

City of Burlington / 2014 CDBG Application Form

Project Name: _____ Safe Tonight _____

Project Location / Address: Our Emergency Shelter is confidentially located in Burlington, VT

Applicant Organization / Agency: Women Helping Battered Women, Inc.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1535, Burlington, Vermont 05402

Physical Address: 294 North Winooski Avenue, Burlington, Vermont 05401

Contact: Jennie Davis Title: Director of Program Services Phone #: (802) 658-3131 ext. 2016

Web Address: www.whbw.org Fax #: (802)658-3832 E-mail: jennied@whbw.org

EIN #: _____ 03-0283657 _____ DUNS #: 162200463 _____

**CDBG Funding Request: \$22,000 for 1 yr or \$44,000 for 2
yrs _____**

Check ONE: _____ 1 year _____ x _____ 2 years
(Equal Access, Health) (Housing,
Homeless, Hunger)

1. Type of Organization

_____ Local Government _____ x _____ Non-Profit Organization (please provide copy of your
IRS 501(c)(3) tax exemption letter)
_____ For-Profit Organization _____ Institution of Higher Education
_____ Faith-Based Organization

2. Conflict of Interest: _____ Please complete and sign attached form.

3. List of Board of Directors: _____ Attached.

Certification

To the best of my knowledge and belief, data in this proposal are true and correct.

I have been duly authorized to apply for this funding on behalf of this agency.

I understand that this grant funding is conditioned upon compliance with federal CDBG regulations.

I further certify that no contracts have been awarded, funds committed or construction begun on the proposed program, and that none will be prior to issuance of a Release of Funds by the Program Administrator. In addition, this project is ready to proceed as of July 1, 2014.

Signature of Authorized Official

Name of Authorized Official

Title

Date

I. Demonstrated Need

1. What is the need/opportunity being addressed by this program/project and how does that contribute to CDBG's national objectives?

The needs addressed through Women Helping Battered Women's (WHBW) Safe Tonight programming are to safely and sustainably house victims of domestic violence on an emergency basis as well as to provide transitional housing, rental assistance and supportive services to adults and children who are homeless as a result of domestic violence. WHBW provided emergency housing to 183 adults and 101 children in FY2013, amounting to over 12,000 nights of housing. In addition, our Transitional Housing services provided 9,349 nights of housing to 19 adults and 19 children during FY 2013, and the Rental Assistance Program served 4 adults and 4 children resulting in 1,644 nights of housing. HUD's 2013 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations for Chittenden County Point-in Time Count for January 30, 2013 estimates that 40% of all adults and children accessing emergency shelters on that night were victims of domestic violence.

WHBW's Economic Justice Program works with adults at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic violence to stabilize housing and/or re-house those who are marginally housed as a result of domestic violence. This program works in concert with WHBW's Safe Tonight programming to address the immediate housing needs and barriers to independence often faced by victims of domestic violence.

WHBW's Safe Tonight and Economic Justice (EJ) Programs contribute to CDBG's national objectives through the provision of emergency and transitional housing services to a subpopulation of people presumed by HUD to be low/moderate income which includes battered spouses. WHBW is the only emergency shelter in Chittenden County that provides services specifically for victims of domestic violence.

II. Program/Project Design

1. Describe the program/project activities. [UWCC]

WHBW's Safe Tonight program began as a confidentially located shelter with supportive services. In response to the growing shortage of affordable housing in Chittenden County, WHBW entered into an agreement with the State of Vermont to house victims of domestic violence in hotels when our shelter is full, this housing is called our Safehome Program. Residents in the Safehome Program have access to all of the supportive services that people in our shelter receive. In 2005 WHBW and the Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) worked together to create housing solutions for survivors of domestic violence resulting in an 11-unit transitional housing apartment complex called Sophie's Place. The success of Sophie's Place, subsidized by BHA, led to the creation of our Rental Assistance Program (RAP). The RAP, funded by private, State and Federal grants, subsidizes apartments for survivors of domestic violence as they transition out of WHBW's shelter or Safehome. Supportive services are provided to RAP participants that work to stabilize housing and eliminate any barriers to self-sufficiency. If participants are successful in the RAP after one year they receive a section eight voucher. WHBW's most recent housing collaboration is with the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT). This project enables WHBW to provide supportive services at a hotel owned by CHT. This model is an expansion of our Safehome Program, with the primary difference being on-site case management services that aim to stabilize housing situations.

The (EJ) program works with marginally housed victims of domestic violence in our community with the goal of safely re-housing and/or stabilizing housing. This program works to eliminate barriers to self-sufficiency and provides supportive services to victims of domestic violence who are accessing supportive housing services but who are not in our emergency shelter. EJ program advocates work with domestic violence survivors to provide access to opportunities to regain control over their lives – physically, emotionally, and economically – and to reestablish their homes in a way that moves them closer to self-sufficiency, free of violence. WHBW provides case work and advocacy services specific to survivors of domestic violence that have been a hallmark of our agency's work. EJ Advocates meet to create an Individualized Support Services Plan (ISSP). The household, with the support of the advocate, identifies their needs and the goals that will help them work towards self-sufficiency. Based on our knowledge of the economic effects of domestic violence we anticipate that a majority of the Individualized Support Services Plans will continue to have a strong emphasis on economic justice issues, thus, economic literacy training, credit counseling and repair, debt management, advanced housing advocacy - including homeownership counseling, and employment and training opportunities are some of the key areas of need that are addressed through ISSP's.

2. Why is the program/project designed the way it is? Explain why the program activities are the right strategies to use to achieve the intended outcomes. [UWCC]

The Safe Tonight program goal of safe, stable housing for victims of domestic violence was designed to provide immediate access to emergency housing and supportive services during a crisis while also ensuring that post-crisis services and housing options are available. As the need for our services grew while the capacity of our emergency shelter remained the same WHBW developed partnerships to meet the need in our community. Emergency shelter is often a necessary step as victims of domestic violence flee unsafe living situations and relationships with their children. Many shelters do not provide services for victims of domestic violence as their staff are not trained for traumatic incidents and their facilities are not confidential or secure enough. WHBW's Safe Tonight program was designed specifically to respond to the emotional and physical needs of victims of domestic violence, providing trauma-informed access to emergency and post-crisis housing and supportive services.

The EJ program was created in response to the struggle to secure safe and affordable housing for many individuals and families fleeing domestic violence, particularly those with lower incomes and damaged credit histories. In addition to being in emotional crisis and dealing with being physically and emotionally unsafe, meeting the basic need of housing can be particularly precarious for a survivor of domestic violence. We know from years of working with survivors that in addition to physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse, economic abuse is often perpetrated by the abuser, which can leave a victim with few or no economic resources to flee an abusive situation. Economic abuse takes many forms and is employed using a variety of tactics such as: controlling access to all of a household's income, preventing the victim from working or gaining any job experience; sabotaging work or education through harassment at work or in school; purposefully destroying a partner's credit by opening accounts in the victim's name and not paying the bills or by maxing out numerous credit cards; or even going so far as to cause the victim to get evicted due to damages or other disruptions caused by the abuser in the home. Ruined employment, credit and housing histories often leave victims in dire economic circumstances. An abuser will often tell a victim – "you can't make it without me," or "you'll have to come back to me," – and this type of abuse often results in victims feeling like they are forced to stay living with an abusive partner or feel compelled to return after fleeing. Trying to secure safe, affordable housing with no money or job and a damaged credit history can prolong a survivor's homelessness indefinitely, certainly well past the time available in an emergency shelter or Safehome.

3. How will this program/project contribute to the City's anti-poverty strategy?

The City of Burlington's CDBG Anti-Poverty Strategy of reducing the number of people living in poverty in Burlington, most especially among those groups disproportionately affected by poverty, is addressed through the stabilization of housing for people who are homeless or marginally housed as a result of domestic violence. It is often difficult to re-build your life after fleeing domestic violence. Housing stabilization helps stabilize other parts of survivor's lives including childcare, education and employment, which in turn leads to economic self-sufficiency and long-term stability.

4. How do you use community and/or participant input in planning the program design and activities? [UWCC]

WHBW is in its fortieth year of service to victims of domestic violence in Chittenden County and access to emergency, transitional and long-term housing and supportive services is consistently identified as a need by our service users when they enter our programs. The transitional housing, rental assistance, and EJ programming were all developed in response to the needs of service users entering WHBW's emergency housing programs.

III. Proposed Outcomes

1. What are the intended outcomes for this project/program? How are people meant to be better off as a result of participating? [UWCC]

The intended outcomes of the Safe Tonight and Economic Justice programming are to provide emergency shelter and to safely and sustainably re-house individuals and families who are marginally housed or homeless as a result of domestic violence. Providing stable housing includes supportive services that result in economic self-sufficiency and long-term stability, thus decreasing the chances that they will return to homelessness.

2. List your goals/objectives, activities to implement and expected outcomes (# of units, # of individuals, etc.)

Goal/Objective	Activity Funded	Outcomes
Emergency Housing is provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing their homes	Shelter Coordinator Position-10 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing support Director of Program Services-6 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing	Burlington residents fleeing domestic violence have access to safe, confidential and supportive shelter. Based on FY13 numbers served we anticipate serving 280 adults and 259 children.
Staff provide comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence in emergency housing and for those who are marginally housed	Shelter Coordinator Position-10 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing support Director of Program Services-6 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing	Shelter residents will have assistance meeting basic needs, advocacy with local human service agencies, emotional support groups, and therapeutic activities for their children, and information and referrals for local resources. Same numbers served as above.
Staff work with victims of domestic violence to find permanent housing	Shelter Coordinator Position-10 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing Director of Program Services-6 hours/week: Intakes, supportive service provision, next-step housing	Victims of domestic violence who are homeless or marginally housed are able to find safe, permanent and sustainable housing. Based on FY13 numbers we anticipate 21-23 households will move into permanent housing.

IV. Impact / Evaluation

1. How do you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you assess project/program outcomes; your description should include: what type of data, the method/tool for collecting the data, from whom you collect data, and when it is collected. [UWCC]

WHBW uses a self-sufficiency matrix (SSM) to determine whether and how program participants are better off. SSM's are filled out by staff with program participants when they enter the program, after 28 days in the program, after 90 days in the program, and when they exit the program. SSM's collect data regarding the capacity of program participants to manage essential life skills as well as their level of self-sufficiency in fundamental areas including; Community Involvement, Safety, Shelter/Housing, Parenting, Adult Education, Child Care, Mobility, Children's Education, Personal Finances, Income, Family/Social Relations, Legal Status, Life Skills, Employment, Food, Disabilities, Legal Needs, Health Care Coverage, Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Job Search Skills.

SSM's allow service providers and program participants to gauge the level of need in each area and work internally, or make external referrals, in each area as appropriate. SSM's provide clear direction for staff and program participants, and help staff determine what the focus of work with each program participant. The SSM's also support program participants as they are able to clearly see and define *for themselves* the aspects of their life in which they need assistance as they move towards increased self-sufficiency and away from abusive, controlling homes and relationships.

2. How successful has the project/program been during the most recent reporting year for your CDBG project? Report the number of beneficiaries you intended to serve with which activities (as noted in your last Attachment A) and your final outcomes (as noted on your Attachment C) from June 2013. For non-CDBG participants – just report on your achievements from the previous year.

WHBW's Safe Tonight and EJ program served 495 in FY 13. Emergency Shelter and EJ programming was quantitatively and qualitatively successful based on both surveys and SSM's given to program participants at entrance and exit from these programs as reported in Attachments A from last year's CDBG application and Attachment C from June 2013. During FY13's reporting period WHBW switched from a survey to report outcomes to the SSM's, thus outcomes reporting for the previous year is in two different formats. Based on the SSM's, on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being completely self-sufficient and 5 being in crisis, the mean number reported at entry into the program in the area of shelter/housing was a 4.4. The mean

number reported at exit from the program in the area of shelter/housing was a 2.8, with a 2 being defined as “Stable/Safe”.

Based on survey reports there was a statistically significant positive change in the following two statement areas from entry into the program to exit: “I have financial stability and/or economic independence” and “I have safe and affordable housing”. 0% stated they had financial stability and/or economic independence at entry and 55.6% had it at exit. 16.7% stated they had safe and affordable housing at entry and 88.9% had it at exit.

The anticipated number to be served in FY13, 954, was based on an enormous “spike” in need for our Emergency Shelter and Safehome program in FY2012. The actual number of Burlington residents served in these programs in FY13 was 495, however, this number represents a return to what we had typically been seeing over the course of a year, and the FY13 prediction was based on an anomalous increase in need in FY 12.

3. How does this data reflect beneficial outcomes of this project/program? Has this impacted your program planning at all? [UWCC]

This data reflects beneficial outcomes of this project as the primary goal of both the Safe Tonight and EJ programs are to stabilize housing for program participants. With self-reported data from program participants on both SSM’s and surveys reporting positive outcomes in housing stabilization and safety, as well as statistically significant positively reported outcomes in every other area on the SSM’s, WHBW programming significantly benefits program participants in housing stabilization and the other essential area’s that contribute to long-term safety and self-sufficiency.

The primary impact that our outcomes have had on program planning is to enhance our community collaborations. The Transitional Housing and Rental Assistance partnerships and community funding sources have greatly increased our capacity to safely and stably house program participants post-crisis. Increasing our ability to provide post-crisis housing assistance and supportive services to victims of domestic violence has improved our housing outcomes for program participants over the past decade.

V. Experience / Organizational Capacity

1. What is your agency’s mission, and how do the proposed activities fit with your mission?

WHBW’s mission is to assist in the transition to a safe, independent life for all those who have been affected physically, sexually, emotionally, or economically by domestic abuse. The safe, stable housing and supportive services accessed through the Safe Tonight and Economic Justice programming represent an essential component of a safe, self-sufficient and independent life.

2. Please describe any indications of program quality, such as staff qualifications and/or training, adherence to best practices or standards, feedback from other programs or organizations you partner with, etc.

All staff are required to attend a twenty hour training that encompasses all aspects of trauma-informed, culturally competent service provision. WHBW staff regularly attend trainings with the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (VNADSV) and attend national trainings with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) so that we are adhering to national best practices. Through our receipt of the Federal Transitional Housing Grant through the Department of Justice’s Office of Violence Against Women WHBW staff also have access to technical assistance from the NNEDV.

Our ongoing, long-term partnerships with BHA and the State of Vermont are indicative of positive relationships with community partners. The recent opportunities for enhanced community collaboration through the Community Housing Grant and partnership with Champlain Housing Trust also point towards good working relationships with community partners.

3. What steps has your organization/board taken in the past year to become more culturally competent?

WHBW is dedicated to enhancing cultural competence among staff. Through a collaborative Youth Grant with Outright Vermont, HOPEWorks, and LUND we receive regular staff trainings focused on working with the LGBTQ community. We also have regular trainings at our bi-monthly staff meetings from community organizations including; Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, RU12?, Champlain Valley Agency on Aging, Vermont Center for Independent Living, Association of Africans Living in Vermont, HowardCenter, LUND, and the Community Health Center.

4. Have you received Federal or State grant funds in the past three years? Yes No

5. Were the activities funded by these sources successfully completed? Yes No N/A
 If No, please explain:

VI. Proposed Low & Moderate Income Beneficiaries / Commitment to Diversity

1. Will the program target a specific (solely) group of people? If so, check **ONE** below:

- Abused Children Elderly (62 years +) People with AIDS
 Battered Spouses Homeless Persons Illiterate Adults
 People with Severe Disabilities

2. For your proposed project, please estimate how the **Burlington residents** will break out into the following income categories during the total grant period. Use the Income Table at <http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/CDBG/2013-HUD-Income-Limits/>.

Service / Activity	Unduplicated Total # of Burlington HH / Persons to be Served	# Extremely Low-Income	# Low-Income	# Moderate-Income	# Above Moderate-Income
Emergency/Transitional Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing from their homes	Adults 214 Children 144	Adults 214 Children 144	Adults Children	0	0
Staff work with Burlington Residents, not housed in our Transitional or Emergency Housing Program, to find permanent housing	Adults 66 Children 115	Adults 66 Children 115	Adults Children	0	0
Total number victims of domestic violence to be served in FY15	Adults 280 Children 259	Adults 280 Children 259	Adults Children	0	

3. a. Who is the project/program designed to benefit? Describe the project/program’s target population, citing (if relevant) specific age, gender, income, community/location or other characteristic of the people this program is intended to serve. [UWCC]

The program is designed to benefit victims of domestic violence, individuals and families. There is generally no demographic characteristic of a “typical” victim of domestic violence, so we do not have a target demographic population. Our statistics show that a vast majority of our program participants are extremely low-income or low-income, and HUD presumes that victims of domestic violence are principally extremely low-income, thus our program reflects the needs of extremely low-income victims of domestic violence.

b. How do you select and reach your target population?

WHBW does not select its target population, all of our services are voluntary and service users primarily contact WHBW through the 24-hour emergency hotline. The hotline is considered the “gateway” to services at WHBW as an overwhelming majority of our service users reach us that way. We regularly provide brochures and flyers to high schools, colleges, healthcare facilities and social service agencies so that our hotline number is accessible in the community. We also provide trainings to community partners that provide comprehensive information about our services and how best to access them.

WHBW’s website has also been optimized with easily searchable keywords so that if service users are looking for us on the internet we are extremely easy to find. The NNEDV and VNADSV also direct people who live in Chittenden County to our hotline and services if they call the national or state hotline.

4. Describe the steps you take to make the project/program accessible, inclusive and culturally appropriate for the target population. [UWCC]

In FY13 WHBW’s emergency shelter completed an ADA approved bedroom renovation, and an ADA approved bathroom renovation. Members of the deaf community access our 24-hour hotline through TTY

which is currently considered best practice for emergency hotlines. Immediate access to interpreters is provided to individuals who call the hotline and need interpreting services, and access to interpreters for in-person meetings and on-going services is provided by either VRRP or the Language Line. We recently completed a translation project for our basic outreach materials that translated our brochure into Bosnian, Arabic, Vietnamese, Nepali, Kirundi and Swahili.

VII. Budget / Financial Feasibility

1. Budget Narrative: Provide a clear description of what you will do with CDBG’s investment in the program. How will you spend the money? Give specific details. [UWCC]

CDBG’s investment will go directly to support staff in the Emergency Housing and EJ programs. The Emergency Shelter Coordinator (ESC) oversees all aspects of the emergency housing program including management of the overnight and weekend shelter and Safehome staff. The ESC provides case management to program participants in our Emergency Housing Program, including working with participants as they enter transitional and permanent housing, and ensures that the shelter facility is inclusive and accessible for all program participants. The ESC also works with the State of Vermont to facilitate our Safehome program and works collaboratively with Safehome staff so that all of the emergency housing needs of victims of domestic violence are met in the community.

Funding will also support the Director of Program Services who oversees all direct service programs at WHBW, including Emergency Shelter, Safehome, Transitional Housing and Economic Justice, and also facilitates the weekly housing clinic at WHBW. The Housing Clinic at WHBW provides housing search and supportive services to victims of domestic violence who are homeless or marginally housed as a result of domestic violence but who are not in our Emergency Shelter or Safehome program.

2. If you plan to pay for staff with CDBG funding, describe what they do in relation to the specific service(s) / activity(ies) in your Project/Program Design.

Specific Service / Activity	Position/Title	Work Related to CDBG-Funded Activity	# of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity	% of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity to be paid with CDBG
Emergency Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence	Emergency Shelter Coordinator	Case management, oversight of emergency shelter facility, staff and programming, addressing barriers to self-sufficiency with program participants, ongoing housing support during transition to transitional and permanent housing	10 hrs/wk	25%
Staff work with Burlington Residents, not housed in our Transitional or Emergency Housing Program, to find and secure permanent housing	Director of Program Services	Oversight of all direct service housing programs, facilitation of weekly housing clinic which provides housing search support and addresses barriers to safe, sustainable housing for marginally housed victims of domestic violence	6 hrs/wk	15%

3. Program/Project Budget

Line Item	CDBG Funds	Other	Total
Salary and Benefits for SH and EJ Staff	\$ 22,000	\$ 341,729	\$ 363,729
Professional Services and Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 25,934	\$ 25,934

CDBG programs is diverse, however, local support for these initiatives helps us leverage state and national support, including the Vermont Building and General Services grant funds for shelter capital expenses.

9. If your organization has experienced any significant changes in funding levels during the past year, please explain.

Over the past fiscal year WHBW completed two federal grants that were not renewed, the Community Defined Solutions Grant (CDS) and The Federal Recovery Act Transitional Housing Grant (THP ARRA). The CDS Grant primarily funded community partners including the State's Attorney's Office and the Winooski Police Department. The THP ARRA grant was a one-time grant without the option of renewal so the funding received from that grant was not factored into program planning after it ended.

10. What cost-cutting measures has your organization implemented?

WHBW recently increased staff contributions to our health insurance, dropped our 403-b plan, consolidated some positions to increase efficiency, implemented a new leadership structure that reduces administrative staffing costs, and increased the hours of coverage on our emergency hotline by salaried staff thereby reducing the number of hours of hourly shift staff time.

VIII. Collaboration/Efficiency

1. Please describe other organizations/programs you work with to achieve outcomes for your program participants. How does your program collaborate with other programs, organizations, or services to address the needs of the people you serve? [UWCC]

WHBW collaborates with multiple community partners to achieve successful outcomes for program participants. Our partnership with the State of Vermont through the AHS Economic Services Division allows us to house our program participants who are homeless as a result of domestic violence on an emergency basis when our emergency shelter is full. Our partnership with BHA has created our 11-unit transitional housing apartment complex as well as provided section eight vouchers for successful participants in our rental assistance program, providing safe, sustainable post-crisis housing options. Recently we have expanded our community collaborations to include a partnership with the Champlain Housing Trust which has enhanced our ability to provide comprehensive services to people in our Safehome program. The EJ program regularly works with a variety of community partners to help people address barriers to self-sufficiency including Opportunities Credit Union, CVOEO, VDOL and the Reach-Up program.

2. Describe your agency's efforts at becoming more efficient in achieving your outcomes or managing your project/program.

WHBW has implemented or enhanced several aspects of our housing programming to create efficiencies in achieving our outcomes. The housing clinic was established to provide regular weekly housing support and resources for service users. We have increased our focus on Rental Assistance funding, pro-actively seeking out sources for this funding as it has proven to be the most effective model for moving service users from emergency to permanent housing.

3. What other agencies provide similar services or programs? [UWCC]

WHBW is the only domestic violence service provider in Chittenden County that provides emergency housing, transitional housing, rental assistance and economic justice services. There are other emergency shelters in the county, however, they do not serve victims of domestic violence as there are safety risks and staff and facilities are not equipped to handle the population.

IX. Sustainability

1. How will this project have a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington? If this project ends, will that benefit continue?

The projects have already had a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington as WHBW is entering its 40th year of service and has served Burlington continuously during that time. Thousands of victims of domestic violence have benefitted through WHBW's emergency and supportive services as they fled domestic violence. If the programs end the benefits will also end, however, WHBW is committed to securing diverse, sustainable funding for these vital initiatives.

2. If CDBG funding ends, will the project be able to continue?

As previously mentioned, the Safe tonight and EJ programs have a diversity of funding sources, thus if CDBG funding ends the project will continue. Local support for programs that benefit Burlington residents is always looked at positively by other funding sources for these crucial, life-saving programs.