



Request for Proposals Project-Based Voucher Program

INTRODUCTION

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), Rhode Island Housing (“RIHousing”) seeks proposals from property owners interested in participating in the Section 8 Project-Based Voucher (“PBV”) Program, an initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”). RIHousing expects to make rental assistance available for up to 200 units under this RFP.

Under the PBV program, a housing authority such as RIHousing enters into a Housing Assistance Payments (“HAP”) Contract with a property owner to pay rental subsidy on behalf of eligible low-income tenants. The subsidy is provided by HUD and subject to all applicable HUD regulations.

The HAP contract may cover either all or a portion of the units in a development (see Attachment B: Scope of Work for specific requirements), and carries a term of up to twenty (20) years, after which it may be renewed by agreement of the owner and housing authority. The rental subsidy is attached directly to the unit and does not follow the tenant when he or she chooses to move.

Households interested in renting a PBV unit are first referred to the housing authority’s waiting list. When a PBV unit becomes available, the housing authority establishes applicant eligibility for the PBV program, and then refers eligible applicants to the owner to conduct further screening according to their tenant selection plan. If both the housing authority and the owner approve an applicant for a unit, the applicant may enter into a lease with the owner. The family pays 30 percent of their income (after certain deductions) toward rent and the housing authority pays the owner the difference between the family’s portion and the gross rent of the unit.

INSTRUCTIONS

Responses should be submitted **via email only** to RIHousing, to the attention of Charles Francis, Assistant Director of Leased Housing and Rental Services, at cfrancis@rihousing.com. **Proposals will be reviewed on a rolling basis, subject to the availability of PBV funds.**

Respondents are advised that **all** submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request.

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ELIGIBLE OWNERS AND PROJECTS

All for-profit and non-profit owners are eligible to apply under this RFP. Proof of legal ownership must be provided.

Only **existing housing** will be funded under this RFP; units must be available for occupancy as of the date of PBV contract execution. Projects proposed to be or under construction are not eligible.

Under Rhode Island state law, a housing authority generally has exclusive jurisdiction to lease families within its municipal boundaries. Therefore, eligible PBV projects **must** be either located within the jurisdiction of RIHousing or be accompanied by a letter from the local housing authority (or other applicable municipal authority) agreeing to allow RIHousing to project-base and administer vouchers within its jurisdiction.

RIHousing's jurisdiction currently includes the following cities and towns:

Barrington	Jamestown	Portsmouth
Charlestown	Little Compton	Richmond
Exeter	Middletown	Scituate
Foster	New Shoreham	West Greenwich
Glocester	North Kingstown	
Hopkinton	North Smithfield	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RIHousing reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to rebid the original or amended scope of services and to enter into negotiations with one or more respondents. RIHousing reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. Furthermore, although RIHousing estimates having sufficient resources for approximately 200 new PBV units, RIHousing may adjust this estimate upward or downward in its sole discretion. RIHousing's decision on these matters is final.

For further information contact: Charles Francis, Assistant Director, Leased Housing and Rental Services, cfrancis@rihousing.com / (401) 457-1228.

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Attachment A: Proposal Narrative

Please provide the following information with your response:

A. General Agency Information and Experience

1. Provide a brief agency description, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Name of the principal(s) of the agency
 - b. Name, telephone number and email address of a representative of the agency authorized to discuss your proposal
2. Describe your agency and its capabilities particularly as related to the development of housing opportunities for low-income households, special populations and participation in HUD and/or other governmental assistance programs.

B. Project Information

1. General information:
 - a. Project name
 - b. Project address, including census tract (please indicate if census tract has a poverty rate of 20 percent or less)
 - c. Proof of legal ownership (e.g. deed)
 - d. Number of units in the project
 - e. Number of units proposed to receive PBV assistance
 - f. Number of bedrooms in each unit
 - g. Requested contract rent by unit type
 - h. Actual market rent (for any market units)
 - i. Breakdown of utility responsibility (owner vs. tenant paid)
 - j. Number of units in the development that are compliant with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, including a description of applicable accessibility features
 - k. Proposed tenant selection plan
 - l. Public transit and/or community amenities and distance from proposed project
2. Describe the housing challenges faced by low-income households in the geographic area you propose to serve, including any special populations targeted by the proposed PBV units. Please draw on supporting data where possible.
3. Special populations:
 - a. Indicate whether you plan to serve one or more of the following special populations: homeless households, veterans, victims of domestic violence, elderly, or disabled households.
 - b. Please describe any features of this housing development or supportive services provided that address the unique needs of any such population.

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Attachment B: Scope of Work

RIHousing will require the following of all successful applicants:

- Owner must agree to enter into a twenty (20) year PBV HAP Contract with RIHousing and be bound by all provisions contained therein
- All PBV units must be maintained in accordance with HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS) or equivalent HUD-approved inspection protocol
- Owner must agree to receive and process applicant referrals and subsidy payments using the software system(s) specified by RIHousing.
- Upon receiving referrals of eligible tenants from RIHousing, the owner must conduct screening and leasing activities in a timely manner, and in accordance with its Tenant Selection Plan as well as all applicable federal, state, and local fair housing laws
- Owner must maintain a working knowledge of and adhere to all applicable HUD program regulations, Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Notices, and other HUD guidance, including, but not limited to, 24 CFR 983, the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program guidebook, and the RIHousing Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan
- Owner must promptly notify RIHousing of any issues that would jeopardize the health and safety of any PBV tenants or any non-compliance issues that would threaten their ability to maintain a successful tenancy
- If the owner proposes to project base more than 25 percent of units in a development, owner must make available a level of supportive services appropriate to the needs of tenants in these “excepted” units, but may **not** require participation in supportive services as a condition of tenancy

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Attachment C: Evaluation Criteria

THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Projects must meet the following minimum criteria in order to be considered:

- Project must be ready for occupancy as of the date of HAP Contract execution, as evidenced by a Certificate of Occupancy from the appropriate municipality or other means acceptable to RIHousing
- Project must be located either within the jurisdiction of RIHousing or application must be accompanied by a letter of support from the local housing authority or other applicable municipal authority (see “Eligible Projects” section above)
- Proof of legal ownership (e.g. deed) must be provided

EVALUATION CRITERIA

PBV assistance will be competitively awarded until available PBV funds are exhausted. A committee comprised of RIHousing staff will evaluate proposals based on the following factors:

- Experience and capacity of project owner in providing housing for low-income households
- Demonstrated connection between the proposed project and the housing needs of its target population and geographic area. Particular consideration will be given to projects that propose to serve areas with a limited stock of deeply subsidized housing.
- Projects proposing to serve one or more of the following special populations: homeless households, veterans, victims of domestic violence, elderly, or disabled households
- Projects with affordability or use restrictions that will expire within the next five years
- Projects currently receiving a rental or operating subsidy that is temporary in nature, expired, or is expected to expire or be defunded within the next three years
- Projects located ½ mile or less from public transit and/or other community amenities
- Projects including accessibility features as described in the Proposal Narrative
- Projects whose Tenant Selection Plan reduces barriers for hard to house individuals by means such as allowing mitigating factors for poor landlord or credit history, limiting the look-back period for non-violent criminal offenses, etc.
- Projects owned by firms undertaking affirmative action activities as described in the Proposal Narrative