

Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey



Request for Proposal (RFP)

Abandoned Housing Initiative Receivership Fund

*Ensuring safer neighborhoods through blight reduction
and the creation of safe, habitable homes*

*Release Date: October 1, 2018
Response Due Date: October 26, 2018
Project Start Date: January 1, 2019
Project End Date: December 31, 2020*

Grantor: Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey
Address: One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108
Email: AbandonedHousing@state.ma.us

Utilizing funds recovered by the Office of Massachusetts Attorney General (AGO) through a [nationwide state-federal settlement over unlawful foreclosures](#), Attorney General Maura Healey is pleased to re-launch the **Abandoned Housing Initiative Receivership Fund (AHIR)**. The new phase of AHIR will provide financial assistance to receiverships aimed at revitalizing distressed neighborhoods, promoting home ownership, and combatting the negative impacts of residential property blight. Grant funds will be utilized in partnership with the AGO's [Abandoned Housing Initiative \(AHI\)](#) and municipal neighborhood revitalization projects.

Program Goals & Priorities

Applications are requested from organizations with the capacity to act as a Fund Administrator which would coordinate and oversee a regional or statewide program to administer revolving loan and grant funds to receivers. The AGO seeks to identify and approve one or two Fund Administrators. If two Fund Administrators are selected, each will administer funds in its respective region, to be determined based on the demonstrated capacity and interest of applications. Preferred regional organization would be as follows:

- West Region Counties:
 - Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Worcester;
- East Region Counties:
 - Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk.

The goal of the program is to increase the capacity of receivers to finance the rehabilitation of distressed and abandoned properties. Fund Administrators should propose an effective plan, based upon the documented need in their service area, to:

- Use the award to leverage additional funding to support the rehabilitation of abandoned residential properties and the creation of safe and affordable housing; and
- Provide services necessary to make eligible properties habitable.

Responsibilities of Fund Administrators

Regardless of award size, all Fund Administrators will be obligated to maintain tight financial controls over, and account for the expenditure of grant funds, including:

- Compiling all data relative to funded programming;
- Providing ongoing communications and quality control;
- Providing quarterly program/fiscal reports to the AGO on a timely basis;
- Completing end-of-grant program, fiscal, and utilization reports; and
- Assuring that projects funded under this program are a part of a municipally-supported and AGO approved strategic neighborhood redevelopment plan.

Consideration will be given to applicants who maintain a working knowledge of residential property receivership in Massachusetts whose programs are most likely to affect the largest number of properties. Additional consideration will be given to programs that also exhibit the

ability to obtain additional financing to expand the impact of these resources.

Awards made by Fund Administrators to receivership projects carry the following program requirements:

- \$75,000 maximum award;
- Award structured as a no or low interest loan;
- Loan terms consistent with housing rehabilitation programs typically funded with state or federal funds;
- Up to 20% of award amount may convert into a grant to the project if the property rehabilitation is economically unfeasible from the outset or if the project encounters unforeseen financial challenges during rehabilitation;
- Projects or award amounts outside AGO award requirements will obtain approval from the AGO;
- Reservation of the AGO's right to approve rehabilitation projects that fit within AHI's mission to ensure safer neighborhoods through blight reduction and the creation of safe, habitable homes and to reject projects that do not meet the above-state requirements or AHI's stated mission.

Eligibility

The following are eligible recipients to serve as the Fund Administrator:

- Massachusetts Community Development Corporations (CDC);
- Massachusetts Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI);
- Municipal Governments;
- Municipal Housing and Redevelopment Authorities; and
- Quasi-public agencies with the capacity to manage funds, significant community development experience, and a commitment to stabilizing properties and neighborhoods in their identified region.

Applicants must have met all filing requirements with the Internal Revenue Service and the [Attorney General's Non-Profit Organizations/ Public Charities Division](#), if applicable.

Funding

This RFP is subject to and contingent upon the availability of funds. It is expected that \$1.25 million will be available through AHIR for up to two Fund Administrators. Applicants for AHIR are asked to propose a grant funding level of up to \$1.25 million, commensurate with the range of activities and the proposed impact of their efforts - such as the predicted number of properties to receive services and predicted geographic reach of the program. Funds may only be used for the rehabilitation of residential dwellings or mixed use properties as determined at the discretion of the AGO to meet the overall purposes of the AHI or a municipally-supported strategic neighborhood redevelopment plan.

Fund Administrators may use no more than 7.5% of the total award towards administrative costs. Administrative costs can be claimed quarterly in equal amounts for the life of the grant. Final budgets will be determined by the AGO in its sole discretion. Fund amounts may be higher

or lower than those proposed by the applicant.

Duration

Grants will be awarded for two years from the date of award. Unexpended funds remaining at the end of the grant term must be returned to the AGO.

Money that is encumbered by the Fund Administrator for a project prior to the end of grant term need not be returned to the AGO at the end of the grant term. Similarly, loans extended during the grant period need not be returned to the AGO at the end of the grant term. Rather, such funds will be considered “trailing funds” and shall be returned either on the immediate repayment of an individual project loan to the Fund Administrator or on a biannual schedule agreed upon with the AGO. Any trailing funds must be documented and submitted with an estimated repayment schedule upon the expiration of AHIR.

The Fund Administrator is responsible for prompt payment of any trailing funds and must notify the AGO of the payment amount, payment type (electronic funds transfer or check), and payment date at least one business day ahead of the transaction.

Submission Instructions

- Proposals must be delivered electronically through the AGO’s online grant application process by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 26, 2018.
- Interested applicants may access the application here: <https://www.mass.gov/grant-opportunities>.
- Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.
- Applications will not be accepted in any other format.
- New applicants will be asked to create a free online account. Any applicant that has applied for any grant using the online grant management system may log into its existing account.
- Once applicants have started an application, the application may be saved and returned to later.
- Confirmation of Receipt: Applicants typically receive an email confirmation within 48 business hours; if one is not received please call 617-963-2291 for further instructions and assistance.

Evaluation

Any application that does not meet the submission requirements may be considered non-responsive and may be disqualified without further evaluation. All funding decisions and amounts of funding will be made at the sole discretion of the AGO. Applicants may receive no funding or less funding than requested. Some of the criteria utilized in the selection process include:

- Applicant’s ability to provide documented data-driven evidence of need;
- Geographic diversity of applicant (intention is to provide resources across the state or at least, a wide region within the state).

Questions

Programmatic questions regarding this RFP may be submitted to AbandonedHousing@state.ma.us, only until 5:00 p.m. on October 17, 2018. All other questions may be submitted to agogrants@state.ma.us. When submitting your question(s), please include "Abandoned Housing Program 2019" in the email subject line. Questions received and answers provided regarding this RFP will be posted on the AGO's website here: <https://www.mass.gov/grant-opportunities>.

Reasonable Accommodation

Applicants that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of the RFP information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to agogrants@state.ma.us, no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 12, 2018.

Required Commonwealth contract documents for successful grantees

These documents are listed for informational purposes and should not be submitted with the grant application. Successful applicants will be required to complete these documents within the deadline established at the time of the notification of grant award. No money will be disbursed unless the necessary documents are submitted by the deadlines established.

- Standard Contract Form
- Scope of Services Agreement
- Commonwealth Terms and Conditions
- Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing
- Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (W-9)
- Electronic Funds Transfer Form. (No funds will be distributed except through EFT.)

The AGO expects to award funds by January 1, 2019 to successful applicants who have completed and returned all required grant contract documents with original ink signatures.

Public Records

All responses and information submitted in response to this RFP are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, § 10, and M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 26. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFP are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, § 10, and c. 4, § 7, cl. 26. Applicants should not include any protected personal information.

Updates to this RFP

Any changes/corrections to any part to this RFP will be posted on <https://www.mass.gov/grant-opportunities>. It is the applicant's responsibility to check this web page frequently for any updates.