

## 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, Ste 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 Shelter

### 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:

Renewal Amount Requested: \$44,076

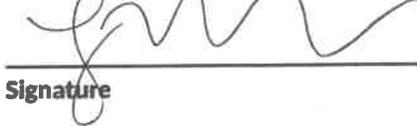
Expansion Amount Requested:

Approximate number of people this program will serve: 315

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 Shelter**

### 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	\$36,192	
Limited Support Services		
Maintenance	\$2,000	
Rent		
Security		

Supplies	\$1,000	
Utilities	\$4,884	
Other (specify)		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$44,076</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>\$44,076</b>	

	<b>Renewal Amount</b>	<b>Expansion Amount</b>
<b>Rapid Re-Housing</b>		
Housing Search & Placement		
Housing Stabilization Case Management		
Housing Stabilization Financial Assistance		
Housing Stabilization Services		
Rent Arrears		
Rent Assistance		
Service Location Costs		
Veteran Housing Stabilization Financial Assistance		
Veteran Rent Arrears		
Veteran Rent Assistance		
<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>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>\$44,076</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
	Stafford County		\$6,000
	Spotsylvania County		\$6,000

## Narrative Responses

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

Empowerhouse’s Shelter provides a safe place for individuals fleeing domestic abuse to reside short term. Domestic violence victims may be referred to Empowerhouse through the FRCoC Coordinated Entry or reach out for services directly to the Empowerhouse 24 hour hotline. As the only domestic violence (DV) shelter serving PD16, victims enter a welcoming and trauma informed facility (10,000 sq. ft.) specifically designed for their safety and well-being. A survivor and her children (318 last year) start in our crisis DV shelter which includes a bedroom or multiple in a suite with one or two bathrooms depending on family size. The immediate physical and emotional crisis needs are met through safety, secured entrances, shelter, food, children’s school stabilization (.75 FTE Children’s services), risk assessment, and safety planning including legal remedies. There is a pantry, multiple kitchens in a large dining area, suite kitchenettes with multiple food storage areas, locking physical and storage spaces, and a co-located playroom, laundry, and computer job help center. There is a secured

playground (5,000 sq. ft.) with privacy walls. Children usually exceed the adults by number in the DV shelter and last year numbered 135, just under half of the shelter population. Staff provide services throughout the building, in offices, and the victim services center. Residents are also within walking distance proximity to public transportation, groceries, and pharmacy.

Victims often enter shelter with feelings of hopelessness and little self-worth. Staff trained on the dynamics of DV and trauma informed care work with clients to help them realize they deserve a life of dignity and respect with safety and hope. Clients begin to open up and staff (.6 FTE VHSP funded case management) help them develop safety plans and identify housing goals that they can work on while in shelter.

Once a housing plan and other goals are established, personal strengths are assessed and needed supportive services or assistance is discussed. Shelter staff (1.4 FTE remaining day shelter staff) provide referrals to community resources and advocacy with those referrals as appropriate. This may include connection to resources for benefits (e.g., TANF, Childcare Support, WIC, and SSDI), documentation/IDs, health and mental health services, substance abuse services, legal services, and school systems. Residents utilize generously donated items from the community (e.g., paper goods, clothing, personal hygiene supplies, diapers, food). Empowerhouse may provide financial resources to help clients work toward their goals (e.g., medication, driver's license fees, birth certificates) to help them overcome barriers to obtaining housing and to obtain benefits. Some residents move home safely with protective orders. Shelter staff meets regularly with clients throughout their stay to support them in preparing for their chosen next steps.

- 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 shelters homeless survivors of domestic violence (DV) and their children in PD16. In 2019, Empowerhouse sheltered 286 people. In 2015, Empowerhouse sheltered 25% (272) of the total area homeless population sheltered. We expanded and relocated the Empowerhouse DV shelter in FY17 after much needed expansion of a home that had been built 30 years ago. The former shelter no longer kept pace for the number of people who needed it (per high rate of area population growth) and its heavy duty use. Children are sheltered with adults as DV victims are forced to uproot their children when confronted with violence and abuse. As with all shelters serving the FRCoC, Empowerhouse attempts to divert anyone requesting shelter from becoming homeless. Callers to the 24-hour DV hotline (1,551 calls-FY19) have a number of needs, and as part of their safety planning our DV shelter is explored. If they are seeking quick exit from the abusive situation or wish to leave their current residence, we explore all safe options including social supports of family and friends, FRCoC prevention, and seeking protective orders.

A major criterion for requesting shelter and becoming homeless for our population is leaving an unsafe DV situation. If they define their current residence as unsafe and the only step that will increase their safety is coming to the shelter, every effort is made to make shelter available. With the new shelter in place and the unit of independent shelter, we were able to receive all local requests for safe shelter last year. The average daily census was 25 and every effort is made to not exceed 30 at one time due to limited staffing capacity. When we opened the new shelter, we were able to add 1.3 new FTE staff (including overnight and after hours coverage) thanks to other funding sources to ensure 24-hour

coverage and to aid in responding to the 50% increased population. Our goal continues to be sheltering all unsafe DV survivors and their children needing it and supporting them in a trauma informed manner with the case management needed to help them move to permanent housing quickly. In FY19, 151 households (HH) (51% unaccompanied singles) resided temporarily (average 29 days) in the Empowerhouse shelter. Of the 150 HH (272) that exited the DV shelter last year, 74 households exited to permanent housing (34 of which were families with children), 190 people exited in family HH, and 62 were unknown.

Empowerhouse assists over 3,500 people each year through all of its programming and reached over 6,000 teens in area classrooms last year with education. Area law enforcement responds to over 6,500 DV calls on average annually. The shelter is serving the victims and their children who become homeless as a result of DV. The services are voluntary, trauma-informed, aim to increase safety, and seek permanent housing solutions that are safe for each sheltered victim as desired per their individualized self driven plan.

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

	Renewal	Expansion
Households with Children	50%	%
Households without Children	50%	%
<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)**

Individuals and their families in PD 16 who contact the FRCoC Coordinated Assessment Providers seeking homeless services due to domestic violence are referred by policy to Empowerhouse's Domestic Violence (DV) **Hotline** (DV Coordinated Entry Process) or Outreach Office. Calls to the Empowerhouse DV hotline (1,551) allow for direct safety planning and assessment for DV shelter. If victims are in a safe place to do so and they are seeking shelter, staff by procedure implement a Shelter Assessment to understand their immediate and ongoing safety, support system, and current living situation. A Danger Assessment is also completed which highlights several factors associated with increased risk of homicides (murders) of women in intimate partner violence relationships. Once completed, the next procedure is for Empowerhouse staff (three including at least 1 from shelter) to review the Shelter Assessment and confirm eligibility for placement. By policy, alternative housing options are discussed to help divert the individual or family from becoming homeless including whether the individual has a support system of family and friends that may be an immediate safe housing option or determining if the individual is a candidate for FRCoC prevention services. If prevention services are an option, the individual is connected with the Empowerhouse housing advocate (HA) for possible prevention referral. If it is determined that their current living situation is unsafe and their only option is to enter shelter, then Empowerhouse staff follow the procedure to place them in our DV shelter or an alternative shelter that same day.

After immediate crisis needs are addressed, by policy, the shelter director (SD) works with the client to complete a housing plan. This plan documents the client's identified housing options and helps shelter staff provide services and identify resources that can assist clients in attaining permanent housing as quickly as possible. When completing the plan, residents are first asked if they have a plan for their housing needs following their shelter stay; responses, if any, are recorded. Family and friends are also discussed as an option for permanent housing. If no options are identified, the shelter staff ask if the client would like more information on subsidized and/or Empowerhouse's Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) services. Victims interested in RRH can choose to complete the Empowerhouse Prioritization Tool (created for DV and reviewed by FRCoC) with the Empowerhouse DV Housing Advocate (HA). The assessments that demonstrate the highest barriers to obtaining housing will score highest and are prioritized for the RRH. Once housing goals are identified, the SD helps clients think through next steps they can take to reach those goals and ask what other services or assistance might benefit them in reaching those goals. Based on these conversations, the SD makes referrals and provides supportive services to assist clients with their housing goals

**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). 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 to 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)**

N/A to Shelter Applications. This is an Emergency Shelter Application.

- 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)**

Empowerhouse staff provide an extensive resource information packet about services, agencies, and resources available in the community. Once the Shelter Director (SD) works with residents to establish their goals, the shelter staff help survivors identify barriers to obtaining housing and discuss available community resources to help with goal attainment. Empowerhouse has established strong relationships with community organizations throughout PD 16 to quickly connect shelter residents as their needs are identified. Empowerhouse provides a Job Help Center at the shelter in a partnership with Rappahannock Goodwill Industries. The SD assists residents in initiating the process with local Departments of Social Services (DSS) to receive benefits (e.g., TANF, Childcare subsidies, health insurance), the Health Department (e.g., WIC), and Head Start. Clients with school age children are provided contact information for McKinney-Vento Liaisons in their school district. Shelter staff help with to minimize disruption in school attendance. For survivors involved in CPS investigations, the close connection with area DSS have helped children stay with their protective parent while in the Empowerhouse shelter where they are safe. Survivors and their families may come into the shelter with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing. The SD requests an RGI Voucher in which families can use to obtain clothing and shoes. Many with transportation barriers receive free bus passes. The FRED bus is a resource that may be new to survivors and their children, which shelter staff help them learn to navigate.

Many have barriers due to mental health and substance use. If not already connected, we help them access RACSB disability and counseling services which continue to be helpful as they move forward. The National Counseling Group provides in-home counseling to some clients. We partner with counseling services at Snowden. Clients with substance use concerns know they can seek treatment at RACSB and their Sunshine Lady House (SLH). Empowerhouse visits the SLH at least monthly to share DV information. Empowerhouse hired a SOAR worker to support DV homeless households with expedited applications for social security and disability benefits to help them have income when they are unable to work long term. Clients connect with free clinics and community health centers, e.g. Moss, Christian.

A Legal Aid Works Para-Legal visits the shelter 2X/ month for intake connecting victims with attorneys for protective orders, custody, visitation, support, immigration, and divorce proceedings. Staff help some clients open a checking account, which for some is their first exposure to writing a check. Additionally, resource information is regularly shared with clients; such as SERVE which operates a food pantry accessible to our Stafford clients or SECA, Salvation Army, and CVHC which are resources they may need to access for utility or housing funds. LUCHA Ministries operates a food pantry and immigration clinic.

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

Empowerhouse and other system partners meet frequently in various committees and work groups to help achieve a seamless system for those experiencing homelessness. Empowerhouse receives referrals to our 24 hour hotline as our coordinated entry point from system partners when the homeless individual or family is fleeing domestic violence (DV). Empowerhouse refers those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness to our system's mainstream coordinated entry line for a streamlined assessment to support them to either divert to another solution, not shelter, or to land at the appropriate shelter where there is an opening if they cannot be prevented. When we divert from shelter, we may work with a third party to explore continued support where they are staying or we may divert to prevention resources where mainstream resources may be leveraged to support the household from becoming homeless or connect them with prevention if they qualify and all other resources are exhausted. DV victims are a priority sub-population for FRCoC prevention services.

When participants leave our shelter, we share a FRCoC (at Micah) housing locator who addresses the needs of location for all of our sheltered families entering DV RRH services. The Empowerhouse housing team and supervisors attend the community prioritization meetings to be available for DV services, shared clients, to continue to update our systems processes, and to connect with homeless DV individuals and families in our partners' doors. Through these coordinated processes GWRC maintains a list across the system of the homeless needing services of housing to help us serve those with the highest barriers and help as appropriate and able. Micah runs the furniture bank in which Empowerhouse and Hope House have entered into an MOU we pay into to support the continued supply and delivery of furniture for our RRH clients.

We also support the DV homeless to connect with mainstream supports at social services for financial benefit programs, VIEW, TANF, and childcare resources. Our shelter director (SD) will explore with DV survivors as part of their safety plan whether they have interest and feel safe seeking a protective order. The SD facilitates connection to the DV RRH team to engage survivors in a barriers assessment tool to help tease out those with the highest barriers and identify who will be prioritized to meet with housing staff as a result of having the highest barriers to entering housing.

The McKinney Vento school liaisons are frequently contacted to support children with their transition into homelessness and out of it as they pass through our system. Empowerhouse trains (often via the 40 hour Empowerhouse VD training) FRCoC staff, shared staff from partner agencies to support the entire FRCoC efforts to support homeless and imminently at-risk homeless DV victims in our community for them to gain support wherever they enter our system. Empowerhouse provides annual DV training to FRCoC case managers.

**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)**

Empowerhouse identifies harder-to-serve individuals through the shelter by exploring barriers once in shelter, through outreach, and through partnerships with area community agencies such as RACSB's crisis stabilization, the Sunshine Lady House (SLH) and Snowden. At the SLH, Empowerhouse staff visit at least monthly to provide DV information to residents in a group setting. Snowden contacts Empowerhouse when they have DV survivors receiving in-patient or out-patient services where Empowerhouse goes on site to visit with their patient and coordinate services. We respond on site at the hospital to meet with individuals who disclose DV victimization. Within DV shelter population FY 19, our households experienced the following rates: substance abuse (13%), severe mental illness (24%) and other disabilities (6%).

To more fully support persons identifying as LGBTQ+ folks, Empowerhouse employees received a full day on-site training from The Virginia Anti Violence Project, a Richmond based group that serves LGBT and queer communities across Virginia. We also work closely with FAHASS as an ally in serving LGBTQ+ individuals. We partner with youth serving organizations e.g. Office on Youth, the group home, Juvenile Detention, and Juvenile based probation court services and serve young people in our teen girls groups and teen boys groups. 26 unaccompanied youth (18-24 years old) households, half of which had children, made up 17% of our sheltered households in FY19.

With our new expanded shelter, open for nearly 4 years, it is easier to accommodate larger families than it was in the past and multiple larger families at one time when DV victims request it. In the past couple of decades family size determined whether a DV victim could obtain DV shelter if she and her children were unsafe. Now, on average, each family has two children. Families of 9 were in the shelter, two families of 6, and three generation families have entered the DV shelter when unsafe due to DV. Because 4 of the 9 suites are two-bedroom or three with one or two bathrooms in each, the shelter can comfortably accommodate multiple size families easily in a clean and safe environment where food, personal items, and clothing will be provided if needed. Empowerhouse specs for the new shelter included accessibility features, one level, wheelchair accessible, a suite with pocket doors and transfer seat in tub, appliances and roll up sinks, grab bars in showers to help with the needs of fragile individuals, and equipped with devices for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Outreach partnerships include but are not limited to law enforcement handing out information and phone numbers to DV victims, healthcare providers increasingly trained with implementation of connecting DV victims with the Empowerhouse hotline or requesting on-site visit, schools where annually we talk with over 7,000 children who learn of DV services for their families, and courts where we provide in-person advocacy during DV days.

**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 the facilities enhancements in the new shelter, the partnerships with RACSB, Snowden, and youth serving organizations, and the training for Empowerhouse staff by the Virginia Anti-Violence Project, Empowerhouse has an MOU partnership with RGI which increases resources for our victims with disabilities, an expertise they provide to our partnership. To further serve victims with disabilities, we sought funding for a part-time SOAR (SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) Advocate to more fully 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 process which enabled them to increase their income and insurance, which will have lasting impacts to stabilize this family in housing. The new SOAR Advocate will establish relationships with qualifying sheltered households to support this population more fully and help them gain income they otherwise would not have due to their disabling conditions.

Empowerhouse also works to explore options that are available to serve victims who present as medically fragile. When area shelters and facilities designed for helping her medically turned down a victim who presented as not able to care for herself and identified her abusive husband as her caretaker, Empowerhouse was brought in to explore options for sheltering her. At the point of safety planning and with a window of time to escape safely, the DV Housing Advocate (HA) worked quickly to deploy financial resources to help her escape to us quickly and then to another area where she wanted to go and would be taken care of by family. The safest intervention for her was something that would allow her to leave immediately and with the shortest travel time. This was set up within hours and allowed her to travel with dignity and resources gathered that met her medical needs and diverted her from homelessness.

Operating a larger, accessible, and trauma informed shelter required increased levels of supplies to support all of the children and DV victims who come through. Empowerhouse received support from a new partner to secure a large shed where storage will accommodate the consumables that now overflow into conference room that will better be used for its original purpose of places to gather and increase support for the DV individuals and families making temporary use of the facility.

**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)**

Empowerhouse has a curfew of 8 PM on weeknights and 11 PM on weekend nights. This serves a safety purpose at our household 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)	.6	

Ideal Caseload for 1 FTE Case Manager	30
Average Length of Stay for Project Participants	29
Average Financial Assistance Cost per Household (RRH/Prevention Only)	N/A
Shelter Beds for Households without Children (Shelter Operations Only)	9
Shelter Beds for Households with Children (Shelter Operations Only)	25
Shelter Units for Households with Children (Shelter Operations Only)	7

**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)**

Rose Leone has been the Empowerhouse Domestic Violence (DV) Shelter Director since 2012. She is dedicated to the housing focused case management at .6 FTE. She previously worked at Empowerhouse beginning in 1996 as a Shelter Night Resident Manager then became a Court Advocate, ultimately holding a supervisory role and interim Executive Director position. Recent training highlights include:

- Dignity Health - Human trafficking – dispelling the myths
- Spotsylvania Sheriff Dept drug training
- Crisis intervention De-Escalation training-City Schools
- Children resiliency training-Empowerhouse
- Virginia Anti Violence Project-Serving LGBTQ+ people
- SAMSA- Trauma Informed Services
- CoC – Family SPDAT Case Management

During her time away from Empowerhouse, Rose worked for six years as trainer and helped implement coordinated response teams across the state for the statewide coalition: The Virginia Sexual and

Domestic Action Alliance in Richmond, VA. She continues to work with the Action Alliance as a trainer on DV and Crisis Intervention. Under her guidance, a new and expanded shelter facility opened in FY 2017 and she successfully transitioned residents and staff into the new environment. Rose's passion for her work can be seen in the way she approaches each new victim that has the courage to enter our doors and break free from abuse. Once clients have their immediate physical and emotional crisis needs met, she is able to help them find the strength to envision and take steps toward a life that is safe and filled with dignity, respect, safety, and hope.

All other shelter staff are not funded by DHCD are dedicated to providing domestic violence services at shelter and maintaining low barrier and safe buildings where residents have an opportunity to recover from domestic violence and find safe housing and financial stability in their future. The DV Shelter Director is supported by the Shelter Services Coordinator, Ashley Kinney, and the Children's Coordinator, recently vacant after an 8 year service by the former employee. Ashley joined Empowerhouse in 2012 as a Night Resident Manager before beginning her current position in August 2016. The shelter team has 8 part-time hourly shift Night Resident Managers who rotate to provide support to residents in the evenings, at night, and weekends. All members of the shelter team have completed Empowerhouse's 40 hour volunteer training and full-time Empowerhouse staff complete at least 20 hours of training each year focused on best practices in DV, housing, and providing domestic violence supportive services.

**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)