

**VISTA Application Checklist
(include as cover letter for application)**

Organization Name: Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention

Date of Submission: May 3, 2018

Name of Individual Submitting Application: Polly Ruddick

Contact for Individual: pruddick@lexingtonky.gov or 859-258-3105

of VISTAs Requested: 1

- Applicant Information Form**
- Narratives**
- Performance Measure Chart**
- VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)**
- On-Site Orientation + Training (OSOT)**
- VISTA Recruitment + Retention**
- Supervisor + Host Site Capacity**
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Applicant Information Form

Date Submitted: 5/3/2018

Type of Application: **Previous VISTA Experience** **No VISTA Experience**

AGENCY INFORMATION:

Legal Name: Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government – Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention

Address: 200 East Main St., Lexington , KY 40507

EIN: 61-0858140

Legal Status of Agency: **501(c)3 Charitable Non-Profit** **Government Agency**
 Other

of VISTA Slots Requested: 1

MISSION/PURPOSE OF AGENCY

Describe the core programs of your agency. In other words, what does your organization do to fulfill its mission? The LFUCG Office of Homelessness Prevention & Intervention provides planning, resources and coordination alongside community partners to build a Lexington where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. The Office does not provide direct services but serves as the Continuum of Care lead organization and coordinates more than \$3 million in local and federal funding operated by dozens of partner organizations that provide services ranging from street outreach and shelter to permanent supportive housing. OHPI facilitates the local coordinated entry system for homelessness and conducts data collection (including the annual Point In Time Count) and analysis to identify needs, develop best practices among providers, and provide funding for new and innovative solutions.

Give a short 2-3 sentence description of your intended VISTA project. The VISTA member in the Office of Homelessness Prevention & Intervention serves as a critical team member for leading data collection efforts and supporting overall coordination and program improvement. Specifically, the member leads the annual Point In Time Count of people experiencing homelessness including process development and improvement for future years. The member also supports the coordinated entry system for housing placements through policy development and implementation and works alongside staff members to develop and deploy program monitoring tools and associated technical assistance.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency Director: Polly Ruddick

Director Phone Number: 859-258-3105

Email Address: pruddick@lexingtonky.gov

Contact Person: Polly Ruddick

Contact Email Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Proposed VISTA Supervisor: Polly Ruddick

Email: Click here to enter text.

Phone Number: Click here to enter text.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

of Full-time Staff: 2

of Part-time Staff: 0

of Active Community Volunteers: Approximately 100 volunteers support the office throughout the year in various projects. About 75 of those volunteers serve during the annual Point In Time Count.

Annual Budget: Office of Homelessness FY2017-2018 Operating Budget - \$120,716; FY 2017-2018 Budget including funds provided as grants – \$808,432.

Age of Organization: Office of Homelessness - 4 years

VISTA PROJECT FOCUS AREA

Economic Opportunity (Financial literacy, housing, employment)

Military Families

Healthy Futures (Sustainable agriculture, food resources, health care)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Is your organization currently a member of HHCK? If yes, are you current on HHCK dues? Yes

Note: Each agency awarded a Homes for All VISTA through HHCK must become a paying member of HHCK.

VISTA Performance Measures

Please select all of the metrics that you anticipate will apply to your project. An additional form is provided in this packet for submission purposes.

Performance Measure	Check (if applicable)	Target Number	Tracking Mechanism (Database, sign-in sheets, etc.)
# of community volunteers VISTA members recruited	X	100	Sign-In seats form point In Time Count and other activities
# total service hours community volunteers recruited by VISTA member	X	500	Sing-in sheets for Point In Time Count and other activities.
\$ value of cash resources leveraged by VISTA member			
\$ value of in-kind resources leveraged by VISTA member	X	\$2,000	Monthly reports compiled by VISTA member, reviewed by supervisor.
# of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving housing placement services because of VISTA capacity building efforts	X	250	Reports from Fayette County Coordinated Entry database.
# of economically disadvantaged individuals transitioned into housing because of VISTA capacity building efforts	X	100	Reports from Fayette County Coordinated Entry database.

VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

Title: VISTA Homelessness Prevention and Intervention Specialist
Sponsoring Organization: Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky Project Name: Homes for All Project Number: Project Period: 8/20/2018 – 8/20/2019
Site Name (if applicable): LFUCG Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention
Focus Area(s) (do NOT put “capacity-building”) Primary: Continuous system improvement Secondary:
Note: <i>If your VAD is not accepted, the State Office will note the reason(s) why here.</i>

VISTA Assignment Objectives and Member Activities

Goal of the Project: The Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention seeks to further refine and improve its annual Point In Time Count of people experiencing homelessness. This complicated count requires in-depth coordination and analysis to ensure all people are counted and properly recorded and reported so that Lexington can track overall progress in reducing homelessness and identify areas of need. Finally, the VISTA project will result in a project monitoring and technical assistance process adopted by the city’s Homelessness Prevention & Intervention Board for continuous improvement of the homeless system to reach the goal of diversion, prevention, and rapid re-housing.

Objective of the Assignment (9/20/2018 – 4/30/2019)
Improve efficiency and accuracy of the Fayette County Point In Time Count of people experiencing homelessness.

Member Activities:

1. Revise existing methodology and secure adoption by Continuum of Care board.
 - a. Conduct best practices review of similar communities and consult results and feedback from prior years.
 - b. Incorporate changes into revised methodology and present to CoC board for approval.
2. Plan and conduct 2019 Point In Time Count and compile results for public distribution and submission to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - a. Recruit volunteers and secure in-kind donations of materials for unsheltered count.
 - b. Train shelter staff members and volunteers and conduct count in January 2019.
 - c. Coordinated with shelters and other housing programs to compile results and disseminate to HUD and the public.
3. Conduct debrief of 2018 PITC and recommend process improvements for 2020.
 - a. Interview and survey PITC volunteers and shelters and compile feedback on 2019 process.
 - b. Propose recommended changes for 2020 count.

Objective of the Assignment (4/1/2019 – 8/20/2019)

Create and deploy project monitoring tools and process for evaluation of locally funded and federally funded but locally operated homelessness projects.

Member Activities:

1. Work alongside the Continuum of Care Coordinator to develop a universal monitoring tool for all local homelessness projects that considers compliance, efficiency, and efficacy of the intervention.
2. Assist with developing a process for monitoring and identification of opportunities for training and technical assistance.
 - a. Work with OHPI staff members to draft policies and procedures and review with the Continuum of Care Board.
 - b. Work with other local public and private funding sources to seek process efficiencies including universal monitoring tools and visits.

CNCS Prohibited Activities

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

On-site Orientation & Training

Working in the Office of Homelessness has a steep learning curve and the Office invests heavily in training VISTA members in their first month. During that time the VISTA member will be trained to use the HMIS database; participate in several HUD webinars to learn about the Continuum of Care process and funding; and meet one on one with the CoC Coordinator and OHPI Director for orientation to LFUCG and all local funding. Next, the VISTA member is taken to each of the community's emergency shelters and several additional key providers for tours of those facilities that include meeting staff and learning about specific programming. The VISTA member will participate in high level staff meetings and Urban County Council meetings to develop an understanding of local government. The Office also maintains a binder of materials update by each preceding VISTA member with information for their successor. This includes specific recommendations for training and development needs and opportunities, a glossary of terms and acronyms, and bibliography of policies, procedures, and other documents to know and understand. The new VISTA member is always given time in their first weeks to review this binder and the associated ancillary documents and then to meet with appropriate staff members for questions and discussion.

Serving in the Office of Homelessness provides significant professional development opportunities for anyone seeking a career in housing and homelessness projects or the non-profit sector. As a function of the position, the person works closely with both front line staff members and executive leaders of most local organizations in this field. Members build relationships with these organizations as they perform job duties and participate in various meetings. Members also have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by leading meetings and conducting trainings and/or presentations. Any member serving in the Office of Homelessness can expect to have multiple avenues for employment at the close of their service and the Office staff provide support in that process by arranging meetings and contact to make those employment connections. Additionally, members end their term of service with a breadth and depth of knowledge of federal and local funding for homelessness, including the HUD Continuum of Care that is matched only by long-term employees of local organizations. This factor alone makes them attractive to many employers. They will also be licensed users of the local HMIS system and will have participated in multiple additional trainings and webinars ranging from understanding chronic homelessness to grant writing and budget development.



OHPI AmeriCorps VISTA On-Site Orientation Plan

Working in the Office of Homelessness has a steep learning curve and the Office invests heavily in training VISTA members in their first month. The following training plan and resources have been developed in conjunction with the last two AmeriCorps VISTA's – as they have been very involved in developing the training materials.

Week One:

- Introduction to staff and physical workspace (office, breakroom, restrooms, keys, parking, etc.)
- Explanation of Office Policies
- New User Training for the database Kentucky Homeless Management Information System (KYHMIS)
- Participate in several HUD webinars to learn about the Continuum of Care process and funding – list of recommended webinars will be provided
- Begin reading the Point In Time Detailed Instructions Document created for you by previous AmeriCorps VISTA; this includes specific recommendations for training and development needs and opportunities, a glossary of terms and acronyms, and bibliography of policies, procedures, and other documents to know and understand.
- Shadow current AmeriCorps VISTA

Week Two

- Introduction to key partners in the community (Emergency Shelters, Street Outreach, etc) and learning about their specific programming
- Meet w/ OHPI Staff to learn about various sources of funding for the homeless population (local & federal)
- Discuss HHCK timesheets
- Review of the VISTA Assignment Description with detailed conversation about responsibilities

- Work with current AmeriCorps VISTA on Introduction to Coordinated Entry and Ending Veteran Homelessness initiative.

Week Three:

- Attend Coordinated Entry and Documenting Chronic Homelessness Training

On-going:

- We have compiled a list of professional Listserves/email mailing lists you are encouraged to register for to stay current with new approaches in the industry
- Participation in high level staff meetings and Urban County Council meetings to develop an understanding of local government

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The Office of Homelessness Prevention & Intervention has two full-time employees. The Continuum of Care Coordinator, a full-time position, will serve as site supervisor and ensure the VISTA member has access to all needed training and development needed to be successful. This position, conducts all training for the Office including certifying individuals to use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database. This position benefits greatly from the support of the VISTA and the two work closely together. Management of this project and supervision of the VISTA member are part of this position's job duties and she is able to manage that capacity.

The Office of Homelessness has hosted a VISTA for each of the past two years and has a dedicated office including desk, computer, phone and other necessary equipment and supplies dedicated for this position. The cost share funds are included in the Office's budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 as well as funds for mileage reimbursement. The Office also has dedicated resources for training and other needs as they arise.

All former and current members would describe their experience as an excellent opportunity to develop leadership and facilitation skills while growing a deep understanding of the issues and funding that impact housing and homelessness. The experience is also an excellent opportunity to build relationships with dozens of local providers of homelessness services while demonstrating skills in front of these potential employers. Members who serve at this site can expect to be sought after by employers in the field as their term of service ends because many partners have already worked with the member and know their skills, abilities, communications style, etc. This is an excellent site for professional growth. In addition, the member is given the opportunity to make a significant and lasting impact on the homelessness system in Lexington. Policies and procedures written by members are used today in the community's coordinated entry process and the VISTA member serves as lead for the annual Point In Time Count with an emphasis on process improvement and ensuring complete and accurate data. The data used in that count and in other areas drives the overall priorities for the Office of Homelessness including where funding is directed and for what purpose.

The Continuum of Care Coordinator, will supervise the VISTA member because the project activities directly tie to this area of responsibility within the Office. This position is responsible for compilation and submission to HUD of all Point In Time Count and Housing Inventory Count data; leadership of the coordinated entry system; performance monitoring; and training and technical assistance. The VISTA member works closely with this position and together they identify the specific projects, coordinate and develop a response, and implement solutions. Whomever is selected for this position must have successfully provided supervision for past VISTA members even if located at another site.

The VISTA member will serve in the Office of Homelessness Prevention & Intervention offices at 101 E. Vine Street in Lexington – an annex property of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government. Weekly service hours are generally 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with occasional evening or weekend meetings or presentations. Once during the service year the VISTA member will lead the annual Point In Time Count

which takes place late on a weeknight and requires some evening meetings and training in the weeks leading up to the count.

**Homes for All VISTA
Partner Site Application
SIGNATURE PAGE**

Acknowledgements:

We understand that AmeriCorps VISTA members placed through Homes for All are required to attend all Homes for All trainings/events, participate in conference calls, and national days of service. We agree to release them from the site to participate. We support Homes for All in its effort to provide member training and recognition events and will accommodate occasional absences of the member (with advance notice, when possible) for this purpose.

Assurances:

- The legal applicant organization has an active Drug-Free Workplace Policy and an active Non Discrimination Policy.
- Partner site has the institutional, managerial, and financial capability required to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the activities described in this application.
- Partner site will comply with all applicable requirements of all federal laws, regulations, and policies governing this program.
- Partner site will keep such records and provide such information to Homes for All CNCS with respect to the program as may be required for fiscal audits and program evaluation, including documentation of in-kind contributions, for three years.
- Partner site will comply with the non-displacement rules of The National and Community Service Act of 1990.
- Partner site will comply with all Prohibited Activities related to AmeriCorps service.
- Partner site agrees to provide a nonrefundable site contribution of \$5,400 per VISTA. This is not the cost of the VISTA member.
- Partner site must be current members of the Homeless + Housing Coalition of Kentucky.
- Partner site agrees to keep the lines of communication between the organization and the appropriate HHCK staff (Program Director or Member Coordinator) in regards to the member's progress, any problems that arise, and highlights of the member's service year.
- Partner site agrees to **not** hire the member until the member's service commitment is complete.

Director
Member Supervisor Signature:  Date: 4-24-18

Mayor
Executive Director Signature: pending Council Approval Date: _____

Partner Site Board Chair: _____ Date: _____