



**SEMINOLE COUNTY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**DIVISION OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE**

**FISCAL YEARS 2018-19 THROUGH 2020-21 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**

**Tenant Based Rental Assistance:  
Rental Subsidy and Security Deposits**

**Applications Due**

**4:00 p.m., Thursday, January 31, 2019  
Carrie Longworth, Division Manager Community Assistance**

## OVERVIEW

- I. **Introduction:** Seminole County announces a Request for Application (RFA) for activities funded with HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) dollars for **Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)**. The HOME funds under this RFA are restricted to **Monthly Rental Subsidies and Security deposits**. The funds are to assist persons who are elderly (62+) and/or have a disability.
  
- II. Applicants will apply to be the TBRA Administrator for Fiscal Years (FY) 2018-19 through 2020-21. Allocations and contracting will be done on an annual basis. Project implementation and performance will be a consideration for each program year.
  - A. **Issuing Agency: This Request for Application (RFA)** is issued by the Seminole County Community Services Department, Division of Community Assistance (hereinafter referred to as the “County”).
  
  - B. **Eligible Applicants:** Non-profit organizations, public housing authorities, and other public agencies are eligible to apply. Non-profit organizations include those organizations that have received 501(c)(3) federal tax exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and are registered as a non-profit corporation in the State of Florida. Organizations and agencies may not restrict client participation based on required religious affiliation or services. Seminole County will not accept applications from individuals.
  
  - C. **Availability of Funds:** It is anticipated that an estimated **\$400,000** in HOME funds will be available for projects selected under this RFA (approximately \$200,000 per year). An additional \$50,000 is available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for a full-time employee to administer the program. Funds will be available starting in 2019. The County reserves the right to reduce or increase funding under this RFA, to request additional clarifications from funders, and to publish a new RFA in subsequent program years.

<b>2019-2021 <u>Estimated Total</u> Allocation Amounts</b>	
<b>Funding Category</b>	<b>Estimated Total Fund Amount</b>
Security Deposits and Rental Subsidy	\$400,000 HOME *approx. \$200,000 per year
Administering TBRA- 1 FTE	Up to \$50,000 CDBG

**REVIEW AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:**

**Step 1 Staff Review and Assessment.** Division of Community Assistance staff will perform a technical review of the applications received, and forward all eligible to the Seminole County Community Services Application Review Committee (ARC) based upon the established criteria. The ARC will consist of Community Services Department Staff who will review and score the applications.

**Step 2 Final Decision by Seminole County Board of County Commissioners.** The Seminole County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) makes the final funding awards. The tentative date for BCC funding decisions is March 2019.

**NOTE:** Disposition of final project awards is contingent on project eligibility and funding availability, as well as federal, state and local statutes, regulations, policies and contract requirements.

**RFP SCHEDULE:**

**Monday, December 31, 2018 RFA Released**

**Thursday, January 11, 2019 Pre-Application Workshop**  
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Seminole County Community Services  
534 W. Lake Mary Blvd.  
Sanford, FL 32773

**Thursday, January 31, 2019 Applications Due** (Seminole County Community  
4:00 p.m. Services Office)

**February 1-15, 2019 County staff review**

**March 2019 Awards Announced**  
(Tentative)

**March 2019 Contracts Executed**  
(Tentative)

## BACKGROUND

This program is authorized under the provisions of Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, which established the HOME program. The HOME program is implemented through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is subject to the requirements of Section 24, Part 92, of the Code of Federal Regulations (24 CFR 92). The purpose of HOME is to expand the supply of permanent affordable housing for low-income families and individuals.

Seminole County receives HOME funds annually from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Department of Community Services administers this funding on behalf of the Seminole County.

**TBRA Funding Priorities:** The County's 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan prioritizes extremely-low and very-low individuals who are elderly (62+) and/or have a disability to receive TBRA assistance. This population includes individual and families.

**TBRA Program Information:** TBRA programs use HOME funds to assist tenants with rental assistance and/or other costs associated with housing, such as security deposits. TBRA assists individual households to obtain permanent housing rather than providing assistance to housing projects. The subsidy level is individualized to the tenant household based on their income. **This RFA is for Security Deposits and on-going rental subsidy.**

### **TBRA Eligible Activities under this RFA**

#### **Security Deposits:**

- Seminole County policy is that Security Deposits must be paid to Landlord/Owner on behalf of the tenant.

#### **Rental Assistance:**

- Seminole County policy is that Rental Assistance must be paid to the landlord or owner of the property on behalf of the tenant. It may not be paid directly to the tenant.
- Rental Assistance must be provided in compliance with the Seminole County TBRA minimum/maximum subsidy limits.

#### **Other Costs:**

- Costs of Administering TBRA:
  - Eligible Project Costs: inspecting the housing and determining the income eligibility of the household, calculating the amount of TBRA assistance and disbursing the assistance (the County anticipates funding 1 full time employee (FTE) up to \$50,000 with CDBG funding annually for administration; the County reserves the right to increase or decrease this amount based on funds available).

**Ineligible Costs:**

- Supportive Services

**Descriptions:**

**Extremely Low Income Household:** Households with income at or below 30% Area Median Income ([AMI](#)).

**Very Low Income Household:** Households with income at or below 50% Area Median Income ([AMI](#)).

**Security Deposit:** Maximum HOME funds for Security Deposit assistance may be a one-time payment of up to two (2) month’s rent for the unit.

**Rental Assistance:** On-going monthly rental subsidy.

**Permanent Housing:** Housing that is not time limited and does not require a household to move by a specified date or within a specified timeframe.

**Public or Private:** Units may be publicly or privately owned.

**GUIDELINES**

**Principles and Requirements include but are not limited to:**

- Performance and outcomes will be considered during application/project review and contracting will include performance based/outcome oriented results that help provide stable housing for this population.
- This project can assist individuals/households regardless of their current housing status (homeless or housed) at the time of application.
- Project activities must be consistent with the County 5 year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.
- Projects generally should be **readily accessible and broadly available community-wide (not limited to the agency clients/programs)**.
- Applicants are required to maintain a TBRA waitlist when openings become available. Program is considered at full capacity when 30 households are being simultaneously assisted with on-going rental subsidy.
  - *At the time of award, program will have 20 active households.*

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The Application is divided into sections, all of which must be completed and submitted by the deadline. The sections are organized in the following manner:

- I. **Application Cover Sheet**
  - II. **Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Narrative** – (may not exceed 5 pages).
- Attachment A      Budget – Security Deposits Only**

**Attachment B      Budget – Security Deposits and Rental Assistance**

**Exhibit A      Agency Capacity and Experience (may not exceed 4 pages).**

Applicants should prepare one original and three copies of each application for submittal.

Hard copies are due by **4 p.m. NO LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED.**

**Applications can be delivered in person to:**

Seminole County Community Services Department  
534 W. Lake Mary Blvd. Sanford, FL 32773  
Attn: Carrie Longsworth

**Completed applications should consist of the following, in this order:**

- Application Cover Sheet with a signature by an authorized official on the “Master Copy”.
- Project Narrative (may not exceed 5 pages). Additional pages will not be reviewed.
- Agency Operating Budget.
  - Attachment A
- Additional Materials
  - One (1) Agency Capacity and Experience (Exhibit A) (may not exceed 4 pages) per applicant;
  - For Nonprofit organizations: Agency Certification of nonprofit Status: IRS 501(c)(3) letter;
  - An electronic copy of your agency’s most recent Audited Financial Statements.
  - Current organizational chart that includes project staff and management.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered; applications are considered complete if all required materials are submitted. Applications must meet threshold criteria in order to be considered for funding.

To Be Completed by Community Services Staff Only:

<b>Threshold Criteria</b>		
<b><u>Criteria:</u></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
A. Application is submitted on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Application package is complete (all required materials are included).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Project is consistent with the Seminole County RFA Priorities and HOME Program eligibility criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Project is consistent with the Seminole County 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If the response to A, B, C, or D is NO then stop here. Application will not be reviewed.</b>		
<b>Application Meets Threshold Criteria.</b> (If yes, proceed to review below.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## PROPOSAL/APPLICATION NARRATIVES – GENERAL INFORMATION

Use a minimum font size of 12 points and one-inch margins. Your project narrative responses in **Sections II cannot exceed 5 pages**. Additional pages will not be reviewed.

The information provided in your application should be written as though the reviewers have no prior knowledge of your agency or programs. Make sure that your responses describe the specific proposed project, and not your agency's general mission. The more clearly you describe the project the better your application will be understood. Applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly read the RFA and questions, being careful to respond to these accordingly.

Include only the specific supporting documentation required. Do not attach other materials such as cover letters, annual reports, newsletters, brochures and general letters of support. If included, these will be discarded.

### **Project proposals should address the following questions:**

- Does the agency propose to provide Tenant Based Rental Assistance to the identified priority populations and subpopulations?
- Does the agency have recent experience with administering rental assistance programs (i.e., determining income eligibility, completing housing inspections, reviewing lease agreements, issuing rental assistance and/or security deposit assistance), housing homeless, low income, or unstably housed individuals and families in permanent housing (particularly market rate housing), and working with other local grant programs to achieve similar outcomes)?
- Describe the agency's outreach plan (i.e., identifying the target (sub)population(s) and client access to the project including whether a subset of the target (sub)population will be prioritized for assistance) and how the project will be made available and accessible to persons county-wide.
- Does the project specify ways of allocating resources to ensure maximum usage?
- Does the agency already have successful relationships with area landlords/owner and/or property managers?
- Does the agency collaborate with other services, programs and agencies within the community to provide services or resources to participants to assist participants achieve housing stability?
- Does the project include specific, measurable outputs and outcomes that meet the purpose of the funding?
- Does the agency demonstrate an ability to manage federal or public funding with adequate financial procedures in place?
- Does the agency have regular monitoring and audit procedures in place with an explanation of any findings? Are any audit or monitoring findings resolved or in the process of being resolved?
- Does the agency demonstrate cultural competence to support the proposed project and serve the identified populations?
- Does the agency address any barriers or challenges to program implementation, performance concerns or other similar issues?



## TBRA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS / USES

It is anticipated that approximately \$400,000 in HOME funds will serve 30 extremely low and low-income households for the 2-year period. The estimated breakout is 27 households at or below 30% AMI and a maximum of 3 households at or below 50% AMI.

### Who is eligible to receive TBRA assistance?

**(The definitions provided below are current as of the publishing of this RFA and are subject to change.)**

TBRA assistance is available for persons who meet the following definitions:

**Extremely low** and **low-income** individuals and families with:

- **Annual incomes at or below 30% Area Median Income (AMI) and annual incomes at or below 50% AMI;** priority must be given to households with incomes at or below 30% AMI. Assistance to households with incomes at or below 50% AMI cannot exceed 10% of the total caseload.
- Income must be calculated in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609 and documented by two (2) months of source documents evidencing annual income. Income limits are established and published annually by HUD.
- Income must be recertified at least annually while receiving TBRA assistance.

**AND**

Individuals and families who are:

- Head of household or co-head of household **is elderly (age 62+) and/or disabled.**

### Housing Requirements

TBRA assistance may be provided to eligible participants who must be allowed to locate (public or private) permanent housing of their choice within Seminole County. TBRA assistance moves with the participant if the participant wishes to rent a different unit; however, TBRA assistance may be provided only within Seminole County.

Units that are assisted with TBRA must meet the following **property standards**:

- **Housing Quality Standard (HQS):** the Agency must conduct HQS inspections before assistance is provided and at least annually thereafter during the period of assistance.
- **Occupancy Standards:** the unit must have at least one (1) bedroom or living/sleeping room for each two (2) persons.
- **Rent Reasonableness:** gross rent must be reasonable in relation to other units of comparable size and amenities in the region as reported by the Seminole County Rent Reasonableness Survey.
- **Lead-based paint:** the unit must meet the lead-based paint requirements at 24 CFR part 35.

**Other General Requirements:**

- Assistance must be available and accessible to persons County-wide.
- The participant and the landlord/owner must enter into a written lease agreement of not less than one (1) year. The Agency must review and approve all leases; if the lease is not reasonable, the Agency may not approve it.
  - Lease agreements may not contain any provisions prohibited by **24 CFR 92.253(b)**
  - Lease agreements must have addendums for the HOME program and Violence Against Women Act
- Security Deposits are only an eligible expense if the household is also receiving an on-going monthly subsidy.

**Security Deposits**

TBRA assistance may be used to pay for **security deposits** (as defined by the local or state landlord-tenant law):

- Only an eligible applicant may apply for HOME security deposit assistance; however, per Seminole County policy, the security deposit payment must be made directly to the landlord/owner.
- The Agency may make a one-time security deposit payment of up to two (2) month's rent to the landlord/owner on behalf of the eligible applicant.

**Rental Assistance**

TBRA assistance may be used to pay for **Rental Assistance**:

- The rental assistance subsidy varies depending on the participant's income, which must be calculated according to 24 CFR 5.609 and 24 CFR 5.611(a); income-eligible participants must contribute towards the unit rent in order to receive TBRA assistance in accordance with the County-established parameters:
  - The minimum tenant contribution is 30% of the household monthly gross adjusted income or \$50 whichever is greater
  - The maximum rental assistance payment is the difference between the gross rent and 30% of the household monthly adjusted income
- TBRA may not duplicate existing rental assistance programs that already reduce tenant's rent payment to 30% of monthly gross adjusted income.
- The participant and the landlord/owner must enter into a written lease agreement as described in Housing Requirements; generally, the lease must be for a term of one year, however, the participant and the landlord/owner may mutually agree to a shorter term.
- In addition to the lease agreement between the participant and the landlord/owner, two (2) rental assistance agreements must be in place:

- Between the Agency and the Landlord/Owner. The term of the agreement may not exceed 12 months, but may be renewed, subject to the availability of HOME funds. The agreement must begin on the first day of the term of the lease. The agreement must include the terms under which rental assistance will be provided, the term of the agreement, that the landlord/owner will provide the agency with a copy of all written notices to the participant, and that the landlord/owner will comply with HOME regulations.
- Between the Agency and the participant. The agreement must include the terms under which rental assistance will be provided, the term of the agreement, and that the landlord/owner will provide the agency with a copy of all written notices to the participant. The agreement need not terminate on the termination of the lease; however, no payments may be made after lease termination until the participant enters a new lease.
- Additionally, a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Addendum and Seminole County lease Addendum (prohibiting certain language) must be completed and signed by both the landlord/owner and participant.

I. APPLICATION COVER SHEET – RFA

PROJECT TITLE: _____
CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT APPLICANT: LEAD APPLICANT AGENCY: _____ PRIMARY CONTACT NAME: _____ MAILING ADDRESS: _____ PHONE (INCL. AREA CODE): _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____
PROJECT LOCATION: _____
PROJECT DESCRIPTION ( LIMIT TO <u>ONE</u> (1) SENTENCE ):          
BUDGET & SERVICE LEVELS:  HOME TBRA PROGRAM FUNDS REQUESTED: _____ OTHER COUNTY FUNDS REQUESTED FOR TBRA PROJECT ADMIN: _____ <b>TOTAL TBRA FUNDS REQUESTED:</b> _____ OTHER RESOURCES: _____ <b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET:</b> _____ ANNUAL AGENCY BUDGET: _____ % OF AGENCY BUDGET THAT PROJECT REPRESENTS: _____ % OF PROJECT BUDGET THAT REPRESENTS SERVICES TO SEMINOLE COUNTY: _____ PROJECTED HOUSEHOLDS TO BE SERVED ANNUALLY: _____
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL INFORMATION IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT. THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT WHO WILL COMPLY WITH ALL CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS IF THE PROPOSAL IS AWARDED FUNDING.  SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____  TYPED NAME / TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

## II. TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TBRA) PROJECT NARRATIVE

**NOTE: PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN THE BODY OF THE NARRATIVE.  
DO NOT DELETE THE QUESTIONS.**

*SECTION II MAY NOT EXCEED 5 PAGES.*

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** *PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT. INCLUDE A PROJECTION OF ANNUAL HOUSEHOLDS AND PERSONS TO BE SERVED. IF THE AGENCY PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED FUNDING FOR A TBRA PROJECT, DESCRIBE THAT PROJECT'S OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES.*

**AGENCY EXPERIENCE:** *PROVIDE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF AGENCY EXPERIENCE WITH ADMINISTERING RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (I.E., DETERMINING INCOME ELIGIBILITY, COMPLETING HOUSING INSPECTIONS, REVIEWING LEASE AGREEMENTS, ISSUING RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND/OR SECURITY/UTILITY DEPOSIT ASSISTANCE), HOUSING EXTREMELY LOW OR LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN PERMANENT HOUSING, WORKING WITH AREA LANDLORDS/OWNERS AND/OR PROPERTY MANAGERS, AND WORKING WITH OTHER LOCAL GRANT PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE SIMILAR OUTCOMES)).*

**OUTREACH AND ACCESS:** *DESCRIBE IN DETAIL HOW THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL REACH THE TARGETED (SUB)POPULATION(S), DESCRIBE HOW THE TARGET (SUB)POPULATION WILL ACCESS PROJECT SERVICES, ANY ANTICIPATED BARRIERS TO PROJECT ACCESS BY THE TARGET (SUB)POPULATION(S) AND HOW THESE WILL BE ADDRESSED. ALSO DESCRIBE ANY EXCLUSION CRITERIA USED BY THE PROJECT AND WHY THESE CRITERIA WERE SELECTED. DESCRIBE HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO HOUSEHOLDS COUNTY-WIDE.*

**PROJECT ELIGIBILITY:** SPECIFY HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE COMPLY WITH HOME PROGRAM AND RFA REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING SERVING ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS, DOCUMENTING ELIGIBILITY, MEETING HOUSING REQUIREMENTS, AND PROVIDING ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE COSTS ONLY. IF THE AGENCY WILL COORDINATE WITH OTHER PROGRAMS WITHIN THE AGENCY AND/OR WITH OTHER AGENCIES IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE DESCRIBE THESE COLLABORATIONS. AGENCY MUST ADDRESS PROJECT OVERSIGHT.

**COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES/PROGRAMS AND COORDINATION:**

DESCRIBE OTHER PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES THAT WILL PROVIDE SERVICES AND/OR RESOURCES TO PROJECT PARTICIPANTS (E.G., CASE MANAGEMENT, SERVICES FOR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, LIFE SKILLS, MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT, ETC.). TO ASSIST PARTICIPANTS ACHIEVE HOUSING STABILITY. INCLUDE ANY FORMAL AGREEMENTS AND HISTORY OF PARTNERSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY AND LINKAGES TO MAINSTREAM RESOURCES.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES:** THE OVERALL GOAL OF TBRA IS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO EXTREMELY LOW AND LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WHO ARE ELDERLY (62+) AND/OR HAVE A DISABILITY. WITH THIS IN MIND, DESCRIBE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT, ANY POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING THOSE OUTCOMES, AND PROVIDE ONE EXAMPLE OF OUTCOME ACHIEVEMENT WITH A SIMILAR PROJECT. OUTCOMES MUST DESCRIBE WHAT IS ANTICIPATED WILL CHANGE OR BE DIFFERENT FOR PARTICIPANTS AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT.

Of those successfully placed in permanent housing, what % of households will remain housed:		
Current performance (or proposed if not currently providing service)	1 <sup>st</sup> year benchmark: % increase	2 <sup>nd</sup> year target: % increase
%	%	%

**OUTCOME EVALUATION:** *DESCRIBE IN DETAIL HOW THE PROPOSED PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED, THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED, AND THE PROJECT/AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS, INCLUDING PROJECT OVERSIGHT TO ENSURE OUTCOMES ARE MET. DESCRIBE THE METHODS AND TOOLS THAT WILL BE USED.*

### III. BUDGET

- a. COMPLETE AND ATTACH AGENCY OPERATING BUDGET, FOR ONE PROGRAM YEAR. THE BUDGET IS ATTACHED AS ATTACHMENT A
- b. BUDGET SHOULD BE COMPLETE, THOROUGH AND ACCURATE

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2) PROVIDE ANY OTHER RELEVANT NARRATIVE ACCOMPANIMENT TO YOUR PROJECT BUDGET WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE THE REVIEW TEAM TO KNOW IN THE SPACE BELOW: