

**Outreach for Comprehensive Eviction Prevention (CEP)**  
**NJ Department of Community Affairs**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**August 2021**

**A. Name of grant program:** Outreach for the Comprehensive Eviction Prevention (CEP)

**B. Issue:**

The New Jersey Eviction Moratorium implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic protected families impacted by the pandemic from losing their housing and prevented further spread of the disease. As New Jersey winds down the COVID-19 eviction moratorium, the State has introduced critical protections to renter households who experienced economic hardships during the pandemic and has provided mechanisms for financial supports to landlords that have lost revenue during this period. All renter households with incomes below 120% of the area median income are protected from eviction or removal at any time for nonpayment of rent, habitual late payments of rent, or failure to accept a rent increase that accrued from March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021.

Depending on the household's income level and specific circumstances, they may also be eligible for protection from eviction or removal through December 31, 2021, and other assistance and services, including utility assistance. To take advantage of these protections, income qualified NJ households must accomplish several tasks, including self-certification of income and submission of an application for rental assistance.

**C. Purpose of the proposal:**

This grant program provides funds for non-profit agencies in New Jersey to implement an outreach strategy to meet the goals of the new Eviction Prevention bills, known as S3691 and A4463, signed by Governor Murphy on August 4, 2021 as P.L. 2021, c. 188 and P.L. 2021, c. 189. In order to ensure that all eligible NJ households are knowledgeable about these protections and services, the Department requires an intensive outreach strategy, with marketing activities to commence shortly after being selected as a grantee. DCA seeks administrative economies of scale, and aims to ensure services are provided to highest need communities without duplication of service. The goal of this initiative is to conduct outreach activities to ensure that households are made aware of all assistance available. Grantees must demonstrate ability and a plan to both provide outreach and to directly assist households in submitting eviction prevention self-certification forms and rental assistance applications.

**D. Available funding:**

Federal Pandemic assistance funding available for these grants totals \$5 million dollars. This grant is supported by federal funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES), Public Law #116 -136, dated March 27, 2020, and is also supported by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, (ARP) known as Public Law #117-2, dated March 11, 2021.

**E. Eligible Entities:**

1. New Jersey 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 non-profits with at least five years of demonstrable experience in serving income eligible households with housing assistance.
2. Extensive experience providing outreach, in such activities as:
  - a. Housing enrollment events
  - b. Canvassing events
  - c. Creating and Hosting outreach events.
2. Extensive experience providing one or more of the following services:
  - a. Rental Assistance
  - b. Homelessness Prevention
  - c. Eviction prevention/ landlord tenant counseling
  - d. HUD-Certified Housing Counseling services
  - e. Wrap around case management services
3. Selected grantees must meet the threshold standards outlined in Section H.
4. Applicants must demonstrate that they possess sufficient capacity to design and implement an outreach campaign; establish partnerships with grassroot organizations to conduct the outreach; and the ability to work under a tight timeline with high performance expectations.
5. Agencies that intend to partner or sub-grant portions of this outreach and client engagement to engage constituents most thoroughly within their service area shall enter into a streamlined MOU regarding same.
6. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to develop a timely plan to execute the strategy described, including a strategy to reach the most vulnerable neighborhoods, and demonstrate the capacity to serve people that speak different languages either within the agency or through the competencies of selected partners.

**F. Scope of Work:**

1. Under a DCA-approved marketing and public outreach plan, grantees shall provide data-driven outreach plans and client engagement services to educate the public on these protections, on accessing necessary resources or support, and in directly assisting households in submitting self-certification forms and rental assistance applications. For example, this link includes data on [‘Where to Prioritize Emergency Rental Assistance to Keep Renters in Their Homes’ | Urban Institute](#)
2. Grantees shall provide comprehensive outreach and marketing through a multitude

of approaches in order to saturate constituency markets with this information. These plans shall include, at minimum:

- a. Target marketing methodology, including intentional outreach to landlords to further increase housing stability.
- b. Description of outreach mechanisms, including the process to reach those populations that are considered to be least likely to apply for assistance, such as extremely low -income, non-English speaking and disabled households.
- c. Experience of partner agencies involved with these efforts and a specific breakdown of each party's responsibilities.
- d. Mechanisms for gathering lived experience feedback for continuous improvement in messaging.

3. Applicants will outline in detail the mechanisms by which they will assist those wishing to access the law's services and protection, i.e. door knocking, digital media, peer to peer, Facebook live, distribution of pamphlets and flyers, direct, on the spot assistance with certifying and applying via a tablet or smart phone, coordinated outreach with local faith communities, libraries, NJ Head Start programs, Family Success Centers, local business, etc.

4. Regardless of outreach modalities, grantees, and/or their subgrantees, will provide information on the details of both recent laws and shall supplement their knowledge with the information listed on DCA's website concerning eviction preventions and rental assistance at [NJ Eviction Prevention Information](#) and [Home Page - NMA Portal \(onlinepha.com\)](#) and the information below:

- New eviction and foreclosure moratorium deadlines and special eviction protections for tenants who were directly impacted by the pandemic. The eviction moratorium continues through August for all state residents with household incomes below 120% Area Medium Income (AMI) and through the end of the year for certain households with incomes below 80% AMI.
- Eviction protection that is available for tenants with household incomes below 120 percent AMI who were unable to pay their rent between the covered period of March 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021, and who provide a [self-certification form](#) to their landlords and, when applicable, to the court. Tenants meeting these requirements cannot ever be evicted for any outstanding rent during the covered period. While tenants who are covered by this special protection may not be evicted, this rent is still due to landlords and landlords may pursue this rent through a money judgment.
- Eviction preventions for tenants with household incomes below 80 percent AMI, who have applied for state or local rental assistance, and who have experienced an economic impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tenants meeting these requirements who provide a self-certification for to their landlords and, when applicable, to the courts, are protected from eviction for unpaid rent accrued from March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021. For the special eviction protections to take effect, the tenant MUST provide the required self-certification form to their landlord and, when applicable, to the courts.
- All New Jersey households with income less than 120 percent AMI may apply for the [COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#).
- Be familiar with the other rental assistance programs operated by DCA and local or county agencies and refer as appropriate.
- Landlords who are receiving rental assistance must waive any late fees accrued by tenants during the special protections period.
- Landlords may not report delayed rent to crediting agencies and they cannot sell the debt.

- Landlords may not disclose non-payment of rent to others and prospective landlords may not deny renting to a person who wasn't able to pay rent during the covered period of March 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021.
- The moratorium on home foreclosures ends on November 15, 2021, for all income levels. This includes landlords facing foreclosure who currently have tenants.
- The legislation appropriates an additional \$500 million for the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (CVERAP) and \$250 million for utility assistance.
- For the purposes of this outreach, incomes shall be identified as follows:
  - Middle income – at or above 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), and below 120% AMI
  - Moderate income – above 50% AMI, below 80%
  - Low income – at or below 50% AMI
  - Very low income – at or below 30% AMI

**G. Maximum and minimum awards:** The minimum award shall be \$500,000 and the maximum award shall be \$1 million dollars.

**H. Threshold screening** – applicants that do not meet these standards will not be considered:

1. Active SAGE account with the Department on or before September 7, 2021.
2. Not listed on the DCA list of High-Risk grantees and, as applicable, the current audit submission is not overdue.
3. Valid registrations:
  - a. A SAMs registration noting that entity is not in a 'Debt Offset' status for owing funds to the federal government. [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)
  - b. An active State Vendor number, as listed on NJStart.gov or [NJ Division of Purchase and Property \(state.nj.us\)](http://NJ.Division.of.Purchase.and.Property.state.nj.us)
  - c. Not Listed on the State Debarment list, located at [www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/treas/revenue/debarsearch.pl](http://www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/treas/revenue/debarsearch.pl).
  - d. An active account or exemption at the NJ Charities Registrations website at [Search For A Charity · Basic Portal \(state.nj.us\)](http://Search.For.A.Charity.Basic.Portal.state.nj.us)

**I. Target population:** Clients served directly by grantees or sub-grantees shall have household incomes at or below 120% of the area median income, with the expectation that most clients will have incomes at or below 80% of the median income.

**J. Ineligible activities:**

Purchase or improvement of land or structures.

**K. Grant Term:** The grant term runs from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

**L. Application Process:** All applications must be emailed to: Lisa Costello at [lisa.costello@dca.nj.gov](mailto:lisa.costello@dca.nj.gov) Later, approved applicants shall be required to transfer all application data to DCA's electronic grants system, known as SAGE. Applications must include the following information:

- Agency Description
- Proposed Program Descriptions
- Program Objectives

- Scope of Services
- Contact Information
- Program Components
- Program Service Areas
- Program Personnel Listing and resumes of key staff
- Consultant Listing
- Proposed Program Budget

***Required Application Attachments:***

- Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension
- Certification Regarding Lobbying
- Resolution from grantee board
- Copy of SAM.gov Certification
- Partnership Listing and a list of the services provided through such partnerships
- Signed Application Cover Page
- Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation

Administrative costs are limited to a maximum of 15% of the total grant award.

**O. Review Criteria**

Office of Community Services staff will review and evaluate applications based on a **100-point system**. Applications are scored as follows:

1. Demonstration of Sufficient Capacity to undertake proposal – **50 points**
  - a. Demonstration of length of experience in proposed activity
  - b. Demonstration of regional or statewide level work in area of proposed activities
  - c. List of proposed partner sub-grantee partners and details of their experience and length/breadth of collaboration.
  - d. Detailed list of proposed outreach methods.

<b>Marginal Response 1-5 Points</b>	<b>Acceptable Response Maximum 35 Points</b>	<b>Excellent Response Maximum 50 Points</b>
The applicant's response was incomplete, lacks clarity and does not provide assurance as to their ability to perform the work proposed.	The applicant's response was clear, thorough and provides reasonable assurance as to their capacity to perform the work proposed.	The applicant's response provides significant assurance as to their capacity to perform the work proposed – the answers provided demonstrate a high level of expertise and capability.

2. Ability to implement the proposal in an effective and timely manner – **35 points**
- a. Clear description of how the proposed activities will provide maximum outreach.
  - b. Description of similar programs delivered in the recent past.
  - c. Examples of agency capacity that will permit such implementation.

<b>Marginal Response 1-5 Points</b>	<b>Acceptable Response Maximum 20 Points</b>	<b>Excellent Response Maximum 35 Points</b>
The applicant's response was incomplete and did not provide a clear description of activities	The applicant's response provided a clear description of project activities and how the proposed activities will help improve leasing. Timeline seemed reasonable.	The applicant's response provided a clear, detailed description of project activities and how the proposed activities will help improve leasing. Timeline seemed reasonable.

3. Budget
- a. Proposed costs are eligible, reasonable and clearly defined – **15 points**

<b>Marginal Response 1-5 Points</b>	<b>Acceptable Response Maximum 10 Points</b>	<b>Excellent Response Maximum 15 Points</b>
The applicant's response was incomplete and did not provide a clear description of the budget.	The applicant's response provided a clear description of the budget. Budget items were eligible, and reasonable.	The applicant's response provided a clear description of the budget. Budget items were eligible, reasonable and substantiated by narrative.

**O. Reporting requirements:**

Grant recipients are required to provide monthly performance reports and participate in weekly status meetings with DCA staff. Electronic reporting will be required according to the following schedule:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
9/1/21 - 9/30/21	11/1/21
10/1/21 – 10/31/21	12/1/21
11/1/21 – 11/30/21	1/1/22
12/1/21 – 12/31/21	2/1/22
1/1/22 - 1/31/22	3/1/22
2/1/22 - 2/28/22	4/1/22
3/1/22 - 3/31/22	5/1/22
4/1/22 - 4/30/22	6/1/22
5/1/22 – 5/31/22	7/1/22
6/1/22 – 6/30/22	8/1/22
7/1/22 - 7/31/22	9/1/22
8/1/22 - 8/31/22	10/1/22

Grant recipients are required to track and report the following at a minimum:

- All outreach events, activities performed, and outcomes
- Partners engaged in outreach, activities performed, and outcomes
- Basic household demographic information (i.e., address, zip code, county of residence, household size, race or ethnicity and primary language.)

Grant recipients are required to participate in weekly virtual meetings with DCA to touch base about the progress of these activities.

**P. Technical Assistance Session:**

Applicants MUST participate in the technical assistance webinar scheduled for August 30, 2021. Log in information will be distributed by August 27, 2021.

**Q. Deadline:** Applications must be submitted by **September 7, 2021**.

**R. Date by which applicants shall be notified:** On or about September 24, 2021.

**S.** Applicants with questions about this RFP may email Lisa Costello in the Division of Housing and Community Resources at [Lisa.costello@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Lisa.costello@dca.nj.gov)