

**Rental Assistance for Victims - Empowering Choice Housing Program (EHP)**

**FY2016 Request: \$2,000,000**  
**Reference No: AMD 54796**

**AP/AL:** Appropriation

**Project Type:** Life / Health / Safety

**Category:** Public Protection

**Location:** Statewide

**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)

**Impact House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)

**Contact:** Kelly Howell

**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2015 - 06/30/2020

**Contact Phone:** (907)269-5591

**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

This project will provide a referral-based transitional housing assistance program designed to meet the housing needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will grant to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) permanent fund dividends that would have been paid to individuals who were sentenced or incarcerated under AS 43.23.005(d) as allowed under AS 43.23.028(a)(5)(B) and AS 43.23.028(b)(2).

<b>Funding:</b>	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	Total
PFD Crim	\$2,000,000						\$2,000,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Prior Funding History / Additional Information:**

Sec1 Ch18 SLA2014 P61 L25 SB119 \$2,000,000  
 Sec1 Ch16 SLA2013 P76 L25 SB18 \$1,500,000  
 Sec1 Ch17 SLA2012 P130 L14 SB160 \$1,328,400

Prior year general fund appropriations to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

**Project Description/Justification:**

The Empowering Choice Housing Program (EHP) is a referral-based, transitional rental assistance program designed to meet the housing needs of families displaced due to domestic violence and sexual assault. AHFC will administer project funds through the same mechanism and locations as the federal Housing Choice Voucher program along with up to one million additional federal dollars. The EHP is a partnership program with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA), and the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA), whereby AHFC provides transitional tenant-based rental assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, whose primary mission is to represent victim services programs throughout the state that provide services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, shall assist those programs in providing referrals for program participants based on their expertise to determine displacement due to domestic violence or sexual assault.

A primary duty of the CDVSA is to implement, maintain, and monitor domestic violence and sexual assault crisis intervention and prevention programs in consultation with authorities in the field. CDVSA approved programs shall provide referrals of program participants to AHFC (DVSA programs).

Family income must be at or below 50 percent of the area median income. Income limits are set by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are based on family size and the community where the family resides. EHP recipients must be referred to AHFC by an approved domestic violence and sexual assault program named in the memorandum of understanding. While participating in EHP, families may still submit an application for any AHFC program with an open waiting list.

As vouchers become available, families are invited to a briefing session, provided detailed information about the program, and issued a voucher. Rental assistance is limited to 36 months. To receive voucher subsidy, a unit's rent must be reasonable. The unit must also pass a federal housing quality standards inspection. Landlords may use their own leases, and AHFC requires an initial lease term of one year. Once a family finds and leases an AHFC-approved rental unit, AHFC breaks the rent into a family portion and a subsidy portion. Families pay their portion of the rent directly to their landlord. AHFC pays the subsidy portion directly to the landlord.

In order to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, data monitoring is ongoing and continuing. Data to be monitored includes, but is not limited to, the number of vouchers issued in each participating community, number of vouchers in shopping status, number of vouchers leased, number of available vouchers in each participating community and the average housing assistance payments for each participating community.