



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 1568

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

Queen Esther's Place is a faith-based foster home dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, and transformative environment for girls ages 13-18 in Alachua County, Florida. Operated by Fresh Start Ministries of Gainesville. The program offers stable housing, life skills training, educational support, and emotional healing for young women who have experienced trauma, neglect, or displacement which could result in homelessness. With a foundation rooted in christian values, Queen Esther's House fosters personal growth, self-sufficiency, and spiritual development through structured mentorship, counseling, and community engagement. The home's holistic approach ensures that each resident receives the care, resources, and guidance needed to thrive emotionally, academically. and spiritually.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	350,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	350,000
Total State Funds Requested	700,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	700,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	700,000	100%

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**
- If yes, provide the most recent instance:**

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. **Is future-year funding likely to be requested?**
- a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**
- b. **Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.**
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Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

07/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

11/01/2025

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

National grants and donor funding

11. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

N/A

12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Salary will be used for the Executive Director who will also serve as the Residential Manager	80,000
Other Salary and Benefits	This amount will be used for employee benefits.	15,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Office and equipment supplies	25,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Program study and development consultant	10,000
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Salaries for (1) full time and (3) part-time staffers	130,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Used for security system, groceries, furnishing, toiletries, utilities, taxes and insurance	80,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Cost will cover expert guidance in compliance, licensing and operational best practices ensuring all state regulations are met. Additionally funds will be used for research materials, and professional services to enhance the home's long-term sustainability and effectiveness.	10,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Property acquisition:\$200k will be used to purchase a home, establishing a stable and secure foundation for the foster care initiative. Renovations & safety upgrades: \$100k will cover structural updates, code compliance, modifications and essential safety features to meet state foster care system mandates.	350,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		700,000

13. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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The long-term goal of Queen Esther's Place is to empower and equip young women in foster care with the skills, confidence, and support necessary to break cycles of instability and build successful, independent futures through a stable and nurturing environment. The program aim is to foster personal growth, educational achievement, and emotional resilience, ensuring that each resident is prepared for adulthood. Providing mentorship, life skills training, and faith-based guidance. Queen Esther's house seeks to produce confident, self-sufficient, powerful young ladies.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Queen Esther's House provides a comprehensive range of activities and services designed to support the personal, educational, and emotional development of young women in foster care. These include stable housing, individualized case management, academic tutoring, and college or career readiness programs. Residents receive life skills training in areas such as, financial literacy, cooking, and job readiness, along with access to professional counseling and trauma-informed therapy. Faith-based mentorship, bible study and spiritual enrichment programs.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Queen Esther's House directly benefits the Alachua County community by providing a safe stable, and supportive home for young women in foster care, reducing homelessness and juvenile delinquency rates. By equipping these young women with essential life skills, conflict resolution skills, education, and emotional support. The program fosters self-sufficiency, leading to more productive, engaged citizens. The home also eases the burden on local social services by offering structured faith-based alternative for at risk youth, decreasing reliance on emergency housing.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

Queen Esther's Place serves adolescent girls 13-18 in foster care system. particularly those who have experienced trauma, abandonment, neglect, or instability in Alachua County, Florida. This project specifically targets young women who are at risk of aging out of the foster care system without the necessary life-skills, education, or support to transition successfully into adulthood. Many of these girls faced emotional, physical or psychological challenges and Queen Esther's house provides them with essential tools and support to help them navigate efficiently.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The expected outcome of Queen Esther's House is to empower young women in foster care to achieve stability, independence, and personal growth by providing them with a safe home, education, life-skills training, self-worth, and emotional support. Success will be measured through key performance indicators, including high school graduation rates, college or vocational programs enrollment, job placement, and overall self-sufficiency upon leaving the program.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?

Contract extensions or renewals may be contingent upon meeting performance benchmarks, ensuring accountability.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster? No

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?

- Yes, Applied



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- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College



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Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.