City of St. Louis
2015 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Application

1. **Name of Applicant:** Employment Connection

2. **Name of Program:** Project Transition

3. **Program Address:** 2838 Market Street, St. Louis, MO 63103

4. **Phone:** (314)333-5633 **Fax:** (314)333-3633 **E-mail:** kesseld@employmentstl.org

5. **Contact Person & Title:** David Kessel, Chief Operating Officer

6. **SELECT ONLY ONE CATEGORY. An agency may request funds from multiple funding sources and from multiple categories. The agency MUST complete a separate application for each category.** To select a category, double click on the box **and** under the default value select "checked".

2015 Continuum of Care (CoC): NEW PROJECTS ONLY (priority given to projects with the target population of women previously served by the Shalom House)

☐ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for chronically homeless households, including individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth

☒ Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) for individuals and families, including unaccompanied youth who are residing on the streets or in emergency shelters or who are fleeing domestic violence

☐ Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) Lead (successor to HESG funded HMIS Lead), including system, administration, management, and coordination

☐ Supportive Services Only (SSO) for Coordinated Front Door to homeless services

7. **Target Population:**

☒ Single Men
☒ Single Women
☒ Families
☐ Teenage Mothers
☒ Women w/ children
☐ Battered Spouse
☐ Alcohol Dependent
☒ Chronically Mentally Ill
☒ Veterans
☐ Persons with Physical Disabilities
☐ Elderly
☐ Youth
☐ Drug Dependent
☐ Persons with HIV/AIDS
☐ Other

8. **Housing:**

☐ Barracks
☐ Group/Large House
☒ Scattered Site Apartments
☐ Single Room Occupancy
☐ On-site Apartments
☐ Detached House
☐ Other

9. Requested amount reflects: 57 % of the program/project budget of $ $195,000
Requested amount reflects: 3 % of the total agency's budget of $ $3,633,022
Is this program/project currently in existence? ☒ Yes How many years? 1.5 ☐ No
Annual amount of funds received from other City Department/Agencies? $ $588,198

1. **Narrative:**

Employment Connection's Project Transition provides rapid re-housing to eligible homeless heads of household and their families. Project Transition currently serves a minimum of 20 heads of household and their families with rapid rehousing and additional supports using a transition in place model, allowing them to live a more stable, safe, and happy life. The current program is funded primarily through a $70,000 Missouri Emergency Shelter Grant through the Missouri Housing Development Commission.

The $111,998 in rapid rehousing funding requested in this proposal will be used to serve an additional 20 heads of household and their families from St. Louis City. Direct case management will be provided in participants' homes, with a case manager available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by phone for all participants in the program. Additional services provided by Employment Connection for eligible clients include job readiness training, computer resources and training, interview clothing assistance, behavioral health services, transportation assistance, and other supports.

We are confident that the outcomes achieved through this funding will meet or exceed the St. Louis City Continuum of Care performance targets. We are also willing to set aside a percentage of units to serve the priority populations of homeless Veterans and/or homeless families with children under 5, as those are both populations we current serve through our housing programs.

2. **Client Population:**

Project Transition will serve homeless individuals and families in need of stability and services in St. Louis City. Heads of household served will be low income individuals of all genders and racial groups, ages 18 and older who fall within the documented Department of Housing and Urban Development definition of homeless. Participants will be scored and referred via the Continuum

of Care's Coordinated Entry Assessment Tool, including those clients who come directly to Employment Connection seeking assistance. Homeless status will be verified via all documentation required by HUD.

There is a clear need for additional rapid rehousing services, as one third of all clients seeking services from Employment Connection reported they were at-risk of being homeless in 2014. Clients are typically in need of assistance in finding suitable housing, connecting with landlords, security deposits, rental assistance, and/or utility assistance in order to become housed in and retain quality housing.

3. **Organizational Capacity and Experience:**

Employment Connection was founded in 1977 after a study by the Young Lawyers Division of the Bar Association of Metropolitan Saint Louis found employed ex-offenders were 66% less likely to return to incarceration. Our agency immediately began work to reduce recidivism through employment, pursuing our mission of "assisting individuals with limited opportunities to self-sufficiency." In 1980, Employment Connection became a full United Way member agency. Since that time, we have expanded services to fill identified gaps in services to a range of clients including homeless individuals and families, out-of-school and at-risk youth, U.S. veterans, non-custodial fathers, and other low-income residents of the St. Louis area. Today Employment Connection serves nearly 1,500 individuals each year, providing necessary supports and services to assist clients in overcoming their significant barriers, find employment, and reach self-sufficiency.

From 2011 to 2014, we successfully placed 2,064 St. Louis area residents into employment, with 62% of those placed retaining that employment for a minimum 90 days. We currently provide 15 units of scattered site Permanent Supportive housing for homeless, disabled veterans and

their families in St. Louis City, and 20 units for disabled, formerly homeless individuals in St. Louis County. We are also currently providing Rapid Re-Housing assistance to families in both St. Louis City and St. Louis County through Missouri Emergency Solutions Grant (MESG) and St. Louis County Housing Resource Commission funds. We utilize a transition-in-place model to move clients from homelessness to self-sufficiency.

Employment Connection collaborates and/or partners with variety of local service providers including, but not limited to: St. Patrick Center, Family Resource Center, the Veteran Court Technology Clinic, Fathers' Support Center, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment, St. Vincent De Paul, Provident Counseling, the Salvation Army, and others. Working together allows for wraparound of any services we don't currently provide in-house, like drug and substance abuse treatment, daycare, etc.

Employment Connection has experience managing complex funding contracts. For several years, we have received unqualified audit opinions, as no weaknesses or areas of improvement in documented internal control procedures were identified by our auditors, so no management letter was issued. We follow all grant expenditure requirements, including bids if required. All duties are segregated. Direct assistance to clients is requested by one of our Housing Case Managers who completes a voucher specific to the grant-funded categories. All documents are attached to the voucher, reviewed, and approved by the Program Manager. Our Accountant reviews the voucher and issues the check. The check is signed by our COO or CEO, plus the signature stamp of the other. The stamps are kept in separate locked drawers. The accountant doesn't have access to both stamps. Checks are mailed or distributed by our Executive Assistant. If a check is delivered by a Housing Case Manager, a signature is obtained.

4. **Service Plan:**

Employment Connection's Project Transition will provide rapid re-housing to homeless heads of household and their families. Twenty individuals and their families will be provided supportive housing and additional support using a transition in place model, allowing them to live a more stable, safe, and happy life.

Individuals participating in this project will be will be referred via the Continuum of Care's Coordinated front door , and all clients will be scored and assessed via the Coordinated Entry Assessment Tool, including those clients who come directly to Employment Connection seeking assistance. Case managers will begin meeting with the participants prior to their entry into housing, basing their initial meetings and service provision planning on the front door individualized assessments. Participants will be engaged approximately one month in advance of their move into housing, to assist them in preparing for the transition. This will also help to ensure that the participants are prepared and knowledgeable about the requirements of maintaining leased properties.

Program participants will work closely with their Case Manager in seeking housing which fits their individual needs, has access to transportation and other services, and meets all housing quality standards. Employment Connection's housing staff have established relationships with a wide range of landlords and apartment managers, and are knowledgeable and experienced in negotiating and building positive relationships with new landlords. Employment Connection will work with clients and landlords through the process of signing the lease, and then assist clients in moving into their new housing , including provision of basic furnishing and household goods.

Once adjusted to their living environment, program participants will work closely with their Case Manager to develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) which addresses potential barriers that would impede their individual path to self-sufficiency and remaining in housing. This plan

will encompass the holistic needs of the participant and their household, including: education, physical health, behavioral health, childcare and children's needs, goals, employment history, financial literacy, barriers to employment, criminal history, legal barriers, domestic capabilities, transportation, and social supports.

The participant and case manager will work together to develop a step-by-step plan as part of the IDP for addressing/overcoming each barrier to self-sufficiency, as well as a timeline for accomplishing each task. This plan will allow the participant to see a logical and achievable series of goals with an end result of maintaining their housing and attaining a state of self-sufficiency. Regular contact with participants will allow for ongoing assessment of goal accomplishment, identification of new needs which may require a revision of the plan, or needed assistance in accomplishing particularly difficult tasks.

The process of developing the Individual Development Plan is a completely client centered approach that engages the participant, helping them to get more invested in their success. As the participant begins to develop a clearer understanding of needs, recognition sets in that self-sufficiency is achievable by taking charge of the tasks and resources that will lead away from their prior situation of homelessness. The plan allows the participant to see a logical and achievable series of goals with an end result of self-sufficiency and retention of permanent housing. While the participant works with their case manager to overcome potential barriers, Employment Connection's Career Developers work to develop potential career paths for the participants. Employment Connection works with more than 400 employers from the St. Louis Region and has helped develop careers for persons with limited opportunities for 36 years.

Project Transition will provide services 365 nights a year, providing a minimum of 20 scattered site rapid re-housing beds to St. Louis City clients. Direct case management will be provided in

participants' homes a minimum of once per month after housing placement. Additional home visits will be provided as needed to ensure effective housing focused case management is provided. In addition, a case manager will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by phone for participants. Additional services are available at our main offices at 2838 Market Street in St. Louis City including job readiness training, computer resources and training, interview clothing assistance, and other services. Transportation assistance is provided to clients to assist them in accessing these additional services.

5. **Participant Tracking and Reporting:**

Employment Connection is experienced with and currently utilizing HMIS through the both the St. Louis City and St. Louis County Continua of Care. Client records, leasing and assistance documentation, case management notes, and other documents are maintained in hard copy on file. Client records, case notes, and progression tracking are also maintained on a regular basis in the HMIS, to ensure efficient and timely monitoring of client progress. We maintain full compliance with all HMIS usage, training, and data quality requirements. Client confidentiality and privacy standards are carefully followed to maintain the safety of both their personal data and privacy.

2015 BUDGET

Agency: Employment Connection

Prepared By:
David Kessel/Nora Davis **Date:** 8/17/2015

	Year 1 Request	Year 1 Match	Total Request	Total Match
COC:				
Acquisition/Rehabilitation/Construction	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
Leasing	$60,000.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
Rental Assistance	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
Supportive Services	$16,299.67	$ 1,757.00	$16,299.67	$1,757.00
Operating Services	$32,991.67	$11,245.00	$32,991.67	$11,245.00
HMIS	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
Administrative	$ 2,706.66	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
ESG:				
Emergency Shelter				
Rapid Re-Housing				
Homeless Prevention				
Street Outreach				
Data Collection				
Sub-Total	$111,998.00	$13,002.00	$111,998.00	$13,002.00
Program Total	$125,000.00		$125,000.00	

Budget Detail

Total Budget	Total Expenses	Total Budget	COC	Match
Total Salary	$40,734.54	$40,734.54	$34,489.54	$6,245.00
Total Fringe	$13,508.46	$13,508.46	$13,508.46	$0.00
Staff Mileage Reimbursement (1 x .445 per mile x 50 x 52)	$1,157.00	$1,157.00	$0.00	$1,157.00
Staff Cell Phone (1 x $50 Per Month x 12)	$600.00	$600.00	$0.00	$600.00
In Kind Furnishings (20 x $250)	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	$0.00	$5,000.00
Utilities/Deposits (20 x $200)	$4,000.00	$4,000.00	$4,000.00	$0.00
Rent (20 x $2,500)	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	$0.00
Security Deposits (20 x $500)	$10,000.00	$10,000.00	$10,000.00	$0.00
Grand Total	$125,000.00	$125,000.00	$111,998.00	$13,002.00