

American Rescue Plan (ARP) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) Request Form

Please complete this form in accordance with the process instructions.

Agency/Point of Contact: MN Department of Health/Margaret Kelly, Deputy Commissioner

Title of Request: Emergency Temporary Staffing Pool -Hospital Decompression

Date: 10/25/2021 **Request Amount:** \$ 2,490,000

Expenditure Time Period: 10/29/2021 to 6/30/2023

Brief Summary of Request: (Summary must be complete on this page with supporting information attached)

In light of extreme constraints on hospital capacity and staff shortages in long-term care (LTC) facilities that limit the ability of hospitals to discharge patients to an appropriate setting, MDH requests authorization of \$2.49M to expand the emergency staffing pool to provide temporary staff to skilled nursing facilities voluntarily agreeing to use temporary staff to add beds for individuals who no longer need hospital-level care. This will free up hospital beds in areas of short supply due to the number of patients needing hospitalization. This effort will be conducted under MDH's authority pursuant to MN Statutes, Section 144.05, Subd 1 (2) and jointly managed by MDH and DHS pursuant to MN Statutes, Section 471.59 (joint exercise of powers). MDH/DHS will use third party entities under contract with DHS to carry out the requirements of this response activity. MDH and DHS will jointly identify nursing facilities stable enough to participate. Individual patient discharge decisions will be governed by all current applicable laws. No additional hospital discharges to nursing facilities receiving emergency staffing pool resources will occur on or after February 15, 2022. DHS estimates this funding will be sufficient to cover the costs of 50 certified nurse assistants and 25 licensed nurses, or other clinical staff as indicated, for approximately six months. DHS and MDH will incur administrative costs related to administration of the program.

The Emergency Temporary Staffing Pool activity is an appropriate use of the state fiscal recovery funds (SFRF). The pool is a direct response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. It provides temporary replacement workers to care for individuals in congregate care settings experiencing staffing shortages related to COVID-19. The Emergency Temporary Staffing Pool is jointly managed by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health (MDH). Between August 2020 and October 2021, there were 249 provider sites approved for assistance and a total of 719 positions requested.

Funding awards give third party vendors discretion to offer: (1) significantly higher salaries than pre-pandemic wage rates for equivalent licensure levels and relative to training, credentials, background check, license status; (2) at least 14 days of paid sick leave; (3) comprehensive health insurance benefits, including asymptomatic diagnostic testing; (4) workers' compensation coverage; and (5) housing and per diem expenses for the duration of their deployment. DHS offers a variety of additional incentives and bonuses to improve response times. All Emergency Temporary Staffing Pool staff must be vaccinated against COVID prior to any deployment and undergo regular COVID infection surveillance testing.

Margaret Kelly
Digitally signed by Margaret Kelly
Date: 2021.10.27 14:14:50 -05'00'
Department Head Signature

Date