

Emergency and Transitional Housing Program

Request for Applications



Spring 2024

Revised: 3/12/2024

The Emergency and Transitional Housing (ETH) program provides limited funding to increase access to short-term housing for individuals at risk of homelessness and who are under the supervision of the Division of Probation and Parole or have recently been released from state incarceration. The ETH program aims to provide emergency and/or transitional housing to stabilize the reentry process until longer-term housing can be found, improving their chances of having a successful reentry experience.

In support of the goals of the 2017 Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) legislation, this program shall be funded by a portion of the savings allocated to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C) for reinvestment in programs and services that support the reduction of prison admissions and recidivism.

1 Application Window and Eligibility

1.1 Application Cycles

The application window for prospective housing providers will occur twice yearly, in Spring and the Fall. Approved housing providers shall be placed on a "Housing Provider Referral List" for one (1) year. Providers interested in continuing with the ETH program must reapply on an annual basis.

ETH Housing Providers who applied and were approved in Spring 2023 must reapply to remain on the ETH Approved Provider list.

ETH Housing Providers who applied and were approved in Fall 2023 do not need to reapply at this time.

1.2 Applicant Eligibility

Eligible housing providers are limited to non-profits who have obtained federal tax exempt status (501c3) that have a documented history of working with either formerly incarcerated persons and/or as an emergency or transitional housing provider.

Applicants must:

- Be in good standing with the Louisiana Secretary of State office and have been so for the last two (2) years (if operational for less than two (2) years, must be in good standing since inception).
- Be a registered vendor on LaGov
- Submit the application and all required support documentation

2 ETH Program Description

2.1 Scope of Services

Emergency Housing

Definition: Overnight shelter (homeless shelter) provides emergency sleeping accommodations for a period not to exceed twelve (12) hours. Access to food services for at least one (1) meal per day is required.

Eligible Participants and Approved Length of Stay:

Participant Type	Approved Length of Stay
Participants under supervision with P&P	Not to exceed fourteen (14) days within a six (6) month period
Participants who have just full-termed out of DOC incarceration	Not to exceed fourteen (14) days within a six (6) month period

Transitional Housing

Definition: Transitional housing is not an extended shelter stay; but a temporary residence until a participant can find a long-term housing solution. The facility shall provide residents access to food services for at least one (1) meal per day. Supportive and counseling services are optional, but are not fully covered under the ETH program.

Eligible Participants and Approved Length of Stay:

Participant Type	Approved Length of Stay
Participants under supervision with P&P	Not to exceed six (6) months, or until supervision end date whichever is sooner
Participants who have just full-termed out of DOC incarceration ¹	Not to exceed three (3) months

2.2 Deliverables

Housing providers shall provide services as outlined in Section 2.1 Scope of Services (Emergency and/or Transitional Housing) to participants and submit a monthly invoice detailing the name of participant, length of stay to date, and per diem amount per day.

2.3 Housing Provider Referral List

Approved housing providers shall be placed on a “Housing Provider Referral List” for one (1) year. Providers interested in continuing with the ETH program must reapply on an annual basis.

Placement on the referral list does not guarantee any number of participant referrals to any housing provider.

¹ See Section 4.1 – “Eligible Participants” for more details

3 Housing and Meal Accommodations

3.1 Housing Accommodations

At the minimum, the ETH program requires the following housing standards and food availability based on providing either emergency or transitional housing services as defined in Section 2.1- Scope of Services. Facilities shall be inspected by DPS&C staff prior to approval of application and staff shall conduct annual site visits to ensure adequate housing.

3.1.1 *Housing Standards* (adapted from Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Minimum Standards)

- A. Structure and Materials: The facility must be structurally sound to protect the residents from the elements and not threaten the residents' health and safety.
- B. Access: Residents shall have 24/7 access to the facility and have alternate means of evacuation in case of a fire or other emergency.
- C. Space and Security: The facility must provide each program participant in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. For the standard size bedroom (10x12), no more than 2 people per bedroom is recommended.
- D. Interior Air Quality: Each room or space within the shelter has a natural or mechanical means of ventilation.
- E. Water Supply: Water supply is free of contamination.
- F. Sanitary Facilities: Residents must have access to sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, private, and adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
- G. Thermal Environment: Facility has any necessary heating/cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
- H. Illumination and electricity: Facility has adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and support health and safety. The facility has sufficient electrical sources to permit the safe use of electrical appliances in the facility.
- I. Food Preparation: Food preparation areas shall contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner.
- J. Sanitary Conditions: The facility shall be maintained in a sanitary condition.
- K. Fire Safety: The facility must have a sufficient number of functioning smoke detectors, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the facility. Where possible, smoke detectors must be located near sleeping areas. The facility shall have a second means of exiting the building in the event of a fire or other emergency.

3.2 Food Availability

The facility shall provide access to food or at least one (1) meal per day. This may include, but is not limited to:

- A. Staff preparing meals in a kitchen. The facility shall have proper permits in place in accordance with state and local laws regarding food preparation, storage and handling.

- B. Provide access to a place for participants to cook/prepare meals for themselves. This would include, but not be limited to: stovetop/oven, microwave, kitchen ware and utensils, etc. Providers should also ensure that the resident has one of the following options: 1) access to a food bank, 2) have SNAP (food stamp) benefits, or 3) a means to purchase their own food.

3.2.1 *SNAP Policy*

ETH Providers shall not require residents to surrender their SNAP/food stamps for household use or to be used by other residents. It is illegal to require/suggest a resident (ETH or otherwise) to surrender any amount of SNAP benefits as a condition of staying at your facility. The only exception are for facilities that are Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) approved Group Homes or Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities. If you are interested in the responsibilities and qualifications of becoming a DCFS approved Group Home or Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facility, please visit <http://www.dcfslouisiana.gov/page/406> for additional information.

If some residents receive SNAP/food stamps while others do not, then the ETH Provider must maintain a provision for food access for those participants who do not.

3.3 Additional Housing Policies

As a part of the application process, all ETH providers must submit a copy of all house policies, rules and procedures. In addition, the following housing policies should be implemented for all ETH participants.

3.3.1 *Waiving of Fees Encouraged*

The purpose of the ETH program is to provide short-term housing for people at risk of homelessness who might not be able to afford other housing opportunities. Therefore, we strongly encourage all ETH providers to waive any deposits or fees for ETH participants.

3.3.2 *Participant Acknowledgement of the ETH Program*

Approved housing providers must have ETH participants read and sign the “ETH Participant Acknowledgement” form upon placement in your housing facility. This form is provided to the ETH housing provider by the JRI Office upon acceptance in the ETH program. It is recommended that this form to be completed upon intake when the participant is reviewing your facility’s in-house rules and policies.

The form includes the following information:

- An explanation of the compensation provided by the ETH Program relative to the cost of room and board
- Resident responsibility for housing and housing costs beyond the ETH period
- An explanation of what the ETH funds do and do not cover

The ETH resident must read and sign the form upon intake and submitted to the JRI Office during invoicing.

3.3.3 Work as Payment Not Allowed

The ETH participant may not be required to work as a payment for housing during the period that the ETH Provider is receiving reimbursement from the JRI Office.

4 Participant Placement

4.1 Eligible Participants

Eligible participants for this program must fall into one of these categories:

- **Participants Under P&P supervision:** People who are at immediate risk for homelessness and are currently under the supervision of Probation and Parole², or
- **Participants who have just full-termed out of DOC incarceration:** People who are leaving DOC incarceration, and are at immediate risk for homelessness, and will not be under the supervision of Probation and Parole upon release, and do not need to register as a sex offender with the Louisiana State Sex Offender and Child Predator Registry upon release.

4.2 Participant Referrals

There are three (3) methods for participant referrals:

1. **Probation & Parole Direct Referral:** If an individual needs housing services, their Probation & Parole Officer shall refer them to a specific housing provider on the ETH Housing Provider Referral List. The P&P Officer shall select the housing provider based on the individual’s characteristics (i.e. sex, parish, sex offender status) and the individual’s needs (e.g. proximity to employment, proximity to family, etc.).
2. **Indirect Referral:** If your organization identifies eligible participants through other sources (e.g. faith based outreach, word of mouth, etc.), you may receive the per diem for the participant with prior approval from the local P&P Office. In order for indirect referrals to be recognized and approved on the invoice, the participant’s name must be listed on the ETH Referral List submitted by P&P as confirmation of referral. It is suggested to receive written confirmation from P&P when requesting indirect referral approval.
3. **JRI Office Referral:** If an individual is currently incarcerated and in-need of housing services upon release, a state or local facility staff member (i.e. Transition Specialist) shall contact the JRI Office to approve a referral to an ETH provider. These referrals shall be done on a case-by-case basis, and coordinated by the JRI Office.

Placement on the referral list does not guarantee any number of participant referrals to any housing provider.

Referrals to housing providers shall be based on the participants needs including but not limited to: proximity to employment, doctor appointments, transportation, etc.

Participant Type	Approved Referral Sources	Time of Referral
Participants under supervision with P&P	P&P Direct Referral Indirect Referral <i>JRI Office Referral (if needed)</i>	Immediately prior to release, or At-Release, or Post-Release (while the participant is under supervision)

² All under adult felony supervision by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Participants who have just full-termed out of DOC incarceration	JRI Office Referral Only	Immediately prior to release, or At-Release
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4.3 Participant Referrals for Sex Offender Statuses

Housing providers shall be in compliance with local and state laws as it relates to the housing of sex offenders³.

Additionally, housing providers shall comply with the following requirements for participation in the ETH program:

1. Ensure **all** sex offender residents are in compliance with local and state laws pertaining to registration and notification⁴. This includes sex offenders who are not on P&P supervision.
2. Maintain compliance with all sex offender residence restrictions and acknowledge that subsequent changes in the law and/or the opening of a new childcare facility, church, school, or area where minors congregate within the restricted proximity of a housing unit shall cause immediate disqualification.
3. Report **all** inappropriate conduct (including criminal offenses) of sex offender residents to the supervising P&P officer of the resident and the JRI Office immediately, not to exceed 24 hours post-incident.
4. Have a policy in place to allow the supervising P&P officer the ability to maintain contact with the sex offender, at a minimum via telephone, in the event of a natural disaster or emergency situation where residents of a facility are displaced.
 - a. Assist the resident with Emergency Plan compliance within 24 hours of an emergency or evacuation/relocation which includes:
 - i. Reporting to the nearest law enforcement office and checking in,
 - ii. Contacting the closest P&P office and requesting reporting instructions, and
 - iii. Immediately informing the shelter director that the resident is a registered sex offender or under active supervision for a sex offense(s), if relocated to a shelter facility.
5. Ensure no child under the age of 18 is allowed to reside at location.
6. Provide additional documentation at the time of application of compliance with applicable laws pertaining to housing sex offenders with minor victims.

4.4 Case-By-Case Participant Extensions

Some participants may be approved for additional ETH reimbursement **on a case-by-case basis**. Those participants include:

- Individuals who have completed supervision while participating in the ETH program, but are nearing their next housing opportunity
- Individuals who have completed 6 months in the ETH Program, but are nearing their next housing opportunity

³ Housing must meet the minimum qualifications as stated in Louisiana RS 15:538 D. (i.e. at least a 1,000 feet away from a school, church or park, etc.)

⁴ See [RS 15:542](#) for additional information.

These extensions must be pre-approved by the JRI Office as soon as possible, and no less than one month prior to the participants' ETH end date.

Additionally, an ETH participant may take over per diem payments once the maximum ETH length of stay is reached, at the discretion of the housing provider.

5 Application Submission Process

5.1 Application Submission and Deadline

Completed applications for this program must be uploaded to [Smartsheets](#) for processing.

Deadline for applications for the Spring 2024 housing provider referral list is **April 15, 2024, at 4:30 pm (CT).**

Questions regarding the ETH Program, may be submitted to jriprograms@la.gov.

5.2 Application Review

Applications shall be reviewed on a rolling basis in the order they were received. The JRI Office will contact the person listed on the application for any clarifying information or if additional information is needed to make the appropriate determination. *If the application is considered incomplete, the JRI Office will make reasonable attempts to collect the outstanding information via email. If the requested information is not submitted timely or repeated attempts are needed to receive the outstanding information, it shall result in a denial of the application.*

The JRI Office and/or P&P staff shall conduct a housing facility site visit to ensure they are structurally sound and safe for living. Application processing and review may take up to three weeks upon submission of your application.

Applicants shall be contacted in writing upon approval of the application, or if denied, a reason will be given and the applicant would be eligible to reapply in the next application period.

Applications shall be approved or denied at the sole discretion of DPS&C and Division of P&P staff. Decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

5.3 ETH Approved Providers

Applicants shall receive written notification of acceptance into the housing referral program. The letter will also include the per diem amount authorized and the effective date of accepting participants. Additionally, approved applicants shall receive a copy of the ETH Policy and Procedures document that will include more details about the referral process and invoicing procedure.

Approved housing providers shall be placed on a "Housing Provider Referral List" for one (1) year. **Placement on the referral list does not guarantee any number of participant referrals to any housing provider.**

5.4 ETH Provider Requirements

Approved ETH Providers are required to certify the following statements prior to housing residents under the ETH program:

1. Approved ETH Provider shall notify DPS&C- JRI Office and the supervising P&P Officer of all inappropriate conduct of residents (including criminal offenses) immediately, not to exceed 24 hours post incident.
2. Approved ETH Provider shall screen all persons housed at the facility, including but not limited to the nature of their offense, whether they are a sex offender, and whether they must comply with registration and notification requirements. The results of the screening shall be kept in an electronic or paper file. In the event that a resident is discovered to be a sex offender, ensure compliance with the requirements for providers who house sex offenders as stated in Section 4.3.
3. Approved ETH Provider shall provide quarterly reports documenting any disturbances, whether in-house among residents or throughout the neighborhood. This documentation should show how the housing provider actually implemented house rules and policies.
4. Approved ETH Provider shall acknowledge that inadequate or negligent supervision of residents at their facility may subject them to liability.
5. Approved ETH Provider shall acknowledge that failure to comply with requests for information and documentation in order to ensure compliance with ETH requirements may subject them to immediate removal from the ETH approved provider list.
6. Approved ETH Provider shall acknowledge that they may be terminated from participation in the ETH program at-will and that no cause is required to be shown for termination.

6 Payment Information

6.1 Allowed Per Diem

Compensation for this program shall be limited to the following per diem rates (per participant) by housing provider type:

Housing Provider Type	Allowable Cost (Per Participant)
Emergency (Homeless) Shelter	Up to \$12 per day
Transitional Housing (Short-term Housing)	Up to \$20.84 per day ⁵ <i>If Approved for Additional Per Diem Funding:</i> Up to \$26.10 per day

Note: "per day" for the purpose of the ETH Program is per overnight stay and ends upon the last night the participant stayed in housing.

⁵ Unless the JRI Office approves a Request for Additional Per Diem Funding.

Upon approval into the ETH program, each housing provider shall be notified of their approved per diem amount. **The approved per diem amount shall not be higher than the applicant's published price.**

6.2 Sex Offender Housing Incentive Pay

If the housing facility meets the minimum qualifications as stated in [LA R.S. 15:538](#) (meaning the housing facility is at least a 1,000 feet away from a school, church, playground or otherwise listed in the referenced statute), the housing provider will be eligible for an additional \$2.00 per person per day per diem for providing housing to convicted sex offenders. Housing such individuals often require the individual to comply with state laws on sex offender registrations, including registering the facility's address as the place of residence, along with additional community notifications to the surrounding areas (postcards, notices in newspapers, etc).

6.3 Request for Additional Per Diem Funding

We understand that the ETH per diem may not cover all incurring costs for housing an ETH participant. If your vendor published price is above the maximum daily ETH per diem rate (i.e. \$20.84 per participant per day), you may request an additional per diem amount for transitional housing using the Request for Additional Per Diem Amount form of the ETH Application (Appendix E).

Additional per diem Requests shall be reviewed and may be approved based on at least **one** of the following criteria:

- The requested per diem amount is reasonable and necessary to aid ETH participants in finding and securing long term housing. This would include employing additional staff to assist participants in identifying and applying for rental units or long term housing programs.
- Operating expenses for the facility (i.e. rent, utilities, essential staff) is higher than the maximum per diem (\$20.84 per participant per day); therefore, accepting individuals into the ETH program at the allocated per diem rate would be detrimental to the operation of the transitional housing facility.

We cannot guarantee that a request for additional per diem will be granted.

In order to be considered for an additional per diem amount, the ETH Provider must submit supporting documentation that details the operational costs of your facility and/or illustrates the need for the additional per diem amount (e.g. operational budget, funding sources etc.).

A provider cannot invoice DPS&C for more than \$5,000.00 in any given month, regardless of the per diem rate, or the number of locations or facilities. Therefore, by requesting a higher per diem amount per participant, you may be limiting the number of ETH participants and the number of bed days that you may accommodate for ETH reimbursement each month.

6.4 Probation and Parole Compensation Fee

In order to compensate ETH Providers for the administrative effort needed to comply with the ETH program, all approved ETH providers will receive a \$1.00 P&P compensation fee per participant per day added to the approved per diem amount. The fee will be auto-calculated on the ETH invoice.

However, the total invoice amount, including the compensation fee, must be lower than \$5,000 per month in order to be processed for payment (See 7.5 Maximum Compensation).

6.5 Maximum Compensation

Maximum compensation allowed per housing provider is \$5,000 per month. A provider cannot invoice DPS&C for more than \$5,000.00 in any given month, regardless of the per diem amount, P&P Compensation fee, Sex Offender Incentive Pay, or the number of locations or facilities a provider has.

For example, Provider A provides transitional housing for 7 ETH participants for the entire month of March.

Calculating the Overall Per Day Per Participant Amount:

- Approved Daily Per Diem: \$20.84 per participant per day
- P&P Compensation Fee: \$1.00 per participant per day
- *Total Per Day Amount for Invoicing:* $\$20.84 + \$1.00 = \mathbf{\$21.84}$ per participant per day

Calculating Total Invoice Amount for March

- 7 people * 31 days = 217 bed days
- 217 bed days * \$21.84 per day = \$4,739.28
- *Total Invoice Amount for March:* **\$4,739.28**

Please stay mindful of how many ETH participants you are enrolling and how long they expect to stay in housing. It is recommended to “fill out” the invoice as you are enrolling or continuing participants, as the template provided will calculate the total automatically.

6.6 Invoice Processing

Upon receipt of each invoice, DPS&C shall check the invoice and attachments for the correctness and return them if required. Upon acceptance and approval of a signed itemized invoice for services performed, DPS&C shall make every reasonable effort to make payments within thirty (30) business days of the approval of the invoice. If the invoice is returned to the ETH Provider for corrections, the thirty days processing window will start over upon resubmission. The invoice shall not be approved for payment until all corrections have been resolved. To ensure faster payment, all ETH Providers are encouraged to sign up for direct deposit via the Electronic Funds Transfer Enrollment form by the Office of Statewide Reporting and Accounting Policy (OSARP). Please see Appendix G for more information.

6.7 ETH Funding Requirements

DPS&C reinvestment funding may not be used for housing a participant otherwise being fully funded under another funding source (federal, state, local, philanthropic funding, etc.). For example, a housing provider cannot invoice a participant in the ETH program and list the same participant to receive full payment under a federal grant. By submitting the signed itemized invoice, the housing provider is certifying that they are not being fully compensated by another funding source for ETH participants’ stay. If it is found that the provider has not been truthful, whether through the omission of information or otherwise, the provider shall be suspended from the ETH program pending the investigation.

Additionally, the ETH participant may not be charged for room and board costs paid through this program. If the ETH reimbursement does not fully cover room and board costs as defined by the published price submitted with the ETH application, the ETH provider may request a weekly fee of the ETH participant to make up the difference. The ETH provider must denote this weekly fee on the ETH Application. Since ETH participants are at-risk of homelessness, we highly encourage all ETH providers to waive any fees or deposits.

7 COVID-19 Considerations and Resources

Each ETH Provider has the discretion to administer its own COVID-19 screening and cleaning protocols. ETH Providers are encouraged to use local testing facilities to screen prior to entry; however, the JRI Office shall not reimburse the ETH Provider for any COVID-19 testing costs or other COVID-19 related expenses.

The ETH Provider is also highly encouraged to educate all residents on how to identify COVID-19 symptoms.

The Center for Disease Control published COVID-19 Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing (see [here](#)). The guidance also includes links to helpful resources such as videos, fact sheets and posters for your housing facility.

8 Suspension, Termination, or Voluntary Removal from ETH Program

DPS&C reserves the right to suspend or terminate an approved ETH housing provider at any time and for any reason, including any infraction deemed by DPS&C to be a threat to the safety and health of facility residents or the public.

8.1 Suspension from ETH Program

DPS&C may suspend an ETH Provider as needed for investigative purposes or guideline violations as deemed necessary by DPS&C. The ETH Provider shall be notified immediately of the violations via a Letter of Suspension sent to the email of record along with a notification that their status on the approved provider list has changed from Approved to Suspended. Throughout the duration of the suspension, the ETH Provider may not accept any new residents into their facility and all payments shall be suspended for current residents.

Full cooperation is required by all ETH Providers with regard to any investigation(s). Should the provider be reinstated upon conclusion of an investigation, the ETH Provider shall be placed back on the ETH provider list and may resume accepting new residents.

8.2 Termination from ETH Program

A Provider may be terminated from the ETH program for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of any of the ETH Policy and Procedures;
2. Violation of zoning codes, use and occupancy permits, licensing laws;
3. Noncompliance with any sex offender housing requirements or stipulations;
4. Permitting, aiding, abetting, or concealing the commission of any illegal act;
5. Failure to cooperate with DPS&C staff or P&P officers concerning site visits;

6. Fraudulent attempts to obtain funds through invoice requests for residents who are not currently active in the grantee's ETH program or for any other reason;
7. Sexual harassment, activity, and/or relationships between residents and staff;
8. The grantee, housing manager, or staff persons entering into a transaction with an ETH resident whereby information, goods, or services are exchanged for money, or any other good and valuable consideration;
9. Conduct or practice deemed by DPS&C to be detrimental to the welfare of residents being served by the ETH program or the public;
10. The submission of false information to DPS&C; or
11. At-will with no cause necessary, as determined appropriate by DPS&C

Terminated ETH providers shall be notified via a Letter of Termination sent to the email of record, along with a notification that the status has changed from Suspended to Terminated on the approved provider list. The Department is not required to provide the terminated party with a reason for their termination or reveal any results or conclusions involved in any investigation.

8.3 Voluntary Removal

If an ETH Provider chooses to be voluntarily removed from the ETH program, the provider must submit a letter to the JRI Coordinator notifying of withdrawal from the ETH Program along with an effective date at least 30 days after such notice. Upon the lapse of the required 30 days, the ETH Provider shall be removed from the approved provider list and shall cooperate with DPS&C in the relocation of current residents whose housing is reimbursed by DPS&C to other approved ETH Providers. In the event that residents elect to remain housed at the removed facility, their stays shall not be reimbursed by DPS&C.

8.4 Opportunity to Reapply

In the event, an ETH provider is removed from the program (terminated or voluntarily removed), the provider may reapply after one full calendar year; unless otherwise stated in the termination letter.

9 ETH Program Contact Information

9.1 ETH Application

Questions or concerns regarding the ETH Application should be sent to:

The JRI Office

Department of Public Safety and Corrections

jriprograms@la.gov