

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES of the Housing and Homeless Council**

### **Percentage of Distribution of Funds**

All of the Homeless Offering contributions are to be distributed as grants. When making grants, at least seventy percent (70%) of the funds available shall be used for Capital Expenses, defined as construction and property acquisition and/or renovations and furnishing of shelters (and other places of ministry with very poor or homeless persons), transitional housing, single-room-occupancy housing, rental units, owner-occupied homes, special financing programs, emergency grants for such projects, all of which directly provide temporary or permanent housing or other ministry to homeless or poor persons.

Up to thirty percent (30%) of the remaining funds received shall be available for Operating Expenses, defined as programs and other operating services that meet the needs of low-income or homeless persons.

In June 2005 the Annual Conference approved a provision that if requests for capital funds total less than 70% of the funds available, more than 30% will be available for operating grants.

### **Grant Funding Periods**

Grant applications are due:

- March 1 with notification of Council's decision on or about June 1
- September 1 with notification of Council's decision on or about Dec. 1

If the application deadline falls on a holiday or a weekend, the deadline will be the first business day after these dates.

Grant applications for emergency funding between Council meetings are considered and acted on by the Executive Committee of the Council.

Beginning with the spring 2004 cycle, application forms and instructions are available from the Housing and Homeless Council's website. The forms will not be mailed out unless an applicant requests a hard copy. (11/03)

Grant applications that are deferred at a May or November meeting (because of the need for more information, etc.) may be considered at a Council meeting other than the May or November meetings. Grant applications may also be deferred because of a lack of funds available in the Housing Trust Fund.

### **Priority Funding**

Priority is given to United Methodist applications. It is also suggested that priority be give to those agencies that have strong United Methodist association. (9/96)

Priority is given to projects that address permanent and transitional housing

Emphasis is placed on distributing grant monies across the 12 districts of the Conference.

### **Processing of Grant Applications**

An on-site visit is made to each applying agency by one or two members of the Housing and Homeless Council, who fill out an evaluation form. We recommend (9/96) that the designated Council members visit a site together and come back with a recommendation of whether or not to fund the applicant's request. When possible, visits are made by Council members who are in the same district as the applying agency. On-site visits for

the purpose of evaluation cannot be made by Council members who are also board members or staff members of the applying agencies.

Beginning with the spring 2004 grant cycle, each application requires an “endorsing United Methodist Church”. The endorsing church completes a form indicating the church’s involvement in the program. If the applicant is a United Methodist Church, then that church will complete the endorsing church form. The district for the applicant will be the endorsing church’s district. There is room on the form for listing up to five additional United Methodist churches involved with the project. (11/03)

Since priority is given for projects with a high level of United Methodist involvement, on-site visitors are encouraged to probe this question more deeply, asking for specific involvement—what exact financial and/or volunteer commitment has been made by the churches/groups listed. (9/00)

Applications for grants are considered by the whole Council at the May and November meetings. The applying agencies are “represented” by the on-site visitors who did the evaluation report.

After the May and November meetings, applicants are notified of the action of the Council by letter. Letters announcing the awarding of a grant should indicate how the funds are to be used (as stated in the grant application) and any contingencies of the grant. According to North Georgia Conference accounting practices, the checks are mailed out separately from the Treasurer’s Office. Those agencies receiving funds are instructed to complete a report as to the use of funds by an assigned date. No future grant applications will be accepted from an agency who has not expended their previously awarded funds. If an application was not funded, a letter is sent to the applicant stating why the funds were not granted. If an application is deferred, a letter is sent detailing the reasons for deferral and requesting any additional information, if needed.

#### **Funding—Miscellaneous Notes**

- Previous funding from the Housing and Homeless Council does not help nor exclude an applicant.
- Any church/agency/ministry may receive only one grant during a 12-month period. (11/03)
- A large organization which operates ministries in several distinct communities may submit applications for the projects in different communities during the same year.
- Capital Grants should not exceed \$10,000. Operating Grants should not exceed \$2,500, and Habitat for Humanity Grants should not exceed \$5,000. (5/06)
- In the absence of special circumstances, such as new construction or the acquisition of new equipment, the Council will not usually approve multiple capital grant requests for the same project or program. However, each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis. (5/00)
- On-site visitors are not to make any commitments to grant applicants regarding the likelihood or amount of grant funds the applicant may or may not receive. (9/00)
- Regarding grant requests for building Habitat for Humanity homes, the Housing and Homeless Council should consider only those grant applications that come from a United Methodist Church or a build that includes at least one United Methodist Church. (9/00)

**Endowment Fund**

The permanent endowment portion of the overall Housing Trust Fund should be referred to as the *Endowment Fund*, distinguishing it from the grant distribution portion of the Housing Trust Fund. (9/93)

As approved by the 1997 Annual Conference, a part of the operating expenses of the Housing and Homeless Council may come from earnings derived from the permanent endowment fund, when necessary. Enactment of this provision will occasion some adjustment in the proportions in the earlier Housing Trust Fund Policies. (See 1997 Annual Conference Journal.)

As approved by the 2005 Annual Conference, when the Endowment Fund reaches one million dollars, 100% of Homeless Offering funds received shall be available for grants. The Endowment Fund reached \$1,000,000 in 2005. 100% of the Homeless Offering funds are available for grants.

The Council on Finance and Administration took the Housing and Homeless Council's administrative budget out of the North Georgia Conference Budget in 2008, giving a \$30,000 grant in 2008. Beginning in 2009, all or most of the administrative expenses of the Housing and Homeless Council are to be covered by the endowment fund.

To determine how much of the Endowment Fund is available for administrative expenses, each year the amount will be up to five percent (5%) of the average of the Endowment on December 31 for the previous three years.

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