

Bureau of Housing and Support Services (BHSS)

The Bureau of Housing and Support Services administers an array of programs to address homelessness in New York State. These programs provide a range of services for homeless, at-risk and low-income households. BHSS programs are designed to prevent homelessness, support emergency shelters, construct supportive housing for households experiencing homelessness, and offer essential services to stabilize housing situations. BHSS is comprised of two functional units: the Capital Program Unit (CPU) and the Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU).

Bureau of Housing and Support Services Contacts

Richard Umholtz Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Division of Housing and Refugees Services
Richard.Umholtz@otda.ny.gov

Dana Greenberg Director
Bureau of Housing and Support Services
Dana.Greenberg@otda.ny.gov

Michael Washburn Assistant Director
Capital Programs Unit, Development
Michael.Washburn@otda.ny.gov

Brenda McAteer Assistant Director
Capital Programs Unit, Operations
Brenda.McAteer@otda.ny.gov

Linda Camoin Assistant Director
Services Programs
Linda.Camoin@otda.ny.gov

Sarah Watson Assistant Director
Community Engagement
Sarah.Watson@otda.ny.gov

For a listing of all the Bureau of Housing and Support Services programs and contracts, please visit <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/housing>.

Capital Program Unit (CPU)

Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP)

Established in 1983, HHAP was the first program in the country to devote substantial financial resources to the development of homeless housing, and it remains one of the few programs nationally to focus not only on the provision of housing itself, but also on the delivery of appropriate support services to tenants.

HHAP provides capital grants and loans to not-for-profit corporations, charitable and religious organizations, municipalities and public corporations to acquire, construct or rehabilitate housing for persons who are homeless and are unable to secure adequate housing without special assistance. In addition to overseeing the development of projects, the Capital Program Unit is responsible for ensuring that projects developed with HHAP funds remain fiscally viable. This is accomplished through asset management activities such as monitoring visits, review of annual reports, provision of contracted Technical Assistance resources, and assisting with projects experiencing challenges where necessary. CPU staff monitor HHAP projects for 25 to 30 years, depending on the duration of the contract. HHAP may fund stand-alone projects scaled to community need or be used in combination with other capital programs such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) toward large-scale, mixed-income projects.

The appropriation for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-2026 is \$153 million. Funds are awarded via an Open Request for Proposals (RFP), which means that applications are reviewed, and awards are considered in the order in which proposals are received. HHAP began accepting applications for funding beginning in June 2025.

As of September 2025, HHAP's portfolio consists of 411 projects and 597 sites. These projects provide a total of 11,920 units and over 18,510 beds. The value of the portfolio in terms of the HHAP investment is \$1,081,315,168. Operational projects are widespread geographically, with at least one project in nearly every county.

HHAP is administered by a public benefit corporation, the Homeless Housing and Assistance Corporation (HHAC).

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP)

Program Description

STEHP provides assistance for individuals and families to remain in or obtain permanent housing, and assistance with supportive services during their experience of homelessness, the eviction process and housing stabilization. STEHP supports comprehensive programs that are designed to help maintain and improve the quality of emergency and transitional shelters, and drop-in centers for homeless individuals and families. STEHP assists organizations in meeting the costs of operating programs that provide comprehensive supportive services aimed at housing stabilization, rapid rehousing services, and eviction prevention assistance to individuals and families.

Federal funds allocated from HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), combined with New York State homeless assistance funds, comprise STEHP funding. Approximately \$19 million is awarded annually to not-for-profits, units of local government and local social service districts. The current 76 contracts began on October 1, 2024, and assist approximately 50,000 individuals annually.

Funding Amount

Approximately \$19 million

Eligible Applicants

Local social services districts, units of local government, tribal organizations, or nonprofit corporations eligible to do business in the State of New York.

Eligible Target Service Population

Homeless and at-risk individuals and families that meet the HUD definition of homelessness.

Eligible Services and Costs

Eligible services are category-specific according to ESG regulations. Eligible services include but are not limited to the following:

- Case management
- Counseling and crisis intervention
- Employment, educational and vocational assistance
- Life skills training
- Housing search and housing stabilization services
- Community-based rental assistance
- Information and referral
- Participant rent and security deposits
- HMIS expenses
- Staff and participant travel
- Organizational rent, utilities, insurance and operating expenses

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP)

Program Description

The purpose of NYSSHP is to support social services districts, units of local government and not-for-profit corporations in providing supportive services to eligible residents of supported housing in order to assist them in achieving greater independence. The populations to be served include single adults, young adults (18-25) and families who are in need of supportive services. The service provision for all populations is designed to assist residents in remaining stably housed so that they do not enter or re-enter the homeless services system.

The SFY 2025-26 appropriation of \$63 million supports 134 contracts consisting of 20,244 units of supportive housing throughout New York State.

Funding Amount

Approximately \$63 million

Eligible Applicants

- Local social services district, unit of local government, tribal organization or nonprofit corporation eligible to do business in the State of New York.
- Eligible applicants must manage, own, lease, or operate transitional or permanent housing or be a local social services district or unit of local government applying on behalf of a nonprofit corporation(s).

Eligible Target Service Population

- Single Adults, Young Adults (18-25), and Families
- Preference given to applicants that serve Medicaid recipients who also have a Severe Mental Illness (SMI), Substance Use Disorder (SUD), and/or a physical disability.

Eligible Services and Costs

Eligible core services are those designed to assist eligible residents to live independently and remain stably housed. They include but are not limited to the following:

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| • Case management | • Life skills training |
| • Counseling and crisis intervention | • Building security services |
| • Employment, vocational and educational assistance | • Information and referral |
| • Parenting skills development | • Social/recreational services |
| • Pregnancy counseling | • HMIS expenses |
| • Family reunification and stabilization | • Travel |

Next RFP Release

2026

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)

Program Description

The HOPWA program provides States and localities with the resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing and support services needs of low-income persons with AIDS and HIV-related diseases. A broad range of housing-related activities may be funded under HOPWA, including, but not limited to project or tenant based rental assistance; supportive services; short-term rent or mortgage payments to prevent homelessness; and technical assistance in establishing/operating a community residence. HOPWA services are provided in 37 counties across New York State through a total of 13 contracts.

Funding Amount

Approximately \$3.7 million

Eligible Applicants

Not-for-profit organizations and public housing agencies.

Eligible Target Service Population

Low-income individuals with documented HIV infection, HIV-related illness, or AIDS and their families. All individuals with HIV/AIDS are eligible for housing information and referral services regardless of income. The definition of AIDS is that found in 24 CFR 574.3. OTDA uses the HUD definition of a “low income” person or family defined in 42 USC 12902, as one whose income does not exceed 80% of the median income for the area, as determined by the Secretary of HUD.

Eligible Services and Costs

Eligible services are category specific per HOPWA regulations. Eligible services include but are not limited to the following:

- Long term rental assistance
- Short term rent, mortgage, utility payment assistance
- Case management
- Crisis intervention
- Mental health services
- Substance use counseling
- Coordination of benefits
- Counseling on tenant rights and responsibilities
- Securing utility services
- Moving arrangements
- Paying for representative payee services
- Mediation services related to neighbor/landlord issues
- Operating costs for facility-based housing
- Housing information
- Referral services
- Assisting individuals and families in understanding leases

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI)

Program Description

ESSHI is an interagency funding opportunity designed to provide service and operating funds to support newly developed permanent supportive housing units for vulnerable populations experiencing homelessness. Funds are used towards operating expenses attributable to maintaining the supportive housing units, to help program participants remain stably housed, and to provide case management and other supportive services.

As of September 2025, OTDA has 3,643 ESSHI units locked-in through 113 executed contracts and an additional 35 in development.

Funding Amount

There is no minimum or maximum number of units that applicants may apply for. Projects may receive up to \$34,000 per qualifying individual/unit in the New York City metro area (New York City and Suffolk, Nassau, Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam counties), and up to \$31,000 in the rest of the state.

Successful applicants receive a conditional award and then have up to 24 months to secure financing for the new supportive housing units.

Eligible Applicants

Not-for-profits and Tribal Organizations with demonstrated experience in one of the following areas:

- Housing for homeless families, individuals, and/or young adults
- Housing for families, individuals, and/or young adults with an unstable housing history
- Housing for families, individuals, and/or young adults who are at risk of homelessness
- Housing for families, individuals, and/or young adults that have health, mental health, intellectual or developmental disability, and/or substance use disorders
- Housing for youth/young adults with significant histories of mental health, foster care or criminal/juvenile justice involvement; and
- Providing services and supports to help families, individuals, and/or youth/young adults that have disabling conditions or life challenges that require specialized support services to become and remain stably housed.

Eligible Target Service Population

Families with a qualifying individual, individuals and/or young adults who are both homeless and who are identified as having an unmet housing need, and have one or more disabling conditions or other life challenges, including:

- Serious mental illness (SMI)
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD)
- Persons living with HIV or AIDS
- Persons living with Hepatitis C
- Survivors of Domestic Violence (DV)
- Survivors of Human Trafficking (HT)
- Military service with disabilities
- Long-term homelessness
- Youth or young adults between 18 and 25, including those who left foster care within the prior five years
- Reentry – individuals reentering the community from prison or juvenile justice placement
- Seniors – individuals who are age 55 and older, enrolled in Medicaid, and have a chronic condition or physical disability
- Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)
- Individuals with a physical disability that affects daily living activities

Eligible Services and Costs

- Rental subsidies and other occupancy costs.
- Costs associated with services and staff that assist the eligible target population remain stably housed, including program supervision, housing counselors or specialists, and employment counseling.
- Services to assist participants to live independently and remain stably housed, such as:
 - advocacy and connection to health care services
 - behavioral health services
 - housing case management
 - counseling, crisis intervention, and safety planning
 - legal system and court assistance
 - public benefits management
 - transportation assistance
 - employment, vocational, and educational assistance
 - life skills training and support
 - parenting skills development
 - family reunification and stabilization
 - health education
 - building security services
 - social and recreational services

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Operational Support for AIDS Housing (OSAH)

Program Description

The OSAH program provides operating funding to HHAP projects that house homeless singles and families living with HIV/AIDS. The OSAH program provides support to this limited pool of HHAP-funded AIDS housing providers to pay for costs associated with personnel, supplies, utilities, consultants, travel, equipment, contractual obligations, and maintenance needs. Through six contracts, OSAH supports approximately 400 individuals/families in over 200 units of housing in seven counties throughout the state.

Funding Amount

Approximately \$1 million

Eligible Applicants

HHAP-funded project sponsors specifically obligated in their HHAP contract to serve homeless persons with HIV/AIDS.

Eligible Target Service Population

Formerly homeless families and/or individuals.

Eligible Activities and Costs

- Maintenance and operation activities that are directly associated with the operation and maintenance of the eligible HHAP project and its grounds.
- Support services activities designed to allow individuals to live independently, and which are not funded by other programs.
- Minor construction and/or rehabilitation activities that directly support and enhance the operation of the eligible HHAP project.
- Administrative costs not to exceed 10% of the total award.
- Non-personnel costs that are directly associated with the eligible HHAP project.

Ineligible Activity

Services to individuals or families residing in non-AIDS units within eligible projects.

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Legal Services for Housing Stability Program (LSHSP)

Program Description

The purpose of the LSHSP program is to provide legal assistance to renter households in all areas of the State who need assistance to maintain housing stability using a combination of legal advice, counsel or representation, assistance in obtaining mainstream benefits, and/or referrals to other not-for-profit or government entities which specialize in assistance and can further assist in ultimately stabilizing housing. LSHSP providers may also provide direct rental arrears payments in conjunction with a case that has advanced toward court proceedings. There are currently eight contracts totaling \$50 million covering every county in the State.

Funding Amount

\$55 million

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be a not-for-profit organization whose main focus is providing free legal services and is able to provide legal representation to clients in a court of law in the State of New York.

Eligible Target Service Population

LSHSP participants must be renters in the State of New York who have requested legal services based on a housing instability problem, event or crisis. Participants must be facing homelessness, and their income must be 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Salary and fringe benefits for position such as attorneys, paralegals, and case managers
- Legal services to participants such as advice, counsel and direct representation
- Court fees on behalf of tenants in connection with active case
- Rental arrears payments in connection with a case for an eligible participant in an effort to preserve housing stability
- Mediation programs with landlords; advocacy on behalf of participants with landlords, judges, courts, and local service organizations and/or government entities
- Activities to educate participants regarding tenant's rights and responsibilities; to organize tenants to address code violations, landlord abandonment or harassment
- Assistance in applying for any Federal, State, and local benefits
- Referral to support services designed to stabilize households in permanent housing
- Staff or participant travel
- Administrative expenses

Next RFP Release

2026

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Emergency Needs for the Homeless Program (ENHP)

Program Description

ENHP supports programs that meet the emergency needs of homeless individuals and families and those at risk of becoming homeless. Funds are used to augment existing programs that provide services to these individuals and families to assist them toward stabilizing their lives and moving toward self-sufficiency.

The ENHP Program currently has three contracts that support crisis intervention, eviction prevention, emergency feeding and summer youth services to households throughout New York City.

Funding Amount

\$1 million

Eligible Applicants

Not-for-profit corporations and charitable organizations in social services districts with a population in excess of 5,000,000.

Eligible Target Service Population

Individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Eligible Services and Costs

- Crisis intervention
- Eviction prevention
- Emergency feeding
- Summer youth services

Services and Community Engagement Unit (SCEU)

Code Blue and Homeless Services Plans

SCEU provides oversight to Homeless Services Plans (HSP) and Code Blue activities. Pursuant to 18 NYCRR §304.2, each local social services district must develop and submit a comprehensive plan for addressing homelessness that reflects coordination of locally available services. The plan documents the availability of housing and services for individuals and families who become homeless, including Code Blue services. Per 18 NYCRR § 304.1, the Code Blue regulation states that, when air temperatures are at or below 32°F including windchill, local social service districts must:

- identify individuals believed to be homeless and unable to find shelter in inclement winter weather, and to direct and offer to move such individuals to the appropriate sheltered facilities to protect their health and safety;
- instruct outreach workers to work with other relevant personnel and local police in relation to the involuntary transport of individuals who refuse to go inside and who appear to be mentally ill and at-risk for cold-related injuries consistent with the provisions of section 9.41 of the Mental Hygiene Law; and
- ensure that all facilities used to shelter homeless individuals during periods of inclement winter weather are safe, clean, and well-maintained and supervised.

Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC)

The New York State Balance of State Continuum of Care (NYS BoS CoC) was established in October 2018 and currently covers nine counties: Cattaraugus, Clinton, Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Putnam, Schoharie and Sullivan Counties.

As the Collaborative Applicant for the CoC, SCEU staff perform a variety of functions including oversight of HMIS administration; assistance with performance monitoring; engagement and education of stakeholders; coordination and submission of annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts and other reporting; and submission of funding applications. SCEU provides staff to support the various committees and workgroups that comprise the NYS BoS CoC.