

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

Hope For Us

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FY 2025 Transitional Living Program Grant

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Administration for Children and Families

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1.0: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth homelessness in the city of Nashville surged in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite substantial federal allocations to alleviate the problem, the city has struggled to address youth homelessness due to internal breakdowns in program execution. Hope For Us proposes to implement a transitional housing program that will provide homeless youths with temporary housing, educational and professional development opportunities, and assistance with relocating to permanent housing and acquiring permanent jobs. With over 40 years of experience implementing federal and state grant activities, most notably housing assistance programs, Hope for Us is confident that this program will significantly reduce the overall number of homeless youths in Nashville.

2.0: STATEMENT OF NEED

Youth homelessness in the city of Nashville, Tennessee has proven to be a stubbornly consistent problem, particularly since 2020. Point in Time surveys, mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), provide useful data for measuring homelessness across the United States. For Nashville, a comparison between 2020 and 2024 youth homelessness statistics is shown in the table below:

Table 1: Number of Unsheltered, Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18-24*

Date	Number of Unsheltered, Unaccompanied Youth
January 2020 ¹	17
January 2024 ²	260
March 2024 ³	240
May 2024 ⁴	208

***Please note that the number of unsheltered, unaccompanied youth from 2021 – 2023 was not recorded in the respective PIT surveys for those years.**

The decline in youth homelessness during 2024 is notable, however the number of unsheltered youths is still over 12 times higher than the 2020 numbers. Further, the decline in these numbers is likely attributable to one-time federal funding opportunities that will soon expire.

The 2022 Nashville Performance Study of Homelessness and Affordable Housing⁵ describes the federal funding received by the city since 2020 to combat the increase in homelessness. However,

¹ <https://www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/Point-in-Time-Count-2020-Infographic.pdf>

² <https://www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/Point-in-Time-2024-Infographic.pdf>

³ https://www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04/HMIS_Data_Report_2024-03.pdf?ct=1712938814#:~:text=3%2C598%20people%20experienced%20homelessness%20in,have%20experience%20homelessness%20in%20Nashville.

⁴ <https://www.nashville.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/Nashville-Community-Homelessness-and-Housing-Data-May-2024.pdf?ct=1718203204>

the city indicated that desired outcomes were not being achieved due to systemic deficiencies and poor governance. The report offered several housing models and strategies were provided to address these concerns; however, it is unclear whether they have been implemented, as illustrated by the data in the table below:

Table 2: Nashville Homelessness Statistics

Date	Number of Homeless Individuals
January 2022 ⁶	1,916
January 2023 ⁷	2,129
January 2024*	2,094
February 2024*	3,821
May 2024*	3,218

***Please note that the data for 2024 can be found in the reference listed in Table 1.**

As with the data in Table 1, a decline is noted in 2024. Whether this decline is attributable to the successful implementation of the strategies offered in the performance report is currently unclear. What has been reported, however, is that chronic homelessness increased 43% between 2023-2024 and that current funding is insufficient to fully address the current homeless population.⁸ Altogether, these figures and reports depict a long trend of persistent homelessness in the city, even with current federal aid.

Accordingly, Hope For Us seeks grant funding for our proposed Transitional Housing Program to provide sheltering and supportive services to unaccompanied, unsheltered youths aged 18 – 21. We recognize the grant’s scope focuses on homeless youths aged 16 – 21, however data for youths under the age of 18 is not readily available in Nashville. Despite this, our program will ensure that all participants transition into stable, independent living.

⁶ <https://www.nashville-mdha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/PIT-Count-Infographic-FINAL.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.nashville-mdha.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PIT-Count-Infographic-2023-FINAL.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.wkrn.com/news/local-news/nashville/chronic-homelessness-in-nashville-increased-43-millions-have-been-invested-to-curb-issue-in-recent-years/#:~:text=However%2C%20despite%20that%20one%2Dtime,1%2C472%20as%20of%20March%202024.>

3.0: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Hope For Us has successfully implemented programs assisting troubled youths with achieving independent living for 10 years. Our programs are typically funded by grants and community donations, though on a smaller scale. Some of these programs include our Just In Time and Upstart programs that have helped over 550 youths in 2020 and 2022. Through the years, Hope For Us has garnered a veteran team that is familiar and successful with grants of this type, as this proposal will demonstrate.

3.1: Program and Grant Management

The program will be completely managed by Hope For Us. Tyler James, our program director, has led all of the organization's efforts to assist troubled youths under other programs since 2020. Tyler comes with 18 years of federal grant experience, making him an invaluable asset to ensuring compliance with all grant requirements and program success. One of his most pertinent endeavors was a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Continuity of Care (CoC) program that assisted disabled individuals transfer to permanent living spaces. That program successfully placed 150 disabled individuals in permanent housing in 2018.

He will be joined by two program co-directors, Sasha Lee and Patrick White. Sasha's has 7 years of experience as the organization's financial director for grant programs. She also previously served as chief financial officer for Nashville's housing authority for 12 years. Her experience included financial management on several federal grants.

Patrick brings 9 years of experience legal and policy compliance for federal grants from the Government Accountability Office. He has authored several reports regarding the proper operation and compliance of housing programs in Iowa, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Virginia. 80% of the investigated programs saw marked improvements once the reports were issued.

This dedicated team of highly qualified professionals will serve at the helm to ensure that all program and grant requirements are met. All administrative grant requirements will be overseen by Patrick. Appropriate policies and procedures – whether new or existing – will be created or amended under his direction for proper compliance. Financial management will be led by Sasha, who is currently utilizing the organization's grant management system and processes for other active grants. This same system will be applied to this grant opportunity and practices will be adjusted in accordance with this grant's requirements.

3.2: Staffing

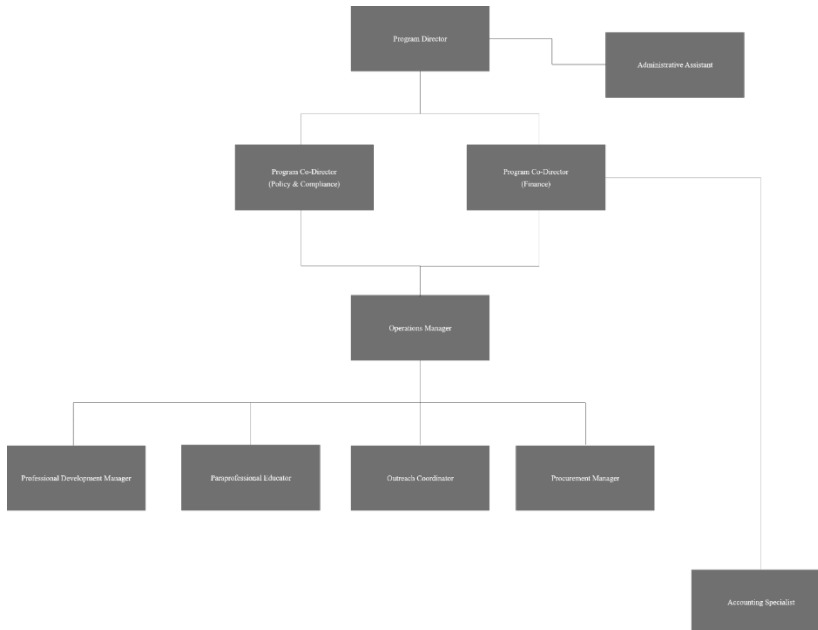
The program's hiring process will be implemented within the first three months of the program. Ideally, all hiring needs will be satisfied within 45 days of program initiation, as several key positions are currently filled. The breakdown of all filled and anticipated positions is provided in the table below:

Table 1: Program Staffing List

Position Title	Division	Status
Program Director	All	Filled
Program Co-Director	Policy & Compliance	Filled
Program Co-Director	Finance	Filled
Operations Manager	Program Delivery	Filled
Procurement Manager	Procurement	Filled
Outreach Coordinator	Public Relations	Filled
Accounting Specialist	Finance	Vacant
Professional Development Manager	Program Delivery	Filled
Paraprofessional Educator	Program Delivery	Vacant
Policy & Compliance Specialist	Policy & Compliance	Vacant
Administrative Assistant	All	Filled

The graphic below depicts the organizational chart with all the anticipated positions for the program:

Figure 1: Organizational Chart



The program will prioritize onboarding of these individuals in the following order:

1. Outreach Specialists, Registered Nurse, and Psychiatrist, as they are needed for the program intake and evaluation phases.
 - a. Outreach Specialists will only be active during the intake and follow-up phases.
 - b. Registered Nurse and Psychiatrist will be onboarded through a memorandum of understanding.
2. Accounting Specialist, as it is assumed that the responsible co-director can manage initial financial tasks without assistance in the early program stages.
3. Professional Development Manager and Paraprofessional Educator for the professional development and transition phases.
 - a. Both positions will be procured.

Based on prior grant experience and the current grant requirements, the organization is confident that this roster will provide the best outcomes for program participants. The hiring priority also provides the smoothest allocation of resources for the program’s duration. Please see the budgetary section of this proposal which describes the funding requirements for each position.

4.0: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Transitional Housing Program will provide sheltering and supportive services to unaccompanied, unsheltered youth aged 18 – 21 in Nashville. The goal of the program is to empower homeless youths in Nashville to achieve stable, independent lives. This goal will be achieved by the accomplishment of the following objectives:

- Enroll 100 unaccompanied, unsheltered youths in Nashville through outreach and intake;
- Ensure the successful transition of all program participants to safe living spaces with a 12-month minimum lease; and
- Ensure all program participants secure either a full-time job or two part-time jobs.

The following sections will provide more detail on how the program will be administered and how outcomes will be achieved and measured.

4.1: Program Activities

The program will be implemented in several phases, as depicted in Figure 1 below:

Figure 2: Program Phases



The following sections go into detail for each phase of the program and their associated activities.

4.1.1: Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to mobilize resources, prepare agreements, and establish the program's organizational structure for successful program launch. This phase of the program consists of the following activities:

1. Signing of the grant agreement.
2. Development of memorandums of understanding (MOU) and requests for proposals (RFP).
3. Contacting Continuum of Care or other stakeholders involved in the care of homeless populations for methods of contact for unsheltered, unaccompanied youths.
4. Onboarding staff
5. Program launch

This phase is anticipated to take 50 days.

4.1.2: Program Outreach

Outreach will be conducted to inform prospective youths of the program and encourage them to enroll. This phase consists of the following activities:

1. Canvassing Nashville to identify unsheltered, unaccompanied youths.
2. Posting flyers at key areas in the city with contact information and the address of the program site. Flyers were developed prior to the writing of this proposal.
3. Posting advertisements on social media and local news radio. Advertisements were developed prior to the writing of this proposal.

Activities conducted in this phase are expected to last three months.

4.1.3: Program Intake

Program intake involves the registration of eligible individuals at the site. Youths will undergo the intake process as they arrive at the program site. Youths will be assisted through a brief application process that will screen for the following:

- Basic demographic information, most notably age
- Duration and cause of homelessness
- Level of educational attainment
- Job history (last three jobs)

The purpose for collecting this information is to determine applicant eligibility and assess their need. This will allow the program to tailor the services provided to each individual and increase the likelihood of their success.

Applicants that are not eligible will be remanded to other programs in the city that can accommodate their needs. The program will have flyers and contact information for similar programs available for these individuals.

This phase is anticipated to last for four months and will occur simultaneously with the outreach phase.

4.1.4: Medical and Mental Evaluation

The program will develop memorandums of understanding (MOU) with one local health clinic and one psychological counseling center for this grant. The MOU will allow for a registered nurse and a counselor to examine all participants at the site after program intake. If it is determined that intervention is necessary, the following will occur:

- Physical health concerns: First aid and triage will be conducted on-site. Any conditions requiring more extensive intervention will require the participant to be remanded to a medical facility.
- Mental health concerns: The counselor will provide four sessions over the first two weeks that the participant is at the site. Further sessions will be conducted at the discretion of the counselor.

The program aims to ensure that all participating youths are physically and mentally well enough to take advantage of the opportunity afforded to them under this grant. These evaluations will occur simultaneously with program intake.

4.1.5: Educational and Professional Development

Program participants will undergo a twelve-week educational and/or professional development program that targets both academic and job-related needs, in addition to searching for apartments. Both the academic and professional development courses are designed to last five weeks each, to allow program participants to participate in both, if needed.

The educational portion of this phase will empower program participants to be able to successfully take the General Educational Development (GED) exam. The educational material provided will be commensurate with standard high school curricula, given the age of the participants. Participants with no GED will need to take and pass the exam at the end of this course to move to the next phase. The program will assist with this process. Participants that already have a high school diploma or a GED may opt out of this portion of the program and take an extended version of the employment course.

The employment portion focuses on professional development activities to assist in job-seeking and retention. Some examples include:

- Proper resume development
- Interview preparation
- Navigation job-seeking websites

- Writing quality cover letters

Participants with no prior job experience will receive more in-depth instruction to better market themselves to employers. For this group, there will be an emphasis on any relevant skills, community service, extra-curriculars, or pertinent references.

Lastly, this section will briefly provide instruction on seeking and retaining apartments. Given the age of the participants, it is possible that many have not lived on their own and will need guidance for securing stable living. This section focuses on the following:

- Utilizing apartment-searching databases
- Understanding fair market rent
- Rental lease agreements
- Landlord-tenant relationships
- Tenant rights

This segment of this phase will last two weeks.

4.1.6: Transition

Once program participants have successfully completed the educational and professional development section of the program, they will begin working on job applications. Participants will primarily apply for full-time jobs. Part-time jobs are permissible only if a participant secures two of them. The program will assist participants with transportation and other needs for job interviews. Hope For Us anticipates that all participants will secure jobs within two months of completing their educational or professional development course.

Once the participant secures a job(s), they will be allowed to work while living on the program site for 30-days from the date of employment. Extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances but will not exceed 45 days. During this time, the participant must apply for apartments. Participants must apply for apartments that:

- Are within a 20-mile radius of the jobs applied for.
- Have a minimum 12-month lease.
- Are rented at fair market value in the city of Nashville.

When a participant secures an apartment, they will be relocated from the program site to their new place of living on the date identified in the rental agreement. The program will assist with this process. Relocation of all participants is anticipated to take 60 days.

4.1.7: Follow Up

The program will contact successfully transitioned participants within the first 10 days of relocation to assess their progress. Questions will be asked pertaining to:

- Living conditions
- Job satisfaction
- Relationship with the landlord
- Work-life balance

These check-ins will be conducted every week for 60 days from the date of relocation. At the 30-day mark, there will be an informal site inspection to ensure that living conditions are suitable for the program participant. Once the 60-day period has concluded, and no issues have been identified, the participant will have successfully completed their program participation. A brief survey will be provided to them to allow for feedback and program evaluation.

4.2: Special Considerations

Hope For Us understands the possibility of interacting with youths that may have learning or other disabilities. To that end, the program will ensure that the registered nurse and psychiatrist evaluate youths to identify any disabilities that are present. Additionally, the professional development manager and paraprofessional educator must be trained to provide instruction to those with learning disabilities. Finally, the program site is fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and can accommodate youths with physical impairments.

4.3: Program Timeline

The program is anticipated to last approximately fifteen (15) months, from October 1, 2025 to January 11, 2027. The duration of each program phase is listed below:

- Initiation – 50 days
- Outreach, Intake, and Evaluations – 130 days
- Professional Development – 114 days
- Transition and Follow Up – 165 days

Please see the *Program Work Schedule* document that provides a visual breakdown of the timeline and responsible parties.

4.4: Expected Outcomes

To reiterate, the program goal is to ensure that participating youths transition to stable, independent living within the city of Nashville. We therefore expect two main outcomes:

1. 100 unaccompanied, unsheltered youths securing a full-time job or two part-time jobs.
2. 100 unaccompanied, unsheltered youths securing a rental apartment with a 12-month minimum lease.

The successful implementation of this program will make a sizable impact on the total population of youth homelessness in Nashville. The organization also hopes to replicate this program on a larger scale through collaboration with the state of Tennessee. The success of this pilot program will provide a roadmap to aid similar programs that are currently struggling to succeed. Such success would also alleviate further strain on the federal government to provide funding to aid these causes.

4.5: Reporting

The program will provide regular performance and financial reports in accordance with program guidelines. Both reports must be submitted quarterly, with an annual report due at the end of the calendar year. At the end of the grant cycle, the program will provide a final performance and financial report certifying the completion of all eligible work and costs under the grant.

5.0: BUDGET AND NARRATIVE

The following table shows a breakdown of the proposed budget for this grant:

Table 3: Program Budget

Items	Quantity	FTE	Cost (ea)	Total
		Personnel		
Program Director	1	0.5	\$75,000.00	\$37,500.00
Co-Program Director	2	0.25	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00
Operations Manager	1	0.5	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00
Procurement Manager	1	0.5	\$45,000.00	\$22,500.00
Outreach Coordinator	1	0.5	\$40,000.00	\$20,000.00
Accounting Specialist	1	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Professional Development Manager	1	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00

Paraprofessional Educator	1	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Administrative Assistant	1	0.5	\$30,000.00	\$15,000.00
Sub-Total				\$235,000.00
Equipment/Supplies				
Copy Notebooks	100	0	\$3.19	\$319.00
Pens	100	0	\$1.21	\$121.00
Pencils	100	0	\$0.11	\$11.00
First aid kits	50	0	\$28.99	\$1,449.50
Sub-Total				\$1,900.50
Miscellaneous				
Interview attire (men and women)	25	0	\$150.00	\$3,750.00
Rental Truck (60 days)	2	0	\$57.02	\$3,421.20
Rental Car (120 days)	2	0	\$27.37	\$3,284.40
Sub-Total				\$10,455.60
Grand Total				\$247,356.10

The budget presented above is broken into three categories: Personnel, Equipment/Supplies, and Miscellaneous. The total budget request is \$247,356.10, which fits within the maximum allowable award for this grant.

Personnel costs are inclusive of the salary and fringe benefits of every staff member that will be working on the grant. The “FTE” (Full-Time Equivalent) column shows the amount of time that each staff member will be allocating to the grant. For example, an employee with an FTE of 0.5 will be allocating half of their time, and consequently their salary, to this grant. It is anticipated that all managerial-level employees will only allocate a portion of their time to the grant, as they are currently working on other activities. Conversely, all support staff will be working full-time. The salaries listed in the budget are based on the typical salary of the specified position and qualifications in Nashville.

Equipment and supplies are for all materials that will be utilized for the grant. These supplies are specifically for program participants to allow them to partake in professional development and educational activities. There are no other office supplies or equipment requested in the budget, as the organization can provide the other amenities. The prices listed are the per unit price of these items from Office Depot.

Items in the miscellaneous category are for the facilitation of various program activities. The rental car is for the outreach and follow-up phases of the project. The rental truck is to assist program participants with moving from the program site to their new permanent residence. The number of

days each vehicle is rented is commensurate with the duration of the corresponding program phase (see program work schedule). Prices for these items are based on the rates for Avis Car Rental, as it is the company utilized by the organization for all other activities. Interview attire is for program participants to utilize during the transition phase where they will be applying for full- or part-time jobs. Because participants are homeless, it is possible that they have no belongings to present themselves appropriately for job interviews. Prices for interview attire are based on typical attire that can be found in retail stores such as Target or JCPenney.

6.0: EVALUATION PLAN

Program evaluation will be conducted throughout each phase of the program and at the end of the grant term. Each phase will be reviewed for different metrics, which is shown in the table below:

Table 4: Program Evaluation Metrics

Phase	Evaluation Metric
Program Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood characteristics and locations • Number of homeless youth recruited • Social media engagement
Program Intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless youth demographics
Medical and Mental Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of youth requiring medical or psychological intervention. • Indicators of conditions requiring medical or psychological intervention.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading/writing level of program participants • Number of participants requiring educational development and professional development. • Indicators for identifying educational and/or professional development needs. • Pass/Fail rate of non-GED holders.
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of time to secure a permanent job(s) • Most common employer of program participants • Neighborhood characteristics of new permanent residence. • Average rent of new permanent residences.
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of complaints or issues identified. • Rate of recidivism.

These metrics will allow the organization to evaluate the following:

- Overall program success
- Indicators associated with homeless youth
- Indicators of youth homelessness

It is the organization's hope that the evaluation not only informs similar transitional living assistance efforts across the state, but also provides context for the reasons why youth homelessness is occurring. This data can then be used to enact preventive measures to reduce the incidence of youth homelessness going forward.