

Program Application for CPA Funds

Date of Application March 5, 2019

1. Agency Name and Address: Respond Inc. PO Box 555, Somerville, MA 02143

2. Non-profit designation (if applicable): 501(c)(3) #51-0163763

3. Contact name, phone number and email address for program manager:

Jessica Brayden, CEO; 617-625-5996; Jessica@respondinc.org

4. Name of proposed Program: Housing Program for Victims of Domestic Violence

5. Amount of request (CPA): \$11,412

6. Note which eligible use category the proposed program fits (see pgs. 1-2): Support – to provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance on behalf of an income eligible household for the purpose of making housing affordable.

7. Describe proposed activity (please attach additional pages as needed): RESPOND would use this grant to provide flexible rental assistance up to 6 months for survivors of domestic violence who are seeking safe, independent housing in Somerville. As a result of this program, more homeless survivors will be rapidly rehoused. The rental assistance budget is calculated at 2 units at FMR for 3 months, but assistance will be flexible. A 1.0 FTE Case Manager will help survivors obtain housing including (all case management activities are through other funding sources, please see below #15 & 16): 1. Housing Search: The Case Manager helps survivors find housing and submit housing applications on a weekly basis. 2. Self-Sufficiency Programs: The Case Manager will meet with survivors bi-weekly to help them achieve housing, safety, and other related self-sufficiency goals. 3. Referrals to Mainstream Programs: The Case Manager assists survivors in accessing benefits including SNAP, housing vouchers, Medicare and Medicaid, and SSI. 4. Advocacy: The Case Manager will advocate for survivors to Somerville and other local community housing providers to secure sustainable housing. Rental assistance will be paid to housing providers on behalf of qualifying families through CPA funds.

8. Timeframe for performance: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

9. If it is a new program, estimated time to set up program: N/A

10. Describe the need within the community for the type of program proposed and note any other agencies that may be addressing it (to the extent applicant is aware) and how this program is different:

According to the HUD Consolidated Plan 2018-2022, 74% of low to moderate income households in Somerville are experiencing housing cost burden. Unfortunately, survivors of domestic violence are hardest hit by this housing crisis. The vast majority of survivors are low or no income—an estimated 99% are under the economic control of their abuser—making it unlikely that a survivor could afford independent housing in Somerville (Allstate Foundation, 2016). As a result, most survivors are forced to choose between abuse and homelessness (NNEDV, 2012). Housing is the greatest unmet need for survivors in Massachusetts (64% of unmet requests for services) (NNEDV, 2017). RESPOND proposes to help this vulnerable population gain access to a Housing Program that provides temporary rental assistance (through CPA funds) and case management (through other funds) so survivors cultivate safety and self-sufficiency. Furthermore, with rental assistance, RESPOND will be able to help survivors remain in their home town of Somerville, keeping their critical support networks intact—friends, family, religious groups, schools, jobs—to support self-sufficiency and healing. RESPOND will continue to be Somerville’s only provider of homeless services designed exclusively for victims of domestic violence.

11. Provide the income level of targeted beneficiary/beneficiaries:

Beneficiaries may come from all income levels (up to 100% AMI), though we anticipate that 98-100% of beneficiaries will have very low, low, or no income (up to 50% AMI).

12. Description of who the program will benefit (veteran population, homeless, etc. and please note the extent to which beneficiaries are Somerville residents):

Beneficiaries will be any survivor of domestic violence in Somerville who meets the HUD homeless definition including sheltered and unsheltered survivors, and survivors fleeing or attempting to flee. Survivors may come from RESPOND’s emergency shelter. All eligible people will be screened and assessed through the Somerville CoC coordinated entry system. Since 1974, RESPOND has been based in Union Square Somerville, served Somerville residents, and maintained a strong presence in the community. Serving Somerville residents continues to take priority.

13. Estimated number of individuals or households to be served: Two households

14. Describe how program outcomes will be measured and tracked: Anticipated outcomes: 1. Beneficiaries will be re-housed within an average of three months, 2. 100% of beneficiaries will remain housed at the end of the project period, and 3. Beneficiaries report feeling safer than prior to their move. The Program Officer runs monthly data reports. Report data is collected through: ongoing observation of, and discussions with, survivors while they participate in programs; exit interviews with survivors when they end their participation in programs; and annual surveys of collaborating agencies. The Apricot database system is used to collect quantitative data, including number of survivors served, demographic data, services accessed, client housing goals and whether those goals were met.

15. Please attach a complete program Budget and include the status of all funding sources (note any funds pending or already received).

16. Describe whether the proposed activity will be carried out with or without any other funding from the Trust: RESPOND is requesting CPA funds to be earmarked exclusively for rental assistance for participants in our Housing Program. Without dedicated CPA funds, RESPOND would deliver the Housing Program in the absence of rental assistance. All case management activities within the Housing Program are funded by a Sustaining Grant from The Cummings Foundation (received) and Emergency Solutions Grant from the City of Somerville (pending).

17. Experience and capacity of the agency and staff – please describe staff available to work on the project (and note if staff need to be hired) and describe any similar successful programs and how they relate to other programmatic activities:

RESPOND is New England's first domestic violence agency. Our mission is to partner with individuals, families, and communities to end the serious public health issue of domestic violence. RESPOND was founded by several Somerville women—survivors of domestic violence—who recognized the need for safe housing for survivors. Our housing services have evolved from offering safe haven in our founders' homes, to establishing an 8-bedroom emergency shelter, to launching a fully realized housing program in 2015. This program has demonstrated success. Last year, of 49 families who participated, 40 families

(81%) obtained permanent housing (6 left for shelter and 3 for transitional housing). RESPOND has the necessary operational and financial systems in place to manage this grant award and deliver on project objectives. RESPOND has a diverse fundraising platform to sustain its core services including government grants, foundation and corporate grants, individual donations, and events. RESPOND has been a grantee of DPH, VAWA, VOCA, ESG, and CDBG funds over the last year. For both VOCA and ESG, RESPOND successfully raised matching dollars from private funding sources, individual, and in-kind donations. The CFO, who holds an MBA, leads the accounting department and is responsible for regular financial reporting on grant awards. RESPOND takes part in an annual 3rd party financial audit to ensure that our financials and financial practices are in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the US. A team of 20 staff members ensures the capacity is available to complete project milestones on time. Overseeing the Housing Program is a dedicated 1.0 FTE Case Manager. She will coordinate payment of CPA funds as rental assistance to local housing providers. The Case Manager will be overseen by a CEO with over 20 years of nonprofit experience who also holds an MBA.

18. Note if applicant has previously been funded by the Trust and, if yes, a concise summary of the number of residents served in the prior fiscal year and the impact of the program:

RESPOND most recently received \$10,500 from the Trust for July 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017. In addition, we received: \$3,000 (2012), \$5,000 (2013), \$10,000 (2015), and \$10,000 (2016). In 2017, our Housing Program created measurable benefits including: 1) compelling, complete housing applications that prioritized our clients and reduced their Housing Authority wait time, 2) a higher acceptance rate for clients' housing vouchers, 3) reduced time spent in our shelter (one client moved into a subsidized unit in less than three months) which maximizes the number of available shelter beds for survivors still in need, and 4) an increased number of clients being placed into independent housing. The program served 49 families in total.

19. Explain how the proposed activities/project addresses a need and/or strategy in City of Somerville's 5 Year Consolidated Plan (Can be viewed online at www.somervillema.gov).

Our Housing Program directly addresses Goal #5. Reducing and Ending Homelessness by addressing the needs of a particularly at risk population: survivors of domestic violence. Research clearly demonstrates that domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness. The Case Manager has developed relationships with landlords and housing providers in Somerville to facilitate the placement of survivors into permanent housing options. Furthermore, we maintain contact with survivors after being placed to ensure long-term housing stability. By providing rental assistance, specifically, we will ensure that survivors are able to afford safe housing while they work towards self-sufficiency. As noted above, this program delivers remarkable benefits for survivors, by reducing homelessness, ensuring continued safe housing, and turning over shelter beds more quickly to protect survivors still in danger.

20. Explain how the proposed activities/project addresses a Goal or Action Step in the SomerVision Comprehensive Plan (Can be viewed online at www.somervillema.gov).

This project directly addresses the Housing Goal in the SomerVision Comprehensive Plan. Specifically it addresses: I. Serve families of all sizes, types, and socio-economic backgrounds. Our priority is to ensure clients have a safe home. Our second priority is ensuring the continued affordability of their housing through rental assistance. III. The majority of clients served are low, very low, or no income. This project aims to help clients maintain residency in Somerville. Our Case Manager advocates on behalf of clients to landlords and housing providers, to ensure housing vouchers are accepted, survivors are not evicted due to “zero tolerance for crime” policies, and survivors have the resources to remain in their homes. IV. This project serves a population that is especially at-risk for homelessness: survivors of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a primary cause of homelessness. RESPOND is the only agency in Somerville providing homelessness services exclusively for survivors.

21. Does your agency participate in a Continuum of Care? Please explain.

RESPOND participates in the Somerville CoC’s coordinated entry process, which provides outreach to homeless survivors of domestic violence plus access to our program. RESPOND will coordinate closely with the Somerville Homeless Coalition, the agency that maintains CoC’s coordinated entry process. The CoC will provide outreach and identify potentially eligible survivors based on the CoC’s Coordinated

Entry Assessment Tool, who will then be referred for screening. RESPOND also maintains community outreach to survivors and community members using a Coordinator of Community Based Services. RESPOND reaches over 5,000 individuals in Somerville annually. RESPOND also maintains partnerships with agencies throughout Greater Boston who provide referrals for survivors in need of our specific homelessness services.

22. Is your agency monitored by HUD or another funder for housing programs?

Yes ___ No X

If yes, has the monitoring resulted in any currently open findings? Yes ___ No ___

RESPOND, Inc.
FY20 Program Budget

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Foundation Revenue	\$50,000	Secured	Cummings Foundation
City of Somerville	\$17,000	Pending	Emergency Solutions Grant
Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund	\$11,412	Pending	CPA Funds
TOTAL	\$78,412		

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source</u>	
Salaries/Wages	\$43,680	Cummings	Case Manager Salary (43,680): Weekly Supervision (2,000): Administration/Data (400)
Fringe	\$10,046	Cummings, ESG	23% Fringe - Payroll tax, health, dental, life insurance
Sub-Total	\$53,726		
Rental Assistance	\$11,412	CPA	(2 households x 2 bedroom units of 2019 FMR for Boston- Cambridge-Quincy @ \$1,902 x 3 months)
Rapid ReHousing	\$8,000	ESG	Rapid ReHousing Funds from ESG
Sub-Total	\$19,412		
Indirect Costs	\$5,274	Cummings, ESG	
TOTAL	\$78,412		