



Request for Proposals

Ambulance Transport for Mental Health Evaluation and Treatment

RFP Posting: Monday, November 27, 2017

Deadline for Questions: Thursday, December 21, 2017

Submission Deadline: 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, January 5, 2018

Estimated Award Decision/Notification: March 2018

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
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Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following capitalized words are defined as follows for purposes of this RFP:

1. Advanced Life Support Ambulance (ALS Ambulance): An ambulance that is staffed and equipped to provide emergency medical services above the Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) level and used in the transport of patients
2. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
3. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4. Approved Facility: A facility as defined by Section 103 of the PA Mental Health Procedures Act that meets the standards of that chapter and other applicable regulations, or obtains an exemption under Section 105 of the Act
5. Basic Life Support Ambulance (BLS Ambulance): An ambulance that is equipped to provide emergency medical services at or below the Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) level and used in the transport of patients
6. Contract Services: The specific services which the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
7. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
8. IRES: The Allegheny County Department of Human Services' 24/7 Information, Referral and Emergency Services
9. OBH: The Allegheny County Department of Human Services' Office of Behavioral Health
10. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
11. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
12. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
13. RFP: Request for Proposals
14. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services (DHS), is seeking Proposals from qualified Proposers to provide ambulance transport for individuals requiring mental health evaluations and treatment through an involuntary commitment petition. Proposers must be able to safely and reliably transport individuals to and from locations throughout Allegheny County and, on occasion, throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Proposers must respond to a transport request on a 24/7 basis within two hours for transport within Allegheny County or within a reasonable negotiated time for transport outside Allegheny County. The Successful Proposer(s) must identify individuals' insurance coverage and must initially submit invoice for payment of its provided transportation services from the insurer for the individual, if any, before seeking payment from Allegheny County, as Allegheny County is the payer of last resort.

DHS anticipates a need of approximately 44 transports per month.

Award details

Allegheny County intends to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s) to provide the Contract Services for a term of six months, beginning January 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2018, with the County having the option to extend the term of the Agreement. The Agreement(s) will provide for compensation to the Successful Proposer(s) on a fee-for-service basis based upon a negotiated rate for the services provided.

Who can apply

All entities, including non-profit and for-profit organizations, are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Entities do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County but must meet all of Allegheny County's contractual requirements, including insurance requirements (see Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers), and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capability to provide the Contract Services.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions about this RFP is Thursday, December 21, 2017. Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, January 5, 2018. Proposers will be notified of the County's decision to award an Agreement by March 2018.

Who we are

On behalf of Allegheny County, DHS is the issuing office for this RFP.

DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly-funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, intellectual disability, homelessness and community services.

More information about DHS is available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

When an individual is exhibiting symptoms of mental illness that are unmanageable and that may result in danger to that individual or to others, it might be necessary to hospitalize that individual involuntarily for his or her own protection or the protection of others. The process of petitioning for involuntary, emergency mental health evaluation and treatment is known as involuntary commitment and is specified by Section 302 of the Pennsylvania Mental Health Procedures Act. In Allegheny County, petitions for involuntary commitment are managed and authorized by the Department of Human Services' Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), as administrator, through its Information, Referral and Emergency Services (IRES) 24-hour phone line.

Individuals subject to involuntary commitment often require ambulance transport to an authorized facility. Ambulance transport also is needed to transfer individuals from one authorized facility to another. A transfer may be required when the examining hospital does not have a bed available to admit the individual.¹

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

2.1 Target Population

Successful Proposer(s) will be transporting individuals who are exhibiting symptoms of mental illness that are unmanageable and that may result in danger to that individual or others. These individuals may require an involuntary commitment. When transports are required from one facility to another and individuals are under a doctor's care, generally only Basic Life Support (BLS) Ambulances are required. In other cases, when individuals must be transported from the community, Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulances may be required.

The Successful Proposer(s) should be able to provide the appropriate level of transport (BLS or ALS Ambulance) to and from any location in Allegheny County. The Successful Proposer(s) also should be able to provide the appropriate level of transport to and from any location in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; however, the majority of transports will begin and end within Allegheny County. Proposers may propose to serve a smaller geographic region within Allegheny County and Pennsylvania.

¹ For more information about the involuntary commitment process in Allegheny County, see the data dashboard at <https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/index.php/2015/12/01/visualization-involuntary-commitment-petitions-in-allegheny-county-2002-through-2013/> and report at <https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Involuntary-Commitment-Petitions-in-Allegheny-County.pdf>

2.2 Referral Process

All transports, whether initiated by a doctor, the police, or some other party, must originate with a call to IRES to be reimbursable. Once IRES issues a warrant for transport and evaluation, DHS will inform the Successful Proposer of the individual's name, date of birth, height and weight if known, location for pick-up and delivery, and any other available, relevant information.

2.3 Billing and Data Management

The Successful Proposer(s) must identify and invoice the individual's insurance company to receive payment for transport. Allegheny County is the payer of last resort and the Successful Proposer(s) must submit insurance rejection documentation when invoicing DHS. The Successful Proposer(s) will submit monthly invoices to DHS on a fee-for-service basis. For transports billable to DHS, the transport type ordered (BLS or ALS Ambulance) determines the billable amount. If a Successful Proposer provides a mode of transportation different from the order, DHS must approve it prior to submitting a bill for payment. Initial BLS and ALS Ambulance transports have flat rates. Additional services and charges are paid after 10 miles for the one-way trip when the ambulance is carrying the referred individual. The Successful Proposer(s) will use the IRES web-based data management system for invoicing and billing DHS.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and must address their qualifications by responding to the specifically-requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. The maximum score that a Proposal can receive is 100 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Organizational Capacity (40 points possible)

- Ability to provide safe and reliable transport by BLS Ambulance or ALS Ambulance, as appropriate, 24 hours a day, seven days per week (10 points)
- Ability to pick up the individual in need of transport within two hours of receiving referral or within a reasonable negotiated time for transport outside Allegheny County (15 points)
- Capacity to provide transport to and from any location within Allegheny County, or a smaller geographic area clearly described in the Proposal (10 points)
- Capacity to provide occasional transport to and from any location in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or a smaller geographic area clearly described in the Proposal (5 points)

Invoicing and Billing (35 points possible)

- Ability to identify and invoice individual's insurance company to receive payment for transport, and provide DHS with proof of invoice prior to seeking payment from DHS (20 points)
- Capacity to use the IRES web-based data management system for invoicing and billing purposes and to submit monthly invoices to DHS in a timely manner in a format acceptable to DHS (15 points)

Financial Management and Cost Schedule (25 points possible)

- A completed cost schedule and detailed budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies the proposed the transport rates and additional services and charges (20 points)
- Financial health, as shown by financial audits or certified financial statements for the past three years (5 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Submission Process

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What We Are Looking For)
 - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal)
- b. Proposers must use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available at our Active Solicitations website with the RFP announcement at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- c. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - MWDBE documents
 - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
 - Audited financial reports for the last three years
 - W-9
- d. Proposer should not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.

- e. If you do not have audited financial reports for the last three years, you may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.
- f. Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts or page limits that may be specified in the Response Form.
- g. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, January 5, 2018 to be considered for review.**
- h. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the evaluation committee for review and scoring as described in Section 5 below.
- i. You will receive an email when your Proposal is received. If you do not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting your Proposal, please contact DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us

4.2 How to Contact DHS about this RFP

- a. All inquiries and questions must be submitted via email to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to questions, changes and clarifications will be posted at our Active Solicitations website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations
- c. Please be sure to check this website regularly for answers to questions, additional information or changes to the RFP or the RFP process.

4.3 Other Information

- a. The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all of the Terms and Conditions specified in Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers.
- c. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of a Proposal.
- d. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- e. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposer(s).
- f. Proposers also should be aware that all documents and materials submitted in response to this RFP are subject to requests made pursuant to Pennsylvania's Right-To-Know Law and that the County may have to make submitted documents and materials available to a requestor after an award of an Agreement is made.

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee convened by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria using the scale listed in Section 5.1 b.

5.1 Evaluation Model

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An Evaluation Committee will be formed by DHS and may consist of some or all of the following:
 - Content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
 - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- b. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points for each response on a Proposer's Response Form according to their expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in Section 3 using the following scale:
 - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Below expectations
 - 3 – Meets expectations
 - 4 – Exceeds expectations
 - 5 – Outstanding
- c. The Evaluation Committee members then will meet collectively to discuss the individual scores and evaluations of each committee member.
- d. DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make a formal oral presentation to the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee will score the oral presentation and add it to the Proposer's Proposal score. The oral presentation will be scored using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that an oral presentation can receive is 15 points:
 - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement the proposed services effectively (5 points)
 - Proposer's answers to Evaluation Committee's questions (5 points)
 - Proposer's presentation is thoughtful and professional (5 points)
- e. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.

- f. The Evaluation Committee will submit their recommendation for award of an Agreement to the Director of DHS for his approval, who in turn will submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).
- g. The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement with a Proposer as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- h. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.
- i. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

For a Proposal to be eligible for evaluation, it must be:

- Received by the due date/time
- Properly formatted and include responses to all requested information
- Complete with all required forms and attachments

Proposals which do not meet the above requirements will be automatically rejected and will not be presented to the evaluation committee.

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must be willing to comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County are provided in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations along with a description of insurance requirements for Successful Proposers.

6.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Requirements

Allegheny County has MWDBE goals of 13% participation for Minority Business Enterprises and 2% participation for Women Enterprises, and expects that Successful Proposers will make a “good faith effort” in assisting the County in meeting these goals.

- a. All Proposals must include either of the following:
 - If your organization is capable of meeting the MWDBE contract goals, a completed MWDBE Participation Statement and MWDBE Contact Information

form is required. You must also attach the MWDBE certifications of the firms you intend to use with the Participation Statement.

If your organization will request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, a completed MWDBE Participation Statement, MWDBE Contact Information form and MWDBE Waiver Request are required.

- b. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - MWDBE Forms
 - [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
 - [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
 - [MWDBE Contact Information form](#)
 - MWDBE Resources
 - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
 - [MWDBE Response Checklist](#)
 - [Guide for completing the MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
 - [Sample Diversity Policy](#)
- c. For more information about MWDBEs, visit the [Allegheny County MWDBE website](#).

6.2 HIPAA Compliance

DHS is a covered entity under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Therefore, a Successful Proposer must comply with all HIPAA requirements.

6.3 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. All electronic devices must have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of an information breach.
- c. Successful Proposers must also have policies in place to ensure that electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected).

6.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

By submitting a Proposal, a Proposer agrees to not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, client or any other person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, familial status, age (40 or over), or use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

6.5 New Provider Requirements

If awarded an Agreement, Successful Proposers who do not have current Allegheny County contracts will be required to complete the [DHS New Provider Application](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx), available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx>. While not required as part of your Proposal, Proposers may wish to review the requirements of this application.