeting notes.

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3367170/74770101/510817417/74770101_rhi_email.pdf

4. b. In the past year, describe your agency's activities/engagement/involvement with local affordable housing providers (e.g. multifamily assisted housing owners, PHAs, Low Income Housing Tax Credit developments, or local low-income housing programs) about implementing a Move On strategy (Informational resource:

Friends of the Family met with North Iowa Regional Housing Authority to discuss the idea of a move on strategy for users of housing vouchers. The North Iowa wait list is short enough that clients who are ready and wanting to exit RHI's program can get on the wait list and be awarded a housing choice voucher before reaching the maximum length of stay. We have also discussed with them developing a strategy to move people off of section 8 and to self sufficiency to open up vouchers.

We have also worked with a low income housing tax credit development project to provide case management to 5 set aside homeless units and 5 set aside low income units. As the service provider we will work with the developer to adopt a move on strategy that will allow these units to open up at a more frequent rate.

<https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Moving-On-Chapter-6-Final.pdf>):

4. b. Please attach documentation to verify, such as an email chain or meeting notes.

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3367170/74770192/510817417/74770192_rhi_email.pdf

5. In the past year, to what extent has your agency taken steps locally to educate communities on the issues of homelessness: (e.g. decriminalization of homelessness engaging local policymakers, law enforcement, or business leaders; implementing community plan)?

Friends of the Family educates community leaders on homelessness throughout the 14 counties we serve. We have participated in the Iowa Council on Homelessness Day on the Hill since its inception and engage our state legislators. We discuss state and local issues that affect the homeless population such as criminalization, right to assistance bills that penalize tenants who call the police, and programming that moves us closer to ending homelessness.

Locally, we meet with multiple County Board of Supervisors and community funders/leaders about homeless services. This includes education on Housing First, Coordinated Entry, Prioritization, and Rapid Rehousing. We have found high levels of support from our local government officials which avoids any damaging policies being brought forward that would hurt the homeless population.

We work with Mason City PD on a mental health grant that focuses diverting people who experience homelessness from jail into community resources.

6. In the past year, to what extent has your agency taken steps locally to prevent the discharge of persons from local systems of care (foster care, health care, mental health care, correctional facilities) into homelessness?

Friends of the Family met with Pillars, a housing program for girls and young women aging out of foster care. Friends of the Family has added questions to our housing follow up calls to find out if callers are eligible for their program as a measure to prevent people who are aging out of foster care from discharging into homelessness. We have conducted outreach to Community providers so they are aware of our programming and often refer clients so they can complete a VI-SPDAT or connect with us to provide resources/referrals and diversion. We talk with individuals who are being discharged (hotline callers or caseworkers) to help them come up with a short term plan (diversion) and then a long term plan (applying for our housing programming, section 8 or income based housing). We are also working on a bringing a low barrier shelter to Mason City so people would have a place to go upon exit from jail, the psychiatric ward/ER or simply living on the streets.

7. a. Did your agency participate in the street (unsheltered) count in counties served by your project and how?

Friends of the Family provided a unsheltered count for the counties we serve with this project. We were not the lead agency for this region and provided support to the local Coordinated Services Region to ensure a street count was conducted.

7. b. Did your agency submit the PIT/HIC information for your projects by the set submission deadline? If not, why?

yes

8. List at least one representative of your project participate in the April 2019 Annual Meeting of Iowa Balance of State CoC Grantees. Describe any special participation your agency performed in regards to the meeting. Ben Brustkern and KarLee Kearns were in attendance. KarLee is on the CoC committee as a voting member and assisted in updating the appeals procedures for this years competition.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

9. a. Has this project completed it's first grant full grant cycle? (i.e. 1st year renewal with end date after application date?) Yes

9. b. Project grant year end-date completed: Dec 31, 2018

9. c. Grant amount: 182035.00

9. d. Total funds expended: 177689.00

9. e. Funds remaining (unexpended funds): 4346.00

9. f. Unexpended funds % (unexpended funds/grant amount): 2.39

APR Sage Submission Requirement (days) 90

APR Deadline in SAGE: Mar 31, 2019

10. a. Date APR submitted to HUD in SAGE: Mar 07, 2019

10. b. Did your project meet the 90-day requirement? Yes

11. a. Has HUD monitored the project within the past two years? No

12. a. Failure to participate in supportive services and/or failure to make progress on a service plan: No

12. b. Loss of income or failure to improve income: No

12. c. Active substance abuse: No

12. d. Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found in the project's geographic area:	No
12. e. Ensure that every effort is made to help participants transition to other housing options when continuation in this project is jeopardized or about to expire?	Yes
12. f. Attach the project's written termination policy. The effective date must be evident on the policy.	https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3367170/74776944/510817417/74776944_rhi_manual.pdf
13. a. Transportation assistance is provided to clients to attend mainstream benefit appointments, employment training, or jobs.	True
13. b. At least semi-annual follow-ups are attempted with participants after project exit to ensure that mainstream benefits are received and renewed (and for RRH projects, to verify that housing stability is maintained) for a period of X years.	True
13. c. Annual interim reviews with current clients are being completed with 30 days of anniversary date to check on client well-being and update all relevant data including: income, disability status, health care, etc.	True
13. d. Project participants have access to SSI/SSDI technical assistance provided by the applicant, a sub-recipient, or partner agency.	True
14. Did the number of clients served by your project achieve or exceed your estimated levels of service when you last applied/renewed this grant? Explain, success/difficulties.	Yes. The Rapid Housing Initiative of North Iowa was projected to serve 40 participants and we exceeded that estimate and served 50 individuals.

PROJECT PERFORMANCE/EVALUATION

Attach "2019 BOS CoC Renewal Application Report" from HMIS/DVIMS	https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3367170/74778606/510817417/74778606_bos_coc_monitoring_report_v032520191.pdf
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15. Does the agency maintain an average of 14 days or less between clients' project start and entry into HMIS?	No, however we have reduced the number from last grant year which was an average of 69.42 days to 16 days this current grant year. All new clients are now being entered within 5 days of entry to the project. Unfortunately, the 16 day average is reflecting the clients that were entered in the previous grant year. We have also discovered that the when a baby is born, or children are placed back in the household, that they are a delayed entry. We believe that over the last grant year we are well under the 14-day window and that number is skewed by previous client entries and newborn babies/reunified families.
16. Does your agency maintain an average data completeness score of less than 2% missing data?	Yes we are Less than 2%.
17. RRH: Does your project sufficiently prioritize literally homeless clients or those fleeing domestic violence?	Yes we are Higher than 93%. Actual number is 100%
18. RRH/PSH: Was program average time to permanent housing under 30 days?	Yes we are Under 30 days. The program average time to permanent housing is 19 days.
19. RRH/PSH: Is the total move-in date error less than 5%?	We are Under 5%. The project currently is at 0%
20. RRH/PSH: Is the total exit destination error less than 10%?	We are Under 10%. The project is currently at 0%
21. RRH: Percentage of all adult participants who increased total income from entry to exit?	We are More than 30%. The program has a rate of 67%
22. RRH: Percentage of exits to Permanent Housing?	We are more than 80%. The actual rate is 96%
23. RRH: Chronic population served in project?	We are more than 10%. We serve chronic population at a 24% rate.

BONUS QUESTION

***Bonus - Describe any specific services provided by your project specifically for youth/mental health/substance abuse:**

Friends of the family is helping to create a vision, mission, and policies and procedures for the low barrier shelter for the most vulnerable residents of our community. The shelter has developed partnerships with other agencies in the community that fit with the flow of services already being offered. Currently there is no place for people who are actively using substance to go for safe shelter -this will be a place for them to stay each night as needed. FOF also works closely with substance abuse providers and mental health counselors as well as school social workers to address homelessness. We continue to work with the local police department to deter homeless people with mental illness from being arrested and being referred to local community providers.

Through this grant and local match dollars, we have supportive services money that can be used to cover the cost of mental health or substance abuse appointments for clients and their children.
