

Assistance Policy Urgent Repair Program – 2021 Cycle

What is the Urgent Repair Program? The City of High Point has been awarded \$75,000 by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (“NCHFA”) under the 2021 cycle of the Urgent Repair Program (“URP21”). The City shall contribute an additional \$10,000 from General Funds that are allocated toward affordable housing on an annual basis to supplement URP21 project activities. This program provides funds to assist very-low and low-income households with special needs in addressing housing conditions which pose imminent threats to their life and/or safety or to provide accessibility modification and other repairs necessary to prevent displacement of very-low and low-income homeowners with special needs such as frail elderly and persons with disabilities. A total of 8 households are projected to be assisted under URP21.

This Assistance Policy describes who is eligible to apply for assistance under URP21, how applications for assistance will be received, what the form of assistance is and how the repair/modification process will be managed. The City has made every effort to design this URP21 project to be fair, open, and consistent with the City’s approved application for funding and with NCHFA’s URP Program Guidelines.

The funds provided by NCHFA come from the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund.

Eligibility: To be eligible for assistance under URP21 applicants must meet the following requirements.

- 1) Must reside within the City of High Point and own and occupy the home in need of repair.
- 2) Must have a household income which does not exceed 50% of the State median income for the household size (see income limits below).
- 3) Must have one or more fulltime household members with special needs (i.e., be elderly (≥ 62 years old), handicapped or disabled, a single parent household with at least one dependent child in residence, a large family with ≥ 5 household members, a household with a child below the age of six with lead hazards present or a military veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable).

- 4) Must have urgent repair needs, which cannot be met through other state or federally- funded housing assistance programs.

**URP21 Income Limits
(Statewide non-Metro) ***

<i>Number in Household</i>	<i>30% of Median Income (very low income)</i>	<i>50% of Median Income (low income)</i>
1	\$14,900	\$24,800
2	\$17,000	\$28,350
3	\$19,150	\$31,900
4	\$21,250	\$35,450
5	\$22,950	\$38,300
6	\$24,650	\$41,100
7	\$26,350	\$43,950
8	\$28,100	\$46,800

**Income limits are subject to change based on annually published HUD income limits.*

Outreach Efforts of the Urgent Repair Program: The City of High Point will advertise or publish an article about the Urgent Repair Program in the local newspaper serving the City (The High Point Enterprise), at senior centers throughout the City, with veteran’s organizations that serve City residents, and on the City’s website.

Selection of applicants: The City shall select recipients on a first-come, first-served basis based on applications received from eligible applicants. NOTE: For a true emergency (e.g., tree falls on roof, sewer backup, etc.), the application and eligibility assessment shall be expedited, and work shall begin as soon as feasibly possible (see paragraph 10 of the Procurement Policy for more information).

The NCHFA Program guidelines require that a minimum of 50% of the households assisted must have incomes which are less than 30% of the area median income for the household size, and no household with an income exceeding 50% of the area median income will be eligible. This guideline will be adhered to strictly and will be a key factor in selection of those households served under the grant.

Recipients of assistance under the URP21 will be chosen by the above criteria without regard to race, creed, sex, color, or national origin.

The definitions of special needs’ population under the URP21 are as follows:

- Elderly: An individual aged 62 or older.
- Disabled: A person who has a physical, mental or development disability that greatly limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.
- Large Family: A large family household is composed of five or more individuals, with at least four being immediate family members.

- Head of Household: The person or persons who own(s) the house.
- Household Member: Any individual who is an occupant (defined below) of the unit to be rehabilitated shall be considered a “household member” (the number of household members will be used to determine household size and all household members are subject to income verification).
- Occupant: An occupant is defined as any immediate family member (mother, father, spouse, son/daughter of the head of the household, regardless of the time of occupancy); or non-immediate family member who has resided in the dwelling at least three months prior to the submission of the family’s application.
- Lead hazards: A child below the age of six with lead hazards in the home.
- Veteran: A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Emergency: A situation where a household member has an immediate threat of being evicted or removed from a home due to health or safety issues within a time frame that the program can complete a repair to stop eviction or removal.

Client Referral and Support Services: Many homeowners assisted through the Urgent Repair Program may also need other services. When City staff meet the homeowner during the intake and work write-up process, they will discuss the resources and programs available in the City and provide pamphlets and agency contact information when appropriate.

What is the form of assistance under URP21? The City will provide assistance to homeowners, whose homes are selected for repair/modification in the form of a loan. Homeowners will receive an unsecured deferred, interest-free loan, forgiven at a rate of \$2,000 per year, until the principal balance is reduced to zero.

What is the amount of the loan? The amount of the loan will depend on the scope of work necessary to address the identified imminent threats to life and/or safety, and that will be determined by the City’s Project Manager. There is no minimum to the amount of the loan; however, the maximum life-time limit in accordance with URP21 guidelines is \$10,000.

What kinds of work will be done? Only repairs that alleviate housing conditions which pose an imminent threat to the life and/or safety of occupants of the dwelling unit or accessibility modifications will be performed under the City’s URP. It should be noted that all deficiencies in a home may not be rectified with the available funds.

All work that is completed under URP21 must meet or exceed NC State Residential Building Code standards and be done in compliance with all state or local permitting, inspections, licensing and insurance requirements.

Who will do the work on the homes? The City is obligated under URP21 to ensure that quality work is done at reasonable prices and that all work is contracted through a fair, open and competitive process. To meet those very difficult requirements, the City will invite bids from contractors who are part of an approved contractors’ list, as well as from vendors provided

through lists from the City's Purchasing Division. Please request a copy of the City's Procurement and Disbursement Policy for further information.

A minimum of three approved contractors will be invited to bid on each job, and the lowest responsive and responsible bidder will be selected for the contract. "Responsive and responsible" is described in the Procurement and Disbursement Policy. Every effort will be made to secure at least three bids; however, in a case when this is not possible, the City's Purchasing Policy will be followed.

Should fewer than three (3) bids be received, the Project Manager may move forward in awarding the project to a responsive and responsible bidder.

In the event there are no responsive and responsible bids received in response to a bid solicitation, the City will assign the project to a non-profit housing repair and development organization, Community Housing Solutions (CHS), to undertake needed home repairs. The City will enter into an open contract with CHS to implement this option. The City's Project Manager will prepare the work write-up and cost estimate for each project, which will then be reviewed and finalized in consultation with the Home Repair Project Manager with CHS. CHS will then execute repairs in accordance with the agreed upon work write-up and stated cost.

The City has an existing approved contractors' list for its existing rehabilitation programs. We encourage other contractors to apply, particularly minority and women-owned businesses. A contractor or vendor can apply through the following process:

- 1) Fill out a contractor's questionnaire form which includes references, financial information, and recent jobs completed (contact: Thanena Wilson @ 336-883-3351).
- 2) Provide appropriate documentation, including licenses and liability insurance.

The City of High Point is an equal opportunity employer, implements non-discriminatory practices in its procurement/disbursement and will make special outreach efforts to include minority and women-owned enterprises (M/WBE) within its contractor and subcontractor pool.

What are the steps in the process, from application to completion? Now that you have the information about how to qualify for the City of High Point's URP21, what work can be done, and who will do it, let's go through all the major steps in the process:

- 1) **Completing an Application form:** Homeowners who wish to apply for assistance should call (336) 883-3349 or visit the City's website at www.highpointnc.gov/cd. Proof of ownership and income will be required. Those who have applied for housing assistance from the City in the past will not automatically be reconsidered. A new application will need to be submitted.
- 2) **Screening of applicants:** Household income will be verified for program purposes only (information will be kept confidential). Ownership of property will be verified along with

other factors.

- 3) **Preliminary inspection:** The City's Project Manager will visit the homes of applicants to determine the need and feasibility of repairs/modifications.
- 4) **Applicant interviews:** Approved applicants will be provided detailed information on assistance, program repair/modification standards and the contracting procedures associated with their project at this informational interview.
- 5) **Work write-up:** The City's Project Manager will visit the home again for a more thorough inspection. All areas of the home must be made accessible for inspection, including the attic and crawlspace, if any. The owner should report any known problems such as electrical short circuits, blinking lights, roof leaks and the like. The Project Manager will prepare complete and detailed work specifications (known as the "work write-up"). The Project Manager shall review the work write-up with the homeowner and obtain written acceptance of the work write-up from the homeowner. A final cost estimate will also be prepared by the Project Manager and held in confidence until bidding is completed.
- 6) **Bidding:** The work write-up and bid documents will be sent to a minimum of three contractors on the Approved Contractors' Registry, or from lists provided by the Purchasing Division, who will be given one week in which to inspect the property and prepare bid proposals. Each will need access to those areas of the house, in which work is to be performed, in order to prepare a bid. Bids will be opened in the City's Community Development & Housing Department.
- 7) **Contractor selection:** Within 24 hours of the bid opening, after review of bid breakdowns and timing factors, the winning bidder will be selected. All bidders and the homeowner will be notified of (1) the selection, (2) the amount, (3) the amount of the City's cost estimate, and (4) if other than the lowest bidder is selected, of the specific reasons for the selection.
- 8) **Execution of loan and contract:** The loan will be executed as well as the repair/modification contract. This contract will be between the contractor and the homeowner, with the City serving as the homeowner's agent. The total loan amount of URP21 funds will never exceed \$10,000 for project hard costs.
- 9) **Pre-construction conference:** A pre-construction conference will be held at the home. At this time, the homeowner, contractor and program representatives will discuss the details of the work to be done. Starting and ending dates will be agreed upon, along with any special arrangements such as weekend or evening work hours and disposition of items to be removed from the home (such as old plumbing, etc.). Within 24 hours of the pre-construction conference, the City will issue a "proceed order" formally instructing the contractor to commence by the agreed-upon date. NOTE: A "proceed order" will not be issued until the contract between the contractor and the homeowner has been executed.

- 10) **Construction:** The contractor will be responsible for obtaining any required building permits for the project before beginning work. The permit must be posted at the house during the entire period of construction. Program staff will closely monitor the contractor during the construction period to make sure that the work is being done according to the work write-up (which is made a part of the rehabilitation contract by reference) and in a timely fashion. The Project Manager will inspect new work for compliance with the State Building Code as required by the guidelines of URP21. The homeowner will be responsible for working with the contractor toward protecting personal property by clearing work areas as much as practicable.
- 11) **Change Orders:** All changes to the scope of work must be reduced to writing as a contract amendment ("change order") and approved by all parties to the contract: the owner, the contractor, the Project Manager, the City's Community Development and Housing Director (or his/her designee), and the City Manager (or his/her designee). If the changes require an adjustment in the loan amount, a loan modification stating these changes in the contract amount must be completed by the City and executed by the owner. If the changes result in a decrease in the loan amount, an estoppel informing the homeowner of these changes in the contract amount will be completed by the City and conveyed to the owner.
- 12) **Payments to contractor:** The contractor will be paid following the inspection and satisfactory completion of all items on the work write-up as well as the receipt by the City of the contractor's invoice and a release of liens, signed by all sub-contractors employed on the job and by all material suppliers from whom materials for the job were purchased. Please request a copy of the City's Procurement and Disbursement Policy for further information.
- 13) **Post-construction conference:** Following construction the contractor and the Project Manager will sit down with the homeowner one last time. At this conference the contractor will turn over all owner's manuals and warranties on equipment. The contractor and Project Manager will go over operating and maintenance requirements for any new equipment installed and discuss general maintenance of the home with the homeowner. The homeowner will have the opportunity to ask any final questions about the work.
- 14) **Closeout:** Once each item outlined in paragraph 12 above has been satisfied and the homeowner has signed a Certificate of Satisfaction, the job will be closed out.

What are the key dates? If, after reading this document, you feel that you qualify for this program and wish to apply, please keep the following dates in mind:

- Applications shall be available to the public starting on the date the NCHFA URP21 Funding Agreement is executed. It is anticipated that the execution of the Funding Agreement will occur on or about August 16, 2021.

- Resources for this program shall be available through December 31, 2022 or when total resources have been spent, whichever occurs first.

How do I request an application? Please contact:

April Jones, Administrative Coordinator
City of High Point, Community Development and Housing Department
211 S. Hamilton Street, Room 312
High Point, NC 27260
336-883-3348 OR april.jones@highpointnc.gov

Is there a procedure for dealing with complaints, disputes and appeals? Although the application process and repair/modification guidelines are meant to be as fair as possible, the City of High Point realizes that there is still a chance that some applicants or participants may feel that they are not treated fairly. The following procedures are designed to provide an avenue for resolution of complaints and appeals.

During the application process:

- 1) If an applicant feels that his/her application was not fairly reviewed and would like to appeal the decision made about it, he/she should contact Thanena Wilson, Assistant Community Development & Housing Director, within five days of the initial decision and voice their concern. If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the decision, the detailed complaint should be put into writing.
- 2) A written appeal must be made within 10 business days of the initial decision on an application.
- 3) The City of High Point will respond in writing to any complaints or appeals within 10 business days of receiving written comments.

During the repair/modification process:

- 1) If the homeowner feels that repairs or modifications are not being completed according to the contract, he/she must inform the contractor and the Project Manager.
- 2) The Project Manager will inspect the work in question. If he finds that the work is not being completed according to the contract, the Project Manager will review the contract with the contractor and ask the contractor to remedy the problem.
- 3) If problems persist, a mediation conference between the homeowner and the contractor may be convened by the Project Manager and facilitated by the City's Community Development and Housing Director ("Director") or his designee.
- 4) Should the mediation conference fail to resolve the dispute, the Director will render a written final decision.
- 5) If the Project Manager finds that the work is being completed according to the contract, the complaint will be noted, and the Project Manager and the homeowner will discuss the concern and the reason for the Project Manager's decision.

Will the personal information provided remain confidential? Yes. All information in applicant files will remain confidential. Access to the information will be provided only to City employees

who are directly involved in the program, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency and auditors.

What about conflicts of interest? No officer, employee or other public official of the City, or member of the City Council, or entity contracting with the City, who exercises any functions or responsibilities with respect to URP21 shall have any interest, direct or indirect, in any contract or subcontract for work to be performed with program funding, either for themselves or those with whom they have family or business ties, during their tenure or for one year thereafter. Relatives of City employees, Council Members and others closely identified with the City, may be approved for rehabilitation assistance only upon public disclosure before the City's Community Development and Housing Director and written permission from NCHFA.

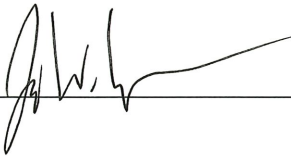
What about favoritism? All activities under URP21, including the review of applications, inviting bids, selecting contractors and resolving complaints, will be conducted in a fair, open and non-discriminatory manner, entirely without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status and disability.

Who can I contact about URP21? Any questions regarding any part of this application or program should be addressed to:

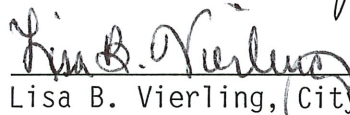
Thanena S. Wilson
Assistant Director, CD&H Department
211 S. Hamilton St., Rm. 312
High Point, NC 27260
336-883-3351
thanena.wilson@highpointnc.gov

This Assistance Policy is adopted this 2nd day of August 2021.

Mayor Jay W. Wagner



ATTEST:



Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk



****TO BE PLACED IN PROJECT FILE****

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the URP21 Assistance Policy and was provided the opportunity to review the document with City staff.

Owner _____ Date _____