

AHFC Domestic Violence Rental Assistance Program**FY2015 Request: \$2,000,000****Reference No: 54796****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Life / Health / Safety**Category:** Public Protection**Location:** Statewide**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)**Impact House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)**Contact:** Les Campbell**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2014 - 06/30/2019**Contact Phone:** (907)330-8356**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

Domestic Violence Rental Assistance addresses the needs of homeless or near-homeless families who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. These same families might otherwise qualify economically for the federal Housing Choice Voucher program. However, because demand for vouchers far exceeds the supply, the targeted families are unlikely to receive assistance in time to address their immediate needs. These funds will combine with one million dollars (before sequestration adjustments) of federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding to fully fund the 214 vouchers. AHFC will administer the funds through the same mechanism and locations as the federal Housing Choice Voucher program.

| Funding: | FY2015 | FY2016 | FY2017 | FY2018 | FY2019 | FY2020 | Total |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Gen Fund | \$2,000,000 | \$2,055,000 | \$2,112,000 | \$2,170,000 | \$2,230,000 | \$2,291,000 | \$12,858,000 |
| Total: | \$2,000,000 | \$2,055,000 | \$2,112,000 | \$2,170,000 | \$2,230,000 | \$2,291,000 | \$12,858,000 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required | <input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project | <input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going |
| 0% = Minimum State Match % Required | | <input type="checkbox"/> Amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill | |

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

| | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Staff</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Project Development: | 0 | 0 |
| Ongoing Operating: | 0 | 0 |
| One-Time Startup: | 0 | 0 |
| Totals: | 0 | 0 |

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

Sec1 Ch16 SLA2013 P76 L25 SB 18 \$1,500,000

Sec1 Ch17 SLA2012 P130 L14 SB 160 \$1,328,400

Project Description/Justification:

This project will provide a referral-based transitional housing assistance program, the Empowering Choice Housing Program (ECHP), designed to meet the housing needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The projected outcomes include:

- Rental assistance for up to 214 households statewide who are displaced from permanent housing or otherwise at risk of displacement because of a recent or reoccurring instance of domestic violence as defined by (Alaska Statute, Section 18.66.990(3)).;
- Provide voucher assistance in the 12 communities where AHFC currently offers a housing choice voucher program; and
- An opportunity to advance Governor Parnell's "Choose Respect" initiative.

Program Description:

AHFC is the federally authorized agency responsible for administration of the Alaska Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program. Congress appropriates funding through HUD, which is then distributed by formula among public housing authorities. The HUD allocation of vouchers to Alaska consists of 4,275 regular vouchers and another 560 special program vouchers. Eligible families are those whose family income is below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). Nearly all families served are at or below 30% AMI, which is below the federal Poverty Line.

Over the decade, demand for voucher assistance has far exceeded the supply with approximately 4,400 families on AHFC waiting lists. AHFC administers its waiting lists by date and time. Due to federal budget declines and recent sequestration cuts to AHFC's federal funding, housing choice vouchers have had periods where no vouchers could be issued. Obtaining voucher assistance can be a very long process given current waiting lists and prolonged holds on voucher issuance. The Empowering Choice Housing Program (ECHP) is a referral program that will ensure a streamlined process for providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The ECHP is a partnership program with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA), and the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA), whereby AHFC provides transitional tenant-based rental assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, whose primary mission is to represent victim services programs throughout the state that provide services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, shall assist those programs in providing referrals for program participants based on their expertise to determine displacement due to domestic violence or sexual assault.

A primary duty of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is to implement, maintain, and monitor Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault crisis intervention and prevention programs in consultation with authorities in the field. CDVSA approved programs shall provide referrals of program participants to AHFC (DVSA Programs).

In order to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, data monitoring is ongoing and continuing. Data to be monitored includes, but is not limited to, the number of vouchers issued in each participating community, number of vouchers in shopping status, number of vouchers leased, number of available vouchers in each participating community and the average housing assistance payments for each participating community.