

MH Trust: AHFC Rural Housing Coordinator - New Region **FY2025 Request: \$135,000**
Reference No: AMD 64686

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Life / Health / Safety
Category: Health/Human Services **Recipient:** NA
Location: Statewide **House District:** Statewide (HD 1 - 40)
Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1 - 40) **Contact:** James Wiedle
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2024 - 06/30/2029 **Contact Phone:** (907)330-8359

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project funds a Rural Housing Coordinator position to support State operating infrastructure in a region that does not yet have this position. The Rural Housing Coordinator position will engage community partners, build local capacity, and establish a coalition to address homelessness. This position will strategize on how to address overcrowding, improve substandard housing, and increase affordable housing. The coordinator will work with Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) and Association of Alaska Housing Authorities staff to maximize local, state, and federal funding opportunities and to ensure effective use of available dollars.

Funding:	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	Total
1092	\$135,000						\$135,000
MHTAAR							
Total:	\$135,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$135,000

<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"/> Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input checked="" 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:
 Sec4 Ch1 SLA2023 P11 L23 HB41 \$135,000

Project Description/Justification:

In addition to being geographically and culturally diverse, Alaskan communities are unique in their housing resources and housing challenges. There is no “one-size-fits-all” checklist to improve access to safe and affordable housing in rural Alaska. The role of the Rural Housing Coordinator (RHC) program is to develop a community response to homelessness that fits the specific needs of the community. Rural Alaska faces challenges with infrastructure, employment, overcrowding, and rising housing instability. Rural communities also have untapped resources to address emergency housing needs and develop long-term solutions to limited housing options.

The RHC program works with local leadership to develop a coordinated response to homelessness. Local government, nonprofit partners, religious communities, and dedicated volunteers may be providing services, but the community does not yet have a coalition working together as a safety net. The coordinator will identify partners and develop a systemic response. Additionally, RHC staff identify unmet needs and work to address those gaps.

Examples of RHC projects include:

- Development of a Community Coalition to address homelessness;
- Establishment of a seasonal overnight emergency shelter for homeless individuals;
- Establishment of an eviction prevention program and successfully applying for funding;
- Working with local government to identify available space for a food pantry and setting up a partnership with the Food Bank of Alaska; and
- Working with existing programs to create a referral system between agencies to provide services more efficiently.

AHFC administers these funds in partnership with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, the Statewide Homeless and Housing Coalitions, and other Rural Housing Coordinators. Successful projects and ideas are shared and adapted for other communities and services.

The projected outcomes are:

- Establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a rural community and establish the RHC program in union with local government;
- Produce a report within the first 12 months that defines the unhoused and at-risk population in the community, existing resources, and gaps in services;
- Establish a coalition to address homelessness and barriers to affordable housing development; and
- Work with local government, nonprofit partners, and other stakeholders to apply for state and federal funding to support affordable housing development.