



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY
& SOCIAL JUSTICE

REIA #26-14 Emergency Family Shelter Service

Requesting Agency/Department(s)	Dollar Amount
Health and Human Services	\$3,064,158

Funding Source

General Fund – Undesignated Reserves

Finding

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #26-14 will advance racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County. The programs funded by this supplemental appropriation help to maintain emergency shelter capacity at motels, ensure the safety and habitability of the motel shelter facilities, and continue supporting families on their path toward housing stability, while preventing families with minor children from having to sleep outside or in places not meant for habitation.

Background

Purpose

The purpose of SA #26-14 is to continue utilizing motels as emergency overflow shelters for families experiencing homelessness in Montgomery County. The Short-term Housing and Rental Assistance Program (SHARP) continues to support families in transitioning more rapidly from shelter to permanent housing. Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Services to End and Prevent Homelessness’ (SEPH’s) diversion team works to reduce inflow into the shelter system by identifying and supporting safe alternatives to motel placements.

Despite these efforts, family shelters have been at capacity since COVID-19, and ongoing housing instability – driven by rising rents, evictions, lack of affordable housing, and eroding safety resources continue to push demand beyond available capacity. Since January 2025,

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DHHS reports that SHARP has increased the number of families transitioning from the family shelter system to permanent housing to 30 families per month, following the receipt of new funding. However, during the same period, an average of 28 families per month continued to enter the shelter system, indicating a persistent need for overflow shelter.

The supplemental appropriation will allow DHHS to provide the following resources to sustain motel emergency overflow resources.

- **\$2,960,158** to support the operation of 85 motel rooms per night through the end of the fiscal year. This funding will ensure continued shelter for families who would otherwise face unsheltered homelessness.
- **\$50,000** to cover maintenance costs associated with the extended use of motel facilities as emergency shelters for families.
- **\$54,000** for Stepping Stone Family Shelter, as it is operating at 100% capacity, but its budget only covers 70% capacity.

Analysis

ORESJ has conducted REIAs since 2021. The following REIA(s) are relevant to supplemental appropriation #26-14.

- REIA #26-48 Homeless Solutions Grant
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/26-48.pdf>
- REIA # 25-42 Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH), The Short-term Housing and Resolution Program SHARP, Shelter Services Expansion, Rental Assistance Program (RAP), and Housing Stabilization Services (HSS) Eviction Prevention Program <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/25-42.pdf>
- REIA #24-72 Services to End and Prevent Homelessness, Shelter Services, Overflow and Security expansion
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-72.pdf>
- REIA #23-86 Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund – Homeless Children and Youth Grant
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-86.pdf>
- REIA #22-31 Nebel Street Shelter
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-31.pdf>

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These REIAs assess the root causes and systemic inequities, as well as racial disparities that disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), low-income residents, and others with intersecting identities. Additionally, the REIAs examine services provided and how they have disproportionately benefited Black and African American, Hispanic or Latinx, and other minority households. This is due to systemic inequities in income, rent burdens, and poverty rates, which make these groups more likely to experience housing crises. Sustaining emergency shelter services, as this funding would enable, continues to help address those disparities and ensure that all families have access to safe shelter and a pathway to stable, long-term housing.

Caveats

This REIA has been conducted with the best available information at the time of writing, including department responses to the Racial Equity and Social Justice template and research conducted by ORESJ Policy Team Analysts. While the assessment examines the specific racial equity and social justice impacts of the funding request, it cannot fully address all systemic inequities affecting the communities in question, nor do we seek to examine impacts outside the scope of the funding request. We recommend using this assessment as a starting point for discussions about the program's impact on advancing racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County.