The Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program helps families that live in public housing decrease their reliance on income and work supports. ROSS grants pay the salaries of ROSS service coordinators who are case managers and perform general needs assessments of residents in public housing and Indian housing communities. They identify service providers to meet residents’ needs, including: transportation, child care, education, training, and work supports. ROSS can support the case management portion of integrated service delivery aimed at public housing residents; including work supports screening and assistance.

### Elements of Integrated Service Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Core 1: Employment and Career Advancement</th>
<th>Core 2: Income Enhancements and Work Supports</th>
<th>Core 3: Financial and Asset Building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Management</td>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>Tax Preparation</td>
<td>Financial Coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>Case Management (for employment)</td>
<td>Income Supports</td>
<td>Savings and Asset Building Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Job Retention Support</td>
<td>Supportive Services/ Human Services Referrals</td>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State and Nonprofit Examples

**Center for New Horizons (CNH), Chicago, Illinois:** Centers for New Horizons (CNH), a non-profit in Chicago supported by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), received a grant from ROSS that funds one service coordinator position. Because CHA offers a separate program called FamilyWorks that provides ongoing case management to public housing residents, the CNH service coordinator focuses on identifying the needs of public housing residents based on initial consultations, and linking residents to surrounding community organizations and companies that can help meet their needs.

**Da-Network Housing Ministries, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** Da-Network Housing Ministries, a nonprofit social services organization in North Philadelphia, uses ROSS to fund the salaries of two services coordinators who work with the residents of five Philadelphia public housing sites. The organization received the grant directly from HUD, but works with local tenant councils to gain better access to residents. Each service coordinator serves a minimum of 75 clients per year. They carry out intake assessments, and assist residents in connecting to workforce training, computer literacy, financial literacy and work supports. The coordinators also connect clients to other services provided by Da-Network and bring in other organizations to facilitate workshops for residents.
Eligibility and Targeting

ROSS grants can go to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), Resident Associations (RAs), tribally-designated housing entities, and non-profit organizations. Only residents of public and Indian housing are eligible to receive case management services from ROSS service coordinators, and each coordinator must be assigned full-time to a particular housing project. To be eligible to serve this group, a non-profit organization must receive a letter of support from the local PHA or RA.4

There have been some proposals to combine ROSS funds with the Public Housing General Funds, and eliminate ROSS as a stand-alone program.5 While supportive services and case management are allowable activities under the Public Housing General Fund, most PHAs use their limited General Funds for facilities improvements and maintenance.6

Federal Funding: In FY10, $50 million was allocated, some of which is reserved for the PH FSS program. Of the total FY09 allocation of $37.5 to ROSS, $28 million was available for ROSS service coordinators.

Type of Program: Discretionary Grants

Agency with Jurisdiction: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Match Required: 25 percent local match required, with in-kind services countable.

Services/Program Support

The purpose of the ROSS program is: “To promote the development of local strategies to coordinate the use of assistance under the Public Housing program with public and private resources for supportive services and resident empowerment activities. These services should enable participating families to increase earned income, reduce or eliminate the need for welfare assistance, make progress toward achieving economic independence and housing self-sufficiency or, in the case of elderly or disabled residents, help improve living conditions and enable residents to age-in-place.”7

ROSS service coordinators function as case-managers and provide a full range of case management services to eligible populations. ROSS service coordinators also coordinate with other programs and agencies to ensure that participants receive necessary services, though ROSS cannot fund service provision directly.

In the most recent ROSS Notice of Funding Available (with applications due February 21, 2011), each ROSS service coordinator grant is a three-year grant that provided funding for the salaries and benefits of up to three service coordinators. The maximum salary per coordinator is $68,000. Grantees are to be allocated $10,000 to pay program administration fees and $2,000 for training and travel.8 For the remainder of the three-year period,
the 91 ROSS grant recipients will receive funding annually. In May of 2010, grantees received a total of $27.9 million.

If supported by RA(s), a non-profit was eligible to apply for one service coordinator position for each RA that supported its application. RAs or non-profits applying on their behalf are by statute entitled to 25 percent of all ROSS service coordinator funds.

If supported by a PHA, a non-profit could apply for positions dependent on the number of units served by the PHA:
- 50 to 1,000 units received 1 service coordinator;
- 1,001 units to 2,500 units received 2 service coordinators;
- 2501+ received 3 service coordinators.  

Each non-profit could submit up to three applications requesting up to three service coordinators, meaning that each non-profit could potentially to receive funding for up to nine service coordinator positions. Fiscal year 2009 grantees were determined by lottery from among qualified applications. Slightly less than half of all qualified applicants were funded in fiscal year 2009. For detailed information about the fiscal year 2009 grant application process and requirements, see the fiscal year 2009 ROSS Notice of Funding Available.

**Non-Federal Funds**

Except for funds used to support the Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency program, ROSS service coordinator grants require a 25 percent cash or in-kind match. The matching requirement can be satisfied through the provision of services to program participants, by applicants or partnering organizations. Other federal funding sources can provide the match, as long as this is an allowable use of those other federal funds. Thus, federal, state, or foundation funds could provide the match.

**Program Limitations**

While at one time ROSS funds could be spent directly on services for participants, in fiscal year 2008 the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) limited the allowable uses of ROSS funds exclusively to service coordinators. Since ROSS cannot fund direct service delivery, ROSS service coordinators are responsible for arranging the provision of all services using other funding sources.

Nonprofits are only eligible for a portion of the funds available in ROSS. The remainder is used for the Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency program.
Grantees

Local funding information for ROSS can be found at:

For technical assistance, contact the ROSS Program manager at 202-402-2341. Answers to frequently asked questions are available at: http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm.

1 This program is sometimes referred to as Resident Opportunity and Supportive Services rather than Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency.
3 ROSS is also the exclusive funding source for the Public Housing Family Self Sufficiency (PH FSS) program. ROSS grants for PH FSS fund PH FSS program coordinators, who implement and administer the PH FSS program at individual public and Indian housing facilities. These PH FSS program coordinators cannot provide case management services, though they do connect with local providers of services that might be useful for PH FSS program participants. Because of this limitation and because only PHAs are eligible to apply for this funding, PH FSS and the related-but-independently-funded Housing Choice Voucher Family Self Sufficiency (HCV FSS) program are not good fits for the CWF model.
4 “About the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency Grant Program.”
5 Note that President Obama’s FY 2011 budget request proposes eliminating the ROSS set-aside because “self-sufficiency activities are currently an eligible expense under the Operating Fund.” See http://hud.gov/offices/cfo/reports/2011/cjs/public-housing-cf2011.pdf. As a result, the ROSS funding stream may prove unreliable, though it is important to remember that Congress has yet to draft and approve a final version of the FY 2011 budget.
6 Anice S. Chenault, ROSS Program Manager, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Interview May 27, 2010.
9 Ibid.
10 Chanault.
12 “ROSS Service Coordinators NOFA for FY 2009.”
14 “About the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency Program.”