

**Fiscal Year 2026**

Supporting Students Facing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

**Application Due Date/Time:** October 30, 2025, 11:59 p.m.

**Submit Application To:** [iccb.studentservices@illinois.gov](mailto:iccb.studentservices@illinois.gov)

Note: Exempt from GATA

**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) SUMMARY INFORMATION**

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| **1.** | Awarding Agency Name: | *Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)* |
| **2.** | Agency Contact: | *Mark Mesle, Director for Student Access, mark.mesle@illinois.gov* |
| **3.** | Announcement Type: | *Initial announcement* |
| **4.** | Type of Assistance Instrument: | *Grant* |
| **5.** | Funding Opportunity Number: | N/A |
| **6.** | Funding Opportunity Title: | *Supporting Students Facing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity Project* |
| **7.** | CSFA Number: | N/A |
| **8.** | CSFA Popular Name: | N/A |
| **9.** | CFDA Number(s): | N/A |
| **10.** | Grant Period | *January 1, 2026-December 30, 2026* |
| **11.** | Anticipated Number of Awards: | *45* |
| **12.** | Estimated Total Program Funding: | *$250,000* |
| **13.** | Award Range | *Up to $25,000* |
| **14.** | Source of Funding: | *State* |
| **15.** | Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement: | *No* |
| **16.** | Indirect Costs Allowed  Restrictions on Indirect Costs | *Yes*  Indirect costs are capped at 15% of the budget (this is not an alternative rate **The rate applies to eligible categories\* up to the cap on the total award**. *\*Eligible categories include either those specified in a NICRA, or MTDCs for those who elected a de minimis rate.*) |
| **17.** | Posted Date: | *September 25, 2025* |
| **18.** | Closing Date for Applications: | *October 30, 2025, 11:59 p.m.* |
| **19.** | Technical Assistance: | *A Bidder’s Conference webinar will be held on October 2, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. Webinar link is provided at the end of this NOFO.*  *Additional technical and accessibility assistance will be provided throughout the grant period to grant recipients.* |

**A. Background and Purpose**

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is inviting eligible applicants to participate in the ***Supporting Students Facing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity Project*** by applying for grants, which are GATA-exempt (as noted on the title page), of up to $25,000 per institution. ICCB will fund a minimum of 10 grants to selected community colleges to support the development and expansion of programs to respond to the specific needs of students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

Awards under this opportunity are "Fixed Amount Awards"; the grant agreement will provide a specific level of support without regard to actual costs incurred under the award.  While total funding will be predetermined for awards, reporting will be required. Grantees will receive the specific sum of the award regardless of the actual costs incurred.

This project is designed to assist and support colleges that lack funding to fully support students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, which has been identified as a barrier to the work of Housing and Opportunities that are Useful for Students’ Excellence (HOUSE) Liaison. The HOUSE Liaison role was established with [Illinois PA 102-0093](https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=102-0083), the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, in August 2022. The purpose of this grant is to support colleges as they develop and/or expand campus-level supports for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity and to increase collaboration with local resources to strengthen student supports. Student stipends are allowable in this grant program. See the [Guidance for Student Stipends within Grant Programs](https://www.iccb.org/wp-content/pdfs/grants/Guidance%20for%20Student%20Stipends%20within%20Grant%20Programs.pdf) on the ICCB’s grant opportunities page for details on administering student stipends.

**B. Eligible Applicants**

Community colleges in the State of Illinois are invited to submit proposals under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

**C. Grant Objectives**

The objective of this grant is to support colleges as they create, enhance, or expand programs and campus-level supports for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity and/or to increase collaboration with local resources. All funded colleges will be expected to identify gaps in services and specific areas of support needed for their student population. Additionally, applicants must select at least **one of the** three objectives. ICCB recommends choosing only one of the three objectives based on campus need and capacity. All activities should align with at least one of the goals. The objectives are detailed below.

* **Objective 1:** Develop or expand campus-level activities related to student outreach efforts, training for HOUSE Liaisons and other campus staff, and/or efforts to deepen collaboration across campus divisions to increase support for students.
* **Objective 2:** Create or expand direct student support programs on campus to assist students who are at risk for homelessness or who are currently experiencing homelessness.
* **Objective 3:** Develop or enhance collaboration with local resources to provide increased support for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Build partnerships and expand collaboration with local [McKinney-Vento Liaisons](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeless-Liaison-Contact-Information.aspx) to help with the transition between high school and college and/or working with the college’s local Continuum of Care and other local resources to help support students' needs.

**D. Required and Allowable Activities**

The expectation is that applicants will propose activities that will align with best practices for supporting students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Activities to be carried out by grantees include the following. Please note that this list is **not** exhaustive.

**Priority Activities**

The expectation is that applicants will utilize local data to identify gaps in services and specific areas of support needed for their student population, thereby developing and expanding campus-level support for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. As previously stated, applicants must select at least **one of the** three objectives.

**Example of Allowable Activities**

Objective 1: Examples of Allowable Activities:

* Convene appropriate campus stakeholders on campus to examine current services and supports available to students and work with stakeholders to update, revise, and expand services for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.
* Provide outreach and support at college locations other than the main college campus.
* Provide training and professional development to campus staff to help provide holistic support to students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.
* Institute targeted outreach and events for students.

Objective 2 Examples of Allowable Activities:

* Provide support to students around basic needs and transportation.
* Provide support for families at risk of or experiencing homelessness through childcare referrals, etc.
* Establish or continue a student stipend program for emergency funds to avoid eviction or to establish temporary housing.
* Develop agreements with local temporary housing organizations or hotels offering housing.

Objective 3: Examples of Allowable Activities:

* Work with external partners to facilitate regional conversations.
* Convene and support a community of practice focused on regionally specific student supports related to housing.
* Review and evaluate national and other states’ efforts to support students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity that may guide implementation in Illinois.

**E. Application Package**

**This is a competitive process.** Applications submitted under this grant program will undergo a merit-based review process. All parts of the application package must be completed by the deadline to be considered for funding. Applicants should ensure that all elements are clearly addressed. Applicants will receive a receipt of application. However, applicants **will not** be notified if any items are missing from their application. Applicants must use the templates provided on the **ICCB website:** [**https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/**](https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/)**.** Applicants must complete each section of the application in its entirety, including the following information in the order listed below and utilizing a header for each Numbered Section.

1. **GATA-Exempt Grant Application**

Applicants must complete each section of the application in its entirety.

1. **Cover Page**

The cover page must include the public higher institution’s name, address, telephone number, and website, as well as the contact information, including email address, telephone number and extension, and fax number of the President/CEO, Chief Financial Officer, and Project Coordinator/Administrator.

The cover page must include a statement that stipulates: “This application is being submitted on behalf of the <Institution’s Name>, and, if awarded, the applicant agrees to abide by the provisions and guidelines set forth in the application and by the ICCB. Furthermore, the application has been approved by an individual authorized to act on behalf of the institution.”

1. **Abstract**

Provide an abstract of no more than one page that may be single-spaced and describes the following:

* A brief description of the proposed activities and services,
* A list of anticipated staff, consultants, partners, and service providers with whom the institution will engage.
* A list of the principal objectives.

1. **Project Narrative**

The Project Narrative submitted under this NOFO should be organized, clear, and understandable. The eligible applicant must submit a narrative of **no more than five pages** (charts and graphs are a part of the page limitation), double-spaced, 12-point font that must include the following information in the order listed below and utilizing a header for each of the bulleted narrative sections.

**Narrative Sections**

* **Basic Project Information**: Concise summary of the proposed project scope and impact, including a description of the target population of students to be served.
* **Statement of Need:** Institutional data should be provided to identify need for additional services.
* **Program Justification:** This statement should provide data on potential student impact based on the goals of the grant objective.
* **Fiscal Need:** The grant reviewer may not understand the specific financial needs of your institution and/or chosen program area(s) of focus. Financial need should be explicitly addressed.
* **Detailed description of the measurable project goals and objectives:** The goals and objectives must be measurable and include short- and long-term indicators of success. The expectation is that applicants will propose activities aligning with at least one of the identified project objectives. This must also include a project timeline that encompasses these goals. Clearly describe the project activities and associated timeline for each activity to be carried out during the grant period and the person responsible for carrying out each activity. Should include a description of the impact the project will have on students, the community, the institution, etc. Describe how the institution will determine success of the programming.
* **If applicable, provide a description of any partnerships if applicable**: Provide the number of partnerships and a brief description of the role each partner will play in the grant project. ***Letters of Commitment/Support must be included for all external partners.***
* **Project Work Plan:** Clearly describe the project activities and associated timeline for each activity to be carried out during the grant period and person(s) responsible for each activity to be carried out during the grant period. The activities should clearly relate to the goals of the grant. *A chart or table is encouraged*. Please note that your work plan may change during the grant as a result of technical assistance offered by ICCB, ICSPS, and other partners. The Project Work Plan should provide an estimated number of students to be served and other indications of how the institution will determine the success of the programming outlined. Within the Work Plan, applications should address how they will carry out the following activities:
  + *Identify gaps in services and specific areas of support needed for the student population to develop and expand campus-level support for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.*
  + *Detailed description of how they will carry out the chosen objective(s) from the three possible objectives outlined in the NOFO above.*
  + *All other activities carried out under the grant to support project goals.*
* **Desired Impact:** Describe the impact the project will hopefully have on students, the community, the institution, etc. Include the number of students previously served.
* **Description of applicant’s capacity and experience:** Description of the applicant’s capacity to execute the project**,** including a description of previous experience in implementing successful grant programs of a similar nature and related activities such as wrap-around services for the target population.
* **Scalability or Replicability:** Description of how the project could be scaled or replicated by others in the State. *All resources and products developed with grant funds will be provided by the grantee to the ICCB for sharing with the field.*
* **Contingency Plan:**Provided a brief description of the plan and budget if funds are not able to be spent as originally defined in the application.

1. **Letters of Commitment from External Partners, if applicable.**

Intuitions must include signed copies of letters of commitment, with details of partnership and capacity, from each identified external partner.

1. **Uniform Budget**

All applicants must submit a proposed budget on the State of Illinois Uniform Grant Budget Template (*template provided*). Applicants should submit budgets based on the total estimated costs for the project. For each tab in the budget template that includes space for a narrative, please include details of the costs. **Each funded category in the budget should include a narrative and breakdown of line items.** Gifts, giveaways, or Swag are not allowable expenses in a grant budget. All costs must be reasonable and necessary to achieve program objectives to be allowable costs. Grantees should ensure that they have the institutional capacity to execute this grant and all funding provided with it fully. Grant funds must be expended within the allowable timeframes of the grant period.

**F. Application/Submission Information**

Each grant application package must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., October 30, 2025, to [iccb.studentservices@illinois.gov](mailto:iccb.studentservices@illinois.gov). Grant application and materials may be found on the ICCB website at https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/.

One bidder’s conference webinar will be held. Bidder’s conference attendance is not mandatory. A recording of the information will be available.

**October 2, 2025 2:00 p.m.**

**Participants may join the webinar using this link:** [**https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=madaa54ad8a998c589f06ef431582f13b**](https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=madaa54ad8a998c589f06ef431582f13b)

All questions must be submitted electronically to [mark.mesle@illinois.gov](mailto:mark.mesle@illinois.gov) in the subject line: [**Organization’s Name**] FY26 Supporting Students Facing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity *Project*. All questions will be posted in an FAQ on the ICCB website.

**Paper copies of the applications are not permitted.** Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of the e-mail containing the attachments. It is up to the applicant to ensure that all items in the package are attached and sent in the e-mail.

All applicants, whether funded or not, will be notified upon finalization of the allocations.

**G. Funding Information**

* *Grant Period:* The grant period is January 1, 2026 – December 30, 2026
* *Funding Availability:* A total of $250,000 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the ICCB for grants to eligible entities for the implementation of the supports for students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity as outlined under this NOFO. Only one grant application per college.
* *Funding Deadlines.* ***Please note that no extensions will be given for expending funds****.*
* Grant funds must be obligated by the end of the grant period.
* Goods and products must be received by 60 days after the end of the grant period unless written authorization extending the timeline is provided by the Grantor.
* Services must be fully delivered within the grant period.
* Grant funds must be expended by 60 days after the end of the grant period.
* *Indirect Costs are capped at 15% of the budget. Institutions use their approved indirect cost rate (as documented on the GATA grantee portal) to accumulate eligible indirect costs up to the cap.*
* *Allowable and Unallowable Costs* Grant recipients **must provide budget narrative** explaining the reasonableness and necessity of all costs.

**H. Grant Deliverables**

* Carry out deliverables of the proposed scope of work, encompassing all required activities for the selected Objective(s).
* Work to meet or exceed all of the identified indicators of performance.
* Report on achievement of performance metrics via required quarterly reporting and other supplemental reports as necessary.
* Participate in any required professional development, technical assistance, or learning workshops, **including presenting on the proposed project at the Annual HOUSE Liaison Summit**.
* Submit quarterly reports, which include programmatic, performance, and expenditure data, 30 days after the calendar quarter ends detailing the progress on funded activities. Reporting will commence with the calendar quarter ending after the execution of this agreement. Final close out reports, programmatic and fiscal, will be due 60 days after the termination of the award period. (Reporting templates and other instructions will be made available to grant recipients at a later date.)

**I. Review Criteria and Selection Process**

The ICCB staff will use the criteria listed in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and a scoring rubric to review the applications and will award points accordingly. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined per application based upon compliance with the requirements of this NOFO and the scoring of the grant proposal.

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet all requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. Applications will be scored based on the following criterion, which are further detailed on the scoring rubric:

* Application, Cover Page, and Abstract: 10 Points
* Basic Project Information, Statement of Need, and Fiscal Need: 10 Points
* Overall Project Goals and Objectives & Indicators of Performance: 25 Points
* Project Work Plan, Partnerships, and Desired Impact: 35 Points
* Capacity, Scalability or Replicability, and Contingency Plan: 15 Points
* Uniform Budget: 5 Points

**J. State Awarding Agency Contact**

Mark Mesle, Director for Student Access

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