



## **Request for Proposals (RFP) Kalamazoo County Winter Shelter**

**TO:** Prospective Bidders

**FROM:** The Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care

**Contact:** Patrese Griffin [p.griffin@uwscmi.org](mailto:p.griffin@uwscmi.org)

**RE:** Request for Proposal (RFP) for Winter Shelter (day and overnight)

**DATE:** July 31st, 2026

### **ABOUT UNITED WAY OF SOUTH-CENTRAL MICHIGAN**

United Way of South-Central Michigan (UWSCMI) brings together the people, ideas and resources to create strong, caring communities where every person is valued, thriving, and connected for the common good. We lift our local communities by reducing racial and economic disparities; addressing the needs of households in financial hardship; and creating opportunities for every person to reach their full potential.

UWSCMI targets ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households that earn more than the federal poverty level, but not enough to afford the basic necessities in a modern budget. These households are disproportionately represented by historically marginalized identities and intersections of multiple historically marginalized identities including BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and People with Disabilities communities.

UWSCMI is guided by 6-core values: equity, integrity, collaboration, community, compassion, and results. We recognize the significant, ongoing harm caused by systemic racism and historical inequities in our communities and our organization believes that every person brings unique strengths and perspectives to the social fabric of our region. Every person's lived experience strengthens our collective understanding of how we can build a brighter future.

UWSCMI supports ALICE households by ensuring our region has a strong safety net to help our neighbors access basic needs such as food, shelter, health care, and childcare in times of crisis, and by creating opportunity for ALICE households to reach financial stability



## ABOUT THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Continuum of Care (CoC) for Kalamazoo County is a planning and coordinating body with big aspirations— a county where everyone has equitable access to safe, affordable, dignified housing. Learn more about the CoC here: [www.kzoococ.org](http://www.kzoococ.org).

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

UWSCMI is committed to dismantling systemic inequities that continue to cause harm for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) people, women, and people with disabilities. We believe that these communities must be centered in the work we do. We strongly encourage applications from people with these identities or who are members of other marginalized communities. Together, we will continue to build capacity and accountability in our policies, practices, and partnerships. Full UWSCMI Equity Statement can be read here: <https://unitedforscmi.org/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/>

### 1. Overview

The Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care is seeking qualified and experienced service providers to operate **Winter Shelter Services** during the cold weather season (November – March). This includes **Day Shelter, Overnight Shelter (congregate, non-congregate, or extreme weather)**, services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The objective is to ensure safety, warmth, and access to essential resources during winter months.

#### Additional Context:

In 2025, the Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care (CoC), in partnership with Kalamazoo County Government and the City of Kalamazoo, released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to expand winter shelter capacity and provide emergency shelter solutions during the coldest months of the year. This collaborative effort resulted in the creation of additional seasonal shelter options that provided safe refuge for hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness during periods of extreme cold, and undoubtedly saved lives. While these investments significantly strengthened the community's emergency response, they also highlighted the continued and growing demand for shelter resources. Unsheltered homelessness remains a persistent challenge in Kalamazoo County, and existing shelter capacity continues to be insufficient to meet community needs during winter months and severe weather events. To address current community emergency sheltering needs, this RFP seeks to expand winter shelter capacity with particular emphasis on individuals that are not participating in long-term programming within Kalamazoo County. Since the



conclusion of the 2025-2026 Winter Shelter Initiative, dedicated shelter resources for other populations have been established, including The Landing Place, a year-round shelter for families experiencing homelessness, and the creation of a permanent medical respite program for individuals requiring short-term recuperative care. As a result, the primary focus of this procurement is intended to address the remaining gaps in winter shelter capacity for single adults during periods of extreme cold and severe winter weather. Proposals that can accommodate individuals with companion animals or pets, either directly or through partnerships with animal welfare organizations, are strongly encouraged, as the inability to safely shelter pets can present a significant barrier to individuals seeking emergency shelter.

Applicants may also propose temporary or pop-up shelters to expand capacity during emergency situations because of extreme weather (as defined by 32 degrees). Additional sheltering capacity that accommodates families with children will also be considered. Facilities must prioritize Kalamazoo County residents and describe reasonable verification methods, ensuring no one is turned away during emergencies due to verification delays.

Applicants should present contingency or surge plans for high-demand nights due to severe weather, including partnerships or overflow strategies.

Proposals should avoid duplication of existing services and coordinate with known providers.

## 2. RFP Timeline

| Activity                   | Date                                                   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| RFP Issued                 | July 31 <sup>st</sup>                                  |
| Deadline for Questions     | August 12th Responses will be published by August 14th |
| Proposals Due              | August 21 <sup>st</sup> , 5:00 p.m.                    |
| Evaluation Period          | Week of August 31 <sup>st</sup>                        |
| Notification of Award      | September 4 <sup>th</sup>                              |
| Contract Start Date        | October 1, 2026                                        |
| Shelter Operational Period | November 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027                      |

Optional Taper period or extension of extreme weather pop-up options for April 1- April 30th



**Qualified entities shall provide a proposal to Patrese Griffin via email with the above materials by August 21st at 5PM EST.**

**Questions about the RFP should be directed to** Patrese Griffin, CoC Director at [coc@uwscmi.org](mailto:coc@uwscmi.org). Questions will be answered individually and published August 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. Scope of Services**

#### **3.1 Day Shelter Services**

##### **Expected Services Include:**

- Operating hours between [e.g., 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM]
- Must be located within Kalamazoo County
- Heated indoor space with seating/rest areas
- Access to restrooms and hygiene facilities
- Light meals/snacks, coffee, and water
- Case management/referral services
- Coordination with outreach teams and local services
- On-site staff trained in trauma-informed care and de-escalation

#### **3.2 Overnight Shelter Services**

##### **Expected Services Include:**

- Identify congregate, non-congregate, or emergency Code Blue
- Check-in between [e.g., 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM], check-out by [e.g., 7:00 AM] (if applicable)
- Beds, mats, or cots with clean linens and blankets
- Must be located within Kalamazoo County
- Indoor heating, secure sleeping environment
- Light dinner and breakfast
- Staffing ratio that ensures 24/7 supervision and safety
- Coordination with emergency services and social service providers
- Separate or safe accommodation for families with children and individual adults (if applicable)



- Optional 'Taper-Down' period or extension of extreme weather pop-up options for April 1-April 30th

**3.3 Shelter Access Coordination:** Organizations that are awarded a contract for overnight shelter services MUST agree to participate in Shelter Access Coordination through Housing Resources Incorporated (HRI)

**Shelter Access Coordination is a partnership with HRI and Provider Organizations and is expected to include:**

- Daily Shelter Access Coordination: Conduct coordinated intake, referrals, and bed management across all reporting shelters that have available capacity. Maintain an up-to-date record of reported vacancies and ensure efficient matching of clients to appropriate shelter placements.
- Shelter Diversion: Implement diversion practices during the intake process to assist individuals and families in identifying safe, appropriate alternatives to shelter entry when feasible.
- After-Hours Coordination: Provide or facilitate a process for shelter coordination and referrals during non-business hours (evenings, weekends, and holidays). This may include direct staffing, an on-call rotation, or partnership with an established crisis response system.
- Communication & Data Management: Maintain effective communication channels with shelter providers, CoC and County staff. Document referrals, placements, and diversion outcomes in a system approved by the Coc and County to support accountability and evaluation.
- Equity & Accessibility: Ensure that shelter access processes are fair, transparent, and accessible to all individuals and families in need, with particular attention to populations that face barriers in accessing services.

#### **4. Program and Financial Reporting Requirements**

- Frequency of Reporting: Monthly
- Reporting Operating System: HMIS, Excel, narrative reports, or other system approved by the CoC, City, and County.



**Monthly reporting will be required utilizing metrics that are agreed upon by the CoC, City, and County. Reporting Requirements may include:**

- Day Shelter Services
  - Headcount (including some sort of demographics if possible)
  - Meals Provided
  - Incident Reporting
  - Reporting on Case Management Services (intakes/evaluations, connections to other social services, households moved to transitional housing, permanent housing, etc.)
- Overnight Shelter Services
  - Headcount (including some sort of demographics if possible)
  - Incident reporting
  - Meals Provided
  - Reporting on Case Management Services (intakes/evaluations, connections to other social services, households moved to transitional housing, permanent housing, etc.)
- Shelter Access Coordination
  - Number of households served
  - What services households are being connected with (shelter, case management, etc.)
  - Accounting of referrals, placements, and diversion efforts

#### Financial Reporting

- Submit monthly financial report of expenditures to date compared to budget. Upon request, applicants may be required to submit sufficient documentation such as payroll report, invoices with receipts documenting payment, or credit card statements.
- Financial Reconciliation
  - All expenditures are subject to review and approval by the funding partners.
  - Providers shall maintain supporting documentation for all expenditures for a minimum of five years following contract closeout.



- o The CoC, City, and County reserve the right to request additional documentation, conduct financial monitoring, or perform audits at any time during the contract period and for the applicable record retention period.

- **5. Unexpended Funds**

- Funding is provided only for eligible and documented expenditures incurred during the approved contract period.
- Any funds that remain unspent, are not supported by required documentation, or are determined to be ineligible shall be returned to the fiscal administrator within thirty (30) days following contract closeout unless otherwise authorized in writing.
- Providers shall submit a final financial reconciliation identifying total expenditures, total reimbursement received, and any remaining balance due for return.

## **6. Eligibility Requirements**

Organizations must:

- Be a registered nonprofit, governmental entity, or community service provider.  
*Organizations operating under a fiscal sponsor are eligible to apply, provided the fiscal sponsor is a registered nonprofit and agrees to assume legal and financial responsibility for the project.*
- Applicant has a fiscal management system which maintains checks and balances and follows Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to safeguard all funds that may be awarded under the terms of this funding opportunity. If applicant lacks fiscal management capabilities, applicant identifies its fiscal sponsor.
- Demonstrate experience in shelter/homelessness services.
- Have capacity to operate for the entire winter season (November-March).
- Comply with local fire, safety, and health regulations. Provide documentation from fire inspection showing maximum occupancy for space being utilized as a shelter.
- Provide adequate staffing and supervision.
- Carry adequate liability insurance for the project scope. (Proof of adequate property insurance will be required if you own the building and will be housing individuals)



- Be in good standing with nonprofit status and the Coc, City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo County with other contracts, reporting requirements, fees, and taxes (see General Terms and Conditions for more information)
- In receipt of all required licenses, and certifications and in compliance with zoning regulations to provide the proposed services

## 7. Budget and Funding

A minimum of \$700,000 in total funding is available for this initiative. Proposals should demonstrate strong fiscal stewardship, scalability, and alignment with a community-wide need to maximize shelter and warming center access.

Priority may be given to projects that leverage additional funding, share operational resources, or establish formal collaborations with other community organizations.

Funding is available through the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, and the Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care. The proposer must submit a **detailed line-item budget**, including:

- Personnel and staffing
- Facility rent or maintenance
- Utilities and supplies
- Food and hygiene items
- Transportation, if applicable
- Administrative costs (if allowed)
- Be sure to include other funding sources, if applicable, for this proposed project.
- Maximum Occupancy
- Job descriptions for proposed roles

Must include funding requests **per shelter type - Day, overnight (congregate, non-congregate, or emergency)** and **per estimated guest served per night/day**.



## 8. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals should be in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, single spaced with 1-inch margins, and a maximum of 10 pages.

Proposal must include:

- **Cover Letter**
- **Executive Summary**
- **Organizational Overview:** Please describe the organization's mission, vision, strategic plan, history, and goals.
- **Project Plan for Day and/or Overnight Shelter Services**
- **Facility Location(s) & Site Description:** Applicant must be able to provide evidence of the following for each site/facility being proposed:
  - **Site Control (Proof of ownership, lease, MOU, service agreement etc.)**
  - **Proper zoning for activities proposed**
  - **Maximum occupancy for spaces that would be utilized by guests**
- **Staffing Plan and Safety Protocols**
  - Applicants must provide specific staff-to-guest ratios and a plan to maintain safety and supervision, recognizing that staffing burdens can increase with volume. The proposal should outline staff wellness protocols and strategies to maintain trauma-informed, supportive environments under potentially high-stress conditions.
- **Budget & Cost Proposal: Detailed, line-item budget that includes all proposed expenditures as well as all funding sources. Please include an estimated cost per guest per day.**
- **Organizational Capacity:** Please provide a detailed narrative that describes the Applicant's experience and qualifications and demonstrates ability to execute the proposed activities. Include job descriptions for winter shelter related positions and resumes for key implementation personnel (if available and not included in the page count). Please describe the organization's mission, vision, strategic plan, history, and goals.
- **Additional Materials (not included in page count):**
- Current fiscal year's financial statements (Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows certified by the agency's CFO, Finance Officer, or Board Treasurer)
- **References, letters of support or MOUs for formal partnership** (minimum of 2)
- **Most recent 990 or annual audit**



- **List of Board of Directors names and roles, and last two approved meeting minutes**

**Submission method:** Email to [p.griffin@uwscmi.org](mailto:p.griffin@uwscmi.org)

**File format:** PDF preferred

## **9. Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

| <b>Criteria</b>                 | <b>Weight</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Experience & Qualifications     | 25%           |
| Program Plan & Service Delivery | 30%           |
| Cost-Effectiveness & Budget     | 20%           |
| Staffing & Safety Plan          | 15%           |
| References & Past Performance   | 10%           |

## **10. General Terms and Conditions**

Must be in compliance with the following terms and conditions:

- Funding of proposals via this RFP is contingent on fully executed contracts between UWSCMI and the City of Kalamazoo/Kalamazoo County.
- The Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.



- The selected provider must comply with all federal, state, and local laws.
- Site inspections may be required before final contract execution.
- Prior to execution of contract agreements, selected applicant(s) shall provide, to the satisfaction of the CoC, all program operating policies and procedures, participant eligibility requirements, program terms and conditions, intake and referral procedures, safety and security protocols, grievance procedures, data collection and reporting processes, and any other operational documentation reasonably requested. The CoC reserves the right to require revisions to such documents.
- Mid-term project report due prior to release of second payment.
- The Continuum of Care encourages applications from qualified nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, governmental entities, tribal organizations, and faith-based organizations that have the experience and capacity to provide high-quality winter shelter services. All applicants will be evaluated using the same criteria and must comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws.
- To the fullest extent permitted by law, faith-based organizations are encouraged to apply to participate in the Winter Solutions Initiative. However, a faith-based organization may not use direct financial assistance provided through this procurement to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities. Such an organization also may not, in providing services funded by this RFP discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice. Faith-based organizations may also hire, fire, and make other employment decisions on the basis of their sincerely held religious beliefs, including requiring employees to adhere to religious tenets, practices, and standards of conduct, without jeopardizing their eligibility to receive funds under this RFP, consistent with applicable law.
- Proposals made by applicants that are not currently in good standing with the CoC or any of the funding partners may be rejected. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Current on all federal, state, and local tax obligations, including property taxes, or have an approved payment plan in place that is being honored;
  - Compliance with the terms and conditions of any existing grant agreements, contracts, or funding awards administered by the Kalamazoo County CoC, Kalamazoo County, or the City of Kalamazoo, including timely submission of required reports and satisfactory performance of contractual obligations.
  - Not be subject to any unresolved notice of default, suspension, termination for cause, or other material finding of noncompliance.
  - The CoC reserves the right to verify an applicant's standing with funding partners and to determine whether any outstanding compliance, financial, or contractual



issues materially affect the applicant's ability to successfully perform the services contemplated.