

## **PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR MIDDLESEX COUNTY “HOUSING FIRST” CAPITAL FUNDS**

The Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders has included funds in the capital budget in 2009 and 2010, totaling \$1,000,000 each year, to be used as seed or leveraging funds for housing for the homeless. Specifically, the purpose of this “Housing First” Fund is to assist in the creation of permanent affordable and accessible units which implement the Middlesex County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. This could include, but is not limited to, the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units, the acquisition of land or existing structures for the proposed construction or rehabilitating of units to be used as permanent housing for homeless individuals and/or families.

This document describes the procedure an interested applicant should follow to apply for these funds.

1. Applicant submits letter of request to Board of Chosen Freeholders with a copy to the County Administrator. The request should specify the amount of funds requested. Documentation relating to the overall development budget, sources and uses of funds, and approval or acknowledgment from the municipality where the project will be located is also required.
2. If the Board of Chosen Freeholders believes the request has merit, they will refer the request to the Department of Housing and Community Development for evaluation. In cases where the applicant has also applied for HOME Investment Partnerships program funds, a full subsidy layering review will be conducted since this review is mandatory for HOME funds. In cases where HOME funding is not requested, HCD staff will review to see if the project seems feasible based on its development budget. Depending on the type of project, more information may be requested from the applicant.
3. In addition to project feasibility, HCD staff will evaluate the proposal to see if the project assists in meeting a goal or objective of the County’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness and is being utilized for permanent housing.
4. The Department of Human Services will be provided with the project documentation and given the opportunity to comment on the project as it relates to the 10 Year Plan. This review will be done in consultation with the Executive Director of Coming Home of Middlesex County, Inc. and the Department Freeholder Liaison.
5. Once the review of the project is completed by HCD and DHS, a letter will be sent to the Board of Chosen Freeholders, with a copy to the County Administrator, stating that either the project seems financially feasible based on the information provided by the applicant and will assist in implementing the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness or that the project does not meet this criteria and why. HCD will also provide the BCF with information on the balance of “Housing First” funds available and if any other requests for these funds are currently being evaluated.

6. The Board of Chosen Freeholders will determine whether or not to fund the applicant for the amount requested or for another amount.
7. County Counsel will draw up an agreement for the funding and provide same to applicant for signature. Once the applicant's authorized parties sign the agreement, a resolution formerly approving the agreement can be placed on the next available BCF meeting for approval. Copies of the agreement and authorizing resolution should be sent to the HCD and DHS,
8. DHS will be responsible for tracking these funds. HCD will discuss with the applicant how funds will be disbursed (i.e. lump sum for acquisition costs or through miscellaneous vouchers for construction costs) and coordinate with DHS on creating the necessary purchase order.
9. Requests for payment will be reviewed by HCD staff and then submitted to DHS to be processed for payment.
10. DHS and/or HCD can petition the Board of Chosen Freeholders for additional capital funding in subsequent years to continue the "Housing First" fund.

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