



Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Regina Coordinated Access System Lead (CASL) Call for Expressions of Interest

The Regina Homelessness Community Advisory Board (RH CAB) wants to ensure every individual and family experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homeless, gets the right support at the right time.

An Expression of Interest is the first step in a transparent process that the RH CAB is using to assess the alignment between a proposed project and the requirements and outcomes under the Reaching Home program's mandate to operationalize a Coordinated Access system for Regina.

What is a Coordinated Access System?

A Coordinated Access System is a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports and is an essential element of any effort to prevent and end homelessness. Coordinated access systems are designed to streamline the process for people experiencing homelessness to access the housing and support services needed to permanently end their homelessness.

By standardizing the intake and assessment process, sharing information in real-time within the community, adopting uniform prioritization policies and coordinating referral processes across the community, coordinated access systems connect individuals experiencing homelessness to the right housing and supports as collaboratively and efficiently as possible based on client preferences and level of need. This ensures our community will get the most out of limited resources and we can more rapidly and effectively prevent and end homelessness for those in greatest need.

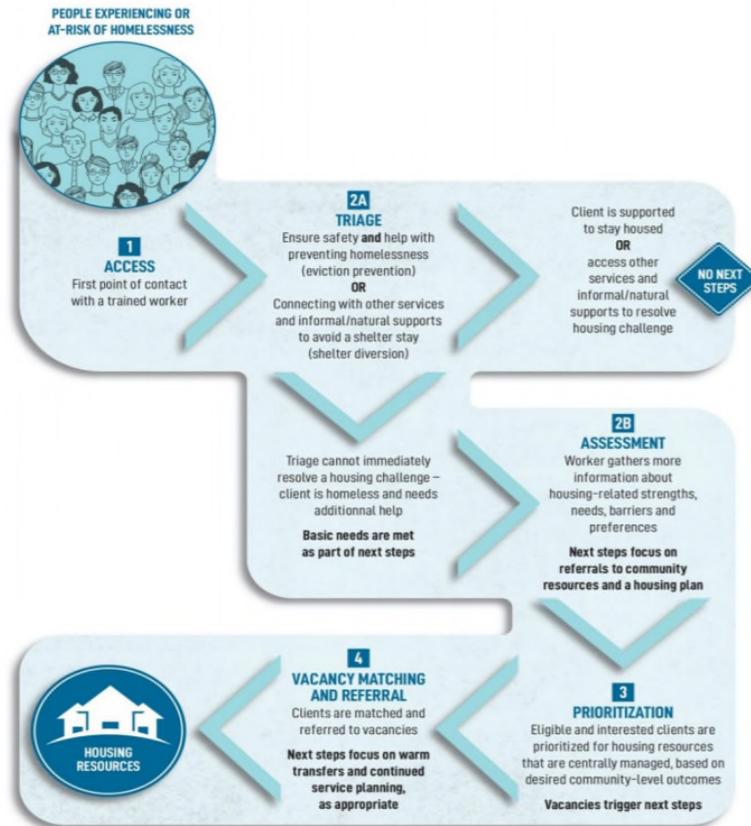
The RH CAB will accept Expressions of Interest from organizations that would like to work within Reaching Home program parameters and closely collaborate with Namerind Housing Corporation as Regina's Reaching Home Community Entity. If this is you, you are invited to submit an Expression of Interest through the process detailed starting at Page 5 of this document.

What is the Coordinated Access System Lead?

This management body is:

- ✓ a well-established organization that usually does not provide frontline services;
- ✓ a dedicated team that provides oversight, guidance, monitoring and evaluation, and continues to refine Coordinated Access system policies and procedures over time;
- ✓ completes client intake and prioritization assessments (as one of the Coordinated Access (CA) access/intake points) and administers and maintains the CA System's By-Names-List of Homeless Clients;
- ✓ inputs, manages, monitors, stores and effectively utilizes and reports data through the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS);
- ✓ continuously communicates and collaborates with Reaching Home funded homeless serving organizations with regards to their program capacities for client matching, referrals and ongoing case management from clients from the community's By-Names-List;
- ✓ continuously ensures real-time program and client specific data is consistently available to CA system partners;
- ✓ persistently onboards partners such as landlords, housing agencies, provincial ministries, and non-Reaching Home funded frontline organizations delivering related services;
- ✓ responsible for ongoing staff/agency training and capacity building for Coordinated Access within the community;
- ✓ ensures best practices within the system and works to keep the CA system consistent and in fidelity to the Housing First approach and established community policies and processes;
- ✓ incorporates feedback into continuous improvement process from the Reaching Home Community Entity and Reaching Home funded partners, Regina's Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) Group, and all key stakeholder groups including the Regina Homelessness Community Advisory Board, provincial and municipal governments and persons with lived experience;
- ✓ manages and regularly meets with CA System governance group – CCI Group; and
- ✓ responsible for continuous systems & community mapping.

Coordinated Access workflow illustration



Coordinated Access workflow and how the Coordinated Access System (CAS) Lead facilitates the process:

At its core, for the CAS Lead, Coordinated Access is essentially the management of three lists (within parameters of community’s CA Process Design & Policies and Procedures for Access, Intake & Assessment, Prioritization, & Referral and Matching);

1. By-Names-List (BNL): a list of individuals/families who are homeless and known by name to the community, stored on HIFIS. Clients are added to this list by accessing Intake Points within the CA System and going through the standard triage and assessment processes and procedures. These individuals/families are subsequently matched to vacancies within programs within the CA Inventory Partners List that best suit their needs;
2. CA Inventory Partners List: A list of housing and support resources in the community, with capacities/vacancies updated in real-time. When a vacancy becomes available within a CA Inventory Partner program, the CA Lead is responsible for working with situationally appropriate partners and connecting eligible clients to the vacancies.
3. Program Matching List: A list of BNL Clients and CA Inventory Partner program matches, with status updates with respect to case management progress.

Existing Partnerships and future roles:

1. Phoenix Residential Society has administered over the past several years the Centralized Housing Intake Process (CHIP) which is a precursor to a full Coordinated Access system. While Namerind's Intake and Assessment Worker will closely work with CHIP personnel during the transition period January 2022 to end Fiscal Year 21/22 (31 March 22), an ongoing relationship between the Coordinated Access System Lead organization and Phoenix Residential Society to transfer/translate all aspects of the Centralized Housing Intake Process to the Coordinated Access System may be required.

2. Flow Community Projects is the Lead for Coordinated Access system design and implementation. This work has been ongoing for the past two years, and Flow Community Projects will remain intricately involved in the project until operationalization is achieved. A full implementation period (to achieve all Reaching Home mandated minimum requirements) of three to six months is anticipated.

3. The Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) Group is the governing body for all CA design and implementation processes. The Indigenous Sub-Advisory Group is an established part of the CCI Group with the mandate to ensure that CA system design, policies and procedures as well as Intake and Assessment tools are culturally appropriate, human centred and trauma informed. Both bodies will remain in place as integral parts of the Coordinated Access System post 01 April 22 and ongoing close collaboration between the Coordinated Access System Lead (CASL) and CCI Group will be required.

4. Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership is the Lead for provincial HIFIS (Homeless Individuals and Families Information System) design and implementation in Saskatchewan's three Designated Communities (Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert). Ongoing close collaboration with SHIP as the HIFIS Lead for Regina implementation staging and system management and maintenance will be required.

5. Namerind Housing Corporation as the Reaching Home Community Entity (CE) for Regina enters into and administers all Contribution Agreements with Reaching Home funded partners as recommended by the Regina Homelessness Community Advisory Board. The CE fulfills all Reaching Home reporting requirements including community level data and outcomes. Ongoing financial and activity reporting, as well as communication, collaboration and data sharing with the Community Entity will be required.

Instructions

- Use the Expression of Interest template included in this document (pages 6 to 9) to describe your organization and proposed project to lead/administer Regina's Coordinated Access System.
- Be as concise as possible with your responses; however, do not leave out important information in order to be brief.
- Answer all questions as best as you can. Incomplete answers will not necessarily result in the RH CAB not selecting your project.
- Submissions must address all the prequalification criteria as well as project details and should be written in a clear, concise, and logical format. The main considerations will be technical capacity, managerial organization, qualifications relevant to the project and previous experience.
- It is important to know as much about Regina's Coordinated Access System as possible prior to preparing this EOI. For additional information on Coordinated Access under the Reaching Home program please review all information provided.
- Send your completed Expression of Interest including a preliminary budget to bconrad@namerind.com by submission deadline of **Wednesday, January 11th, 2022 at 11:59pm**. You will receive confirmation that it has been received.
- Expect your Expression of Interest to be assessed within four (4) weeks from the date of receipt. In addition, a Reaching Home Community Entity team member may contact you during the assessment period to ask follow-up questions.

For further information on Coordinated Access definitions and Reaching Home requirements see Appendix 1.

For further information on Eligible Activities and Expenditures see Appendix 2.

Expression of Interest

Regina Reaching Home Coordinated Access System Lead

1. Eligibility

a. Which of the following best describes your organization?

Not-for-profit organization		
For-profit organization (see note 1)		
Indigenous organization (see note 2)		
Municipality		

Note 1: For-profit enterprises are eligible for funding provided that the nature and intent of the activity is non-commercial, does not generate profit, and fits within the community plan or identified local need where plans are not required. Individuals, for-profit enterprises, and research organizations and institutes may also receive funding to carry out research that aims to help communities understand and address homelessness issues.

Note 2: Indigenous organizations may include, but are not limited to, incorporated for-profit and not-for-profit Indigenous controlled organizations, Indigenous controlled unincorporated associations, Indian Act Bands, Tribal Councils and Indigenous self-government entities. (definition of Indigenous organization utilized by the Regina Reaching Home program: greater than 50% Board and greater than 50% Staff including management).

Note 3: Preference may be given to an Indigenous organization.

Note 4: Strong preference will be given to an organization that does not simultaneously provide frontline services.

2. Organizational Information

Organization Name:

Contact Name (including title):

Email Address:

Phone number:

Address:



Does your organization provide frontline services within the homeless serving sector or a related field?

Yes:	No:
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Please confirm your organization’s ability/intention to comply with the following requirements:

The successful applicant will be required to
1. take over the staff (Intake & Assessment Worker; By-Names-List & Data Administrator) employed by Namerind Housing Corporation,

Yes:	No:
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and

2. sub-contract, for a period of three to six months, Flow Community Projects (CA Design & Implementation Lead) to ensure a smooth transition and successful implementation and operationalization of the Coordinated Access System as of 01 April '22.

Yes:	No:
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The successful applicant will be required to closely collaborate with Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) as the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) Design and Implementation Lead for Saskatchewan Reaching Home Designated Communities and coordinate with SHIP local training and onboarding of HIFIS by Reaching Home funded partners and other stakeholders within Regina.

Yes:	No:
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The successful applicant will be required to closely collaborate with Regina’s Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) Group and its Indigenous Sub-Committee as the advisory and governing body of the Coordinated Access System.

Yes:	No:
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The successful applicant will be required to closely collaborate with Regina’s Reaching Home Community Entity and enter into a data sharing agreement with same for Reaching Home program reporting requirements.

Yes:	No:
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3. Capacity and experience

Insert text here

4. Project Details

Insert text here

4. Budget and funding

Indicate the anticipated budget for the project/initiative, including the following information:

- Rationale for the anticipated budget amount
- Identify all potential sources of funds

Note 5: Preference may be given to an organization with significant cash / in-kind contributions toward the project.

Budget category	Annual cost	Rationale	In-kind or Cash Contribution

Total			

- Interested applicants can contact the Community Entity for further information on known costs towards the project.
- Based on yearly performance and outcomes review, the contract awarded to the successful applicant will be from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2024.
- Organizations that meet eligibility criteria and demonstrate capacity/experience and whose proposed project meets the Reaching Home Coordinated Access requirements may be invited to be interviewed by the Regina Homelessness Community Advisory Board (RH CAB). Each Expression of Interest will be assessed by the RH CAB. EoI submission does not obligate the Regina Homelessness Community Advisory Board to provide funding.

Appendix 1

Coordinated Access definitions and Reaching Home requirements

Definitions:

- **Access:** the engagement point for the individual or family experiencing a housing crisis. This may include emergency shelters, mobile outreach teams, day centres, other community-based organizations and hotlines.
- **Assessment:** the process of gathering information about an individual or family accessing the crisis system.
- **Prioritization:** the process of determining the individual's or family's priority for housing based on information gathered through the assessment.
- **Matching and referral:** the process whereby the individual or family is matched to and offered housing based on project-specific eligibility, needs and preferences.

Reaching Home requirements

Coverage

The coordinated access process must be implemented throughout the geographic area covered by a Designated Community.

Regina receives Reaching Home funding under both the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness streams. Cross-stream engagement on the implementation, operation and use of the coordinated access approach is expected.

The RCASL will be responsible to fully engage with the Community Entity, the Community Advisory Board and Indigenous organizations as they are critical partners in a community's efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness, and their participation in coordinated access is essential to its success.

The RCASL will be responsible to fully engage with Indigenous organizations in order to support active participation of all service providers and ensure appropriate and culturally sensitive referrals.

The Regina Reaching Home program will require all projects receiving funding from the Designated Communities stream and Indigenous Homelessness stream to participate in the coordinated access system. This includes, but is not limited to, emergency shelters, transitional housing providers, outreach teams and diversion service providers, and rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing providers.

Reaching Home funded projects providing housing placement (for example, rapid rehousing, transitional housing, supportive housing) and associated supports (for example, case management) must receive referrals and fill vacancies through the coordinated access process.

Governance

Communities are required to have an appropriate governance operating model to exercise proper leadership for the implementation and ongoing management of the coordinated access system. In Regina, this includes the CCI Group, including the Indigenous Sub-Advisory Group, and RCASL to manage implementation and ongoing operation of the coordinated access system in consultation with the Community Entity and the Community Advisory Board.

Communities must have in place policies and procedures outlining how the coordinated access process operates (for example, the process for evaluating individuals' eligibility for assistance). The purpose of the policies and procedures is to help govern the operation of coordinated access and should be made publicly available, if requested.

Policies and procedures are in place for Regina's Coordinated Access system with regard to:

1. Standard assessment procedures, including documentation of a set of criteria to support uniform decision-making across access points.
2. List of prioritization factors and assessment procedures (for example, acuity assessment form, functional impairments including physical disabilities) with which prioritization decisions are made.
3. Referral procedures, including standardized criteria by which a participating project may justify rejecting a referral; and
4. Protocols for obtaining participant consent to retain and share information for purposes of assessing and referring participants.

Access

Adherence to the established and agreed upon intake procedure for the entry of individuals and families into the system is required by all Reaching Home funded partner organizations

Within Regina's Hybrid Coordinated Access system, designated access points are clearly defined and easily accessed by individuals and families seeking homeless or homelessness prevention services.

All people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness must have equitable access to coordinated access sites, regardless of the way that sites are organized in the community. This includes, but is not limited to, people experiencing chronic homelessness, youth, Indigenous Peoples, veterans and families. Specialized access points may be identified for subpopulations including youth, Indigenous Peoples and survivors of domestic violence.

Individuals may not be denied access to the coordinated access process because of perceived barriers to housing or services (for example, income, drug or alcohol use).

Assessment

All coordinated access locations and methods (for example, phone, in-person) must offer the same assessment approach using uniform decision-making processes.

- The assessment component of coordinated access can be completed at a single interview, or it may be completed in phases, where partial information is collected on an as-needed basis as participants navigate the process. For example, the initial triage could be used to gather information on the individual's immediate needs. This could be followed by an initial assessment to identify a participant's housing and support needs. The final step could be a comprehensive assessment, which will be used to gather the information necessary to refine, clarify, and verify a participant's housing and homeless history, barriers, goals, and preferences.

Requirement: communities must use a common assessment tool for all population groups (for example, youth, women fleeing violence, Indigenous Peoples) so that there is a shared approach to understanding of people's depth of need. However, the questions and approaches used to conduct the assessment can be adjusted for specific populations (for example, a conversational approach rather than an interview-like approach may be more appropriate for Indigenous clients).

- Acuity assessment tools can be used to understand the level of need among those experiencing homelessness.
- Communities are responsible for selecting the assessment tool that works best for them, based on local needs and priorities as well as their approach to coordinated access. Any tool used for coordinated access should have, to the greatest extent possible, the following qualities:
 1. Tested, valid, and appropriate
 2. Reliable (provide consistent results)
 3. Person-centered (focused on resolving the person's needs, instead of filling project vacancies)
 4. User-friendly for both the person being assessed and the assessor
 5. Strengths-based (focused on the person's barriers to and strengths for obtaining sustainable housing)
 6. Housing First-oriented (focused on rapidly housing participants without preconditions)
 7. Sensitive to lived experiences (culturally and situationally sensitive, focused on reducing trauma and harm); and
 8. Transparent in the relationship between the questions being asked and the potential options for housing and support services.
- Assessment tools may not produce the entire body of information necessary to determine an individual or family's needs and prioritization, either because of the nature of self-reporting, or circumstances outside the scope of assessment (for example, manner in which an individual responds to challenges, circumstances of their lived experience). For this reason, it may be beneficial to collect additional information as needed (for example, demographic, background, current situation, preferences) and/or review the approach being used for the assessment. For example: assessments conducted with clients could lead to greater information sharing and experiences if the assessor assigned to the client is part of the same population group (for example, visible minorities, Indigenous Peoples). Engagement with key stakeholder groups to

help inform the assessment questions and approach for the different local population groups is encouraged.

Prioritization

Requirement: prioritization is established through a series of triaging factors, including but not limited to an acuity assessment score from the common assessment tool. It is also important to note, that only information relevant to factors listed in the coordinated access written policies and procedures may be used to make prioritization decisions.

- Beyond the acuity assessment score, other prioritizing factors taken into consideration include, but are not limited to: length and history of homelessness, current sleeping arrangements, health status, vulnerability to victimization, household type, number of children and/or pregnancy, youth, seniors veteran and Indigenous status.
- For example, priority populations could include:
 - People with greater depth of need who are experiencing chronic homelessness
 - People who are highly vulnerable and have multiple disabilities (mental health, substance abuse issues), and people who have exhausted most of their sheltering options
- The priorities established for one population group (for example, singles) will likely be different than the priorities established for any other population group (for example, families, youth); and
- There are 3 main approaches to operationalizing the prioritization of individuals and families. Communities have the flexibility to select which of the 3 approaches works best for their local needs.
 - **Frequent service user approach:** participants are prioritized based upon the volume of service (emergency and/or homeless response) they currently use.
 - **Descending acuity approach:** prioritization relies solely on an acuity (depth of need) score.
 - **Universal service management approach:** a number of co-occurring variables can be considered at the same time to customize a prioritization approach that matches housing and support resources to those experiencing homelessness.

Requirement: in order to manage prioritization for referral and placement in a housing program, communities must maintain a priority list.

- A priority list generally provides persons by name or identification code, and it serves as the reference for the referral process. Those identified on the priority list have gone through the assessment process. Communities can choose between maintaining a single priority list with all known homeless persons, or having separate lists by sub-population (for example, youth, Indigenous Peoples, families).

Requirement: as part of the planning process, communities must establish a set of prioritization criteria for each project type (for example, rapid rehousing, supportive housing).

- For example, a community may determine that the highest priority for permanent supportive housing could be given to those who meet the definition of chronically homeless and have the highest service needs.

Matching and referral

Requirement: referral to housing services must be made based on prioritization guidelines, project-specific eligibility requirements (for example, age restrictions, geographic location) and the specific needs and preferences of the client.

- The referral process is essentially a match that coordinated access makes between the needs and prioritization of the individual or family experiencing homelessness and available housing services. In referral, the individual with the highest priority is offered housing and support services first.
- Communities will determine which matching process works best for them. Primarily they need to decide between a case conferencing model or a short-list model.

Requirement: referral must remain person-centred allowing participants self-determination and choice without repercussions or consequences, other than the natural consequences that occur with choice (for example, clients who refuse a housing placement would maintain their spot on the priority list).

- Referral to a receiving program does not signify admission to that program. Rather, the receiving program may carry out its own intake process, including but not limited to an application, verification process, and admission decision. This would not impact positioning on a priority list.

Requirement: methods of dealing with referral challenges, concerns or disagreements such as refusal of various referrals must be in place.

Homelessness Management Information System

Requirement: the use of HIFIS will be mandatory in all Designated Communities where an equivalent Homelessness Management Information System is not already being used.

- An equivalent Homelessness Management Information System must meet the following requirements:
 - Allow service providers to participate in the coordinated access system
 - The ability to support communities to undertake the intake of clients, the prioritization of clients based on pre-established criteria and the triaging and referring of clients to housing and housing-related supports
 - The capacity to export the same mandatory anonymized data fields to ESDC as required with HIFIS.

Requirement: in all Designated Communities, Community Entities must develop a set of local agreements to manage privacy, data sharing, and client consent in compliance to municipal, provincial and federal laws. This may include the following:

- A Data Sharing Agreement, signed by each participating service provider that outlines a common understanding of what information is to be shared and why, detailing privacy and security protocol decisions, the quality of data to be provided, data entry protocols and relevant data management practices; and
- A consent form, an agreement between the client and the service provider that provides consent on retaining and sharing of the individual's data.

Requirement: Community Entities that operate with HIFIS are required to sign a Data Provision Agreement and an End-user License Agreement with ESDC.

- The Data Provision Agreement is an agreement between ESDC and Community Entities that authorizes ESDC's quarterly collection of certain non-identifiable data fields in return for the use of HIFIS.
- The End-user Licence Agreement is a legal agreement between the End-User, and the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada who owns all right, title and interest in HIFIS and all corresponding intellectual property associated with the software and the program.

Requirement: in all Designated Communities, Community Entities must setup a governance structure to oversee decisions related to implementing and maintaining HIFIS and the data collected. This may include the following:

- Identify participating service providers;
- Create a terms of references;
- Develop policies and protocols; and,
- Address data-related issues regarding legal, privacy, and the integrity of data collection.

Requirement: all Community Entities must access a server and establish corresponding security and safeguards to secure the data collected. This may include the following:

- Securing an IT professional to establish and oversee server and security infrastructure; and,
- Establishing policies and protocols regarding data management and access rights.

Appendix 2

Eligible Activities and Expenditures

Eligible activities include:

- Mapping of the housing and homeless-serving system to identify existing programs and services and assess current capacity, program funders, and program requirements.
- Operating and further developing the coordinated access system, including:
 - Developing partnerships with service providers and other community organizations as necessary
 - Delivering Change Management activities, such as developing and implementing a communication strategy (for example printed or web-based communications, training for, including travel to, Coordinated Access/HIFIS/SPDAT training
 - Implementing a by-name list
- Hiring a project manager for coordinated access, including for coordination of local implementation of HIFIS in cooperation with the HIFIS Lead organization (SHIP):
- Staff wages (for example, Intake & Assessment Worker, By-Names-List administrator/analyst and community mapping coordinator, and the corresponding benefits and mandatory employment related costs (for example, Canadian Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, etc.).
- Acquiring hardware/software IT infrastructure and other necessary IT equipment, and related office furniture (for example, computer):
 - Additional support as necessary, for example, legal advice, network security, development of tailored HIFIS reports.
- Developing partnerships to support a broader systematic approach to addressing homelessness (for example, partnerships with health services, Social Services, corrections, housing providers).
- Acquiring additional support (for example, contracts, consultants) related to project activities.
- Improving services (for example, staff training on activities in support of a broader systematic approach to addressing homelessness). System support projects to strengthen the organizational capacity of networks, coalitions and other sector organized groups to develop best practices in terms of service delivery and more responsive, better-integrated services and partnerships.
- Informing the public and soliciting feedback on activities intended to reduce and prevent homelessness.

Ineligible activities include:

- Software and/or hardware purchase and/or development for the collection and management of homelessness data that constitutes a redundant use of funds and duplicates activities already offered through HIFIS; and
- Administrative costs incurred by Community Entities in the delivery and management of contribution funds under Reaching Home to a third party.

Administration expenditures

As per Reaching Home Directives, no more than 15% of the Reaching Home contribution can be used for administrative costs, and these costs must be reflected in the proposed project budget.

Eligible costs include:

- Administrative costs
 - General administration-type costs, normally incurred by any organization, that enable effective delivery of the project. These include costs such as: administrative staff for activities such as accounting, reporting and human resource management, and general administrative costs such as rent, phone/fax, postage/courier, office supplies, internet/website, bank charges, office moving expenses, office cleaning, security system, garbage removal/recycling, publication purchases, equipment maintenance and membership.
- Professional fees
 - Contracting for goods or services such as bookkeeping, janitorial services, information technology, equipment maintenance services, security, audit costs and legal fees.
 - For services provided in support of Indigenous individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (for example, services provided by Indigenous Elders).
- Travel
 - Travel costs set out in the [National Joint Council of Canada's Travel Directive](#) that are incurred by project staff, volunteers and contracted professionals. Examples include flight, hotel, car rental.
- Capital assets
 - Eligible costs related to other capital costs (for example, vehicles, tools, equipment, machinery, computers and furniture for service delivery).
 - Cost of purchasing or leasing capital assets over \$1,000, excluding taxes, with the exception of facilities. Under Reaching Home, this includes: furniture, appliances and fixtures for the facilities used to carry out administrative activities.
- Other activity-related costs
 - Direct costs explicitly related to administrative activities that are not included in any other expenditure category, such as: cultural competency training, rented space to hold meetings, hospitality for meetings, furniture costing \$1,000 or less, before taxes, printing costs, meter charge for photocopies, translation.

Ineligible activities include:

- International travel costs.
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Costs associated to traffic fines and penalties.