



City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency

Sean M. Ryan, Chairman
901 City Hall, 65 Niagara Square
Buffalo, New York 14202-3376
716-851-2872



PUBLIC SERVICE APPLICATION HANDBOOK

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA)

PROGRAM YEAR 52
October 1, 2026- September 30, 2027

c/o Department of Community Services
Contract Administration Unit
1701 City Hall
Program Managers:

Rebecca Harris
Human Resources Planner
(716) 851-4135
rharris@buffalony.gov

Jessica Starks
Human Resources Planner
(716) 851-5905
jstarks@buffalony.gov

Clare Corbett
Human Resources Planner
(716) 851-4357
ccorbett@buffalony.gov

Sue Lumadue
Sr. Human Resource Planner
(716) 851-5531
slumadue@buffalony.gov



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I. KEY DATES

- April 17, 2026.....CDBG, ESG, HOPWA Applications Released
- April 24, 2026.....CDBG, ESG, HOPWA Application Virtual Workshop
- May 8, 2026.....All Applications due by email
- August 3rd to August 28th.....Award Letters Distributed
- October 1st, 2026.....Entitlement Grant Contract Year begins

II. INSTRUCTIONS

1. Eligibility

HUD Entitlement Grants are annually awarded to the City of Buffalo with amounts determined by the City of Buffalo's population statistics using a formula developed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (BURA), acting as subrecipient to the City of Buffalo, is responsible for administering three of these grants: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG - Public Services), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS(HOPWA).

Only non-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporations are eligible for funding. Unincorporated entities such as Block Clubs are required to partner with an eligible non-for-profit organization to be considered for funding. An organization may be ineligible if it:

- Conducts only religious services, or requires program participants to join in religious activities;
- Conducts political activities;
- Operates a program that does not benefit City or Buffalo residents;
- Requests funding for a facility located outside the City of Buffalo; or
- Requests "start-up funding" for a new organization; total program funding; or in-direct costs.

2. Funding Allocations

The City of Buffalo program year for all HUD Entitlement Grants will run from October 1, 2026, to September 30, 2027.



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BURA will be notified of the AAP Year 2026-2027 allocations. Once 2026-2027 allocations are confirmed, these figures will be made public. CDBG and ESG allocations have remained relatively consistent over the last 2 years, while HOPWA funding has seen a slight increase. An estimation of 2026-2027 allocations can be found below:

CDBG Public Services 2026-2027 Allocation: Estimation \$2 million
ESG 2026-2027 Allocation: Estimation \$1.1 million
HOPWA 2026-2027 Allocation: Estimation \$1 million

Upon receiving notification from HUD regarding 2026-2027 allocations, BURA and Office of Contract Administration will determine allocations. Due to the limitations in funding, all applicants may not be awarded funding or awarded the amount requested. BURA and the Office of Contract Administration use various methods to determine how these applicants are selected. The quality of the application is one of the most critical factors to being considered- especially for new applicants. We highly recommend that you answer all questions fully and succinctly for maximum eligibility. All applications will be evaluated and scored based on the required criteria of the application

Please note: BURA or the City will not reimburse agencies for costs involved in applying for funding, and no activities can begin until an Award Letter has been issued and a Sub-Grantee Agreement is fully executed.

3. Completing the Application

All documents for the CDBG, ESG, and HOPWA Applications will be in either Adobe PDF and/or Microsoft Excel formats. These must be completed in these programs. The PDF files are designed to be used only by Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free PDF Reader which includes features which make it easier for applicants to complete the application. The PDF Application files include character limits, formulas, and other functions which are only functional when using Adobe Acrobat Reader. Reminder: This is a free software program. You do not need to purchase the Pro version to complete the Applications.

Many organizations may use a third-party PDF reader which allows other functions to be used without having to purchase the Adobe Acrobat Pro license. However, these third-party applications are not compatible with the functions implemented by Adobe. Most computers have Adobe Acrobat Reader already installed. When opening the PDF file, right-click the icon, and select "Open with" which will give you a few options to open the file with. Select "Adobe Acrobat Reader." If you do not see this option, you may have to download the free app from their website. The link can be found here: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>



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If you are still having issues completing this application, please contact contractadministration@buffalony.gov for assistance.

4. Submitting the Application

One copy of the checklist and complete application must be sent and received via email no later than May 8th, 2026, at 4pm. As a reminder, NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Please email the checklist and application to: contractadministration@buffalony.gov. **Please put your agency's name and the Entitlement Grant program in which you are applying in the subject line.**

You should expect an email confirmation upon receipt of the application, so if you do not receive one reach out to contractadministration@buffalony.gov for confirmation.

If selected for funding, please note there may be additional documentation requested.

5. Contract Agreements

If awarded funding, the applicant agrees to inform BURA and their program managers when the following occur:

- The organization has staff vacancies for a duration of time that could affect the projected number of participants served or result in HUD funds not being fully expended.
- New staff are hired into the program, followed by an updated Employee Certification form.
- There are changes to an existing project that are significantly different than what the funds were originally approved for, including any budget amendments/modifications submitted.
- There is an increase/decrease of other funding to the project that could affect the projected number of participants served, services provided, ability to meet matching or leveraging requirements, etc.
- As a Subrecipient of HUD funding, your agency is required to comply with all cross-cutting federal and state requirements. If contracted, you are responsible for ensuring your agency is compliant.
- There is no set date for when funds will be available to agencies. The contracting process can take a while, so it is expected that an agency will be able to support themselves and begin to provide services at the beginning of the contract year on October 1st until funds become available.



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III. CDBG PUBLIC SERVICES – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

1. Grant Summary

CDBG is designed to benefit low to moderate income (LMI) persons or areas. Agencies receiving CDBG funding are required to report on the income, race, ethnicity, age, and gender of those persons assisted.

The City of Buffalo is required to submit a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD that documents progress made in carrying out its Annual Action Plan. Each agency will need to provide reasonable estimates on the number of individuals utilizing their program on a regular basis and report on their actual numbers throughout the year.

Please note that persons receiving newsletters, pamphlets, or flyers, or who attend programs of a general nature open to the public, distributed to the general public, cannot be counted as a unit of service. A unit of service should include only people who regularly participate and benefit from your structured program(s). Erie County Nutrition provides support for the Senior Citizen Lunch program, and therefore, should not be counted as a CDBG activity, but rather as a support. The same is true for food distributions of bread and groceries, etc., and similar support services provided by another organization.

2. Eligible Activities

Please refer to the CDBG General Application for a list of eligible services for Year 52. In most cases, eligible CDBG Public Services can include, but are not limited to:

- **Child Care**
- **Counseling and Testing**
- **Technology access**
- **Job Training**
- **Crime Prevention**
- **Drug Use Counseling and Treatment**
- **Education**
- **Health and Wellness**
- **Fair Housing and Homeownership Counseling**
- **Recreation for Youth and Senior Citizens**
- **Education Services for Youth, Seniors**
- **Re-entry programs**
- **Chronic Disease Prevention**
- **Services for the Homeless**



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CDBG funding cannot be used for:

- Equipment and furnishings, unless required to carry out a CDBG-assisted activity. (i.e. laptops, computers, vans, appliances, etc. are ineligible).
- Operations and maintenance expenses with some exceptions (See Laws and Regulations in Resources).
- Political activities, including the use of facilities or equipment for political purposes; or to engage in partisan political activities such as candidate forums, voter transportation, or voter registration.
- Purchasing food and direct marketing of activities.

An activity or project must meet one of HUD's National Objectives for benefiting LMI (Low to Moderate Income) Community Members.

- i. Low and Moderate Area (LMA) Benefit Activities: These are available to all residents of a particular area, where at least 51 percent of the residents are LMI, and the area is primarily residential.
- ii. Limited Clientele Activities (LMC): These are available to a limited clientele; at least 51 percent are low or moderate-income. To qualify under this requirement, the activity must serve one of the following:
 - Groups presumed by HUD to be principally low and moderate income such as abused children, battered spouses, elderly, severely disabled adults, homeless persons, illiterate adults, migrant farm workers, or persons living with AIDS (limited clientele - presumed benefit).
 - The activity requires information be documented on family size and income to document that at least 51% of clientele are persons whose family income does not exceed HUD's Section 8 Low and Moderate Income Guidelines.
 - The activity has income eligibility requirements that limit the activity exclusively to low and moderate income Community Members.
 - Be of such a nature and in such a location that it may be concluded that the activity's clientele will primarily be low and moderate-income Community Members.



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3. Resources

The following information is also available on the web:

Basically CDBG for Entitlement

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/19/basically-cdbg-training-guidebook-and-slides/>

Guide to National Objectives and Eligible Activities for CDBG Entitlement Communities

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/89/community-development-block-grant-program-cdbg-guide-to-national-objectives-and-eligible-activities-for-entitlement-communities/>

CDBG Program Laws and Regulations

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/cdbg-laws-and-regulations/>

Income Limits

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>

CDBG Low-Mod Income Data

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/cdbg-low-moderate-income-data/>

4. Application Contents

There are five components (A-E) to the CDBG Application:

- A. The CDBG 2026-2027 (52) Grant Application
- B. CDBG Activities and Schedules Form
- C. CDBG Budget Spreadsheet
- D. Annual Agency Income Spreadsheet
- E. Other Attachments

Submissions must be prepared on the recommended PDF fillable form (see application for details).

Please note, if you are awarded funding, the application you submit will be included in your contract. This application will be used to ensure you remain compliant with what you committed to in your request for funding. Therefore, be reasonable with how many people you plan on serving, how you will track and measure outcomes, and other commitments you are promising in your application. By not completing some of these aspects of your contracts, you are non-compliant and at risk of losing future funding opportunities through CDBG grants with BURA and the City. Lastly, if you are awarded a contract with BURA,



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BURA and program managers may request a meeting before the contract year begins to negotiate certain aspects of your application (numbers served, goals, etc.).

A. The CDBG General Contract

The CDBG Year 2026-2027 (52) grant application contains information about the agency, the Board of Directors, the list of required attachments, and signatures. The CDBG General Application asks for a selection of activities that your agency is applying to fund. These

activities are broken into eight categories based off of the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): Economic Stability (Economic), Education Access and Quality (Education), Health

Care Access and Quality (Health), Neighborhood and Built Environment (Neighborhood), and Social and Community Context (Social). Each CDBG activity ties back to a SDOH. These eight CDBG activities are categorized under Youth Services, Senior Services, Workforce Development, Health Services, legal Services, Transportation Services, Fair Housing, and Other Public Services.

The application must be signed by either the Board Officer, President, or the Executive Director of the organization. There is an option for the governing board to authorize the Executive Director, CEO, or CFO to negotiate with BURA and sign documents on behalf of the organization. In this case, a letter authorizing the staff member to sign documentation must be signed by the Board President and included with the application.

B. CDBG Activities and Schedules Form

The second component of the application consists of all the details related to the activities you would be offering if awarded funding for next year. An agency may select up to no more than three separate activities for their contract. However, each activity must have its own complete set of Activities and Schedules pages. Therefore, if you select three activities in the CDBG General Application, you must complete and fill out three separate CDBG Activity Schedule pages for each one. A listing of CDBG activities can be found on the "CDBG Public Services Activity" document included with the application.

The Activities and Schedules portion of the CDBG application allows agencies much more freedom in how they design their CDBG-funded programs. All selectable activities will fall under any of the eight activities mentioned in section "A". Activities follow the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) which are proven to lead to desirable outcomes for individuals in the community. More importantly, these activities are much more varied and expansive, allowing agencies to create more accessible and creative programming opportunities.



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The CDBG grant is the most competitive grant. In order to accommodate the influx of applicants, full funding is not guaranteed, and such your activities may be funded in full or in part. Therefore, we ask that you provide costs for each activity.

Measures and Outcomes

One of the most critical sections on this component is measures and outcomes, where you explain the activity and how you will measure its success. You will need to provide goals that reflect the activity you plan to execute. For example, if you selected, "Employment and Job Skill Development," your goal might look like "Assist in getting 20 clients hired for a job in manufacturing by the end of the contract year." We recommend you refer to the acronym, S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely) for developing your goal.

C. CDBG Budget Spreadsheet

The third component of the application is the CDBG Budget. This budget is the total amount you are seeking- including all activities you have selected. For example, if you selected two activities asking for \$10,000 each, then your CDBG budget will total up to \$20,000.

Administrative funds Include:

- Executive Staff and Administrative/Operations Staff
- Unallocated proportion of Operational Expenses
- Insurance, janitorial needs, security

Program Funds Include:

- Direct Program Staff
- Materials and Supplies related to program.

Costs must be reasonable and related to the activity you are proposing. Expenses are separated in the following budget categories:

- Salaries
- Administrative expenses (should calculated at no more than 20% and reported in Other Services)
- Fringe benefits (up to 30% of their salary budget)
- Utilities
- Travel
- Materials and Supplies
- Other Services, including insurance, rent and subcontracted services.
- Capital expenditures or purchase of equipment are not reimbursable in the City of Buffalo HUD funded Public Services programs.



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The full budget spreadsheet will need to be completed: the budget item, detail description, requested CDBG, other funding, and total. The "Requested CDBG" column represents the amount of CDBG funds you are requesting per line. The "Other Funding" column on the budget sheet is used to identify the expenses that are covered by your match (for ESG applications), or other funds leveraged towards the program you are seeking to implement. This "Other Funding" column on the budget spreadsheet will consist of either other grant funds or unrestricted funds provided by your agency. The last "Total" column will total the amounts from the "Requested CDBG" and "Other Funding" columns.

D. Annual Agency Income Spreadsheet

The fourth component of the application is the annual agency income spreadsheet. This spreadsheet indicates other funds you have leveraged towards the activities you are seeking funding for. CDBG funds may take time to become available to agencies; therefore, BURA needs to ensure that the agency can support itself and provide services at the beginning of the contract year. Agencies should not wholly rely on CDBG funds to support their programs and agency.

E. Other Attachments

The last component of the CDBG application consists of all other attachments required for review. The list of attachments needed can be found on pages 10 of the CDBG 2026-2027 grant application. You are required to provide copies of each document needed which is broken down on page 10 as well.



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IV. ESG- EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS

1. Grant Summary

The Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funding is used to assist Community Members who experience a housing crisis (at-risk of homelessness) or are experiencing literal homelessness. ESG funding is designed to help Community Members quickly regain stability through permanent housing and supportive services. Individuals and families served through ESG must fall into one of the categories of homelessness as described by HUD; and support documentation must be kept on file proving an individual is either homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.

Subrecipients rewarded with ESG funds are required to participate in CE (Coordinated Entry) and HMIS (Homeless Management Information System). Coordinated Entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.

The City of Buffalo is required to submit a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD that documents progress made in carrying out its Annual Action Plan. Each agency will need to provide reasonable estimates on the number of individuals utilizing their program on a regular basis and report on their actual numbers throughout the year. This will require uploading all HMIS data for your program into the HUD SAGE system. More information will be provided when necessary.

2. Eligible Activities

The ESG program provides funding to:

- Engage homeless individuals and families living on the street.
- Improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families.
- Help operate these shelters.
- Provide essential services to shelter residents.
- Rapidly rehouse homeless individuals and families.
- Maintain the HMIS system; and
- Prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.



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For housing activities, you will need to estimate how many persons and households your program will serve. For other activities, you will need to provide the number of special population persons who will be assisted. The City of Buffalo, through BURA, does not fund all HUD-eligible activities.

Please note, all ESG related activities are entered into HMIS and awarded entities are required to participate in entering all elemental and universal data. Furthermore, all agencies applying for ESG funding must currently, or agree to use HMIS and all agencies must use the Coordinated Entry system.

HMIS funding is provided only to the Homeless Alliance of WNY, the Continuum of Care (CoC) lead, for licensing and management of HMIS. However, any staff costs that your agency incurs entering client data into HMIS are ESG eligible and should be included under program delivery charges. This also includes preparing the coordinated entry assessments and related staff time required.

Eligible Services for ESG Can Include:

- Case Management
- Emergency Shelter
- Essential Services
- Financial Assistance
- HMIS
- Rapid Re-housing
- Rental Assistance
- Services for Special Populations
- Shelter Operations
- Street Outreach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Transportation

3. Resources

ESG Program Resources

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/guides/#tools-and-guidance>

ESG Requirements

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/esg-requirements/>

ESG Law, Regulations, and Notices

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/esg-law-regulations-and-notices/>

Coordinated Entry Policy Brief

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/coordinated-entry-management-and-data-guide.pdf>

4. Application Contents



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There are four components (A-D) to the ESG application:

- A. ESG Year 2026-2027 Grant Application
- B. ESG Budget and Match Workbook
- C. ESG Activity Workbook
- D. Other Attachments

Submissions must be prepared on the recommended PDF fillable form (see application for details).

Please note, if you are awarded funding, the application you submit will be included in your contract. This application will be used to ensure you remain compliant with what you committed to in your request for funding. Therefore, be reasonable with how many people you plan on serving, how you will track and measure outcomes, and other commitments you are promising in your application. By not completing some of these aspects of your contracts, you are non-compliant and at risk of losing future funding opportunities through ESG grants with BURA and the City. Lastly, if you are awarded a contract with BURA, BURA and program managers may request a meeting before the contract year begins to negotiate certain aspects of your application (numbers served, goals, etc.).

A. ESG Year 2026-2027 Grant Application

The ESG Year 2026-2027 (52) grant application contains information about the agency, the Board of Directors, the list of required attachments, and signatures. The application also consists of details related to the activities you would be offering if awarded funding for next year. The application must be signed by either the Board Officer, President, or the Executive Director of the organization. There is an option for the governing board to authorize the Executive Director, CEO, or CFO to negotiate with BURA and sign documents on behalf of the organization. In this case, a letter authorizing the staff member to sign documentation must be signed by the Board President and included with the application.

B. ESG Budget and Match Workbook

The second component of the application is the ESG Budget Spreadsheet. Here, you will list each expense covered in your proposed plan. Costs must be reasonable and related to the activity you are proposing. Expenses are separated in the following budget categories:

- Salaries
- Administrative expenses (should be kept to a minimum and cannot exceed 7.5%)
- Fringe Benefits
- Utilities
- Travel
- Materials and Supplies



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- Other Services, including insurance, rent and subcontracted services.

Capital expenditures or purchase of equipment are not reimbursable in this ESG program.

Match Requirement

Emergency Solutions Grants funding requires a \$1 for \$1 match, which must be identified in your budget. Please use the "Other Funding" column on the budget sheet to identify the expenses that are covered by your match and/or additional resources which exceed the match requirement. The "Other Funding" column on the budget spreadsheet must be equal to or greater than your match. A separate match source spreadsheet must also be completed.

C. Other Attachments

The last component of the ESG application consists of all other attachments required for review. The list of attachments needed can be found in the ESG General Application. You are required to provide copies for each documentation needed.



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V. HOPWA GRANT- HOUSING OPPORTUNITES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS

1. Grant Summary

The HOPWA grant is used to assist Community Members who have an HIV/AIDS diagnosis with an income at or below the 80% median (as determined by HUD) and help them quickly regain stability through permanent housing and supportive services.

Please note, HOPWA requires that client data is entered into HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) and awarded entities must participate in the process. All agencies applying for HOPWA funding must currently or agree to use HMIS. Entities must also keep documentation on clients on file and ensure that all information is HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliant.

HMIS funding is provided only to the Homeless Alliance of WNY for licensing and management of HMIS. However, any staff costs that your agency incur when entering client data into HMIS are HOPWA eligible and should be included under program delivery charges.

The City of Buffalo is required to submit a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD that documents progress made in carrying out its Annual Action Plan. Each agency will need to provide reasonable estimates on the number of individuals utilizing their program on a regular basis and report on their actual numbers throughout the year.

2. Eligible Activities

HOPWA funds may be used to assist various forms of housing designed to prevent homelessness including emergency housing, shared housing arrangements, apartments, single room occupancy (SRO) dwellings, and community residences.

An essential component in providing housing assistance for Special Needs Population is the coordination and delivery of support services. Consequently, HOPWA funds also may be used for services including (but not limited to) assessment and case management, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, nutritional services, job training and placement assistance, and assistance with daily living.

Eligible services for HOPWA may include:

- Housing Information Services
- Operating Costs for Housing
- Permanent Housing Placement



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- Project/Tenant-Based Rental Assistant
- Resource Identification
- Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility
- Supportive Services

3. Resources

HOPWA Program Resources

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/>

HOPWA Eligibility Requirements

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/hopwa-eligibility-requirements/>

HOPWA Law, Regulations, and Notices

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/hopwa-law-regulations-and-notices/>

4. Application Contents

There are three components (A-C) to the HOPWA application:

- A. HOPWA Year 2026-2027 Grant Application
- B. HOPWA Budget Spreadsheet
- C. Other Attachments

Submissions must be prepared on the recommended PDF fillable form (see application for details).

Please note, if you are awarded funding, the application you submit will be included in your contract. This application will be used to ensure you remain compliant with what you committed to in your request for funding. Therefore, be reasonable with how many people you plan on serving, how you will track and measure outcomes, and other commitments you are promising in your application. By not completing some of these aspects of your contracts, you are non-compliant and at risk of losing future funding opportunities through HOPWA grants with BURA and the City. Lastly, if you are awarded a contract with BURA, BURA and program managers may request a meeting before the contract year begins to negotiate certain aspects of your application (numbers served, goals, etc.).

A. HOPWA Year 2026-2027 Grant Application

The HOPWA Year 2026-2027 (52) grant application contains information about the agency, the Board of Directors, the list of required attachments, and signatures. The application



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also consists of details related to the activities you would be offering if awarded funding for next year. The application must be signed by either the Board Officer, President, or the Executive Director of the organization. There is an option for the governing board to authorize the Executive Director, CEO, or CFO to negotiate with BURA and sign documents on behalf of the organization. In this case, a letter authorizing the staff member to sign documentation must be signed by the Board President and included with the application.

B. HOPWA Budget Spreadsheet

The second component of the application is the HOPWA Budget Spreadsheet. Here, you will list each expense covered in your proposed plan. Costs must be reasonable and related to the activity you are proposing. Expenses are separated in the following budget categories:

- Salaries
- Administrative expenses (should be kept to a minimum and cannot exceed 7%)
- Fringe Benefits
- Utilities
- Travel
- Materials and Supplies
- Other Services, including insurance, rent and subcontracted services.

Capital expenditures or purchase of equipment are not reimbursable in this HOPWA program.

The full budget spreadsheet will need to be completed: the Budget Item, Detail Description, Project Code, HOPWA Requested Budget, HOPWA Matching Funds, and Total. The "HOPWA Requested Budget" column represents the amount of HOPWA funds you are requesting per line. The "HOPWA Matching Funds" column on the budget sheet is used to identify the expenses that are covered by other funds leveraged towards the program you are seeking to implement. This "HOPWA Matching Funds" column on the budget spreadsheet will consist of either other grant funds or unrestricted funds provided by your agency. The "Total" column will total up the amounts from the "HOPWA Requested Budget" and "HOPWA Matching Funds" columns.

C. Other Attachments

The last component of the HOPWA application consists of all other attachments required for review. The list of attachments can be found in the HOPWA Year 2026-2027 grant application. You are required to provide copies for each document needed.