

MadCo Grants Committee Approves Grant for Rapid-Rehousing Program

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
April 3 2024 10:27 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Madison County Grants Committee approved the utilization of the 2025 Illinois Department of Human Services Rapid-Rehousing Grant at the committee's regular meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

This grant will allow a Madison County housing program to continue. The program currently houses 18 families and can house up to 20. Through the Illinois Department of Human Services Rapid-Rehousing Grant, Madison County provides rent assistance for up to 24 months for these families.

“The program goes over a 24-month period and the goal in that 24-month period is to bring someone from homelessness to self-sufficiency,” explained David Kerr, homeless services director for Madison County. “We do that through casework. We do that through employment and training. If people need mental health services or substance abuse services, we attempt to get that for them. If they need help with childcare or making a personal budget — anything we can do to bring them from that point of homelessness to self-sufficiency within that two-year period.”

Kerr said that to be eligible for the program, candidates must meet the definition of being “literally homeless” or be within 14 days of becoming homeless with no place to go. To enter this program, you must call the [Madison County Community Development \(MCCD\)](#) referral line at 618-296-5300.

The department will rank potential participants based on need. Candidates must undergo two interviews and find their own landlord. The money from the Rapid-Rehousing Grant then pays the rent for up to two years.

“The success rate is probably 60% or so,” Kerr added. “It depends on the family. We can give them all the tools and we can see if they are a good candidate, and we’re constantly reevaluating that to see if we’re getting the right candidates in. But after two years, they are responsible for their own rent.”

Many Grants Committee members asked questions about the program and how it works. Michael Babcock, a Madison County Board member, asked why the program is not offered on a larger scale. Kerr responded that he would love to have more units to offer unhoused community members, but there are currently only 54 units available across all of the programs that Madison County has in place, including the 18 that are currently occupied through the Rapid-Rehousing Grant.

Kerr noted that they attempt to tell anyone who is in shelter about this and other Madison County programs to help unhoused community members. He said that ideally, people call the referral line and get shelter immediately in one of the three shelters that Madison County operates. From there, people work with MCCD to get into the Rapid-Rehousing or the permanent supportive housing programs. He said the Rapid-Rehousing program also gives an allowance for furniture, transportation, cleaning supplies and similar needs.

“The shelter is meant to get people off the street today,” he explained. “These programs can't do that because we have to help find a landlord. These aren't the ‘I'm going to pull someone off a park bench tonight’ , if that makes sense.”

Grants Committee member Bill Stoutenborough made a motion to approve the grant. Stacey Pace seconded this motion, and the Grants Committee unanimously approved it. The Madison County Board will vote on this proposal at their next meeting on April 17, 2024.

If you or someone you know is facing homelessness, mental health issues, or substance abuse, resources are available to provide support. For local assistance in Madison County, call 618-296-5300. Additionally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers a National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for those seeking help with mental health or substance use disorders. This helpline is confidential, free, and available 24/7, 365 days a year. For more information on homelessness resources and support, you can visit the National Alliance to End Homelessness or the National Coalition for the Homeless websites.