

# Hunger and Homeless Agency Grant Guidelines



Open Your Heart's Hunger and Homeless grants are targeted toward hunger relief programs or temporary shelter/housing for homeless people or people experiencing domestic violence.

## DUE DATES

March 1st, May 1st, July 1st, September 1st, and November 1st.

Agencies will be notified of grant decisions approximately two months after the due date.

## ELIGIBLE AGENCIES

- Agencies must serve hungry or homeless Minnesotans as the agency's primary function.
- Agencies must have 501(c)3 status OR be recognized as tax exempt by the IRS (i.e. schools, units of government or tribal governments) OR use a fiscal agent with 501(c)3 status.
- Organizations must not limit service based on individual's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or disability.
- Organizations must have completed the grant closure form for previously awarded grants and returned any unused funds to OYH to be in compliance with OYH grant requirements and to be eligible for future funding from OYH.

## ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The primary purpose of our grants is to assist agencies in improving and expanding their facilities to better serve hungry and homeless people. Typical grant awards include funding for kitchen equipment, refrigeration and storage, repair/replacement of HVAC, shelter beds, security systems, renovation of food shelves or homeless/domestic violence shelters, and construction to meet ADA or building codes. Grants are focused on areas within the facilities that directly serve hungry and homeless people rather than administrative space. Street outreach activities to homeless people are also eligible for this grant.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES

- OYH focuses grant making on the front end of the continuum. For agencies serving homeless people, preference is given to services for people who are currently homeless – on the street or in shelters. *Transitional housing has lower priority than shelter. Permanent supportive housing programs are unlikely to receive funding.*
- Hunger programs must be open and free to all in need. Geographic service boundaries are acceptable, but agencies requiring program participation, membership, purchase of food, attendance/participation in religious service, etc., as a requirement to receive food are unlikely to be funded.
- Infrastructure or equipment for shelters or food shelves must benefit the areas where clients are served. Administrative areas, parking lots, etc., are unlikely to be funded.
- Preference is given to projects that increase the numbers of people served or improve the quality of services provided.

Open Your Heart will **not ordinarily** fund:

- Structural improvements on buildings not owned by applicant agency. For repairs or improvement of facilities not owned by applicant, applicant must indicate why building owner does not make requested repairs or modifications.
- Facility upgrades to space that is shared with other user. Applicant must demonstrate that repairs or improvements are only to benefit the applicant.
- Major capital campaign or new construction projects.
- Agencies with significant unrestricted reserves.
- Purchase of vehicles.
- Agencies located outside of Minnesota even if they serve Minnesotans.
- Agencies that charge for service.

Open Your Heart will **not** fund:

- Operating costs, utilities, office equipment or salaries and benefits of staff.

- Food purchases. OYH funds food purchase through a separate, invitation only process that distributes food statewide.
- Purchase of consumable supplies.
- Food and shelter costs for disaster victims.
- Retroactive funding for projects that are already completed.
- Group homes, day care programs, schools, senior nutrition programs or treatment centers.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Agencies are eligible to apply for one Hunger and Homeless grant per year.
- Applying for or being awarded a Hunger and Homeless grant does not affect your eligibility or likelihood of receiving funding for any other OYH grant (such as the Education grant or Special Project grant).
- Umbrella organizations with multiple program sites, but a single EIN or fiscal agency, can submit a total of two grant requests per year per agency. Requests must be for different sites.
- There is no minimum or maximum award. Average grant is less than \$7,000.
- You will receive a confirmation email at the contact email listed in your application when your grant has been submitted. If you have not received this email your grant has *not* been submitted. Please contact us at [grantapplication@oyh.org](mailto:grantapplication@oyh.org) if you need assistance.

## REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

- **Fiscal Year Financial Statement**  
*Required.* Your most recently **completed** fiscal year statement. This is different than your audit; however you may pull this statement from your audit. This should include your budget, income, expenses, and funds in reserve.
- **Year-to-Date Financial Statement**  
*Required.* This should include your budget, income, expenses, and funds in reserve.
- **IRS Determination Letter**  
*If applicable.* With signature page. If you are using a fiscal agent, include their IRS Determination Letter.
- **Audit**  
*If applicable.* The most recent audit.
- **Contractor Estimates**  
*If applicable.* If this request is for structural/remodeling work, **two (2)** contractor estimates are required.
- **Project Budget**  
*If applicable.* If this request is part of a larger project, attach an overall project budget including sources of income and expenses.
- **Photo**  
*Optional.* Here you will be able to include a photo of something related to your grant request, such as a picture of something you would like to replace or update.

## REVIEW PROCESS

- Applications and attachments must be completed online by the deadline to be considered for review at the next board meeting. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed until all information is received.
- The Grant Review Committee will review and evaluate each request based on the information included in the application. **It is important that each application be as specific as possible about the need for the project and the cost of the project components.**
- Upon review of the application, the Grant Review Committee may request additional information via email, a telephone interview, or a site visit. Please note that cover letters, correspondences with OYH staff, and other attachments that are not required (i.e. brochures) will not be reviewed by the committee.
- As one of the few funders that support programs throughout the state, OYH receives far more eligible applications than we can fund. Careful consideration is given to each application and grants are awarded based on needs in the community, impact of grant, and the ability of agency to carry out grant objectives. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate that they have accessed additional funding to support the project.
- The OYH Board of Directors considers Grant Review Committee recommendations and makes the final decision on each complete application. The Board reserves the right to reject any application or portion thereof.

**STILL NEED ASSISTANCE?** Contact Open Your Heart staff at 612-338-5577 or email [grantapplication@oyh.org](mailto:grantapplication@oyh.org).