



Municipal Support Grant Program

Application | SFY 2027 | 2026–27 Winter Season

Administered by Get Warm Now VT, a partnership of Vermont Interfaith Action and Green Mountain Justice, for the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families, Office of Economic Opportunity.

About the Program

The Municipal Support Grant Program (MSGP) helps Vermont municipalities support their unhoused neighbors during periods of extreme cold. Grants go directly to towns and cities so they can provide life-sustaining shelter, services, or supplies to community members in need. The program is established under Act 143 of 2026 at 33 V.S.A. § 2209.

Many Vermont towns have real need but no funded shelter and no obvious way to create one. Smaller communities have been carrying this work on volunteer effort and local goodwill. This program puts flexible money behind that effort.

Who Can Apply: Any Vermont municipality that commits to shelter community members during a National Weather Service Cold Weather Advisory this winter. There are no fixed regions and no minimum population — communities of any size from across the state may apply.

When Shelter Operates: During an NWS Cold Weather Advisory for your locality, which in Vermont corresponds to roughly -20°F wind chill. You monitor advisories for your own locality — most municipalities already carry this obligation under their Local Emergency Management Plan, and the Department of Public Safety provides support as a backstop. Operating during a qualifying advisory is required of grantees; there is no opt-out. You may choose to open in warmer conditions as well.

How Much: There is no hard ceiling on a request. Proposals are assessed on community need, the strength of the plan, and reasonableness. Most awards this year are expected to fall between \$10,000 and \$30,000. If a request looks out of scale with the response you are proposing, we will work with you rather than turn you down.

How You Get Paid: Grantees receive funding up front to get started, with the balance reimbursed against documented costs. Exact payment terms and documentation requirements are being finalized with the Office of Economic Opportunity and will be set in your subgrant agreement. Your town will not have to front the cost of standing up a shelter.

How Long the Money Lasts: Once your shelter commitment is in place, funds may be used through June 30, 2027, whether or not a Cold Weather Advisory is ever issued.

This application is short on purpose. You do not need a finished shelter, a signed permit, or a completed operations plan to apply — those come before a grant agreement is signed, not before you apply. If a piece is missing, say so and tell us what you need. Helping you get there is part of what we do. If you would rather transport people to a shelter in a neighboring town than open your own, that counts too, and we want that option to stay realistic for small towns rather than becoming a paperwork exercise.

Key Dates

- Application posted: Tuesday, September 8, 2026
- **Applications due Thursday, October 1, 2026, by 4:00 PM.** Send to contact@getwarmnowvt.org.
- Award notifications: Thursday, October 15, 2026
- Mobilization readiness: November 15, 2026
- Season opens: on or before December 1, 2026, depending on Vermont temperatures

Technical assistance is available throughout — site selection, staffing, budgets, transportation arrangements, and permitting. Reach out early. If you are interested but not ready to commit, contact us anyway. Knowing which communities are thinking about this helps us design the program and helps the State see where the need is.

1. Municipality Information

Municipality: _____

Mailing Address: _____

ZIP code(s) to be monitored for Cold Weather Advisories: _____

Unique Entity ID (UEI), if you have one: _____

Contacts

Day-to-day contact (name and title): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Cold weather contact and after-hours phone (may be the same person): _____

2. Your Shelter Commitment

Every grant must include a commitment to provide overnight shelter during a Cold Weather Advisory. You can meet that commitment in any of three ways. Check the one that fits, or check more than one if you are combining approaches.

- ☐ **An existing shelter.** Our municipality can already shelter community members in an existing facility approved to operate under cold weather advisory conditions.
- ☐ **A proposed shelter.** We have a municipal facility in mind that could operate under cold weather advisory conditions, and a plan to get it there.
- ☐ **A collaborative agreement.** We will hold a shelter agreement with a neighboring municipality or an approved shelter provider, along with a plan to transport people to and from that site.

Describe your commitment in your own words. Where will people go on an advisory night, who will open the doors, and what still needs to happen between now and December?

If you are relying on a collaborative agreement, name the partner and describe the status of the arrangement:

A signed agreement is not required to apply. A conversation in progress is fine — tell us where it stands. Around-the-clock accessible transportation is scarce in Vermont, so a contract with a regional transit provider is often the practical route. Talk to us early and we can help.

3. Your Proposed Response

Beyond the shelter commitment, you have real flexibility to design a response that fits your community. Check everything you plan to fund:

- ☐ Overnight emergency shelter operations and staffing
- ☐ Repairs and readiness work at a dedicated shelter facility (cots, bedding, code-required safety improvements)
- ☐ Daytime warming and provisions at the same site as the overnight shelter
- ☐ Transportation supporting cold weather sheltering, including transport under a collaborative agreement
- ☐ Life-saving supplies such as coats, sleeping bags, and tents
- ☐ Other: _____

Briefly describe what you plan to do and who it will reach. Include roughly how many unsheltered residents you believe are in your community and how you know.

The statute directs funding toward areas with a high volume of unsheltered homelessness, but this is an evaluation consideration and not a screening test. Proposals from all communities are welcome. Tell us what you see, even if the number is small or uncertain. Funds support existing facilities and operations; the program does not fund new construction.

4. Site and Readiness

Skip this section if you are relying entirely on a collaborative agreement with another community or provider.

Proposed shelter address: _____

Approximate capacity: _____

Proposed hours of operation (e.g., 6 PM – 8 AM): _____

Fire safety approval status for overnight use at the intended capacity:

- ☐ Approved (attach documentation)
- ☐ In process
- ☐ Not yet started
- ☐ Not applicable — collaborative agreement

If not yet approved, describe your plan, timeline, and any barriers:

In most Vermont municipalities this review is done by the State Division of Fire Safety through its regional managers. Sprinkler requirements come up often, and variances with conditions such as awake overnight staff have been granted. Start early — this is the step that most often delays a shelter opening, and it is not a reason to hold off on applying.

Who will staff the shelter, paid or volunteer, and how many people per night?

Training is recommended, not required. You need to be able to show that your staffing arrangement can deliver safe care and safe operations. Get Warm Now VT provides training opportunities, templates, and coaching, including the operating standards and plan templates used by the Extreme Cold Weather Shelter Program.

Is the shelter reasonably reachable on foot or by transit for unsheltered residents in your community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No — describe how you will provide transportation:

5. Guests, Plan, and Coordination

Shelter under this program is low barrier and time limited. No coordinated entry assessment or case management is required. The only information collected at intake is guest name and date of birth, and even that is applied flexibly. Life safety comes first and tracking second. A guest may not be denied shelter for declining to provide information, and no identification is required. Get Warm Now VT provides templates for everything you need to report.

Does your municipality have, or will it develop, a written shelter plan covering guest rules, intake, staff roles, emergency contacts, de-escalation, and entry by law enforcement or outside medical personnel?

- ☐ We have one (attach it)
- ☐ We will develop one before the season — please send us the template

Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP):

- ☐ We have reviewed our LEMP and this proposal does not contradict it
- ☐ We have not reviewed it yet and will do so before an agreement is signed

Is there an Extreme Cold Weather Shelter Program (ECWSP) shelter operating in your locality, or is one applying?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes — name the shelter and operator: _____

If the answer is yes, that is a good thing, not a problem. The two programs run on different triggers — ECWSP activates at 10°F wind chill or colder, the MSGP on a Cold Weather Advisory at roughly -20°F — and a community is well served by both. We ask only that the two operations coordinate, and we will help set that up.

6. Budget

Fill in the categories you plan to use. Round numbers are fine. Attach a page of detail if it helps explain a large line, and tell us if you would like the optional budget template.

Expense category	Amount requested
Overnight shelter operations and staffing	
Repairs and readiness work at the shelter facility	
Daytime warming and provisions at the shelter site	
Transportation	
Life-saving supplies (coats, sleeping bags, tents)	
Other	
TOTAL REQUEST	

Briefly explain your major assumptions — for example how many nights you expect to open, or what a site readiness figure covers:

At the Cold Weather Advisory threshold you may open only a few nights in a season, or none at all in a mild winter. That is expected, and your grant is not contingent on the weather. Early feedback suggests site readiness alone can run \$10,000 or more, so plan realistically rather than modestly.

7. Reporting

Reporting is deliberately minimal and proportionate to the size of the award. Get Warm Now VT provides all templates, and reporting moves to a simple web-based system this season. Please confirm your municipality can:

- ☐ Submit a short report after each advisory night the shelter operates, including a count of people served
- ☐ Report a critical incident promptly if one occurs
- ☐ Keep receipts, invoices, and staff or volunteer hours for anything charged to the grant
- ☐ Submit an end-of-season report

If you foresee any difficulty with this, tell us here:

8. Anything Else

Tell us anything that would help us understand your community, your plan, or what stands in your way. Questions are welcome too.

Signature

This application must be signed by a senior municipal representative — the mayor, selectboard chair, or city or town manager. By signing, that official certifies that the information here is accurate to the best of their knowledge, that the proposal comports with municipal regulations and guidelines, and that the municipality commits to providing low-barrier shelter during a Cold Weather Advisory this winter, requiring no identification and denying no one shelter for declining to provide information.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title (mayor, selectboard chair, or municipal manager): _____

Municipality: _____

Date: _____

Send your completed application by 4:00 PM on Thursday, October 1, 2026 to contact@getwarmnowvt.org. If something in here is a problem for your town, call us before you give up on it.