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# SAFHR HOUSING STABILITY & EVICTION DIVERSION DESK GUIDE

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## Application Guidance

### Overview

The purpose of the State Assistance for Housing Relief (SAFHR) Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion (HSED) program is to support programs within Missouri communities that work to prevent eviction and help to ensure long-term housing stability. These funds should be coordinated with the Missouri Housing Development Commissions' (MHDC) SAFHR rental and utility assistance program to increase access to the SAFHR application and to provide additional legal and case management services.

### Deadline

Applications for funding will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning Monday, August 16, 2021. The application for funding will remain available **until all funds have been awarded**, in accordance with the parameters of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, establishing Emergency Rental Assistance 1, the American Rescue Plan Act, establishing Emergency Rental Assistance 2, and U.S. Department of the Treasury guidelines. All applications received after the application period has closed will not be considered for funding.

### Requirements

- Applicants must be a non-profit, governmental entity, or other community organization that provides housing related case management and/or legal services to eligible SAFHR applicants, eligible to conduct business in Missouri, and be an entity in good standing with the state of Missouri.
- Funding will not be awarded to individuals.
- Funding will not be awarded to sub-grantees.
- Applicants will submit initial 12 month budget estimates with their online application. Approved applicants will submit subsequent yearly renewals with annual budget projections through September 30, 2025 or until all funds have been awarded.

### Eligible Activities

1. **Case Management:** available for organizations that provide housing or housing services for paying salaries and benefits necessary for providing housing stability case management services to eligible SAFHR participants.
2. **Legal Services:** available for organizations to provide legal services regarding pending tenant eviction action. Legal services may be provided directly by a legal services applicant or indirectly via private attorneys.

- 3. Outreach and Marketing:** available for organizations to conduct outreach and marketing to inform Missouri tenants of housing stability services and rent and utility assistance provided by the SAFHR Program.
- 4. Administration:** available to organizations receiving awards for supporting the administration of the program.

### Evaluation of Applications

The Missouri Housing Development Commission wants to ensure that the limited pool of funding is used in the most effective way possible to help organizations provide the necessary services to low to moderate-income renter households in the state of Missouri. Applications may be assessed for completeness of the grant application, experience and expertise in providing programs and services which result in increased housing stability for clients, capacity to provide services, especially provision of remote support for SAFHR applicants, and other relevant factors that show how effectively the project addresses the goals of the SAFHR-HSED program. Additionally, there are certain conditions, which may result in an application being rejected without being reviewed. These threshold requirements include, but are not limited to, missing deadlines, incomplete applications, and serious, recurrent or outstanding finding of noncompliance. Submission of an application does not guarantee an applicant will receive funds.

### Submission

Please submit all required documentation and application via MHDC's Special Project's Department online application: <https://www.mohousingresources.com/other-resources>

#### Contact Information:

For all questions, please contact:

**Amanda Eisenmann**

Housing Program Administrator

Phone: (816) 759-6698

Email: [amanda.eisenmann@mhdc.com](mailto:amanda.eisenmann@mhdc.com)

## Introduction

### Purpose

The State Assistance for Housing Relief (SAFHR) for Renters program provides rent and utility assistance for eligible Missouri renter households who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion (SAFHR - HSED) funds should be utilized to provide case management and legal services intended to keep low to moderate-income Missouri tenants financially impacted by COVID-19 housed.

### Eligibility Requirements

#### ***Income***

All SAFHR - HSED funds must be used to serve Missouri renter households at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). One or more members of an applicant's household must be receiving unemployment benefits and/or has experienced financial hardship directly or indirectly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### ***Housing Status***

SAFHR - HSED funds must be used to assist households currently renting a residential property in the state of Missouri. Successful applicants must prove that they are at risk of housing instability or homelessness as a result of financial hardship directly or indirectly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This can be proved with documentation of rental and/or utility arrears.

Renter households that reside in Clay County, Greene County, Jackson County, Jefferson County, St. Louis County, Kansas City, or St. Louis City may apply for assistance through their local jurisdiction. Each of these localities have received funding from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for emergency rental assistance and run individual programs serving the residents in their jurisdictions. Information on these programs is available at <https://www.mohousingresources.com/safhr-program-materials>.

### Description of Grant Activities

#### ***Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion Services***

Grantees may provide eligible individuals and households (as defined above) with case management and/or legal services in order to foster housing stability for their clients. This may include assisting clients with SAFHR financial assistance applications, connecting clients to other resources and services that may ease their financial hardship, or providing legal aid to tenants facing eviction. Grantees may also provide rental bonds to deliver advance assistance to households at risk of eviction while their applications are still being processed.

### ***Marketing and Outreach***

Grantees may use Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion funds to conduct outreach and marketing to inform Missouri tenants of housing stability services and assistance provided by the SAFHR program and to identify and serve Missouri renters in need of assistance and other community resources to achieve housing stability.

## General Information

### Contacts

Below are the MHDC – SAFHR HSED contacts for funded agencies. Please direct all questions, concerns, updates, and completed service agreement documents to the Housing Program Administrator.

**Please direct questions, concerns, and updates to:**

Amanda Eisenmann  
Housing Program Administrator  
920 Main, Suite 1400  
Kansas City, MO 64105  
amanda.eisenmann@mhdc.com  
(816) 759-6698

### Website

All information and forms pertaining to the SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion agencies can be found on the MHDC website at: <https://www.mohousingresources.com/other-resources>

## Financial Processes

### Payment Process

Before any funds can be released, all required initial grant documents must be completed and received by MHDC:

1. Executed grant agreement (contract)
2. Agency site contact form
3. Authorized signature form
4. Agency W-9
5. Direct deposit form with voided check or bank letter
6. Workforce Eligibility Affidavit and E-Verify MOU

Once all of the above criteria are met, MHDC will automatically disburse funds to the Grantee upon execution of the grant agreement. Grantee may back up disbursed funds using a back-up of expenses form.

MHDC will automatically disburse the first payment of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) once the above grant documents are received and approved. Funds will continue to be disbursed in \$25,000 increments once sufficient back-up covering all previously disbursed funds has been received and approved until the total grant award is expended. If the total grant award is less than \$25,000, MHDC will disburse one payment equaling the total grant award and the agency will submit back-up of expenses for the single disbursement until expended. Please see the disbursement examples below:

### **Example 1:**

Grantee A is awarded \$100,000 and \$25,000 is automatically advanced to Grantee A upon execution of the grant agreement. Once the grantee has expended those funds, the grantee is ready to submit back-up for the next installment of funds. Grantee A submits back-up of expenses totaling \$25,000. Once it is approved, Grantee A will automatically be advanced a second installment of \$25,000. This will continue until Grantee A has expended the total award of \$100,000.

### **Example 2:**

Grantee B is awarded \$100,000 and \$25,000 is automatically advanced to Grantee B upon execution of the grant agreement. Grantee B utilizes more than \$25,000 of their first grant allotment and is ready to submit back-up for the next installment of funds. Grantee B submits back-up of expenses totaling \$29,000.00. Once it is approved Grantee B will automatically be advanced a second installment of \$25,000 until Grantee B has expended the total award of \$100,000. The final payment to Grantee B will be short any allotment overages throughout the duration of the grant.

### **Example 3:**

Grantee C is awarded \$20,000 therefore \$20,000 is automatically advanced to Grantee C upon execution of the grant agreement. Once the grantee has expended those funds, the grantee is ready to submit back-up. Once back-up is approved, Grantee C will have utilized all of their grant dollars and will be ready for grant close-out.

## Back-Up Process

Grantees are required to submit back-up of expenses to account for all SAFHR - HSED spending during the grant period. Back-up must be submitted after any advance of funds is made and before additional installments can be provided. MHDC requires grantees to complete a back-up form to account for all grant eligible expenses and record clients' demographic data. Agencies may not submit more than one back-up form per month. Any further submissions will need to be resubmitted the following month. Additionally, agencies must submit at least one back-up per quarter. Due to the nature of the monthly submission deadlines, monthly submissions will be accepted on the first business day of the following month.

## Funding Period

All SAFHR - HSED funding provided to grantees must be used for expenses that are incurred, paid, and submitted for payment to MHDC during the Grant Funding Period as defined in the Grant Agreement. If billing for salary, pay periods must also incur completely within the funding period. Grantees may request a prorated payment for payroll taxes and/or insurance, which covers any portion of the funding period, but which was paid outside of the funding period.

## Submission Requirements

More guidance coming soon.

## Reporting Requirements

All approved applicants must collect and submit all required US Treasury reporting elements in a format and frequency determined by MHDC. Reporting elements are subject to change pending US Treasury guidance. Required program participant reporting elements include: name, city, county, gender, race, income range, and US Treasury federal priority criteria.

More guidance coming soon.

## Program Components and Eligible Activities

### Case Management

SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion funds may be used to pay cost of assessing, arranging, coordinating, and monitoring the delivery of individualized services to facilitate housing stability for a client that is determined to be SAFHR Eligible (documented using SAFHR Eligibility Form SP-101, see Appendix B). Eligible components of these services and activities are outlined below.

#### ***Eligible Activities***

- Salaries and benefits associated with staff serving eligible SAFHR clients in:
  - Conducting initial evaluation or intake, including verifying and documenting SAFHR eligibility;
  - Counseling;
  - Developing, securing, and coordinating services and obtaining Federal, State, and local benefits;
  - Monitoring and evaluating client progress;
  - Providing information and referrals to other providers;



- Developing an individualized housing and service plan, including planning a path to permanent housing stability;
- Providing paper applications to requesting clients, coordinating with SAFHR applicants to complete applications (including remotely), and manual entry of SAFHR assistance applications.
- Rent or rental bonds, where a tenant posts a bond with a court as a condition to obtaining a hearing, reopening an eviction action, appealing an order of eviction, reinstating a lease, or otherwise avoiding an eviction order.
- Purchase of office supplies to be utilized for providing case management and SAFHR application services.
- Time spent making case notes that document client interactions.

### ***Ineligible Activities***

- Staff time spent serving individuals and families not eligible for the SAFHR program
- Conference costs
- Training costs
- Food purchases
- Mileage costs
- Direct financial assistance (other than rent or rental bonds)
- Technology costs

### Legal Services

SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion funds may be used to pay cost of legal advice and representation in the delivery of legal services to facilitate housing stability for a client that is determined as SAFHR Eligible (documented using SAFHR Eligibility Form SP-101). Eligible components of these services and activities are outlined below.

### ***Eligible Activities***

- Eligible costs are the hourly fees for legal advice and representation by attorneys licensed and in good standing with the Missouri Bar Association in which the services are provided, and by person(s) under the supervision of the licensed attorney, regarding matters that interfere with the client's ability to obtain and retain housing. Hourly fees for legal services must not exceed a maximum cap of \$150 dollars an hour.
- Eligible costs may also include mediation between the client and the owner or person(s) with whom the client is living, provided that the mediation is necessary to prevent the client from losing permanent housing in which the client currently resides.
- Eligible subject matters are limited to evictions.

- Component services or activities may include client intake, preparation of cases for trial, preparation of rental bonds, provision of legal advice, representation at hearings, and counseling.

### ***Ineligible Activities***

- Legal services for individuals and families not eligible for the SAFHR program
- Conference costs
- Training costs
- Food purchases
- Mileage costs
- Direct financial assistance
- Technology costs

### Marketing/Outreach

SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion funds may be used to conduct marketing and outreach to Missouri renters to identify eligible clients and proactively prevent evictions. Eligible components of these services and activities are outlined below.

### ***Eligible Activities***

- Expenses associated with advertising SAFHR and housing stability and eviction diversion services in agency's service area. Appropriate media includes, but is not limited to, television, radio, billboards, and the likes.
- Salaries and benefits associated with staff engaged in SAFHR-HSED focused outreach efforts and/or events.

### Administration

SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion funds may be used to support the reporting and administration of this grant.

### ***Eligible Activities***

- Salaries and benefits associated with staff backing up eligible activities and their expenses.
- Other costs for goods and services required for administration of the program, including rental or purchase of equipment, insurance, utilities, office supplies, and rental and maintenance (but not purchase) of office space.
- Staff salaries, wages, and related costs of staff engaged in eligible program administration activities.

## Client Income Eligibility

All households assisted through SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion are required to be at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) and/or be verified as a low income family in connection with another local, state or federal government assistance program. SAFHR - HSED grantees should use the [MO Housing Resources AMI Lookup Tool](#) to determine income eligibility. The Area Median Income Limits are to be used throughout the entire grant period unless otherwise specified by MHDC. SAFHR bases its income calculation method from HUD’s Handbook 4350.3, Chapter 5, Section 5-5; grantees should refer to this guidance for the correct calculation of income.

The SAFHR-HSED program requires self-certification of income using the SAFHR Eligibility Form (SP-101).

## Recordkeeping Requirements

Supporting documentation for expenses will be reviewed by MHDC. The charts below detail the documentation requirements for costs billed to SAFHR - HSED.

Records to Maintain - Program Participants (Additional detail provided in Appendix B: Client File Forms)

Record	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
<b>SAFHR Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAFHR Eligibility Form (SP-101)</li> <li>• Case notes or other documentation of services provided                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Notes must be dated and detail housing goals, plans and referrals.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Release of Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAFHR Consent Form (SP-102)</li> </ul>
<b>SAFHR Paper Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of paper application received and manually submitted by the grantee with all supporting documentation provided by the household.</li> </ul>

Records to Maintain – Program Participants Receiving Rental Bonds

Record	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
<b>SAFHR Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAFHR Eligibility Form (SP-101)</li> <li>• Case notes or other documentation of services provided</li> </ul>
<b>Release of Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAFHR Consent Form (SP-102)</li> </ul>
<b>Rent Bond Paper Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of Rent Bond Paper Application (SP-104)</li> </ul>
<b>Verification of Identity/Address</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of full lease agreement</li> <li>• Copy of picture ID</li> </ul>
<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Court documentation</li> <li>• Bills for expenditure</li> </ul>

Records to Maintain - Administration

Activity	Acceptable Forms of Documentation (both Cost Incurred and Proof of Payment are required)	
	Cost Incurred	Proof of Cleared Payment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bills paid</li> <li>• Detailed invoices of legal services</li> <li>• Supplies purchased</li> <li>• Equipment purchased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invoice</li> <li>• Receipt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canceled checks, bank statement with SAFHR - HSED payments highlighted</li> <li>• Legal services cannot exceed a maximum cap of \$150 dollars an hour</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee Compensation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timesheets from working with or outreach for eligible clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paystub listing the pay period, employee name and last four digits of employees SSN</li> <li>• Timesheets signed by supervisor and employee detailing eligible SAFHR – HSED activities</li> <li>• Bank statement with SAFHR - HSED payments highlighted</li> </ul>

## Termination and Grievance Procedures

All SAFHR-HSED grantees must have written policies in place that address termination and grievance procedures for program participants that violate program requirements. The policies should detail the program requirements, the termination process, and the grievance procedure for all clients served with SAFHR - HSED. The policies must also detail the timeline and method for notifying clients of their termination, as well as the process to allow clients to appeal the decision. When determining whether program violations merit termination, grantees should consider all extenuating circumstances in order to ensure that assistance is only terminated in the most severe situations. Termination does not prohibit the program from providing further assistance at a later date to the same individual or family. Policies should be retained by grantee and made available upon request by MHDC.

## Prioritizing Assistance

SAFHR Housing Stability and Eviction Diversion grantees should develop or update current written prioritization standards in relation to administration of its HSED grant. Program Guidelines should clearly detail alignment with U.S. Department of Treasury guidance for prioritization based on income status (households with incomes less than 50% AMI) and prioritization based on employment status (households with one or more individuals that have not been employed for a 90-day period). These policies and procedures for assessing eligibility for assistance and determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive assistance should also include prioritization of households currently in eviction proceedings. Procedures should be retained by grantee and made available upon request by MHDC.

## Monitoring

In order to track a grantee's program compliance with MHDC regulations, ensure accurate spending of SAFHR - HSED funds, prevent fraud and abuse, and identify technical assistance needs, MHDC staff will monitor grantees' by conducting on-site or desk audit compliance reviews as well as through review of all financial documentation submitted to MHDC.

More guidance coming soon.

## Grant Close Out

The SAFHR HSED program and grant period will continue through September 30, 2025 or when all funds have been expended.

More guidance coming soon.

## Appendix A – Initial Grant Documents

Before any funds can be released, all required initial grant documents must be completed and received by MHDC. All documents must be submitted electronically.

### Site Contact Form (SP-100)

**Description:** This ensures that MHDC has updated information for the upcoming grant period, including staff contact information, office location(s), hours of operation, and any other relevant information. Please note that the information provided may be used to conduct scheduled and unscheduled site visits.

### Authorized Signature Card (MHDC-101)

**Description:** This form designates all authorized signatories for each grant. All documents that are required to be signed by grantee must be signed by authorized signatories only. If an unauthorized person signs any HSED document, the document will be rejected.

### Grant Agreement

**Description:** The grant agreement is required for all grantees. The grant agreement specifically details the requirements and expectations for the administration of the grant. It is the grantee's responsibility to know and adhere to all provisions set forth in the grant agreement.

### Direct Deposit Form (MHDC-100) and Blank Check/Bank Letter

**Description:** All disbursements from MHDC to grantee will occur using an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The Direct Deposit Form provides MHDC with the grantee's banking information for the electronic transfer. A blank voided check from the indicated banking institution is also required to be submitted with the Direct Deposit form. If the agency does not have access to a blank voided check a letter from the bank confirming the account and routing number will be accepted. **Please note that by default your grantee's banking information will be updated for ALL MHDC accounts. If the banking information provided is for SAFHR HSED or one grant ONLY – it must be indicated on the Direct Deposit Form.**

### Workforce Eligibility Affidavit

**Description:** This document is required for all grantees. This form certifies that the grantee does not employ any person who is an unauthorized alien in conjunction with the contracted services, and that the Respondent is enrolled and participates, or who will enroll and participate, in a federal work authorization program with respect to the employees working in connection with the contracted services.

**E-Verify Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

Description: The E-Verify MOU is an agreement between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Grantee stating that grantee agrees to participate in the Employment Eligibility Verification Program (E-Verify).

**Form W-9**

Description: Form W-9 is used to verify the grantee's Tax Identification Number (TIN).

## Appendix B – Client File Forms

### **SAFHR Eligibility Form (SP-101)**

Due Date:	Completed at first instance of assistance with HSED.
Required:	Yes
Submission / Retention:	Retained in client file
Description:	This form is intended to be used to verify SAFHR eligibility according to Treasury guidelines, certifying both income and housing status.

### **Consent Form (SP-102)**

Due Date:	Completed at first instance of assistance with HSED.
Required:	Yes
Submission / Retention:	Retained in client file
Description:	The Consent Form authorizes MHDC to review the household's file. The consent form must be completed and signed by head of household before first instance of HSED assistance. The MHDC Consent Form is the only acceptable consent form and other versions or alterations of this form will not be accepted.

### **SAFHR Paper Application**

Due Date:	Upon client submission
Required:	When applicable
Submission / Retention:	Retained in client file
Description:	Any paper application received and submitted on behalf of a household must be kept on file by the grantee along with any supporting documentation provided (ID, income statements, federal means tested program documents, lease, rental arrears documents, utility arrears documents, tenant certifications, etc.)

### **Rental Bond Paper Application (SP-104)**

Due Date:	Upon determination of rental bond eligibility
Required:	When applicable.
Submission / Retention:	Retained in client file
Description:	The Rental Bond Paper Application must be kept on file by the grantee when an applicant is receiving rental bond assistance. The grantee is to maintain this document along with the required supporting documentation (SAFHR Eligibility Form, case notes, SAFHR Consent Form (SP-102), lease agreement, Photo ID.) All information in the rental bond paper application must be provided in required reports to MHDC.