

## 2020 FRCoC Cover Letter for VHSP Funding

A separate cover sheet is required for each project application.

### Applicant

Legal Name: Empowerhouse

Type of Applicant (select one):  Non-Profit  Housing Authority  PDC  Unit of Local Government

EIN/TIN: 52-1142547

Address: P.O. Box 1007 Fredericksburg, VA 22402-150 Olde Greenwich, Suite 101, Fred, VA 22408

### Application Contact

Name: Kathy Anderson

Title: Executive Director

Phone: 540-373-9372

Email: [kathya@empowerhouseva.org](mailto:kathya@empowerhouseva.org)

Project Name: Domestic Violence Rapid Re-Housing

### Project Type (select one):

- Coordinated Assessment  Outreach  Emergency Shelter Operations  
 Rapid Re-Housing  Targeted Prevention  Housing Location  
 CoC Planning (Only the CoC Lead Agency is eligible to apply for CoC Planning VHSP funding.)

### Type of Application (select one):

- New (requesting funding for new project)  
 Renewal (requesting level or reduced funding for existing project)  
 Renewal with Expansion (requesting increased funding for existing project)

New Amount Request: \$0

Renewal Amount Requested: \$120,141

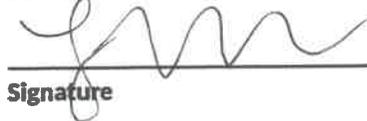
Expansion Amount Requested: \$0

Approximate number of people this program will serve: 60

The applicant organization's governing board discussed and/or approved this application for funding at a meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). If this application has not yet been discussed, it will be discussed at the next meeting of the governing board, which will be held on March 9, 2020 (date).

The applicant organization named above will act as the responsible fiscal agent for any funds received and will comply with applicable tax laws, regulations, and CoC policies. By signing this application, we agree that we have read and approve of the content of this application.

Board Chair:



Signature

2/19/2020

Date

Executive Director:



Signature

2/24/2020

Date

## 2020 FRCoC Application for VHSP Funding Outreach; Emergency Shelter Operations; Rapid Re-Housing; Targeted Prevention

Please complete a separate application form for each outreach, emergency shelter operations, rapid re-housing, and targeted prevention project.

**Project Name: Domestic Violence Rapid Re-Housing**

### Line-Item Budget

Please complete line-item budget below. Budget amounts should reflect the VHSP request only.

*Note: Renewal projects can apply for renewal HMIS and Administration amounts up to the grantee's total FY20 HMIS and Administration amounts regardless of 5% and 3% caps. HMIS and Administration amounts across all of the CoC's FY21 project applications shall not exceed total allowable HMIS and Administration amounts.*

*Expansion projects can apply for an HMIS expansion up to the amount where the combined renewal/expansion HMIS request is 5% of the combined renewal/expansion project subtotal and an Administration expansion up to the amount where the combined renewal/expansion Administration request is 3% of the combined renewal/expansion project subtotal.*

	Renewal Amount	Expansion Amount
<b>Outreach</b>		
Case Management		
Limited Support Services		
Other (specify)		
<b>Subtotal</b>		
<b>HMIS (up to 5% of subtotal)</b>		
Computer Costs		
Fees and Licenses		
HMIS Staffing		
Training		
Other (specify)		
<b>Administration (up to 3% of subtotal)</b>		
Administration		
<b>Total</b>		

	Renewal Amount	Expansion Amount
<b>Emergency Shelter Operations</b>		
Case Management		
Limited Support Services		
Maintenance		
Rent		
Security		

Supplies		
Utilities		
Other (specify)		
<b>Subtotal</b>		
<b>HMIS (up to 5% of subtotal)</b>		
Computer Costs		
Fees and Licenses		
HMIS Staffing		
Training		
Other (specify)		
<b>Administration (up to 3% of subtotal)</b>		
Administration		
<b>Total</b>		

	<b>Renewal Amount</b>	<b>Expansion Amount</b>
<b>Rapid Re-Housing</b>		
Housing Search & Placement		
Housing Stabilization Case Management	\$52,617	
Housing Stabilization Financial Assistance	\$10,000	
Housing Stabilization Services		
Rent Arrears		
Rent Assistance	\$52,797	
Service Location Costs		
Veteran Housing Stabilization Financial Assistance		
Veteran Rent Arrears		
Veteran Rent Assistance		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$115,414</b>	
<b>HMIS (up to 5% of subtotal)</b>		
Computer Costs		
Fees and Licenses		
HMIS Staffing		
Training		
Other (specify)		
<b>Administration (up to 3% of subtotal)</b>		
Administration	<b>\$4,727</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$120,141</b>	

	<b>Renewal Amount</b>	<b>Expansion Amount</b>
<b>Targeted Prevention</b>		
Housing Search & Placement		
Housing Stabilization Case Management		
Housing Stabilization Financial		

Assistance		
Housing Stabilization Services		
Rent Arrears		
Rent Assistance		
Service Location Costs		
<b>Subtotal</b>		
<b>HMIS (up to 5% of subtotal)</b>		
Computer Costs		
Fees and Licenses		
HMIS Staffing		
Training		
Other (specify)		
<b>Administration (up to 3% of subtotal)</b>		
Administration		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$120,141</b>	

## Match

*Please indicate sources of match. Match must equal 25% of requested amount and must be used to meet the goals of VHSP, but does not need to be of the same VHSP Category as the request. Match must be from local or private sources, must be received and expended within the grant year, and may not be used to meet multiple match requirements. If the project is requesting partial or full waiver of the match requirement, please explain. (See Pages 18-19 of the Virginia Homeless and Special Needs Housing Funding Guidelines 2020-2022 for full explanation of the match requirement.)*

Type	Source	VHSP Category	Amount
	Contributions		\$31,000

## Narrative Responses

1. **Provide a description that addresses the entire scope of the proposed project.** (Character Limit: 3,000)

Empowerhouse Rapid Re-housing (RRH) activities assist homeless victims of domestic violence (DV) in attaining permanent housing quickly and increasing self-sufficiency. DV RRH offers financial assistance and supportive case management to individuals and families homeless from DV in PD16. They may be referred through the FRCoC Coordinated Entry or reach out directly to the Empowerhouse 24-hour hotline (FY19-1,551 calls; 1,210 in-person) through the Victim Service Coordinated Entry process for services. RRH will provide rental, deposit, and utilities housing assistance subsidies at participant chosen and rental lease with landlord scattered site apartments and homes.

Participants begin with the Shelter Services Coordinator who implements the prioritization assessment tool and supports them in creating a housing plan (286 people including children were sheltered in FY19). Households most highly prioritized based on the most significant barriers to

obtaining housing will speak to the Housing Advocate (HA) who helps prepare the survivor and her family in obtaining housing. The FRCoC shared Housing Locator (HL), Empowerhouse trained in DV, works with each of the RRH clients to identify properties that meet their needs. The Empowerhouse Housing Case Manager (HCM) and the HL attend lease signings to ensure participants understand all aspects of the process and forms. The HA prepares invoices to pay rent and other financial assistance and continues to promote setting short and long term goals to increase independence including measures to strengthen safety and economic well-being related to abuse. Empowerhouse contracts with Rappahannock Goodwill Industries for a DV trained Employment Specialist (ES) that provides voluntary services strictly to DV survivors in housing. The ES works with them on job searches, resume writing and interviewing techniques and also focuses on helping them overcome barriers to employment. The HCM and ES continue to meet with survivors at the residences and other locations to work on housing stability goals and employment including attainment, maintenance, promotion, increasing skills, scholarships, education, and ongoing financial stability. This may include solving barriers such as transportation, childcare, and lack of skills.

DV RRH will pay a security deposit and at least the first two months of rent in full. Each client who needs it will receive a set amount of money monthly for utilities, based on what is included in the rent and the size of the unit. After two months the client’s financial status will be reassessed and Empowerhouse will determine if a client is able to start paying a portion of their rent and more utilities. Every 3 months the HA performs recertification to determine their current income and eligibility for rental assistance. Once a client is able to take on full financial responsibility, case management services are still offered and available to ensure stability is maintained.

**2. If renewal funding is being requested, explain how the project continues to meet a community need. If new/expansion funding is being requested, explain how the additional funds will increase system capacity and justify the community need for additional capacity. Be sure to use data to support the demonstrated need. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

Empowerhouse served over 3,500 people exposed to domestic violence (DV) last year. Race and Ethnicity Demographics:

White	African American	Hispanic	Unknown	Asian	Native American
47%	21%	16%	13%	1%	1%

11% had LEP and were served by 3 full-time bilingual (Spanish) and bicultural Empowerhouse employees or interpreters.

330 DV survivors benefitted from housing and shelter services in FY19. (In FY 15, Empowerhouse sheltered 24% (272) of PD16 sheltered people.) 54% of Empowerhouse sheltered households in FY 19 were unaccompanied individuals. Renewal funding for Empowerhouse RRH assists individuals and family household DV survivors (72 people in FY19) to re-enter and/or stabilize in housing as soon as possible. They become homeless because they fled or are fleeing DV and have no other options for themselves and their children or they have tried other options and were unable to achieve housing stability and as a result seek entrance to the Empowerhouse DV shelter. As the only DV services organization serving our 5 localities, Empowerhouse maintains the Victim Services Coordinated Entry Process through its existing 24 hour DV hotline.

In FY 19, of the 86 adults and children supported in their own housing through the Empowerhouse housing supports, we supported and subsidized 33 households with 53 children including 5 adult children 18-20 years of age with rental subsidies, case management, employment and education as they entered or stabilized in housing. 28 households, 16 of which were households with 41 children including 2 adult children and 12 of which were single households with 3 adult children, received financial support from Empowerhouse VHSP RRH. Of these, 10 of 11 (4 Single) households with 25 people exited to permanent housing, 6 households with children (19 people). One single was unknown.

Of the 72 individuals assisted with VHSP DV RRH services:

White	African American	Native American	Multi-racial	unknown
40%	42%	8%	7%	3%

**17% were Hispanic.**

DV Survivors experience their own barriers to re-housing as well as those experienced within the general homeless population, sometimes compounded. Many DV survivors in housing experienced victimization by multiple relationships with violence and exploitation. For some this has led to substance use to cope with pain and for others, forced substance use was part of the abuse and coercion used by their abusive partners to control them. Once housed, many are coping with mental health needs, other chronic health conditions, and disabilities as they gain stability in their housing. Most of them are voluntarily working on GEDs or certificate programs, employability skill building, transportation, and continued legal matters related to DV, custody, and support as part of their self driven goals. This subset of homeless individuals and families receive the support to enter housing quickly while receiving critical DV trauma informed services combined with other voluntary supports for their eventual success in housing stability.

**3. Please indicate the breakdown of household types targeted by this project:**

	Renewal	Expansion
Households with Children	65%	%
Households without Children	35%	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**4. Certify that the project will adhere to the *FRCoC Coordinated Entry Policies & Procedures*, including the following requirements of the document:**

X Follow the Housing First model

X Participate in the FRCoC Coordinated Entry Process and/or the Victim Service Coordinated Entry Process (including coordinated assessment for shelter/prevention and prioritization for rapid re-housing)

X Adhere to established project standards (including *FRCoC Rapid Re-Housing Policies & Procedures*)

X Collect data through HMIS or a comparable database

5. **What percentage of households will be served through the Victim Service Coordinated Entry Process (including coordinated assessment for shelter/prevention and prioritization for rapid re-housing)?**

	Renewal	Expansion
Households Served through Victim Service Coordinated Entry Process	100%	%

6. **Describe in detail how your organization implements a Housing First approach. Include specific examples such as organizational or programmatic policies, procedures, guidelines, etc. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

The DV Shelter staff support every sheltered DV victim with a voluntary housing plan. On occasion the survivor may directly enter housing if they are literally homeless but not in the shelter. Per Empowerhouse RRH Policies, except for minimum eligibility requirements, there are no pre-conditions for enrollment which is a standard and important housing first approach. The minimum per policies are as follows:

- A survivor of domestic and/or sexual violence, dating violence, or stalking;
- Eighteen years old or legally emancipated minor;
- Literally homeless and in need of housing without the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Once accepted and prioritized the DV RRH case management team attempt to connect to housing the individual or family first who is least likely to self resolve using our prioritization tool with questions related to barriers to housing entry and their DV situation. The household is connected with the community’s housing locator. The DV Housing Advocate (DVHA) and DV Housing Case Manager (DVHCM) begin working with the participant and the locator. Per Empowerhouse Policies, “The goals of RRH case management are to help households obtain and move into permanent housing, to support households to stabilize in housing, and to connect them to community and mainstream services and supports.” Once the client chooses a location, with the application fee paid with Empowerhouse subsidies if requested, the DVHCM attends the lease signing and helps as needed with supporting the entrance into housing with utility connections and payments if needed, the deposit and first month’s rent. The DVHA works with the participant to select furniture if needed from the Furniture Bank, where Empowerhouse pays a quarterly contribution through an MOU with Micah and Hope House to ensure the continued availability and delivery often needed in setting up a household an necessary to facilitate quick entry to housing.

Empowerhouse also subcontracts with Rappahannock Goodwill Industries to support a DV trained Employment Specialist (DVES) dedicated to the Empowerhouse DV households housed. The DVES serves and meets the DV survivor entering housing as soon as practical for the participant to make them aware of the services available. Empowerhouse hired a DV SOAR Case Manager to residents of our DV shelter to access SSI/SSDI applications to allow them to increase their income despite their disability without having to wait years for acceptance. This experience makes it more likely that housing stability will be attained.

Additional supports during the initial phase to facilitate quick access to DV RRH include (and in policies):

- Safety planning including assessing new rental unit and its location
- Court and hospital accompaniment
- Obtaining necessary identification
- Services in Spanish through available staff and in Spanish and other languages through Language Line
- Education on tenant rights and responsibilities
- Emergency transportation

**7. Describe the systems in place to ensure that households experiencing homelessness are moved quickly to permanent housing and remain stably housed. Be sure to use data demonstrating the outcomes of these systems. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

As part of the coordinated entry process, individuals and their families in PD 16 who are homeless due to domestic violence (DV) are referred to Empowerhouse via the 24-hour hotline (1,551 calls in FY 19). If DV victims cannot be prevented from becoming homeless, they are assessed for shelter. Empowerhouse Diversion may include accessing protective orders or reviewing safe family and friend options. Homeless victims are assessed and usually enter our DV shelter first (151 victims and their 135 children in FY 19) but may also connect directly with DV RRH services if they are homeless and are not able to enter shelter (6 of 33 in DV RRH). Once safely in shelter and their immediate physical and emotional crisis needs are met, Shelter staff work with the victim to complete a housing plan. Victims without alternative housing options and interested in RRH can choose to complete the DV Prioritization Tool (Reviewed by FRCoC). The DV Housing Advocate (HA) reviews the completed tool. Those entering directly from the community meet with the DVHA to complete the prioritization tool.

The DVHA meets with applicants who want to enter the program to help the participant understand the program and services available to them and the responsibilities of both parties. Once victims agree to the program, and if funding is available, applicants are immediately accepted, begin necessary forms, and are referred to the CoC shared Housing Locator (HL), usually the same day. The HL uses the referral information to understand the participant's housing barriers and works with area landlords to negotiate housing placements. They place the victim and their family in permanent housing as quickly as possible. The length of time for placement varies based on the HL's case load and the client specific housing barriers. For the 33 households served with Empowerhouse DV RRH in FY19, the average length of time between acceptance into program and entering their own housing was 48 days. Accounting for one struggling participant's 223 days and removing this outlier, the average changes to 43 days. 13 households entered in 30 days or less.

The DVHCM works with the participant to develop action plans to address needs in overcoming barriers to maintaining housing. Participation in supportive services (e.g., employment services by Employment Specialist (ES), advocacy and education and scholarship attainment -27 % furthered education in FY 19 and 45% in the first half of FY20) or to mainstream services, development of household skills such as budgeting) are voluntary. The ES and Housing Staff continue to check-in or meet with each client at least monthly for support and to assess if any new challenges have arisen that need to be addressed. If landlords reach out with concerns the DVHA responds immediately to support the housed survivor and the landlord to resolve any concerns. As noted earlier, of 17 households exiting DV RRH, 16 remained in permanent housing at program exit in FY 19 (94%).

**8. Describe the specific strategies used to assist participants with both increasing their employment and/or income and maximizing their ability to live independently. Be sure to include data demonstrating the outcomes of these strategies. (RRH/Prevention Only; Character Limit: 3,000)**

Each participant is assessed at program start to determine needs, dreams, goals and voluntary services available in house and in community. The DV Housing team including the dedicated RGI Employment Specialist (ES) helps participants develop personal budgets and goals including their timeline for obtaining and or retaining employment and/or benefits. It is a choice to work with the ES who makes her services fun and enticing. She assesses their education, job skills, employment needs and barriers and helps create a client driven action plan. The ES also assists in identifying potential jobs, writing resumes and cover letters and preparing job applications. She helps them overcome barriers to employment such as transportation (53%), childcare (33%), disability (40%), little to no work history (30%)/education(73%), LEP (14%), substances use, and a criminal background (30%) often stemming from abuse. She assists survivors with computer tutorials via the mobile and on-site Job Help Center. The team also links them and facilitates their application, entrance, financial aid, and participation in College programs as they identify career paths. A former DV ES now heads WIOA Career Services. Familiar with DV RRH, participants have extra help navigating education and career services. The team assists women in applying for the DV Women's Independence Scholarship Program which provides educational support including stipends, housing payments, computers, etc. through personal grants. Empowerhouse, the co-applicant, writes checks for items requested by the client recipient. The ES continues to work with survivors at their homes, at our center, and in the community for ongoing employment goals including search, attainment, maintenance, promotion, increasing skills, and ongoing financial stability.

The Housing staff assesses clients' needs and desires for voluntary services that maximize their ability to live independently and develop action plans to address their needs. They implement semi-annual voluntary seminars that include the Allstate Moving Ahead through Economic Empowerment curriculum specifically for DV victims, budgeting, educational opportunities, dynamics of DV, physical and mental health resources, parenting and childcare resources, and others as identified by clients. Develop a monthly newsletter to include job listings, scholarship opportunities, affirmations, healthy recipes, announcements, etc. Over 3 fiscal years: 77% (108 DV victims) of DV RRH clients pursued voluntary employment services and worked to overcome many barriers. (48) 66% of them gained employment within one year. Of those already employed, 77% maintained employment (33 of 38). These numbers do not speak to other successes of promotions, income gain, scholarships, certification, and educational attainment (27% furthered education in FY 19; 45% so far in FY 20) which are fewer but mighty and impressive given the odds and things they have had to overcome and continue to overcome.

**9. Describe how the project leverages mainstream resources to support clients as they prepare to move on from project involvement. Provide project and community level examples. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

The RRH housing team works with each client to assess their individual barriers to maintaining housing and identify their needs, available community resources are discussed. Empowerhouse has established strong relationships with community organizations and agencies throughout Planning District 16 to quickly connect RRH participants as their needs are identified. The DVHA and DVHCM provide referrals, accompaniment and advocacy as needed (and as allowed by confidentiality rules and client's written permission). The dedicated DV ES works with most clients on their education, job skills and employment

needs. The connections established with the ES, related to any workforce services available at RGI, the tutorials, certifications, and area Colleges are continuing relationships that they will be able to access and benefit from long term. One current housing client, after overcoming many barriers and many years of abuse starting in childhood, is attending school at Germanna and has obtained a job at the school for which she is very proud. Her long term success will unfold because of the connections forged while in the DV RRH program. She has a broad based support system now. Local DSS Departments coordinate benefits e.g., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Childcare subsidies for DV victims. Clinics and health centers are connected to clients while in the program. We hired a part-time SOAR Case Manager (Social Security Outreach, Access, and Recovery) to seek SSI/SSDI disability benefits when they or their children have profound medical conditions. This will establish a long term Social Security connection of support.

Some members of area churches attend the Empowerhouse 40 hour DV volunteer training. They help to connect some of our housing clients in further ways to jobs and military connections. Empowerhouse partners with the school systems and encourage parents in the program to be partners with teachers and PTAs. The ES will meet clients in local libraries in an effort to ensure they have a connection to books, computers, and information.

Many have barriers due to mental health and substance use. If not already connected, we help them access RACSB disability and counseling services which has and will helped them maintain stability in housing. The National Counseling Group provides in-home counseling to some clients. Our participants also utilize counseling services at Snowden. Clients with substance use concerns know they can seek treatment at RACSB and their Crisis Stabilization.

Additionally, resource information is regularly shared with clients. SERVE operates a food pantry accessible to our Stafford clients. SECA, Salvation Army, and CVHC are resources they may need to access if they get behind on a housing or utility bill. Legal Aid Works prioritizes assisting DV victims in civil proceedings such as POs, custody; a procedure to expedite intake when we have an undocumented victim. RUW provides free tax preparation.

**10. Describe how the project leverages partnerships within the homelessness response system to limit duplication.** (Character Limit: 3,000)

Empowerhouse coordinates with partners in the FRCoC system to re-house primarily homeless victims (singles and victims with children) of domestic violence (DV). Prioritization is maintained by the shelter director (SD) who connects residents to the Empowerhouse DV RRH services or mainstream services if they have interest and are not concerned about their confidentiality protection; they will be connected to the community's individual, family, or Veterans Prioritization list, all of which Empowerhouse attends in support of our system. They may be connected to the Salvation Army or CVHC as part of their housing plan and effort to self resolve without the DV RRH services and financial assistance. As part of their housing plan, the SD will explore all options. If they are referred to the housing advocate (DVHA) at Empowerhouse, the team will support their efforts to obtaining leases and permanent housing by connecting them with the voluntary services of the community's housing locator (HL). If a rental is selected and all of the certifications and forms are complete, the Empowerhouse DV housing case manager (DVCM) will accompany the HL and participant to the lease signing. The DVCM will connect the participant to the furniture bank (as part of an MOU with Micah and Hope House and financial payment to Micah) if they are in need of furniture and they will deliver community donated furniture that the

participants need if requested. Continued case management and financial assistance will be need based and recertification is a part of the process. The DVCM and participant will determine the minimum amount of assistance needed to maintain housing stability.

The DV dedicated employment specialist (ES) from Rappahannock Goodwill Industries via another grant and MOU will assist with voluntary services of employment search, employability skill building, applications to certificate programs, higher education scholarships that also support living expenses while enrolled and participating in higher education classes. The DVCM and participant meet at least monthly to discuss participant driven goals focused on housing stability to continue to support the tapering off of assistance and achieving their housing stabilization goals. The DVCM continues connecting participants to Salvation Army as assistance may be needed for short term crisis needs. The Empowerhouse DVHA and DVCM will record all data and services in the HMIS comparable database to support the continued documentation of participants and services. As needed the DVCM will connect participants to RACSB, Snowden Day Services, Family Solutions, the Sunshine Lady House and other mental health and substance use treatment services if the participant wants this support as part of their stabilization goals. Any continued support to achieve social services benefits, disability benefits, child and spousal support are all explored and provided to help participants connect to qualifying services.

**11. Describe if/how the project identifies harder-to-serve individuals/households, including sex offenders, large families, persons who are medically fragile, persons identifying as LGBTQ+, unaccompanied youth, households with accessibility concerns (including language and mobility), and households with limited or no personal phone or internet access. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

The new (2016) Empowerhouse Domestic Violence (DV) Shelter is on one level with bedrooms and suites which lock for privacy, space, and peace of mind. The shelter often is the first stop when accessing DV RRH Services. Serving individuals and families in this new building on one level and with wheelchair accessibility has accommodated people with disabilities, large families with additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and living areas, fewer bunk beds allowing easier access for injured or less mobile individuals, more space to move about, less crowded conditions, and less concern about gender identification with less sharing of bedrooms and bathrooms. The size was increased and that also allows for more peace of mind and less anxiety by people already traumatized by domestic violence. One young woman (single) who was on a top bunk (when the shelter was very full) in her bedroom tented off her sleeping area to eliminate the interaction with others that she did not feel like she could bear at the time. In the past facility, this would have been impossible for her to carve out her own space. We remember one woman trying to use a closet for that purpose in the past. The building has a suite with additional modifications to allow the deaf or hard of hearing to be signaled by various needs to interact and be alerted. The building has a communal phone and computers with internet access for residents.

Empowerhouse staff visit the RACSB Sunshine Lady House (crisis stabilization) every other week to provide a group with domestic violence as the topic. This allows persons with mental health and high substance use to connect with DV services and our program.

There have been several families with 8 children in the shelter who also were able to go into the DV RRH program. Of the 72 DV individuals served by VHSP DV RRH services, 7 were severely mentally ill; 3 were chronically using substances; 5 had other disabilities; and 4 were chronically homeless. The Empowerhouse DVCM is bilingual (Spanish) and bicultural which allows Limited English Proficiency (LEP) participants to directly receive services in their primary language. DV RRH served several families with adult children keeping them housed despite their efforts to become independent and also homeless.

We kept them together as a family unit including 3 young men and 2 young women between the ages of 18-20. One of them tried to leave the household of her mother's and come into shelter when her mother slapped her and other difficulties ensued as they went through re-traumatizing court hearings. Her mother drank and that is when her daughter anticipated conflict with her mother. We met with both parties separately and then together and helped them work through their struggles.

The harder-to-serve individuals/households are identified by the Shelter Director through the work on the housing plan. The newly hired SOAR worker will further support their efforts to stay sheltered while they move toward their housing plan.

**12. Describe efforts made by the project to serve those individuals/households identified as being harder-to-serve (as defined in Question 11), including strategies employed, staff training, and/or partnerships with other organizations, either within or outside of the homelessness response system.**

In some of the same ways that Empowerhouse outreaches to the populations identified as hard-to-serve and works to accommodate and serve them, the same partnerships demonstrate efforts to support the clients identified harder-to-serve. In addition to those mentioned in question 11 about facilities enhancements in the new shelter, the partnerships with RACSB's SLH, and our DVCM who is bilingual, we also partner with Snowden to respond on-site to help facilitate and set up DV services for DV victims who may become homeless at exit from Snowden in-patient psychiatric or substance abuse care. They also serve as a resource for DV RRH clients within their out-patient services.

Empowerhouse has an MOU partnership with Rappahannock Goodwill Industries (RGI) which increases resources for our victims with disabilities, an expertise they provide to our partnership which includes housing DV victims and providing them with targeted employment and education services while entering housing and while in the DV RRH services to provide a path to permanent housing. The RGI Employment Specialist (ES) is fully trained by Empowerhouse to work in a trauma informed manner with DV victims. The ES is also fully trained in serving people with disabilities (the mission of RGI) and is able to employ strategies and tools used at RGI that fit well with our trauma survivors and those with mental health conditions, substance use, and disabling conditions. Their client centered approach is similar in style to the approach used by victim services organizations. This is a great partnership mutually benefitting DV victims and clients with disabilities and the services are perfectly placed for DV victims with disabilities. To further serve victims with disabilities, we sought funding for a part-time SOAR (SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) Advocate to support DV victims coming into shelter with chronic mental health, substance use, and other disabling conditions often stemming from multiple traumas and abuse. We recently hired her to work at shelter and train to begin serving clients. Empowerhouse successfully supported a family through the SOAR process to obtain disability benefits for a disabled child. The DV HCM, a nurse by trade, assisted this family in housing to navigate the healthcare systems and SOAR which enabled them to increase income and insurance which will have lasting impacts to stabilize this family in housing. The new SOAR Advocate will establish relationships with qualifying DV RRH households to support this population more fully and help them gain income they otherwise would not have due to their disabling conditions.

While we serve very few LGBTQ+ clients, Empowerhouse provides excellent training to new volunteers and staff to equip them with tools in working with this harder-to-serve population. Empowerhouse hosted an all day training for staff delivered by the Virginia Anti Violence Project, Richmond based serving LGBT and queer communities across Virginia.

13. **Does either the organization as a whole or this project have any rules or requirements for assistance that could act as a barrier to services (i.e. birth certificate or photo ID, residency requirement, service participation requirement, etc.)? Please list each requirement, describe the purpose of the requirement(s), and describe the efforts the organization makes to assist households in need of services that do not or cannot meet the requirement(s).** (Character Limit: 3,000)

The Empowerhouse DV shelter has a curfew of 8 PM on weeknights and 11 PM on weekend nights. This serves a safety purpose at our building where the majority of residents are seeking safe shelter from their abusive partners. It is safest for staff and residents to have a time that people are not coming and going at night and that the household is settling in; the alarm is set; and everyone is accounted for and any concerns addressed at a reasonable hour. This also assists families with children and people who work in the morning to be as least disrupted as possible. For individuals who have employment that requires a more flexible schedule or another unique situation, accommodations are made by the shelter staff to support individual needs.

No other rules or requirements are in place might be considered to act as barriers to services. The items mentioned in the question are not required by Empowerhouse, DV RRH, or the DV shelter.

14. **Provide the following data. These numbers will be used to calculate anticipated number of households served by the project.**

	Renewal	New/Expansion
Number of FTE Case Managers Dedicated to Project (could be fraction)	.90	
Ideal Caseload for 1 FTE Case Manager	14	
Average Length of Stay for Project Participants	415	
Average Financial Assistance Cost per Household (RRH/Prevention Only)	5,650	
Shelter Beds for Households without Children (Shelter Operations Only)	N/A	
Shelter Beds for Households with Children (Shelter Operations Only)	N/A	
Shelter Units for Households with Children (Shelter Operations Only)	N/A	

15. **Provide a description of project staff capacity to include experience and training. Include a list of the applicable certificates of training for direct program staff. If any staff dedicated to the project are also dedicated to other projects, explain the breakdown of hours by project. If any portion of the funding request is to pay for a new staff position, how will the agency ensure position is filled in a timely manner?** (Character Limit: 3,000)

The RRH Housing Team is lead by a full-time Housing Advocate, Daphne McIntosh. She is dedicated .9 FTE to DV RRH as the Empowerhouse Housing Advocate since 2010. Daphne helps prepare clients for housing, prepares invoices to pay rent and other financial support and continues to work with clients on setting and moving forward with their goals. She has received DHCD (housing), CoC (SPDAT Case Management), CVHC, VHA, National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) (Housing and DV) and National Center on Domestic Violence trainings (NCDV) trainings. Monica Aquino, at .75 FTE not VHSP, has been the Housing and Healthcare Case Manager (HCM) since 2018. Monica is a nurse by trade and began at Empowerhouse in 2015 as the IPV

Healthcare Coordinator. She is bilingual and bicultural and has supported many Latinx DV victims in housing in their first language. She completed the in-house 40 hour volunteer training. Since joining the housing team, she attends lease signings and meets with clients in their homes and at the office to provide supportive services. Monica works successfully with clients to develop goals, connect and utilize community resources, and develop positive relationships with clients. Monica has received trainings by NNEDV, NAEH: Frequently Asked Questions for Low-Barrier Shelters, NCDV, VHA: Recertification Training, RACSB: Mental Health First Aid Training, and CoC: Aps/Cps Training and Cover Virginia Medicaid training

HHRN

\*Addressing Homelessness: Professional Boundaries and Ethics When Working with People Who Have SMI/CODs

Connecting Systems to Break the Cycle of Youth Homelessness Building a Solid Housing Foundation with Mental Health and Substance Use Services

Casa De Esperanza:

\*Human Trafficking in the Latino LGTBQ Latinx Community

\*# Me too? Sexual Harassment and Low Wages Immigrant Workers

Daphne attended Legal Aid Works- U-Visa and VAWA training and in NNEDV's (OVW) Transitional Housing webinars:

- Sexual Violence in Black Woman
- Misuse of the internet for DV victims
- Data Breaches and Victim Service Providers
- Building and Sustaining Partnerships
- Safe Housing for Immigrants

The RGI Employment Specialist (ES)- Housing program, Paola Kery is a dedicated 1 FTE (not VHSP) member of the Empowerhouse's housing team. She is the ES since 2019. In the past she worked as a domestic violence advocate. She was an Empowerhouse volunteer before her position as ES. Paola also is bilingual and bicultural which helps with Latinx housing clients. Some highlights of her training:

- Major Clarity
- CPR/First Aid
- Tech Summit, Innovative Tech Approaches to Addressing Abuse and Safety: A Panel Discussion with Representatives From Tech Companies - Facebook, Google, Uber, Pinterest, AirBnB, Amazon NEDV Technology Summit in Domestic Violence (also attended by Monica)
- OVW TH Grant Southern Meeting-Economic Security, Databases and Confidentiality, TH models, Disaster Planning, Serving Youth, Jacksonville FL

**16. Provide evidence of organizational capacity to administer the requested funding and implement VHSP-funded activities, to include governance, leadership, experience, and financial management. Will project activities be ready to begin on July 1, 2020? (Character Limit: 3,000)**

Empowerhouse has been providing services including shelter for the past 42 years in this community as a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization since 1978. Supporting victims of domestic violence (DV) to obtain their own permanent housing with case management and rental assistance has been in place with grant funding starting in 2009. The organization currently manages 7 grants from the Federal government and State government. This includes a grant from DHCD, originally granted in the 1980s. The Federal grant is from the US Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women Transitional Housing Assistance

for Victims of DV. The other competitive grants and contracts are with the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Department of Social Services. Each of the State funding sources includes some Federal funds flowing through Virginia. The Executive Director and Assistant Director (AD) provide financial management, personnel administration, programmatic functions, and grants management. They have led the organization for 15 years. The Executive Director led another nonprofit for 5 years.

The organization has written financial procedures and internal controls to account for grant funding that support the tracking of program budgets by revenue and expenses. Treasurer's reports routinely provided to the Finance Committee and the Board. The Executive Director (ED) reviews finances monthly and supervises grant expense reports and invoicing via reviewing reports and signing invoices. Multiple individuals are involved in the handling of funds in order to provide a separation of duties across the staff using best practices to minimize or eliminate the possibility of mishandling funds. Most recently the ED and AD completed the DOJ Online Grants Financial Management Training, a 16-20 hour course. The organization has not experienced any legal proceedings or suspension of funds for any reasons by any authority. The organization has strong policies and procedures including a personnel policies manual, ethical responsibilities statement, and robust training for all staff. The board by-laws and responsibilities are routinely evaluated for updates and the board members update their conflict of interest policy annually. The Board Governance Committee led the organization through a 2018-2021 strategic planning process including a 2 day retreat and contract with a consulting firm with the support of grant funding. The organization receives an external audit annually from a reputable accounting firm, Robinson, Farmer, Cox, and Associates. The organization tracks financial transactions in accounting software in an electronic ledger and tracks grant budgets additionally in an excel grant tracking spreadsheet. The organization receives periodic monitoring visits from state funders and the Federal government's Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women which provided great verbal feedback and a written report to follow.

**17. Are there any unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants operated by the applicant or potential subrecipients? If yes, please explain. (Character Limit: 1,000)**

Yes  No

### **Attachments (each project)**

Project Policies and Procedures

Project Job Descriptions (must be housing-focused)

MOU(s) (if applicable)

For DV Renewal Projects ONLY: FRCoC Data Sheet (template provided)

### **Attachments (once per agency)**

Board of Director Listing

Organizational Chart

990 (if applicable)

Profit and Loss Statement (prior year and most recent YTD)

Spending Plan (template provided, please submit in Excel format)

Organizational Certification and Assurances (template provided)