King County Consortium Emergency Solutions Grant Standards

Eligibility: Clients served with King County Consortium Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for 1) emergency shelter, or 2) rapid re-housing must be “literally homeless” by HUD standards, which is defined as follows:

A. An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
   1. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
   2. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals; or
   3. An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

B. Any individual or family who is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual’s or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; has no other residence; and lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

C. Emergency Shelter component standards for admission, diversion, referral and discharge, length of stay and safeguards to meet needs of special populations.

The King County Consortium HESG funded emergency shelter programs serve homeless households. Since spring 2012, all homeless families in King County must be screened, assessed, and placed in programs through the King County Family Housing Connection Program (FHC). FHC is our continuum of care’s coordinated entry program for homeless families. All family emergency shelter programs that are funded as part of our continuum must participate in FHC.

Families screened by FHC must be literally homeless to enter an emergency shelter. If an immediate opening is not available, families are placed on a waiting list. Length of stay for a family in emergency shelter is determined by ability to transition the family to longer term housing, such as transitional housing or permanent housing at time of shelter discharge.

To ensure the safety of families who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, those families are exempted from the FHC coordinated entry system for entry to emergency
shelter and transitional housing. The domestic violence service providers in King County participate in Day One Program, which is a secure and confidential site for referring domestic violence survivors and their children to real time shelter vacancies and services.

Since 2012, all youth and young adults are required to participate in the Homeless Youth and Young Adult Initiative. As part of this all CoC programs are asked to have their participants complete Community Sign In when utilizing an emergency shelter and drop in centers.

The CoC is currently testing coordinated assessment for single adults and exploring integrating it into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). When fully implemented, it will expand coordinated assessment beyond households with children, youth and young adults, and PSH for chronically homeless, all of which have been operational for a number of years.

Our community has set system-wide length of stay targets for various program types, including emergency shelters. These targets are based on current performance with a target designed to shorten the length of stay by population and overall.