

The City of Richmond's Eviction Diversion Program

Call for Applications for Fiscal Year 2025



Release of Application Packet: April 5, 2024

Question and Answer Session: 11:30 am on April 10, 2024

Applications Due: 2:00 pm on April 26, 2024

Table of Contents

❖ Call for Applications	Page 3
❖ Purpose and General Guidelines	Page 5
❖ Application Guidelines	Page 5
▪ Planning and Submission	
▪ Distribution	
▪ Staff Consultation	
▪ Deadline for Submission	
▪ Summary of Evaluation Criteria	
❖ Application Cover Sheet	Page 9
❖ Attachments	
▪ Application Acknowledgment Form-Attachment A	Page 10

Call for Applications

The City of Richmond's Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) is issuing a call for applications from approved housing counseling agencies in Richmond, as identified on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) website, as well as other applicable entities that received Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding from the City that supported emergency rental assistance during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, to implement its Fiscal Year 2025 Eviction Diversion Program. The Program will be funded with a Non-Departmental appropriation to be approved by the City Council and overseen by the City's Housing and Community Development Department.

Between 2016 and 2019, Richmond, VA had the second-highest eviction rate in the United States, at 11.44%. To combat this phenomenon, the City of Richmond collaborated with a local nonprofit to create its Eviction Diversion Program (EDP). However, while Federal and State moratoriums and emergency rental assistance provided during the pandemic assisted in keeping many low and moderate-income persons housed, this demographic is still experiencing difficulties since the COVID-19 mandated moratoriums have ended. Many low-income households face eviction every day and the number of evictions has steadily climbed. Therefore, the City of Richmond feels that it is important to continue to provide the Eviction Diversion Program.

Along with the provided Application Cover Sheet, application packages should include the following information and attachments:

- **Description of the Applicant Organization and its Capacity to Undertake the Proposed Program** - the Applicant must include information on its current work, experience conducting work similar to the Eviction Diversion Program (EDP), and capacity to undertake the proposed EDP, as well as relevant programmatic accomplishments for FY22 and FY23. Attachments to be included for this section: (a) copy of the HUD Housing Counseling Certification for the agency, if applicable, (b) listing of the Board of Directors, (c) copy of prior fiscal year audit, (d) copy of Good Standing Certificate from the State Corporation Commission (SCC), (e) copy of most recent 990 Report, (f) organizational chart, current year operating budget, and (h) if a nonprofit, copy of the IRS Tax-Exempt Designation, and (i) the bylaws and Articles of Incorporation for the organization.
- **Proposed Program Design** – the Applicant must provide a detailed narrative on how it will operate the proposed Eviction Diversion Program, including intake, awarding of assistance to participants, court and legal assistance to be provided, rental and/or financial counseling to be provide, participant case closeout, and post-closeout monitoring. The program design should also include information about dedicated staffing for the program, technology to be used for data collection or aid in programmatic efficiencies, marketing and outreach efforts, and the utilization of any partnerships in the delivery of the program, etc., based on the required guidelines outlined on Page 5. Attachments to be included for this section: (a) a listing of all staff to

be associated with the program, (b) relevant job descriptions for programmatic positions, and (b) all Memorandums of Understanding or Partnership Agreements.

- **Line-Item Project Budget** – the Applicant must include a line-item budget for the proposed program. **Note that the City will allow no more than 10% for general administration (i.e., office supplies, postage, mailings, contractual services, website enhancements regarding the EDP and the pro-rated cost of its annual audit, etc.); and 15% for direct support/personnel expenses. The remaining 75% must be for direct client services (i.e., rental financial assistance.)**

Applicants must email the full name and email address of the Agency Representative who will be submitting the application to Senior Project Development Manager, Amanda Wrinkle at amanda.wrinkle@rva.gov by 5:00pm on Tuesday, April 16, 2026. An agency-specific OneDrive folder will be created and shared with the Agency Representative for application submission.

All applications must be uploaded into the agency-specific OneDrive folder no later than 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2024. Faxed applications and late submissions will not be accepted.

The City will host a virtual Q&A session on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All entities interested in submitting an application are encouraged to attend. Please contact Kristen Stell at Kristen.Stell@rva.gov or via telephone at (804) 646-7824 to register for the Q&A Session. The virtual meeting link will be sent to persons registered on the evening before the workshop, as well as posted on HCD's webpage at <https://www.rva.gov/housing-and-community-development>.

Please direct any questions to the Department of Housing and Community Development at (804) 646-7824. The City of Richmond does not discriminate based on disability status in the admission or access to its programs. Virginia Relay Center - TDD users dial 711.

Disclaimer/Disclosure: The City of Richmond reserves the right to award funding other than what has been requested by an applicant, at its discretion, based on funding availability and/or for projects that meet an immediate need, priority, or goal of the City, and is an eligible activity as permitted by the City's general provisions for the FY25 Eviction Diversion Program.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ENTITIES APPLYING FOR FUNDING TO ADMINISTER THE CITY’S FISCAL YEAR 2025 EVICTION DIVERSION PROGRAM

Purpose and General Information:

The City of Richmond is utilizing a competitive application process to allow applicable entities to apply for funding to administer the City’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Eviction Diversion Program. All funding under this Call for Applications will be available to the following types of organizations:

1. Approved housing counseling agencies in Richmond with a current HUD certification and as identified on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) website; and
2. Entities that received Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding from the City of Richmond to provide emergency rental assistance during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding will be made available through the City’s Non-Departmental appropriations approved by the City Council for FY 2025.

Other required programmatic guidelines are as follows:

1. The Applicant must acknowledge the Eviction Diversion Pilot Program established pursuant to §55.1-1260, et seq. of the Code of Virginia (the “Pilot Program”) in the City of Richmond. Administrative oversight of the implementation of the Pilot Program and training for judges who preside over general district courts participating in the Pilot Program is conducted by the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The parameters of the Richmond and Pilot Programs shall be:

Purpose of the Richmond and State Pilot Program:

- Reduce the number of evictions of low-income persons from their residential dwelling units for the failure to pay under the rental agreement when such persons have experienced an event that adversely affected their financial circumstances such as loss of employment or a medical crisis in their family.
- Reduce displacement of families from their homes and the resulting adverse consequences to children who are no longer able to remain in the same public school after eviction.
- Encourage an understanding of eviction-related processes and facilitate the landlords and tenants entering into a reasonable payment plan that provides for the landlord to receive full rental payments as contracted for in the rental agreement and for the tenant to have the opportunity to make current such rental payments.

- Encourage tenants to make rental payments in the manner provided in the rental agreement.

Collaboration with the State Pilot Program:

- While the State Pilot Program will not be administered by the selected vendor, the vendor may provide funding to any participant in the Pilot Program who resides in the City of Richmond, provided that, in addition to all requirements set forth in VA Code § 55.1-1262, the participant or client further meets all requirements under the vendor's agreement with the City of Richmond.
2. The Applicant must be a certified housing counseling agency or demonstrate the ability to connect eligible participants with HUD-certified housing counselors to fulfill the housing counseling programmatic requirement. This is separate from any additional partnerships or referrals made by the Applicant to other agencies for the provision of supportive services, workforce development and career counseling, and/or behavioral health. These services, if offered as a part of the EDP, must be within the respective Federal and/or State guidelines for the respective service.
 3. The Applicant must have the capacity to effectively create or utilize systems to ensure timely intake, eligibility determination, payment processing, and financial controls that can meet District Courts timelines. A clear process for data collection, management, and reporting must also be in place.
 4. The Applicant must create or utilize, as a part of its intake process, an assessment to triage participants to receive the appropriate level of rental and financial counseling. Applicants must provide up to eight (8) hours of rental and or financial counseling through a combination of group and individual sessions on topics such as budgeting, personal money management, tenant rights, and other appropriate housing counseling to participants based on the assessed level of need. The Applicant may utilize the appropriate technology to provide these services as long as there is a way to provide the City with evidence that the counseling was delivered.
 5. The Applicant must detail strategies of how it will provide in-court or other legal assistance to all eligible participants, either through its own efforts or collaboration with other appropriate entities.
 6. The Applicant must provide post-case closure monitoring with participants by email, telephone or in-person at the 30 and 90-day intervals. If a participant, based on need, receives an additional month of assistance, the post-case closure monitoring must be extended for an additional 30 days.
 7. The Applicant must provide the City with its marketing and outreach strategy for the EDP that includes strategies to reach landlords, judges and court staff, and community members.
 8. The Applicant is strongly encouraged to leverage (in-kind or cash) additional resources or to apply for funds from other sources, i.e. Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP), etc. to maximize programmatic offerings and client financial assistance.

9. The Applicant must provide a line-item program budget. Note that the City will allow no more than 10% for general administration (i.e., office supplies, postage, mailings, contractual services, website enhancements for the EDP, the pro-rated cost of its annual audit, etc.); and 15% for direct support/personnel expenses. The remaining 75% must be for direct client services (i.e., financial assistance).
10. The minimum number of households to be served is 125 households.
11. The maximum amount of assistance to be provided, based on need, is \$ 3,000 with an additional amount allowed for up to two (2) months advance rent payments. In no case should the financial assistance exceed \$6,000.

Application Guidelines

Planning and Submission

- A. **Distribution** – The Application Coversheet and General Call for Applications Packet will be available on the Housing and Community Department’s (HCD) webpage at <https://www.rva.gov/housing-and-community-development/public-documents>
To request an application packet by email or for a paper copy, please contact Ms. Kristen Stell via email at Kristen.Stell@rva.gov or via phone at (804) 646-7824.
- B. **Application Acknowledgment Form** - Note that the applicant's Board Chair or the highest-ranking Board Officer must sign an Application Acknowledgment Form that is required to be submitted with the application (See Attachment A). If awarded, the Board Chair or highest-ranking Board Officer must sign the contract, or the organization must pass a resolution acknowledging the award as outlined in the form.
- C. **Staff Consultation** - Staff members are available to discuss the application process, and other issues over the phone or in person. Appointments are required or via a TEAMS meeting. Please call Kristen Stell at (804) 646-7824 to schedule an appointment for a telephone or TEAMS meeting. HCD will also hold a virtual Q&A Session on April 10, 2024, at 11:30 am. Please call Kristen Stell at the above telephone number to register and for more information. The link for the virtual session will also be on the website on April 9, 2023. All interested and eligible persons should participate in the Q&A Session. Language Assistance Information - Office of Multicultural Affairs (804) 646- 0145.
- D. **Deadline for Submission** – Applications must be submitted no later than 2:00 **p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2024**. Applicants must email the full name and email address of the Agency Representative who will be submitting the application to Senior Project Development Manager, Amanda Wrinkle at amanda.wrinkle@rva.gov by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, April 16, 2024. An agency-specific OneDrive folder will be created so that the Applicant’s Agency Representative can submit its application by uploading the Application Coversheet, narrative, and all required supporting documentation. **All documentation must be uploaded into the agency-specific OneDrive folder by 2:00 pm on Friday, April 26, 2024**. Questions or needed clarification of the upload instructions can be provided to the Agency Representative if requested by contacting Amanda Wrinkle at Amanda.wrinkle@rva.gov. Faxed and late applications will **not** be accepted.

- E. **Attachments** - All attachments must be provided, and the attachments should be labeled appropriately. All necessary information should be placed on the Application Coversheet, as applicable. Other documents cannot replace the Application Coversheet. All attachments should be submitted with the application in the agency-specific OneDrive folder by the deadline.

Summary of Evaluation Criteria

- A. HCD will utilize a panel of evaluators from various City departments to serve as the reviewers of the applications received.
- B. The evaluation for the EDP applications consists of a four-part, 100-point evaluation criteria. Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Experience and Capacity (25 points)
 - Program Design, including Housing Counseling Plan and Post Case Closure Monitoring (35 points)
 - Technology Utilization (15 points)
 - Marketing and Outreach Plan (10 points),
 - Community Partnerships and Collaborations (15 points).



THE CITY OF RICHMOND EVICTION DIVERSION PROGRAM APPLICATION COVER SHEET

1. Program Funds Requested:

- Eviction Diversion Program:

2. Amount Requested: _____

3. Applicant Organization:

Organization Name: _____

Federal Tax ID: _____

SAMS/UEI Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Program Name: **Eviction Diversion Program (EDP)**

Program Point of Contact: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Executive Director/CEO: _____

Is the Organization Incorporated? (Include Applicable Attachments)

Non-Profit Yes No

For-Profit Yes No

Attachments: (Provide applicable documents and check the corresponding boxes of documents submitted)

- Copy of the HUD Housing Counseling Certification(s)
- List of Board of Directors, Members, and Executive Officers
- Copy of Prior Year Fiscal Audit
- Copy of the State Corporation Good Standing Certification
- Copy of Most Recent IRS 990
- Copy of the Organizational Chart
- Copy of Current Year Operation Budget
- Copy of IRS Tax Exempt Designation (Non-profits only) and By-Laws
- Copy of Assigned Project Staff Resume/Bios
- Copy of Relevant Programmatic Job Descriptions
- Copies of Partnership Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding
- Additional Attachments: _____



**City of Richmond Department of Housing and Community Development
Application Acknowledgment Form for Non-Departmental Funding**

The signature below indicates that the Board Chair of _____ is aware of the organization's intention to apply for Non-Departmental funds administered by the City of Richmond's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Board Chair is aware that the Non-Departmental Funding administered by HCD is subject to compliance with all applicable City policies and regulations, and that failure to do so could result in recapture of such funds by the City.

The Board Chair also understands that if _____'s application is selected for an award that the organization has two options in the completion of the contract with the City of Richmond. Either the Board Chair can sign the contract between the agency and the City of Richmond as their acknowledgment of the receipt of the Non-Departmental funds or the Board may pass a Resolution to acknowledge the receipt of funds. One of these two options must be selected at the time of the notification of the award and communicated to HCD in writing.

Board Chairperson's Signature and Date

Board Chairperson's Printed Name