

**Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A**
RFP for Community Violence Reduction Plans from High-Priority Areas

January 19, 2022

1. My school district is already involved in data sharing with the County. Will work done as a result of this RFP just lend itself to the existing agreement or would it need an extension of that data sharing arrangement already in place?

It depends. It depends on which EBPs and programs your community picks, what data needs to be shared, and what your existing data sharing agreement looks like. At a minimum, you will probably need an updated data sharing agreement. In addition, the EBP model developers likely need a data sharing agreement with you, and you probably will need to add these new agreements as well. Note that data sharing agreements do not need to be updated or established to submit a Proposal; this would only happen if your Proposal was selected, as necessary.

Virtual Seminar Q&A

[READI Chicago Q&A](#)

2. How do you collect data to show that it is working in the field. Field notes, interview, survey, focus group?

Heartland Alliance Social IMPACT Research Center partnered with the University of Chicago Crime Lab to collect data and inform the model. Their IMPACT Team is composed of individuals who collect program-level data and have monthly modules to share information and data. They collect many kinds of data such as reincarceration data and victimization data. They use various collection methods including surveys (e.g., participant feedback surveys, staff surveys) and focus groups. In addition, they have an app that program participants use regularly to give real-time data about their social/emotional wellbeing. Heartland Alliance will help communities develop data collection plans.

Additionally, Heartland Alliance partnered with the University of Chicago Crime Lab to conduct a randomized controlled trial to assess whether READI had an impact on gun violence involvement among participants. Preliminary findings show that men who participate in READI Chicago are 80% less likely to be arrested for a shooting or homicide, according to early analysis of the program outcomes at 20 months.

3. Does READI Chicago serve women or anyone under 18 years-old?

READI Chicago serves those at highest risk for involvement with gun violence, regardless of gender. However, in Chicago, the highest risk are only men, 22 through 39 years old. They chose

this target population after looking at data from Chicago and found that individuals most likely to be impacted by gun violence were men, age 22 through 39. There are many resources, programs and support systems that serve wider populations. READI Chicago is designed to serve the highest tier individuals impacted by gun violence.

4. Is housing a support offered to participants?

Yes, many participants enroll in READI to receive housing or legal services. Housing is a barrier for many participants because their convictions cause them to be ineligible for many housing options. Heartland Alliance has had success in other jurisdictions through collaborations with housing entities to create more housing opportunities for individuals with criminal backgrounds.

5. Who will hold the contract with Heartland Alliance? Allegheny County? Or the Community Quarterback or implementor?

The Community Quarterback will hold a contract with Allegheny County. Allegheny County will hold the contract with Heartland Alliance.

6. Who will deliver READI services?

The Community Quarterback, or an implementing partner that is part of a community's CVRP, will deliver READI services. Those services include cognitive behavioral intervention, relentless engagement, connections to transitional paid employment and skill development.

7. What will Heartland Alliance do?

Heartland Alliance will provide technical assistance to community programs and countywide. Before READI is launched in Allegheny County, Heartland Alliance will support planning efforts with communities, including logic model development and staff development. The countywide Convenor chosen through the "RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention" will work with Heartland Alliance to build capacity for READI to be sustained in Allegheny County, including establishing key partnerships for referrals and transitional paid employment.

8. How many communities can do a READI-like program in Allegheny County?

Unfortunately, Heartland Alliance has limited capacity to provide technical assistance to support READI-like pilots; therefore, Allegheny County can have READI-like programs in only three communities over the next five years. In the future, there will be opportunity to expand into other communities. If DHS receives more than three Proposals that include READI, the three communities will be prioritized and chosen based on need.

Becoming a Man (BAM) Q&A

9. What is proactive aggression?

BAM uses an assessment tool to measure proactive aggression versus reactive aggression. Proactive aggression is a premediated behavior that intentionally inflicts harm or instigates conflict with others. On the other hand, reactive aggression is how someone responds to what they perceive as a threat. A person can respond to the perceived threat as a warrior or in a positive manner; or they respond to that threat in a savage or more damaging manner.

10. You mentioned you have chapters in various cities, and Pittsburgh was not on the list. How can we or what is the process for us to get a chapter here so we can get this program into our school?

Youth Guidance, the model developer of BAM, has partnered with DHS to get BAM into schools in Allegheny County. If you would like to establish BAM in your school district, you should partner with the Community Quarterback in your district to submit a Proposal in response to the RFP for Community Violence Reduction Plans from High-Priority Areas.

11. For clarity, did you say BAM will hire staff locally and oversee the program?

Youth Guidance will locally hire the direct service staff that will work in schools (BAM counselors), the program supervisor and the executive director who would oversee the work in the region. All staff and Successful Proposers will receive training and support from a replication specialist assigned to Allegheny County.

12. What is the usual timeframe that it takes to develop the chapter to where it's fully functioning, and like how it is in Chicago and Boston?

The goal is to have BAM programming in schools to begin in earnest in the fall of 2023. Youth Guidance intentionally built a planning year, or a "year zero," into the start of BAM in Allegheny County and the communities that are awarded through this RFP process. In year zero leading up to the fall of 2023, Youth Guidance will work with the school district. They will hire, train and place the local staff, as well as secure partnership agreements and data-sharing agreements with the school districts, and orient school leaders and staff to BAM.

Youth Guidance will work with selected communities to develop a growth plan over the course of a three-year phase. In total, it takes about three to four years to develop that fully self-running chapter. However, it looks different for each geography based upon the size and scale and the pace of growth.

13. How will this fit in the overall violence prevention organization that are interested in all these programs regarding oversight and implementation?

As described in the RFP, the Community Quarterback's job is to be the lead agency in overseeing the implementation and coordination of these different programs. The implementing partners are the organizations who actually do the work of BAM and the other EBPs. The Community Quarterback will oversee the implementing partners and ensure that the programs are carried out. In the case of BAM, the school districts are the implementing partners and Youth Guidance will be the employer working with the school districts.

14. Did I understand you to say BAM pays its counselor salaries? School districts contract with MH providers to pay in school therapists. Is BAM in addition to those providers? Is there a problem related to districts only being permitted to have one MH provider?

Yes, Youth Guidance will employ and pay the BAM counselors as well as a BAM supervisor and director.

BAM complements, and not supplants, existing mental health resources in the schools and BAM staff work in partnership with existing mental health providers. BAM is designed as a tier-two group intervention within the school and does not meet clinical, tier-three mental health needs. Tier-three interventions within the school are for students that require that more intensive, individualized mental health support. BAM groups are curriculum-based, and BAM counselors specialize in implementing its individualized coaching and social/emotional supports. This complements the more intensive mental health services, so that youth can receive the appropriate level of support.

15. If my community says we are doing BAM, will we have a contract with Youth Guidance? You're saying you're hiring your folks, you're overseeing even having a director or supervisor of those folks, so what would the quarterback be doing except having email, text, with your group or with the director of our local group?

Youth Violence has found that BAM works most effectively when there is a strong leader locally that can help them navigate the community. Youth Guidance will be looking to the Community Quarterback and other CVRP partners to adapt BAM to Allegheny County communities. Collaboration is key. At the same time, the contract for BAM will be held between the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and Youth Guidance, as will also be the case for READI Chicago (i.e., contract between DHS and Heartland Alliance) and Cure Violence (i.e., contract between DHS and Cure Violence Global). DHS will assist the model developers in monitoring and evaluating these programs to ensure that they are being implemented with fidelity.

16. So how will this fit in the overall violence prevention for organization that are interested in all three programs regarding oversight implementation?

At minimum, the Community Quarterback will be the fiscal agent (contracted with DHS) who is responsible for subcontracting funds to implementing partners and will establish regular group meetings with all implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders (government, law enforcement, community groups, etc.) to coordinate all the various programs named in the CVRP, identify progress and emerging needs, and to ensure that necessarily information is shared between partners. The primary goal of the Community Quarterback is to reduce Community Violence in their Eligible Community (or grouping of Eligible Communities) through the proper implementation and coordination of their CVRP, which may include BAM, Cure Violence, READI Chicago and existing efforts that show results or promise in reducing violence.

17. Do you work with local organization during the hire process? I ask because many organizations are doing this work in their neighborhoods and know students and community well.

Yes, Youth Guidance will work with the Community Quarterback and School District to hire counselors locally.

18. What challenges has BAM faced and what strategies or approaches had BAM taken in relationship to criminal background checks for employees? Especially in schools?

Because BAM staff work in schools, they must be able to pass a background check and any other screenings school districts require. Background checks and other screenings vary by state, jurisdiction and school district, and Youth Guidance will comply with all regulations need for Allegheny County communities.

However, Youth Guidance acknowledges that some individuals, who may not be able to pass a certain background check, may be able to connect with youth and coach them well. There may be opportunities within Allegheny County's violence reduction efforts to collaborate with other organizations, like READI Chicago and Cure Violence, to find work for these individuals outside a school setting where there is more flexibility.

19. Data collection: what else besides note taking? Videotaping?

The Holistic Student Assessment (HSA) is administered by our staff. All of whom are trained in appropriate survey administration procedures and human subjects protocols. Additionally, all students/families are required to complete a program consent packet that gives permission for their student to participate in the program, but also includes consent for data collection and media release. Academic, attendance and behavioral data is often requested directly from our internal evaluation team so that we are able to share program results with both students/families/schools and other key stakeholders and to assess the effectiveness of the program.

20. You mentioned BAM is a tier-two intervention for schools. Will BAM counselors be trained in educational programs such as SAP (Student Assistance Program) to assist students who will be on tier-two?

BAM counselors will be trained in SAP and other existing support structures within partner districts to facilitate coordination and collaboration with existing resources. The planning year zero will be used to learn policies and procedures to ensure all staff are trained and able to comply and engage with existing practices.

In Pennsylvania schools must have a SAP program to assist students who need mental health and/or drug and alcohol services. It is often the vehicle in which students receive school-based or community-based mental health services. It is sparked by a referral by either the school or parent.

CURE Violence Q&A

21. Are Peer Specialists with history of recovery from gun violence good employee candidates for Cure Violence?

That is a good example. Sometimes Peer Specialists are credentialed, depending on the location and type of specialty. For the Cure Violence model, staff do not need to be credentialed in any way.

22. Do hospitals actually get involved?

Yes, but the level of involvement varies by community. In some areas, Cure Violence staff are located in the hospital where they can engage participants as part of the treatment team and where they can engage people in waiting rooms of emergency rooms. In other areas, the involvement looks more like hospitals providing communication to Cure Violence staff about an event or providing handoffs to Cure Violence as a participant leaves the hospital. A final example of involvement is having an unofficial relationship with hospital staff who can call Cure Violence staff if they witness retaliation being planned on hospital grounds.

There may be opportunities to partner with Successful Proposers of hospital-based violence intervention programs through the “RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention.”

23. Who would be the employer of the violence interrupters?

Proposers who choose Cure Violence should identify the implementing organization that will employ the team of violence interrupters and outreach workers. The implementing organization can be the Community Quarterback or a different organization that is partnering with the Community Quarterback on the CVRP.

24. p. 1 Legal Status: As a public school district taking the lead, should we select Nonprofit or Partnership?

For submission to this RFP, please choose the legal status that you think most accurately describes your organization. During contract negotiation, DHS's Office of Administration will work with Successful Proposers to ensure that all documentation is correct.

25. p. 3: Are MWDBE docs, VOSB docs, and Alleg Co Vendor Creation Forms applicable to our public school district?

Yes, all required forms are applicable to every Proposer, regardless of their designation. Every Proposer must submit the MWDBE and VOSB documentation and other Allegheny County contracting forms.

26. p. 6: Specific to budget and Community Quarterback's coordination work for years 1 and 2, I am not sure how to apply this to a public school.

For question 14 in the response form, please provide costs and revenues related only to the CVRP. You do not need to provide information about your public school's budget.

27. Also, if we are ready to submit the completed RFP Response Form according to the 3/4/22 deadline for Letters of Intent, should we forward the Letter of Intent simultaneously, or may we skip that submission?

No, every Proposer must submit a Letter of Intent, (see details on page 21 of this RFP).

DHS highly encourages Proposers to wait until closer to the May 6 deadline to submit their Proposals. We will hold all Proposals received before the deadline and will not evaluate any Proposals until after May 6. In addition, we will continue to provide more information through this Q&A document until May 5. Proposers should consider this information while developing their Proposals.

28. If I do five communities is the cap 200k each community I work in. If it costs more to do it and I have the right justification on the budget, can it be considered? Or will it be considered?

You may be confusing the two related violence reduction RFPs:

- The "RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Reduction" has a cap of up to 200K for each countywide strategy named in the RFP. As such, if a Proposer applied for all four countywide strategies, and was awarded funds for each strategy, then they would receive

up to \$200,000 (annually) for each strategy (up to \$800,000 in total, annually). These are countywide strategies, so the Successful Proposer would carry these strategies out in more than just five communities. The Proposal submission is due by 3 p.m. on Friday, March 4.

- The “RFP for Community Violence Reduction Plans from High-Priority Areas” does not have a listed funding cap for Successful Proposers applying on behalf on an Eligible Community or grouping of Eligible Communities. If a Proposal is selected, we will base the amount of funding on what was asked for in the Proposal, what we select to fund from that Proposal through the evaluation of the Proposal, and funding limits at DHS. Do not concern yourself with any funding cap at this time. The letter of intent for this RFP is due by Friday, March 4 at 3 p.m. The Proposal submission date is Friday, May 6 at 3 p.m.

For both RFPs, you may propose any total budget and justify the costs in the budget narrative. DHS will consider all proposed budgets for reasonableness and will negotiate and agree upon final numbers with the Successful Proposer(s).

March 3, 2022

29. Who does the PGR evaluation in BAM?

Youth Guidance will conduct both process evaluation and impact evaluation activities related to the BAM program. This will require that school districts enter a data sharing agreement with Youth Guidance, providing the BAM team with access to participant data (behavior, attendance, grades) on a regular cadence.

30. When BAM is implemented, is WOW implemented as well? Are they both implemented together?

WOW will not be implemented alongside BAM through this funding opportunity. The BAM and WOW programs can be implemented both independently and together. The WOW program is continuing to build its evidence-based prior and there may be opportunities for WOW to be delivered alongside BAM in Allegheny County in the future.

March 10, Office Hours

31. Can you give me an idea of what type of technical assistance you are offering?

We are offering a variety of types of technical assistance, such as writing the proposal, helping to write and gather commitment letters, organizing community partners to decide on proposal strategies and helping to decide which community partner will implement the different strategies. What is included in a community’s technical assistance depends on what that community needs. DHS will connect proposers who requested technical assistance with a planner to fulfill their needs.

32. Should we email the DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us address to request technical assistance?

Proposers needed to request technical assistance in their letter of intent, which was due on March 4. Proposers that requested technical assistance will be contacted by their planner the week of March 15. If you did not request technical assistance in your letter of intent, but would still like technical assistance, please contact DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us as soon as possible.

March 31, 2022

33. Can you let us know the model REDI Chicago uses to pay their employees for the first four months subsidy. Do they grant the capital to the Employer or do they pay the Employee directly?

READI, through Heartland Alliance, acts as the employer of record for transitional jobs workers. That means all participants in transitional jobs are on our payroll and receive wages through our payroll process. For CBT stipends, Heartland purchases gift cards directly and distributes them to partner organizations to dispense to participants.

34. Will this RFP fund a drug addiction program?

Please refer to page 15 of the RFP.

Stakeholders serving Eligible Communities may already have violence reduction programs that they find successful. Those efforts can be included in the CVRP, for possible funding, if:

- The program is primarily focused on Community Violence reduction, shows an impact on violence and/or has a logic about how the program will impact Community Violence (i.e., shows promise).
- It complements the EBP(s) that stakeholders serving Eligible Community(ies) have chosen.
- Existing outreach efforts that are programmatically similar to Cure or READI can be folded into the relevant EBP; and existing school-based efforts that are programmatically similar to BAM can be folded into that EBP.
- The Proposer can show how much money and other resources are already dedicated to the program in the Eligible Community(ies).

35. Does the applicant have to select out of the two evidence-based programs? Or can they develop their own plan?

There are three evidence-based programs, not two. The three evidence-based programs are 1) Cure Violence, 2) Becoming A Man and 3) READI Chicago. As stated in the RFP on page 14,

Proposers must choose to implement at least one of the evidence-based programs. However, we encourage Proposers to implement all three evidence-based programs if they have the capacity and the commitment to carry them out. By submitting a Proposal, Proposers are developing their own plan which must include 1) at least one of the listed evidence-based programs, 2) existing efforts to reduce violence that show results or promise (details on page 15 of the RFP) and 3) groups or activities that bring people together (details on page 16 of the RFP).

April 8, 2022

36. In the RFP it states Mount Oliver Borough, can programs be in Mount Oliver or the City (within South Pittsburgh) (i.e, Brashear or Carrick High School) and service Mount Oliver Borough folks?

Yes, violence reduction programs that are in both Mt. Oliver Borough AND the City of Pittsburgh may be included in the Proposal if those programs service Mount Oliver Borough residents.

For example, the feeder schools for Mount Oliver Borough are Carrick High School (most residents) and Brashear High School (some residents). The Proposal can cover violence reduction programs in Carrick High School and Brashear High School because these high schools serve Mount Oliver Borough residents. Proposers looking to do Becoming A Man (BAM) in Mount Oliver Borough would need to get a letter of commitment from the Pittsburgh Public School District to do BAM in Carrick High School and Brashear High School. BAM operates in grades 6-12. Likewise, a violence interruption program (like Cure Violence) that serves Mount Oliver Borough and other South Hilltop neighborhoods (such as Knoxville, Allentown, Carrick and Beltzhoover, for example) may also be included in the Proposal.

37. South Pittsburgh Coalition of Peace (SPCP) has a fiscal sponsor, how should we show that paperwork within our grant and response form?

On the Response Form where it asks for “Partners, Stakeholders and/or Subcontractors included in this Proposal”, please list them there as your fiscal sponsor. Please also provide their C.E.O. and a contact who would be best to talk to regarding fiscal and contracting information in the “COMMUNITY QUARTERBACK REQUIRED CONTACTS” table.

Additionally, for the required financial documents (audited financial reports or other financial documents from the past three years and a W-9), please make sure you are providing documents from your fiscal sponsor as that is who the contract would be executed with.

38. When the quarterback has contracted with the school or a nonprofit entity will DHS pay them directly or will it go through the quarterback's organization?

As currently envisioned, DHS will establish the contract and provide funding to Successful Proposers (aka, Community Quarterbacks). The Successful Proposers (aka, Community Quarterbacks) would then contract with their implementing partners and send these partners the

necessary funding to carry out the programming named (and approved) in their Community Violence Reduction Plan (aka, Proposal). The only exception would be Becoming A Man (BAM). Because Youth Guidance (the model developer of BAM) directly employs full time BAM counselors who work in schools, DHS will contract directly with Youth Guidance and send funding to them directly. BAM will work with Successful Proposers to hire locally where possible.

39. Do you know if there are budget constraints attached to this grant for Violence Prevention? Is there a cap we need to stay under?

DHS will consider all proposed costs for reasonableness and negotiate the final budget with the Successful Proposers.

April 21, Office Hours

40. How much interaction will there be between the EBP model developers, specifically, cure violence folks, and how much time can we figure into our implementation timeline for these interactions?

The extent of the interaction the Successful Proposers will have with the EBP model developers, and specifically Cure Violence, will be determined collaboratively with the Successful Proposers, DHS and the model developers (Cure Violence) during the planning of the implementation phase.

41. For the Cure Violence implementing partners, what are all the services that will need to be covered, such as, violence disrupter employment, cognitive behavioral therapy?

The implementing partner for Cure violence will need to have on staff the following positions: Site supervisor, program manager, outreach workers, and violence interrupters. The number of outreach workers and interrupters will be based on a needs assessment that Cure Violence Global conducts in partnership with DHS and ACHD. The needs assessment will occur during the planning period after Successful Proposers have been selected and awarded. Services like cognitive behavioral therapy and other needs will be through referral to qualified entities that deliver these services.

42. Are BAM counselors hired through Youth Guidance, and, if so, what level of community input will there be in this process?

Yes, BAM counselors are hired through Youth Guidance. Community input is essential to the hiring process. To the extent possible, Youth Guidance desires to hire locally and will work with the Successful Proposer to identify candidates for the positions.

43. How much funding is available for other programs outside of EBPs?

Our preference is to fund implementation of the EBPs and/or existing efforts that have shown results or promise. We encourage providers to implement all 3 EBPs if they have the capacity and commitment to execute them as each program has unique strengths and approaches different audience from different angles.

Additionally, we are also seeking to fund events or projects that bring the community together to discourage community violence, but our preference is to fund the EBPs and/or existing efforts.

That being said, over the next five years we hope to make a \$50 million dollar investment in the space of violence reduction, so funding for programs outside the EBPs will be available.

44. Part D of the RFP where it's asking for estimated numbers of participants served. Is there a level of participation you're expecting over the first – the first year or two? I was just wondering if there's, kind of, a certain threshold that you'll be evaluating the RFPs on based off of the estimated participants or, kind of, any insight you can give toward that?

That question is intended to get an understanding of the what the population you serve will likely be. It does not have to be concrete.

45. What is the maximum grant amount for the Community Quarterback coordination work over the next year or two?

That will depend on the proposal, the EBPs or other efforts proposed and the population the proposal is planning to serve. This number will be finalized with the Successful Proposers during the contracting process.

46. Just kind of understanding the timeline of the projects, for all of the EBPs, is it kind of like a one-year planning? Like the first year would be kind of a planning year, and then after that year, you know, two, three, four, five, are implementing?

Planning time may vary considering the EBP or effort, but yes, that is a good way to think about it.

April 28, 2022

47. If one of the community groups in the collective-impact is due to receive federal grant funding to do this work for youth, would that hurt/help their proposal in any way?

No, it would not hurt your proposal. Relevant experience and alternative funding in this field can be helpful, but that context, and why it may be helpful to performing the services in RFP should be included in your proposal.

48. When addressing the budget in the proposal, should it be for a single year or the estimated cost of a multi-year program?

Please provide your budget in a way that you feel will be most helpful to the evaluation committee in understanding your proposed plan and costs. The structure is up to you. DHS will consider all proposed costs for reasonableness and negotiate the final terms with the Successful Proposer(s).

49. If there are communities that know what they want to do but still need some planning time to get things together, how should they budget that?

Please provide your own approach for how you would incorporate planning funds into your budget. DHS will consider all proposed costs for reasonableness and negotiate the final terms with the Successful Proposer(s).

50. Would it be acceptable to write a brief statement in the proposal stating we plan on hiring staff or independent contractors for this position from the community that represent the community on a variety of different aspects including race/gender/veterans status?

Yes.