

Minnesota Prairie County Alliance
Request for Information (RFI) For Housing Support

Setting Types:

Board and Lodge

Board and Lodge with Special Services

Supportive Housing

Long Term Homeless Supportive Housing

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1. Introduction

General Background

Minnesota Prairie County Alliance (MNPrairie) provides extraordinary human services that build safety, health, and well-being in the communities of Dodge, Steele, and Waseca Counties. MNPrairie is a county human services agency created through a joint powers agreement that provides the full array of public human service programs. Public human services provided through MNPrairie include income and health care assistance such as healthcare coverage, cash, and food assistance, childcare assistance, and child support; social services such as adult protection, chemical dependency assessments, mental health, elderly, and disability supports; child welfare, child protection, licensing for foster care, adoption, and family child care.

This Request for Information (RFI) is to identify potential providers and proposed locations as options to consider for the housing models (Models 1-4) listed below in Section 2. This RFI does not apply to Corporate Foster Care, Family Foster Care, or Customized Living settings.

Housing Support is a State-funded program that provides an income supplement each month to pay for housing. They cover what an individual would need, at a minimum, to live in the community. Housing Support can pay for rent, utilities, and household furnishings. In some cases, Housing Support can pay for food, support services, or both.

To receive a Housing Support payment, a person must meet eligibility requirements. These requirements include being over the age of 65, blind, or over the age of 18 and disabled according to the criteria used by the Social Security Administration or other criteria established in the Housing Support statute (MN Statutes chapter 256I). Also, there are income and asset maximums. County human services departments are responsible for determining individual eligibility. Both families and singles are eligible for this funding.

The Housing Support rate is a monthly payment paid directly to a provider of housing on behalf of the eligible person. Housing Support settings include adult foster care (family and corporate), board and lodging establishments, customized living settings, assisted living, and supportive housing. This RFI does not apply to Corporate Foster Care, Family Foster Care, or Customized Living settings. It only applies to the models listed in below in Section 2. The Housing Support rate currently changes annually on 7/1 and follows DHS guidelines, which covers all room and board costs, including any costs for laundry supplies, utilities, and damages. If the person does not have any reportable income, payment of this amount is paid entirely by the state. If the person is working or has countable assets, the resident may have to pay a portion of this rate out of their funds, with the state paying for the remaining portion.

[DHS Housing Support Information](#)

[DHS Supplemental Services Link](#)

A supplemental service rate may be included in the contract to eligible providers when approved by the County. If a Proposer is requesting consideration for a supplemental service rate, a detailed budget must be provided as an Attachment to the RFI. MNPrairie's availability of

supplemental service rate beds are limited for Board & Lodge settings and require a Special Services Registration with the Minnesota Department of Health. However, there is not this limitation for Long-Term Homeless Supportive Housing. The Supplemental Service Rate is set in June annually per DHS per bed for identified and explicit services requested by MNPrairie. These services must meet each individual's identified needs and may include but are not limited to providing/assisting with transportation, arranging meetings and appointments for and with the individual,, arranging medical and social services which focus on the individual's 's disability and needs, medication reminders, locked medication, up to 24-hour supervision, and case management services with written monthly documentation. These services and accompanying documentation will be provided to MNPrairie on an annual basis or as otherwise requested.

Upon County review and approval, Housing Support providers must enter into a standardized agreement with MNPrairie County Alliance. The Housing Support Agreement assures minimum quality standards for settings across the state and across setting types. The Agreement can be terminated by the state, County, or provider with notice. The state can immediately terminate a Housing Support agreement when the health or welfare of persons is in jeopardy.

2. Models

Model 1 – Group Setting Board and Lodge

- This model provides housing for smaller groups, ideally for 5-6 individuals in a homelike setting with shared spaces, such as living rooms, dining rooms, or kitchens. One-bedroom per person (preferred by County) or shared bedrooms (depending on the size of the bedroom and individuals served).
- The building/facility must qualify to receive a board and lodge license from the applicable health licensing entity and meet zoning requirements. If a supplemental service rate is requested and approved by the County, then a board and lodge with a special services license from the MN Department of Health is also required.
- Three meals a day are provided with at least one being a hot group meal served by the staff to ensure direct resident contact daily. The amount spent on food per person per month must be at least what the DHS regulations provide.
- Staff is present, on site, at least once daily and have the ability to be contacted in case of emergency or urgent resident issues.
 - If a supplemental service rate is requested, in the RFI response, the Proposer must thoroughly describe the additional service package offered. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.

Model 2 - Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Singles

- Rental housing is independent; it includes a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.
- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection for each unit before resident move-in and turn the document into the County.
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. One entity may be qualified to provide both components.

Models that involve collaboration between two or more providers of services (e.g., an existing property management company with vacant units' partners with a service provider) are considered. The supplemental service rate funds the service coordination.

- The County implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building, determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the individual and property management. Minnesota Tenant and Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- A limited amount of on-site supervision is provided. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- Each household/participant has a unit that includes food preparation and sleeping space.
- The service provider must utilize the Coordinated Entry System to identify clients.

Model 3 – Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Families:

- Rental housing is independent; it includes a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.
- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection in each unit and turn the document into the County
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. Although one entity may be qualified to provide both components, the County models that involve collaboration between two or more providers of services (e.g., an existing property management company with vacant units partners with a service provider) are considered. The supplemental service rate funds the service coordination.
- The County implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building, determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the individual and property management. Minnesota Tenant Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- A limited amount of on-site supervision is provided. Services need to be consistent with the service standards outlined in MN Statute 256I.05.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring the resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- Each household/participant has a unit that includes food preparation and sleeping space.
- The service provider must utilize the Coordinated Entry System to identify homeless families.

Model 4 Community Scattered Site – Supportive Housing for individuals receiving waiver-funded services (Supplemental Service Rate not applicable)

- Rental housing is independent through a lease between the participant and property management company or owner.
- The service provider must complete a habitability inspection for each unit and turn the document into the County
- Supportive Housing is an integrated community setting, for those best met on an individualized level and can meet lease requirements.
- This model is comprised of **and must contain** two components: (1) Independent Housing and (2) Service Coordination. Collaboration between the service provider and property management is required. Waiver funds, as allowable, pay for service coordination.
- The County implements a limit on how many Housing Support eligible units are in one building. This is determined during the contracting process.
- The lease is between the individual and property management. A guardian can also hold the lease. The lease cannot be with a service provider if the individual is on a waiver.
- Minnesota Tenant Landlord Laws apply, including notice of one full rental period before the last day of the tenancy for a periodic lease.
- Some on-site supervision is provided. Responses should specify how they intend to determine the number and type(s) of services provided.
- The service provider is not responsible for food provision/preparation. The service provider is responsible for ensuring resident has access to purchase food for three nutritional meals a day using their SNAP benefits (Access includes providing transportation, assisting with grocery shopping, etc.).
- All requirements of provider-specific licensing must be met (such as 245D or 203).
- All 245D services must be delivered in a setting that meets the Minnesota definition of *Own Home* in the Community Based Services Manual.

Financial information specific to Model 2, 3 and 4

- Upon receipt of each monthly Housing Support payment, the service provider shall promptly:
 - Issue payment to the property management per the lease agreement.
 - Unless included in the rent payment, issue payment in full for the following utilities: gas, electricity, phone, water, and trash.
 - Assist the individual in purchasing other required household goods with the remainder of the fund.
 - If the provider is receiving a Supplemental Service Rate, the service provider shall have a written plan which identifies the specific services provided to the individual during the month including a 24-hour emergency plan of care.

3. Staffing and Provider Qualifications

Background Studies

Providers of Housing Support must initiate background studies per MN Statute 245C for the following individuals:

- Controlling and managing individuals as defined in the Human Services Licensing Act (Minnesota Statutes, chapter 245A); and
- All employees and volunteers who have direct contact (provide face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, consultation, or medication assistance) with recipients, and those who have unsupervised access to recipients, their personal property, or their private data.

The provider must assure, and have documentation that before providing any direct service, all individuals required to have a background study as per the requirements listed above, have a notice stating either that:

- 1) The individual is not disqualified under MN Statute 245C.14; or
- 2) The individual is disqualified, but the individual has been issued a set-aside of the disqualification for that setting under MN Statute 245C.22.

Minimum Staffing Qualifications

Minimum provider qualifications are required for settings whose only license is Board and Lodging, and for unlicensed settings. Before or upon hire, the provider must ensure (and provide documentation upon county request) that all individuals/staff that provide face-to-face care, training, supervision, counseling, consultation, or medication assistance) with recipients meet the following minimum requirements:

- Have at least **one** of the following:
 - A course of study in a health or human services-related field leading to a bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, or associate's degree; or
 - One year experience with the target population served (can include being a member of the target population served); or
 - Experience as a Minnesota Department of Human Services certified peer specialist; or
 - Meets requirements of unlicensed personnel in licensed home care settings
- Have a valid driver's license appropriate to the vehicle if transporting clients
- Complete two online trainings:
 1. Vulnerable Adult Mandated Reporting from the department; and
 2. Housing Support Orientation (when/if offered by DHS)

4. General Rules

RFI Overview

This Request For Information (“RFI”) is an invitation to submit a proposal to the County. It is not to be construed as an official and customary request for bids or guarantee of contract approval, but as a means by which the County can facilitate the acquisition of information regarding contracts for Housing Support services. Any proposal submitted is a suggestion to review and possibly negotiate, it is not a bid. These contents of this RFI are subject to revision or cancellation by the County in its sole and absolute discretion with the most current version of the RFI found on the MNPrairie website at www.MNPrairie.org.

Proposers interested in obtaining a Housing Support agreement or expanding services are required to complete the application below. When submitting a proposal, Proposers must

follow the specific format. A response is given within 90 days of application submission with an initial review date of June 1st, and then ongoing.

Proposers can email applications and questions to housingsupport@mnprairie.org
Proposers are encouraged to make their submissions well in advance of the proposal due date.

Ownership of Materials Submitted

Information submitted becomes the property of the County. All information, including detailed rate information, is held in confidence during the review and selection process. After that, the information is public.

The information included in response to the RFI follows Section 13.591 of Minnesota statutes governing data practices. Also, "security information," "trade secret information," or "labor relations" information *is classified as described in Minnesota Statutes 13.37, Subd.1.*

Proposal Submission Notices

- The County is not responsible for costs incurred by any person or agency responding.
- The County expressly reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFI at any time and to reject all responses.
- The County reserves the right to request additional information or a meeting with potential candidates at any stage in this process, including visiting proposed locations.
- There is no guarantee of referrals or compensation for non-occupied beds.

5. Evaluation and Selection

Evaluation Panel and Evaluation Criteria

After review of each proposal, the County may immediately issue a Housing Support Agreement to a successful Proposer based on the evaluation criteria. It may also establish a list of Proposers for further consideration and ask to provide additional information including but not limited to financial statements. Issuing contracts and requesting the information is at the sole discretion of the County.

Projects that are in alignment with the County's mission and vision have priority. The mission and vision are found on www.MNPrairie.org. Projects that promote links among affordable housing, transit, employment, community resources, and supportive services also receive priority. Expansion requests may take into consideration the following: the prior record of services, partnerships, fiduciary responsibilities, and program quality.

Other selection criteria include:

- Project results in housing opportunities not now provided or provided on a limited basis as compared to the county-determined need.
- Proposers demonstrate knowledge of local community supports.
- Proposers demonstrate knowledge of Housing Support, including eligibility requirements, quality standards, provider qualification, and reporting.
- The project has low barriers to entry.

- Proposers have experience helping others increase self-sufficiency.
- Services meet state statute for the proposed model.
- The supervision plan meets the expectations outlined in the program model.
- Services and housing listed in the budget are fiscally responsible and appropriate.
- All proposed projects are in Dodge, Steele, or Waseca Counties.
- The timeline supports full operations within six months of the approval to enter into a Housing Support Agreement.

6. Application

Type all responses within the blank boxes associated with each area. Keep answers as brief and concise as possible while thoroughly answering the question. Answers should focus on the project. Additional pages may be attached, as long as all sections of the application are addressed.

General Contact Information

Applicant/Organization	
Contact person	
Contact title	
Mailing address	
Phone number	
Email address	

Proposed Facility

If unknown at the time of application, please list the preferred site location. Please note that the County must approve the site before entering into a Housing Support Agreement.	
Facility name	
Facility address(es)/proposed location(s)	
Owner/Property Management	
A total number of Housing Support beds requested.	

Organization Summary

Briefly describe the history of your business/organization, including when and why it was formed, and what its goals are. Include information about the experience of owners/staff and general aspects of the business/organization that may be relevant to Housing Support.

Housing-Related Experience

Describe the experience with general housing, Housing Support, or housing individuals who qualify as homeless. Describe the experience with public funding, including adhering to statutes, licensing, and other requirements.

Service-Related Experience

Describe knowledge with local community supports and resources and any plans relating to incorporating these supports/resources in business operations

Target Population

Select one or more of the target population(s) listed below that would be eligible to be housed at the proposed location(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless/At-Risk of Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Adults with Substance Use Disorders <input type="checkbox"/> Adults with Mental Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Adults with Disabilities (not requiring Group/Foster Care Level of Care) <input type="checkbox"/> Adults on Probation/Parole <input type="checkbox"/> Adults with Past Criminal Convictions <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Sex Offenders <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Specific <input type="checkbox"/> All Male <input type="checkbox"/> All Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Culturally Specific - _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Families with One or More Individuals with a Disabling Condition <input type="checkbox"/> Transition Age Youth and Young Adult Age 18-25 with a Disabling Condition <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
Housing instability for the above populations may be due to criminal histories, poor rental history, very low/no income, or bad credit. Indicate below which of these items or others would be applicable in an individual being ineligible to reside in the proposed facility?
If you currently operate housing for any population listed above, provide vacancy and waiting list data. What information do you have that there is a need for your proposed housing in the community?

Program Model

Select models for this proposal: <input type="checkbox"/> Model 1 Group Setting Board and Lodge <input type="checkbox"/> Model 1a Group Setting Board and Lodge with Special Services <input type="checkbox"/> Model 2 Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Singles <input type="checkbox"/> Model 3 Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Long Term Homeless Families <input type="checkbox"/> Model 4 Community Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Individuals Receiving Waiver Funded Services
What are the existing/planned characteristics of the site? For example, the number of individuals to be housed at the location, number of persons per bedroom, accessibility, laundry facilities, kitchen, number of bathrooms, etc.
How many hours of supervision, both on-site and on-call, will you provide? What is the timeline for site development and project implementation?

If you are not the owner/manager/lessor of the housing unit(s), describe the relationship you have (or will have) with the building property management/owner. Include agreements you have for communication, problem-solving, etc.
Are there time limits a person can participate in the housing program? What assistance will you offer if someone would like to transition off of the Housing Support program?
What rules, if violated, can lead to the loss of housing (beyond those of a standard landlord-tenant lease)? What are the discharge policies and processes for both voluntary and involuntary discharge? Include your grievance policy.

For Group Settings (Model 1 & 1a), three nutritional meals per day must be provided on-site, with MNPrarie requiring one meal per day be served hot to ensure there is staff present at group mealtime. Meals/food must be made accessible to the resident in the event they are absent during mealtime. The amount spent on food per person per month shall be at least the DHS rate found in the *budget* section below. Indicate your plans to meet the provision of 3 nutritional meals per day. Identify if a hot meal will be prepared off-site in a commercial kitchen or at the facility. Please note that as per MN Dept of Health Rules 4626.0506 Board and Lodge’s with five residents need to have specific kitchen requirements (dedicated handwashing sink, kitchen sink or sinks, refrigerator, range, preparation space, dishwashing machine or 3-compartment sink) in the kitchen if they are going to be preparing food on-site. The Proposer will need to consult their counties' regulatory authority for specifics.

For a Community Setting, individuals will qualify for SNAP for their food. Still, the Provider is responsible for providing due diligence to ensure residents have access to the provision of 3 nutritional meals per day. This includes individuals having access to kitchen facilities to prepare their meals and availability of assistance when needed in areas such as meal planning, help with grocery shopping, and facilitating transportation to the grocery store. If proposing a Community Setting, provide plans on how these food provision requirements will be met.

Services and Staffing

List services in the chart below. Indicate if services are required or voluntary, frequency if the service is offered on-site or in the community, and who delivers the services. For expansion requests, please indicate if the services are new.

Service	New	Required or Voluntary	Frequency	Location (on-site or community)	Who delivers the services

Describe your program’s staffing and staff-to-resident ratio in the chart below. Include days/hours staff are available or are on-call general duties and required credentials/experience for the positions. Attach additional information if needed.
 (Example: Facility Manager; .5 FTE; 15 residents; visit participants in the residence, determine placement at the facility, communicate with County workers, cook meals and ensure three meals a day are provided; M-F noon to 5:00 p.m.; Associates degree in health or human services and two years work-related experience with homeless/MI individuals).

Staff Job Title	Number of Full-time equivalent	Number of tenants	General Duties	Coverage Schedule	Minimum Qualifications

Budget

Attach a copy of your budget, using the budget form included or your own form that, at a minimum, includes the categories listed. Unless outside funding is to be utilized as a part of the operation of the facility, the budget should reflect the facility's ability to pay for all room and board costs at the DHS annually set rate on 7/1.. If seeking a supplemental service rate, the additional Service Rate budget form below must be completed

[DHS Housing Support Information](#)

[DHS Supplemental Services Link](#)

**Housing Support Projected Monthly Expense
based on ____ Residents Occupancy.**

Description	Budgeted Amount	Details/Comments
Rent(s)/Mortgage		
Homeowners/Renters Insurance		
Property Taxes		
Utilities – Fuel/Electric		
Water & Sewer		
Rubbish Removal		
Building Maintenance/Repair		
Pest Control Service/Supplies		
Lawn care/Snow Removal		
Other Building Costs		
Telephone (not required)		
TV/Cable (not required)		
Furniture & Equipment Purchase		
Furniture/Equipment Repair Costs		
Household & Cleaning Supplies & Toilet Paper		
Laundry Supplies		
Other Lodging Costs		
Food/Grocery Purchase		
Catered/Purchased Meals		
Delivery or Other Food/Meal costs		
Staff/Owner Wages		
Workers comp/FICA/Unemployment Comp		
Income Taxes re this Housing Support Property		
Other Staff/Owner Costs		
Service Costs (Staffing section of the application)		
Miscellaneous Costs		
Total Monthly Expenses		
Average Room & Board Rate		
Average Services Rate (for models 2&3)		

