

AHFC Rental Assistance for Persons Displaced Due to Domestic Violence- Empowering Choice Housing Program (ECHP) **FY2021 Request: \$1,500,000**
Reference No: 60777

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Life / Health / Safety
Category: Health/Human Services
Location: Statewide **House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)
Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40) **Contact:** James Wiedle
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2025 **Contact Phone:** (907)330-8359

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Rental Assistance for Victims 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 up to \$1,000,000 (before sequestration adjustments) of federal Department of Housing and Urban Development 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:	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>Total</u>
1139 AHFC Div	\$1,500,000						\$1,500,000
Total:	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000

<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	
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

- Sec1 Ch1 SLA2019 P6 L3 SB2002 \$1,500,000
- Sec1 Ch19 SLA2018 P9 L20 SB142 \$1,500,000
- Sec1 Ch1 SLA2017 P7 L14 SB23 \$1,500,000
- Sec1 Ch2 SLA2016 P6 L28 SB138 \$1,500,000
- Sec1 Ch38 SLA2015 P6 L24 SB26 \$1,500,000
- Sec1 Ch18 SLA2014 P61 L25 SB119 \$2,000,000
- Sec1 Ch16 SLA2013 P76 L25 SB18 \$1,500,000

Project Description/Justification:

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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, distributed by formula among public housing authorities. The HUD allocation of vouchers to Alaska consists of 4,397 regular vouchers and another 1,061 special program vouchers. Eligible families are those whose family income is below fifty-percent of Area Median Income (AMI). Nearly all families admitted by AHFC are at or below 30 percent of AMI, which is below the federal poverty line.

Over the past decade, demand for voucher assistance has far exceeded 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 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 ensures a streamlined timely process for providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The ECHP is a partnership program with Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA), and Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA), whereby AHFC provides transitional tenant-based rental assistance to families referred by ANDVSA.

The primary mission of ANDVSA is to represent victim services programs and assist programs in providing referrals for program participants based on their expertise. The primary duty of the CDVSA 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).

Data monitoring is ongoing. This 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.

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); and,
- Housing stability for families occupying shelters, families living in abusive households, and families living in places not meant for habitation.