

**Texas Rural Communities, Inc.**  
**168 Cimarron Park Loop**  
**Buda, TX 78610**

**Program Summary: La Posada Providencia**

La Posada Providencia (La Posada) requests **\$5,000** in funding from Texas Rural Communities, Inc. to help support its **Emergency Shelter Program**. This program provides for the immediate needs of our clients to ensure their safety, and provide clean shelter, food, shower and laundry facilities, computer and Internet access, clothes and personal supplies for up to 25 people per day, mostly children and their mothers, 24/7/365 days per year.

Specifically, the funds requested in this application are to fund the *Client Needs* portion of the program. The purpose of Client Needs is to purchase clothing, shoes, backpacks, diapers, car seats, personal and hygiene items, and other needs our clients have and that arise on a daily basis.

Our clients, homeless immigrants and asylum seekers, ages ranging from newborn to elder, have been oppressed in political conflicts, displaced after a natural disaster, or persecuted by life-threatening actions. Many have endured severe hardships, including extreme poverty, unjust imprisonment, even torture. Single adults and whole family units from around the world embark on dangerous journeys, often traveling through as many as 12 countries before reaching the United States border. The entire journey can take months, involving traveling through territory controlled by violent gangs or hostile forces, traversing treacherous terrain, riding in crowded vehicles, or floating on poorly constructed boats. Needless to say, once these individuals reach the United States border, they are physically and mentally exhausted from their trips.

Once clients are processed by immigration officials, they are released to La Posada. Often they arrive to our shelter exhausted and malnourished, with minimal possessions and little or no money. They have gone days or even weeks without eating a proper meal, not having access to showers, and often wearing the same clothes on their back. When adults and families arrive at La Posada, the immediate objective is to restore their overall health and wellness. To accomplish this goal, staff assesses the specific needs of the individual or family and provide them with proper clothing, personal items and baby supplies they and their children may need.

Since immigration policies are constantly changing, these needs are dynamic and difficult to predict. For example, at the end of the first month of the current fiscal year on July 31, our statistics showed that we served 62 clients. At the end of the first quarter of this fiscal year, we have served 197 clients, an increase of 317%! That is precisely why *Client Needs* remain a top priority for us to fund. Since the need for clothing and shoe donations and the other items listed above are standard, La Posada purchases these needed basics for clients on an ongoing basis.

If awarded, 100% of clients will have their immediate hygiene and personal needs met in order to restore their wellness. Clients will be provided with hygiene items (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, clean towel, diapers, etc.), have access to a hot shower, will be given clean clothes and other personal items they may need upon their arrival.

This is an ongoing operational project. Grant monies received as a result of this grant application will be expended within one year from the date of receipt of said grant monies.

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**168 Cimarron Park Loop**  
**Buda, TX 78610**  
**Grant Application: La Posada Providencia**

**Section I: Contact Information**

**a. Name, Mailing Address, Telephone Number and e-mail of Contact person for grant**

Contact Person: Alma Rock, Development Coordinator

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Address: 30094 Marydale Road City: San Benito State: TX Zip: 78586

Work Phone: 956-399-3826 Home Phone: 956-742-9285 Email: [arock@lppshelter.org](mailto:arock@lppshelter.org)

Fax: 956-399-2898 E-mail: [cdplaposada@lppshelter.org](mailto:cdplaposada@lppshelter.org) Website: [www.lppshelter.org](http://www.lppshelter.org)

**Name / Address of Organization:** La Posada Providencia - (address same as above)

**b. Tax ID Number:** EIN#: 300691482. IRS Determination Letter is attached.

**Section II: Organizational Description**

**a. Mission Statement:** *La Posada Providencia*, founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, is a ministry for people in crisis from around the world, who are seeking legal refuge in this country. The shelter staff provides a safe and welcoming home; mentors to promote self-sufficiency and cultural integration; and imparts values which witness God's Providence in our world.

**b. Purpose:** To provide emergency shelter for indigent immigrants and asylum seekers in the lower Rio Grande Valley upon release by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to meet their basic needs, and to promote their successful integration into United States culture.

**c. Organizational History:** La Posada was founded in south Texas in 1989 by the Sisters of Divine Providence, a community of women religious of the Roman Catholic Church. Then, as now, the need exists for temporary, emergency shelter for poor immigrants, asylees and asylum seekers in the lower Rio Grande Valley (the Valley).

While the Valley is commonly regarded as a thoroughfare for recent immigrants, it lacked then, as it does now, the infrastructure needed to adequately serve this population. Specifically, there are major gaps in the provisioning of important resettlement services such as lack of emergency housing; inadequate options for employment preparation; lack of accessible English classes and life-skills education; inadequate local public transportation; and lack of access to social services and healthcare until legal status is resolved. La Posada's purpose effectively closes these gaps in services for current and future immigrants.

Initially, these gaps prompted the Sisters to establish an emergency shelter program in Harlingen. La Posada's first client, Teresa from El Salvador, arrived on December 1, 1989. In 1995, La Posada settled into its permanent home in nearby San Benito.

In 1998, La Posada's operations were transferred to Providence Ministry Corp. (PMC), a Missouri nonprofit corporation with tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) status. In 2000, PMC was granted a certificate of authority to transact business in Texas and operate under the assumed name of La Posada Providencia. In 2011, La Posada abandoned its incorporation in Missouri as PMC and is now separately incorporated in Texas as the non-profit agency, La Posada Providencia.

**d. Major Accomplishments:**

- (1) Since 1989, La Posada has successfully responded to Lower Rio Grande community needs by assisting over 8,500 new immigrants, asylum seekers and asylees. The results of this accomplishment are two-fold; they represent a significant humanitarian effort, and a paying forward community benefit with ripple effects for future generations. The individuals we have helped have become community volunteers, taxpaying residents, small business owners and acquired higher education for themselves and their children.
- (2) In 2010, La Posada began building capacity to deliver client services as efficiently and comprehensively as possible. Since then, four full-time and three part-time positions have been fully integrated into La Posada's operating budget. Two part-time weekend supervisor positions are new additions. They are former La Posada clients who will supervise the shelter, complete household chores, and organize and prepare meals on Saturdays and Sundays. These new positions provide the in-residence personnel relief from the arduous 24/7 schedule. We are especially proud of this accomplishment because it also pays forward the assistance these employees once received as clients.
- (3) In January 2015, La Posada purchased a 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom mobile home to serve as the residence for the three women religious (employees) living on-site. This purchase was made as a result of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department's policy regarding the housing of families in shelters. HUD's policy states that families are not to be separated into different sleeping quarters when residing in a shelter. Facilities that previously separated families into different dormitories based on gender are now required to designate sleeping space for family units that allow all family members to remain together.

Prior to this, La Posada divided clients into the two on-site residences: Casa Guillermo, the men's dorm, and Casa Carolina, the women and mothers with children dorm. The three Sisters that live on-site also resided in Casa Carolina and served as overnight supervisors. With the purchase of the mobile home, the former living quarters for the three Sisters have been re-assigned as two large family rooms and a room for an overnight supervisor. Single adult males and single adult women continue to have the same accommodations as before.

- (4) Coincident with the accomplishments and changes to operations described above has been the Board's adherence to strategic planning for the organization that started in 2010 and later updated for 2014-2016. La Posada has entered a capital campaign, the *Hope Lives Here Campaign*, to construct a \$2M building. The campaign is a five-year effort, extending from 2016 – 2020. The decision to embark on this endeavor is an accomplishment, in of itself, demonstrating a firm commitment by La Posada's Board and staff to address the future needs of the community by assisting a particularly vulnerable homeless population.

### **Section III: Program Description:**

#### **a. Identifying and meeting constituency needs:**

La Posada responds to the needs that exist in the lower Rio Grande Valley to provide emergency shelter and supportive services to homeless immigrants, asylees and asylum seekers as they wait for their legal cases to adjudicate before the immigration court. Although there are other local agencies and churches assisting the immigrant and asylee population, La Posada is the only shelter in the Valley with specialized case management to optimize resettlement outcomes for this population and that can accommodate overnight shelter for extended stays (beyond two days).

Despite the fact that La Posada is located in San Benito, it serves the four Rio Grande Valley counties, Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy. In particular, our shelter meets the needs of the San Benito community by housing hundreds of men, women, and children each year who would otherwise spend their days and nights on the street. There are no other homeless shelters in San Benito. Our shelter remains open 24/7 and clients reside as long as their legal process requires. Services provided by other Cameron County homeless shelters are predominantly focused on the general homeless population.

Two years ago, as a result of an influx of immigrants crossing the south Texas border, Sacred Heart Parish in McAllen opened a humanitarian center for the massive numbers of Central American immigrants being dropped off by Border Patrol at the nearby bus station. The humanitarian center provides a place for immigrants and asylum seekers to have a bowl of soup, a shower, a change of clean clothing, and needed medicine and supplies before continuing their journey. The Humanitarian Center does not have the space and resources to house these individuals for longer than a couple of hours or one night. Since the Sacred Heart Humanitarian Center opened, they have referred longer term asylees and asylum seekers to La Posada. By accepting these referrals, La Posada also meets the needs of the McAllen community to house individuals who would otherwise occupy the streets.

La Posada meets another important need for the community – educating and raising awareness about the immigrant and asylum seeking process. Yearly, we welcome numerous local, state, and national groups to visit our shelter to learn about our work and purpose. Immigration has and continues to be a controversial and political issue; visiting our shelter and meeting our clients provides an opportunity to learn about both the regulations and human sides of the issue. Our non-local visitors leave with a favorable impression of the Valley and its collaborative community efforts to address a significant humanitarian need.

#### **b. Program Description:**

La Posada provides shelter and a stabilizing support system for immigrants, asylees and asylum seekers as they wait for their cases to adjudicate before the U.S. Immigration Court. Lengths of stay vary and are case-specific. Some clients stay with us for a few days, while others can stay for several weeks, months or up to one year. During their stay, clients receive specialized case management with supportive services that are delivered through two interconnected programs. The **Emergency Shelter Program** provides each client with immediate and tangible support in the form of shelter, food, shower, clothing, laundry facilities, computer and Internet access and acutely needed personal and medical supplies for up to 25 people per day, mostly children and their mothers, 24/7/365 days per year. The **Client Self-Sufficiency Program** begins with one-on-one case management which includes needs assessment, goal-setting and facilitation of services to meet identified needs. Supportive

services offered include local transportation to and from off-site agencies (health care, legal-aid and social services), access to on-site communication resources, translation assistance, English as Second Language (ESL) literacy, employment preparation, and life-skills education. When we have long-term stay families with school-aged children, La Posada assists the families in enrolling the children in school, scheduling medical appointments for required immunizations and medical exams, and purchasing clothes, shoes, backpacks and other school supplies needed by the children.

This specialized case management helps clients navigate the immigration process, prepare for their next resettlement step, and begin a plan for achieving self-sufficiency and successful integration in this country. This is the client self-sufficiency part of La Posada and it is critical to laying the foundation for a successful long-term resettlement outcome for these individuals and families. The **Client Self-Sufficiency Program** seeks to empower clients to pursue the comprehensive services available to help them and to take ownership of their goals.

The funds requested in this application are to support our **Emergency Shelter Program** with *Client Needs* purchases. *Client Needs* include clothing, shoes, backpacks, diapers, car seats, personal and hygiene items, and other needs our clients have and that arise daily.

Our arriving clients are men, women and families who, literally, have no recourse to help them upon their immediate release from immigration authorities. Without La Posada, they would be on the streets. Until clients are granted appropriate work authorizations, can secure employment and/or have appropriate recourse to resettle, La Posada provides their sole means of support. La Posada must always be ready to shelter, feed and clothe. We never know how many clients will arrive and when. We just know we must be ready. Funding is imperative.

Since this past summer, the Rio Grande Valley has been experiencing an influx of people fleeing from violence and danger from the Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, similar to what was experienced in 2014. Single adults and families continue fleeing gang violence and try to find a safe place to live and raise their families. Asylum seekers at Sacred Heart Humanitarian Center are reporting that the current U.S. Presidential election is also contributing to the surge.

Rumors, spread by smugglers, are that there will be major immigration changes after the Presidential election in November that could close the border and end all opportunities for requesting asylum in the United States, or that will result in the scenario whereby only those making an asylum claim prior to the election will have an opportunity to gain a legal status. These rumors, fueled by election immigration rhetoric and widely reported by media outlets, have resulted in an increase in people crossing the border and surrendering to immigration officials. La Posada is experiencing the effects of this influx. From the start of our fiscal year on July 1 through October 27, La Posada has served a total of 253 clients from 21 different countries. Currently, we are at capacity, sheltering 25 clients, including 7 children. If referrals and requests for shelter continue at this rate, we project serving more than 500 men, women and children by the end of the fiscal year. This presents a significant challenge for La Posada.

**Primary Goals for the Emergency Shelter Program:**

- a) Meet client needs for clothing, personal and hygiene supplies, diapers, baby items, and other needs presented by adult men, women and children for the next twelve months.

b) Restore the overall health and wellness of clients.

**Methods to accomplish goals:**

- a) Conduct client intake to assesses the specific needs of the individual client or family.
- b) Provide each client or family with identified client needs from intake as well as from subsequent acute needs that may arise.
- c) Provide clients with access to shower facilities, three balanced meals per day, referrals to necessary medical, dental facilities and / or pharmacies.

**c. Description of program participants or beneficiaries:**

La Posada serves homeless immigrants and asylum seekers referred by immigration officials, churches and attorneys in the Valley. This includes men, women, and families from newborn to elder who are in the legal process of obtaining political or religious asylum, or other legal recourse of residency. Ethnicities vary depending on current immigration policies.

The number of individuals to be served with this grant can be anywhere between 300 to over 1,000. To date this fiscal year, we have served 253 clients from 21 countries, including Cuba, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Romania, and Swaziland.

**d. Not applicable**

**e. Proposed Project Budget:**

The Project Budget and La Posada's 2015-2016 organizational budget is attached. La Posada will accept a smaller grant award if TRC is unable to fund the amount requested.

**f. Expected client outcome from program and how this will be measured:**

100% of arriving clients will have their immediate hygiene and personal needs met in order to restore their wellness. Clients will be provided with hygiene items (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, clean towel, diapers, etc.), have access to a hot shower, will be given clean clothes and other personal items they may need upon their arrival.

Measurement is performed as follows:

- 1. The number and characteristics of clients served with grant funds will be tracked and documented. Client characteristics are to include: gender, age, classification as a single adult or family unit, and country of origin.
- 2. Purchases of clothing, shoes, baby supplies, personal hygiene items, and other items will be tracked and receipts will be documented.

**g. Proposed timeline for project expenditure of proposed grant funds:**

This is an ongoing operational project. Grant monies received as a result of this grant application will be expended within one year from the date of receipt of said grant monies.

**h. Previous TRC Award:** La Posada received a \$4,500 grant award from TRC on April 26, 2016. These funds supported La Posada's food budget with purchases of fresh meats, produce, dairy items and other food products used each day to feed clients. For the grant award period (May 4, 2016 – August 31, 2016), La Posada served a total of **5,236 meals to 150 clients**, including 46 adult men, 42 adult women, and 62 children under the age of 18. An average of **1,309 meals** were served each month. A detailed accountability report on how funds were spent was submitted to TRC on September 27, 2016.

### **Section III: Program Description**

#### **e. Proposed Project Budget**

Attached is the Project Budget and La Posada Providencia's Fiscal Year 2015 – 2016 organizational budget.

The profit/loss statement is listed on column 1 of the Statement of Revenue and Expenses report.

La Posada will accept a smaller grant award if TRC is unable to fund the amount requested.