



City of Lawrence

2013 Social Service Funding Application – Non-Alcohol Funds

Applications for 2013 funding must be complete and submitted electronically to the City Manager's Office at ctoomay@lawrenceks.org by 5:00 pm on Friday, May 4, 2012.

General Information: Each year, the City Commission considers requests for the allocation of dollars to a number of agencies that provide services benefiting the Lawrence community. These funds are to be used pursuant to the goals of the City Commission, which can be found below:

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Promoting the economic development of Lawrence to provide varied work and business opportunities.
- **PLANNED GROWTH:** Encouraging growth that protects our environment, neighborhoods, and cultural features while benefiting all of our citizens.
- **COMMUNITY BUILDING:** Creating social capital and celebrating our heritage.
- **ENVIRONMENT ISSUES:** Integrating the environment into our decisions as we work towards a sustainable city.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY:** Improving the livability of all Lawrence neighborhoods.
- **TRANSPORTATION:** Improving access for all citizens.
- **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT:** Enhance the vitality of downtown while maintaining it as a unique community treasure.
- **SERVICE DELIVERY:** Provide excellent city services consistent with resources available.

Applications will be reviewed by the Social Service Funding Advisory Board at meetings held from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. on May 16 and May 23. Applicants are asked to make a contact person available by phone in case questions arise. Following their review, the Advisory Board will forward recommendations for funding to the City Commission.

Recommendations will be based upon the following criteria:

- availability of city funds
- the need demonstrated through the agency's application
- the stated objectives of the applicant's program
- alignment of the program with the City Commission Goals
- the efforts to collaborate and avoid duplication of service demonstrated through the application
- outcomes that move program participants from total dependency toward measurable levels of independence
- ability to measure progress toward the program objectives and the City Commission Goals
- past performance by the agency in adhering to funding guidelines (as appropriate)

The final decision regarding funding will be made by the City Commission when they adopt the Annual Operating and Capital Improvement Budget in August.

PLEASE NOTE THAT FUNDS WILL BE DISBURSED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE UNLESS OTHERWISE AGREED TO IN WRITING:

- FIRST HALF OF FUNDS WILL NOT BE DISBURSED BEFORE APRIL 1
- SECOND HALF OF FUNDS WILL NOT BE DISBURSED BEFORE OCTOBER 1

Questions? Contact Casey Toomay, Budget Manager at ctoomay@ci.lawrence.ks.us or at 785-832-3409.



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2013 Social Service Funding Application – Non-Alcohol Funds

SECTION 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Legal Name of Agency: Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. (HCCI)
Name of Program for Which Funding is Requested: Tenant and Landlord Counseling and Education
Primary Contact Information (must be available by phone 5/16 and 5/23 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.)
Contact Name and Title: Anju Mishra, Branch Manager
Address: 2518 Ridge Court, Lawrence, KS 66046
Telephone: 785-749-3528 Fax: 785-749-2203
Email: amishra@hcci-ks.org

SECTION 2. REQUEST INFORMATION

- A. Amount of funds requested from the City for this program for calendar year 2013: \$17,100
B. Will these funds be used for capital outlay (equipment or facilities) in 2013? If so, please describe: No, this funding request is not for capital outlay.
C. Will these funds be used to leverage other funds in 2013? If so, how: Yes, these funds (if awarded) will help leverage funding from the United Way of Douglas County, from the City of Lawrence CDBG funds, and from local donors.
D. Did you receive City funding for this program in 2012? If so, list the amount and source for funding (i.e. General Fund, Alcohol Fund, etc.): \$17,100

1. How would any reduction in city funding in 2013 impact your agency?

HCCI appreciates the partnership with the City of Lawrence to provide counseling and education for both tenants and landlords so they may understand and initiate their rights and responsibilities as described in the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. HCCI relies heavily on funding from the City of Lawrence to support this program that is not duplicated by any other city department or any other local agency.

In 1988 the City of Lawrence asked HCCI to establish an office in Lawrence to meet the growing demand for face-to-face local counseling and to provide the unique Tenant and Landlord telephone counseling service. HCCI staff are considered experts regarding the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and no other agency in Douglas County provides this type of comprehensive rental housing counseling and education.

HCCI depends on local funding from government, United Way, and the private sector to fund Tenant and Landlord Counseling especially since HUD has reduced the amount awarded to states for "local" housing counseling. For example, this year Congress reduced the total budget for grant allocations disbursed through HUD by 50 percent.

critical that HCCI secure "local" grants to support this much needed service that provides expert counseling following the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act.

2. If you are requesting an increase in funding over 2012, please explain why and exactly how the additional funds will be used:

HCCI is not requesting an increase in funding. This request is to maintain needed funding.

SECTION 3. PROGRAM BUDGET INFORMATION

A. Provide a detailed budget for the proposed program using the following categories: personnel (list each staff position individually and note if new or existing), fringe benefits, travel, office space, supplies, equipment, other.

Personnel:	
Branch Manager:	existing
Tenant/Landlord Counselor I	existing
Tenant/Landlord Counselor II	existing
Total Personnel:	\$43,186
Fringe Benefits (27% of salary)	11,660
Contractual (accounting, audit, etc.)	2,272
Supplies	135
Telephone / Internet	1,925
Printing / Postage	2,831
Insurance / Bonding	90
Dues	45
Office Rent	1,925
Equipment	90
Total	\$64,159

B. What percent of 2013 program costs are being requested from the City?

26.65% of the total program costs are being requested from the City.

C. Provide a list of all anticipated sources of funding and funding amount for this program in 2013:

City of Lawrence General Fund	\$17,100
City of Lawrence CDBG Fund	20,788
United Way of Douglas County	3,954
Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority / Ross Grant	2,500
HUD	1,333
Kansas Housing Resource Corporation	1,206
Total	\$ 46,881

SECTION 4. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM / NEED TO BE ADDRESSED BY PROGRAM

A. Provide a brief statement of the problem or need your agency proposes to address with the requested funding and/or the impact of not funding this program. The statement should include characteristics of the client population that will be served by this program. If possible, include statistical data to document this need.

U.S. Census Quick Facts 2011 indicates almost 54% of the Lawrence housing stock are rental units. Stable and affordable rental housing is critical to the well being of Lawrence as a community. HCCI's Tenant-Landlord (TLL) counseling and education program provides a service that is not available from any other agency or non-profit organization in Lawrence. The TLL Program helps the community strengthen neighborhoods and reduce problems that affect housing stability. Issues addressed include:

- substandard maintenance,
- evictions,
- nonpayment of rent for a variety of reasons,
- security deposit returns,

- availability of accessible housing after an accident or illness,
- drug use by roommates or neighbors, and
- issues related with out-of-town landlords who are not cognizant of, or ignore, local or state housing laws.

Lawrence's Step Up to Better Housing Plan details income levels and housing stock conditions and identifies HCCI as an expert resource and partner. Neighborhoods are stabilized as families and landlords have access to crisis counseling provided by HCCI.

Rental properties inevitably contribute to declining or improving neighborhoods. It is critical that properties in traditional as well as new neighborhoods are stable and well maintained. HCCI resources educate and counsel both tenants and landlords about their rights and responsibilities.

The issue of homelessness is reduced when residents are well-educated about rental housing responsibilities. Citizens participating in homeless and transitional programs rely on a public service network to support their permanent housing goals. HCCI has data, from actual counsels, about the conditions Lawrence clients face. In 2011 - 98% of the households assisted by HCCI's Tenant and Landlord Counseling Program were low or moderate income persons and 19.5% were minorities. Similar numbers are expected to be served in 2012.

B. How was the need for this program determined?

HCCI's Tenant/Landlord Counseling and Education Program addresses needs that are parallel with the City's strategy as outlined in Step Up to Better Housing and the HCCI Tenant/Landlord Counseling and Education Program is named as a key service throughout Lawrence's Consolidated Plan including as a special needs/homeless population partner. Tenant-Landlord counseling was initiated by HCCI in 1972 in Topeka and was initiated in Lawrence in 1988 at the request of the Lawrence City Commission. Tenant and Landlord Counseling and Education is HCCI's longest-running program. HCCI has offices in Topeka, Lawrence, and Manhattan. Topeka is the largest service area for HCCI and Lawrence is the second largest service area.

C. Why should this problem/need be addressed by the City?

The services HCCI provides are an essential part of the "package" of services in Lawrence to help stabilize residents and neighborhoods. Rental counseling serves one compelling issue but the underlying causes of the problem can be related to a need for cash assistance, counseling, job training, emergency housing and other assistance. Tenant/Landlord Counseling has been identified as a critical service in Lawrence. HCCI fits into the federal performance measurement framework in many ways by striving to help clients to help themselves through one-on-one counseling and education. HCCI assists the community with enhancement of suitable living environments, creating decent housing, and providing economic opportunity.

D. How does the program relate to one or more of the goals of the City Commission (see page one)?

HCCI's Tenant and Landlord Counseling and Education Program strongly relates to the city's **Neighborhood Quality Improvement goal** in the following important ways.

Fair Housing: The expert counseling and education HCCI provides is based on federal fair housing law and on the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. Persons who realize their Fair Housing Rights have been violated may contact the City of Lawrence Legal Department which has addressed Fair Housing complaints since the city discontinued its Fair Housing Office a few years ago; however, most people do not recognize subtle Fair Housing issues that may be keeping them from securing affordable rental property. An example is "familial status." HCCI counsels both landlords and tenants about Fair Housing law related to occupancy standards that might exclude families with children while marketing to singles. Another example is inappropriate marketing that excludes persons who are physically challenged. HCCI's education program for landlords and property managers emphasizes the clear Fair Housing directions regarding the need to provide satisfactory accommodations for disabled persons. Often landlords and property managers are not aware that the law provides that if tenants needing physical modifications to a rental unit can pay for these changes, the landlord may not discriminate against them by refusing to consider them as prospective tenants.

Preventing Homelessness: HCCI's Tenant and Landlord Counseling and Education Program keeps people in their rental homes. The rental housing counseling HCCI provides is a major factor in reducing the numbers of very low to low-income families that would otherwise be evicted due to non-payment of rent because they do not know their responsibilities as tenants and they do not fully understand their rights under Kansas law. The

number one complaint HCCI receives from tenants is that landlords do not take care of maintenance issues. Often these complaints are about serious issues such as plumbing repairs, inadequate heating, and structural issues that pose a safety risk. Tenants frequently determine it is in their best interest to “hold the rent payment.” HCCI counsels tenants that it is their responsibility under law to pay their rent on time. It is not acceptable to “hold the rent.” HCCI provides these tenants with the information they need and appropriate forms based on the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act so that the tenants may take necessary and appropriate steps to address issues with their landlord. It is rewarding to HCCI to have renters follow up with these recommendations. The counseling HCCI provides to tenants saves countless complaints to City Hall about rental issues and code violations.

Improving Neighborhoods: Neighborhoods are stabilized when tenants and landlords know their rights and responsibilities and can solve their differences through civil dialogue based on Fair Housing law and the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. The counseling HCCI provides, especially to tenants, and the workshops and trainings HCCI provides for landlords and property managers, are meeting a city goal to inform the public of fair housing practices and the related rules and regulations of rental housing.

The US census reports an estimated 53.3% of Lawrence residents are renters. For many reasons, more people are choosing to rent than own their own home. Some relocate often, some cannot afford to purchase a home, and others simply appreciate the option to have the landlord take care of the property. For whatever reason, the majority of Lawrence residents are renting and many need and appreciate the local, expert counseling HCCI provides that incorporates the explicit intent of Fair Housing law, Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, and City of Lawrence Residential Building Code.

In addition, HCCI serves as a resource and referral agency. HCCI routinely refers persons calling about tenant and landlord issues to appropriate agencies for resources such as utility assistance, legal counsel, and social and rehabilitative services. HCCI is a one-of-a-kind service for Lawrence renters and landlords.

Maintaining existing rental housing stock: The education and counseling HCCI provides to both tenants and landlords contributes to the on-going city initiatives to maintain existing housing stock, especially in core older neighborhoods that offer affordable rental housing for families.

SECTION 5. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

- A. **Provide a brief description of the service you will provide and explain how it will respond to the need you identified in Section 4. The description should include how many clients will be served, and should describe as specifically as possible the interaction that will take place between the provider and the user of the service.**

HCCI's Tenant-Landlord program helps people help themselves to secure adequate, safe, affordable and equitable rental housing through counseling, education and collaboration with other agencies. Historically, about 90% of clients served report low-moderate income.

HCCI has a strategic plan for 2012 and 2013 as follows:

1. provide direct counseling to approximately 300 unduplicated consumers annually,
2. develop and present approximately 8 community education programs targeting 260 renters,
3. continue active participation in partnerships that develop affordable housing units, and
4. concentrate on partnerships that move homeless individuals and families from shelters to homes.

HCCI's Tenant-Landlord Counseling services are available every day from 8:00-5:00. Persons using the HCCI TLL service typically telephone HCCI to ask their questions. HCCI counselors typically respond to telephone calls within a 24 to 48 hour period if they cannot respond on the same day the inquiry was made. Anju Mishra, Branch Manager of HCCI's office, serves the public directly from the Lawrence HCCI office located in the Douglas County United Way building and two other counselors in Topeka provide daily telephone call-back service in response to specific inquiries about tenant/landlord issues. These three staff provide resource referrals to other Lawrence agencies, as needed. In addition, HCCI provides support for the program through staff dedicated to administrative oversight, reception duties and data management responsibilities.

When an individual contacts HCCI, they are entered into the HCCI database as a client and are only counted one time regardless of how frequently they may contact HCCI for assistance about that particular issue.

HCCI's preventive education services are targeted for low-income, homeless and other at-risk groups. The

programs teach basic life skills essential for renters to be successful as tenants and for landlords to maintain rental units that provide safe, decent, affordable housing and contribute to the housing stability of the community.

Programs for tenants include:

- fair housing law,
- basic rights, responsibilities, appropriate behavior and communication skills;
- affordable housing options.

Programs for landlords and the public provide information about the rental application and screening process including:

- fair housing law,
- appropriate maintenance,
- drug and behavior issues,
- landlord's rights and responsibilities regarding entry to the rental unit and
- tenant evictions.

HCCI has been invited to present programs at SRS Full Citizenship, City of Lawrence Landlord Seminar, The Landlords of Lawrence Association and the Salvation Army. HCCI is very willing to develop and present programs for these groups and others in the Lawrence community.

HCCI prioritizes involvement with programs and partnerships to offer more extensive life skills and homeless prevention programs. (See next section for details.)

B. What other agencies in the community are providing similar types of services. What efforts have you made to avoid duplication or coordinate services with those agencies?

There are no other agencies in Douglas County providing Tenant-Landlord Counseling and Education or the related services that HCCI provides.

HCCI actively participates in Landlords of Lawrence concerns related to rental housing counseling and education. HCCI also partners in services with USD 497, Cottonwood, the Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority, Bert Nash Mental Health, Tenants to Homeowners, Independence Inc., Full Citizenship and others to provide services. HCCI counselors work in an ombudsman role for other City services such as code enforcement and fair housing enforcement.

HCCI conducts a regular series of classes in coordination with LDCHA as part of the ROSS Homeownership Support Services. This work assists public housing tenants interested in pursuing homeownership and provides a series of mandatory Renter Preparation classes for all applicants to LDCHA for Section 8 or Public Housing.

SECTION 6. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Please provide three specific program objectives for 2013. Objectives should demonstrate the purpose of the program and measure the amount of service delivered or the effectiveness of the services delivered. A time frame and numerical goal should also be included. Examples include, "75% of clients receiving job training will retain their job one year after being hired," "increased fundraising efforts will result in a 15% increase in donations in 2013," "credit counseling services will be provided to 600 clients in 2013," etc. **Applicants will be expected to report their progress toward meeting these objectives in their six-month and annual reports to the City.**

HCCI's Program Objectives for the Tenant and Landlord Program are as follows.

- 1) **sustain housing** – meaning they will understand their rights and responsibilities and take steps to:
 - a) retain their current rental housing by taking actions such as clarifying the rental agreement with their landlord, paying delinquent rent, or working through the city's code enforcement agents to rectify maintenance issues; or they will
 - (b) examine their legal options and find other rental housing.

At least 80% of persons utilizing HCCI's counseling service will sustain housing – meaning they will remain in place with suitable arrangements with their current landlord or they will find alternate housing and avoid homelessness.

- 2) **utilize community resources** – meaning they will understand their rights and responsibilities and learn from HCCI what community resources are available to help meet their particular needs.

At least 30% of persons will qualify to utilize local community resources (such as funding for utility assistance or a food bank). [It is important to note that while the majority of families that contact HCCI with rental issues are low-income, many of them are already aware of additional community resources and/or do not need referral to additional community resources.]

- 3) **implement their legal rights and responsibilities** – meaning
- a) tenants will know their rights under the Kansas Residential Landlord Tenant Act and will understand what their “next steps” may be and how to proceed to self-advocate for their rights. Examples include: resolving maintenance issues with their landlord, securing the return of a deposit, avoiding eviction, receiving reasonable accommodations for a handicap.
- b) landlords will know their rights under the Kansas Residential Landlord Tenant Act and will understand what their “next steps” may be and how to proceed to be fair and responsible landlords. Examples include: appropriately screening tenants prior to offering a contract, giving verbal and written eviction notice, knowing the legal responsibilities and procedures for disposing of abandoned property.

At least 70% will report they successfully implemented their rights and responsibilities under the Kansas Residential Landlord Tenant Act and as the law was explained to them by HCCI counselors.

Thank you for considering this request for funding from Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc.