

Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A

Providing the HOMEBUILDERS® Intensive Family Preservation Program

48) With the expenses in Appendix F related to training, fidelity and consultation, it appears that all training is to be in the Pittsburgh area. Is it anticipated that any HOMEBUILDERS training or consultation would require flights, etc. for our staff in addition to that estimated?

A: Appendix F assumes all training will occur in the Pittsburgh area. The estimated budget does not account for staff turnover. If a provider has a new staff member, they may have to travel to another site to participate in training.

47) Does the anticipated allocation per HOMEBUILDERS team of approximately \$520,000 per year apply to all years of the program funding. The question is based in the likelihood of higher expenses related to startup in year one (equipment, furnishings, supplies, etc.).

A: Your budget should reflect your anticipated costs which may differ year to year. Note, the first year will be prorated for less based on the number of months.

46) In this program funding model is there any provision for any retained earnings? If so, what percentage of total expenses would be acceptable?

A: There is no provision for retained earnings.

45) In the HOMEBUILDERS RFP, you require a hard copy AND an electronic copy of the RFP by 3pm on the due date. But on the solicitation webpage, you say "only attachments that cannot be sent via email should be mailed or delivered." Can you clarify this?

A: Our procurement procedures have changed since the RFP was issued. You may send the entire application electronically by 3 pm on August 25, 2014. We will send you a confirmation email when we receive the application. If you do not receive a confirmation email, it is the proposer's responsibility to contact Maria Wallace at maria.wallace@alleghenycounty.us or 412-350-7144 in order to confirm receipt.

44) Should the Cover Page content be in the format of the Common Grant Application Cover Sheet, (where our organizational information is filled in response to the questions provided), or an actual Cover Letter?

A: Please see our response to question 14.

43) Page 27, Appendix B question reads: 253. Have your paid all taxes for the past years, including but not limited to real estate tax, employer taxes, employee withheld taxes, personal income tax (if individual)?

Is this question supposed to read: "Have you paid all taxes....."

A: Yes.

42. The Proposal Format Instructions and Scoring references that resumes and attachments are not counted against the 20 page limit. Please point out the specific section of the RFP which requests resumes? (Are these staff resumes, or Board of Directors resumes, or both)? Additionally, please point out the section of the RFP which requests attachments, (what attachments are required please?).

A: We would like the proposer to discuss the qualifications of staff within the narrative of the response. If you feel strongly that you would like to add resumes, the resumes should be included as an attachment. This is optional.

The required attachments are listed below.

- *Cover page (see page 20 of the RFP for reference)*
- *M/W/DBE Participation Statement (page 20 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Budget Templates (page 21 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Audited Financial Statement from the last two years by a certified auditor. If you are a current DHS provider and are required to provide a certified audit, you do not need to provide this. (page 21 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Financial Health Information (page 21 of the RFP for reference)*
- *List of any current public contracts (e.g., county, state, federal) (page 21 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Proposal authentication form (page 25 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Abbreviated application (page 26 of the RFP for reference)*
- *Resumes (optional)(page 20 of the RFP for reference)*

The cover page, budget, budget narrative, resumes, appendices and attachments are not counted against the 20 page limit.

41. Do we need to have the required insurance policies listed, in place at the time of our proposal submission, or are we able to acquire these policies after the contract is actually issued to our agency?

A: The required insurance policies need to be in place by the contract start date.

40. The Supervisor staff position requires that the staff person have four years prior experience as a HOMEBUILDERS therapist. Is this person appointed to us from the Public Agency, or are we as the provider required to hire the Supervisor?

A: The awardee will be required to hire the supervisor. If the supervisor has a graduate degree and at least two years of experience working with children and families, they do not need to have prior experience as a HOMEBUILDERS therapist. Please refer to page 11 of the RFP for further clarification regarding the level of experience required.

39. We are assuming that the indirect administrative costs schedule pertains to those costs we classify as administrative overhead, which consists of Exec Admin, Fiscal, HR, and IT. We would report the costs on a prorated basis (only those costs that are attributable to this program—not the total agency costs). Question—do we need to list all positions on the indirect staff roster or can we list key positions and summarize the remaining by cost center?

A: See our response to question 6.

38. If we are bidding for two teams, do we submit one or two proposals and budgets?

A: Please submit one proposal with one combined budget.

37. Will the training costs for one team cover training for two teams? Assuming we submit only one proposal and budget for two teams, is the \$520,000 per year per team decreased by the costs of training for the second team?

A: We were assuming the two teams would be trained together. The \$520,000 estimated budget assumes this cost savings.

36. Per the budget template in the RFP, the first year budget covers nine months. Will the \$520,000 per year be prorated for the first year?

A: The start-up year will be prorated for the number of months it covers.

35. Foster Parent training is listed as a line item in the budget but I cannot find a reference to Foster Parent training in the RFP? Is this a requirement? If so, should foster parent training be discussed in the proposal?

A: This is a mistake. This is not a requirement. The budget has been corrected.

34. Is there a maximum set percentage of the total budget that may be considered overhead?

A: A maximum of 10% can be attributed to indirect administrative costs.

33. On page 10, it says “The HOMEBUILDERS therapist must be able to respond in person if required by case circumstances. The Successful Proposer(s) will be available to respond within thirty (30) minutes. However, on page 20, it states that therapists must be able to reach homes within sixty (60) minutes. Is it acceptable to require phone contact within 30 minutes, with the understanding that staff will be en route and arrive within 60 minutes?”

A: HOMEBUILDERS® standards require that the therapists are able to reach the clients within 60 minutes. Therapists must live within 60 minutes of most of the client families they serve and supervisors must live within 60 minutes of most families served by the team. When needed to address unique geographic circumstances, with consultant approval, exceptions may be made.

Therapists must phone the family and make a determination (sometimes with the supervisor) if they even need to go out.

32. As the HOMEBUILDERS program is based on many CBT concepts which require a certain level of cognitive ability, can modifications be made to the program to meet the needs of any clients and families that have a diminished mental capacity OR is there a minimum requirement of mental capacity before a family can be considered appropriate for the HOMEBUILDERS program?

A: All of the intervention strategies used- cognitive, behavioral, skills teaching are adapted and tailored to the individual clients- based on their learning styles, culture, cognitive abilities, individual situations and other circumstances. HOMEBUILDERS® works with a range of clients, including clients (parents and/or children) with cognitive limitations.

31. The narrative of the RFP requests a budget be completed for ONE Homebuilder team. Due to the fact that training costs of the implementation and ongoing fidelity would not increase with the second team added (according to the HOMEBUILDERS site on SAMSHA it states that training classes can be up to 15 people) it would reduce the costs of the training overall to have both teams attend the training together. Can we submit the RFP as a combined two team report (as if we were awarded both teams)? If not, are we able to submit the RFP with HALF the training costs in the budget, under the assumption that both teams would be trained together (if awarded to two separate Successful Proposers)?

A: The estimated training costs already assume that we would train the two teams together. Thus, the cost savings are built into the budget.

30. What, if any, procedures are in place to train new staff (in the case of staff attrition)? Is there a “Train the Trainer” component available to the HOMEBUILDERS training, to allow for new hires?

A: There is no trainer or trainer process. When there is staff turnover, the HOMEBUILDERS® consultant (at the Institute for Family Development) will identify the upcoming workshops being offered throughout the U.S. and arrange for the new staff to attend. The provider agency will need to cover the travel costs and the material costs for the workshops. There are typically workshops available every few months at different locations throughout the U.S.

29. What neighborhoods have the highest rate of out of home services/greatest need for General Protective Services areas?

Neighborhoods/Municipalities with 10 Highest Investigation Rates

Municipality	Children with Investigations	Rate per 1000

Northview Heights	117	227
Homewood North	203	211
East Pittsburgh	99	192
Bedford Dwellings	62	175
Braddock Borough	104	172
Knoxville	183	165
West Oakland	38	162
Homewood South	104	160
East Hills	158	154
McKees Rocks Borough	221	154

Neighborhoods/Municipalities with 10 Highest Acceptance Rates

Municipality	Children Accepted for Service	Rate per 1000
East Pittsburgh	61	118
Homewood North	109	113
Bedford Dwellings	37	104
Braddock Borough	57	94
West Oakland	22	94
Northview Heights	47	91
Homewood South	56	86
Perry South	92	86
East Hills	87	85
Strip District	4	82

Neighborhoods/Municipalities with 10 Highest Home Removal Rates

Municipality	HRs	Rate per 1000
East Allegheny	9	33
Homewood West	6	32
Bluff	4	31
Allegheny Center	6	30
Allentown	17	26
Friendship	4	22
Polish Hill	3	19
Braddock Borough	11	18
Heidelberg Borough	4	18
Northview Heights	9	17
*Golden Triangle (1235) not included, as likely to have used business/org address		

Neighborhoods/Municipalities with 10 Highest TPR Rates

Municipality	TPRs	Rate per 1000
Point Breeze North	3	9
Verona Borough	4	8
Middle Hill	2	7
Neville Township	1	6
Spring Garden	1	6
Duquesne City	8	5

West Oakland	1	4
Liberty Borough	2	4
Pitcairn Borough	3	4
Fineview	1	3
*Golden Triangle (206) not included, as likely to have used business/org address		

28. The following information would be extremely helpful in answering additional RFP queries:

For out of home placements countywide:

- **Re-entry rates**
- **Length of placements**
- **Time to permanency**

For in-home outcomes countywide:

- **Length of services per family (average)**
- **Number of reauthorizations**
- **Number of in-home services that result in out of home placements**
- **Number of in-home services that successfully discharge**
- **Number that are still not entering care 12 months after services**
- **Number that fail to complete services and reasons for not completing services**

We were able to provide the following information in the timeframe provided.

- For placement related information, please DHS’s report on “Child Welfare Placement Dynamics: Long Term Trends in Allegheny County’s Child Welfare System” <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs/research-cyf.aspx>

For in-home outcomes countywide:

- **Total Counts (excluding JPO, services cancelled and those without dates)**
2012 in home service starts
By family/case: 1037 cases
By service: 2464 services (family received on average 2.3 authorizations for in home; this does not = actual service receipt – just an authorization.)
- **Length of services per family (average)**
By family/case – 247 days (could include services offered simultaneously, duplicating the count)
By service – 104 days

(Response includes only for those services with an end date)

- **Number of reauthorizations**

By family/case – average of 6 reauthorizations (could be multiple in home services)

By service – average of 2 reauthorizations

- **Number of in-home services that result in out of home placements**

By family/case: 123 instances of home removal during in home services (12%); 63 instances of home removal within 60 days after in home services ended (6%)

27. What is the name for the above report/data system?

A: The data was pulled from our child welfare system of record--KIDS (Key Information and Demographics System).

26. Can funds from this grant be used to train “backup staff” to account for potential turnover?

A: We recognize the need for back up staff; however, the training will depend on the number of slots available.

25. Who determines whether a family is eligible for booster sessions? Using what criteria?

A: Booster sessions, which are very flexible can be requested by the family, the referent or suggested and arranged (at the end of the intervention, or via a call later) by the therapist. They are meant to prevent crises, reinforce skills and changes and/or focus on something that is current (e.g. if the intervention may be set up to see how school is going or to meet with school personnel, or to accompany a client to an appointment with new provider, which didn't occur during the intervention due to wait list, etc.). Booster sessions don't typically occur with all families- some are offered and decline, others don't need them. They are available when needed for maintenance or to help with ongoing progress or to avoid or deescalate potential crises.

24. Does the staff administering the booster need to be trained in the model? What if caseloads are full?

A: Yes- the person doing the booster session is the therapist assigned to the case. If that therapist has left the program, the supervisor could do it.

23. What is the required timeframe for administering required booster sessions after the referral?

A: Two booster sessions can be scheduled within 6 months of intake. There is also some flexibility. HOMEBUILDERS typically allows up to 5 total face to face hours over these 2 sessions- some sessions are shorter, some are longer and typically average 5 total hours across the 2 sessions. Again, these are flexible; some families do not request, or need these, some have 2 sessions, some have one.

22. Manager Position is not included in budget? Should a .5FTE manager position be accounted for with these grant funds?

A: The position is listed in Appendix E, page 71.

21. What are anticipated “costs of using the system”? (p.15)

A: The ODM costs are included in Appendix F. We have done our best to capture all costs related to installation and early implementation; however, we are unable to foresee all potential costs that a proposer may incur.

20. What level of detail is necessary for reporting? Similar to other County-funded in-home programs?

A: For fiscal related reporting, it will be similar to other county funded in-home programs. However, the performance and outcome related measures will more extensive than current practice. Page 17 of the RFP provides an overview of the Performance Measures.

19. On p73 the travel amounts for 2.Model Fidelity/Consultation for travel doesn't calculate correctly if one takes days/yr*fee/unit the result is consistently twice as much as the amount stated. Was this intentional because of the 9 month budget or should the amount be the amount as calculated correctly? Eg. 4 airfare trips * \$650 each = \$2600, but the stated amount is \$1300.

A: This is a mistake for year one only. The amount should be calculated correctly. Appendix F has been updated to reflect this change in year one.

18. The Budget sheets include \$300 for concrete goods per family. Is that the “real” experience currently with crisis In-Home families - even though the limit is \$500 per family currently? Are we supposed to use \$300 or is that just an example?

A: The \$300 for concrete goods per family is an average.

17. If a family is determined “ineligible” for the model, what programs will be available for families to access?

A: Regular in-home services will be available as well as other services that may be appropriate to meet their identified needs.

16. In regards to “crisis” situations that need immediate assistance (i.e. housing) what agencies will participate in servicing these clients?

*A: DHS has a number of contracted providers that address immediate assistance needs, including housing. A list of agencies under contract is here--
<http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs/providers.aspx#agencies>*

15. Is it necessary to provide a statement from the applicant indicating their use of MWBE vendors?

A: Yes. Please see page 4 of the RFP. For additional information, go to <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/mwdbbe/index.aspx>

14. What information is required for the cover letter and should it be addressed to anyone specific?

A: The proposer can select the format of the cover page. The cover page should include the proposer's name and contact information.

13. Is there a specific format for the attachments (i.e. page numbering, order etc.)?

A: No.

Posted: August 18

12. I was wondering what services may be eliminated if these are adopted. The HOMEBUILDERS overview specifically mentions "crisis in-home" but the Performance Measures mentions tracking family preservation intervention and family unification intervention. We understand the scope to only affect crisis in-home but want to clarify that Family Unification will remain intact at least for this fiscal year.

A: While HOMEBUILDERS can and will be used for reunification in certain circumstances, it is not intended to replace existing family reunification services. That said, DHS is actively examining all in-home services and, through future RFP processes, will seek to replace unproven services with evidence-based and/or promising practices wherever practical.

Posted: August 12, 2014

11. Do you have electronic versions of the proposal authentication form and abbreviated application that is editable (non-pdf form), or are proposer expected to recreate these forms?

*A: Links to the fillable versions of these documents are available on DHS' Solicitation Webpage. The fillable version of the Proposal Authentication Form is listed under Active Solicitations; Provide the HOMEBUILDERS® Intensive Family Preservation Program. The fillable version of the Abbreviated Application is available under Documents; Required for All Submissions.
<http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.aspx>*

10. On the RFP, page 11, the staffing qualifications state that you can use a Bachelor's prepared staff as a therapist if they meet the staffing requirements, however the budget template list an MSW, can you please clarify.

A: You are correct that the HOMEBUILDERS® therapists do not have to be MSWs. The budget template was meant as a guide for the sorts of expenses you might expect to include in your budget. You should use your actual expenses based upon the staff you are proposing in your narrative.

9. The RFP indicates that the successful bidder will receive \$520,000 per year for implementation and expenses. For the startup year of the contract which is nine months would the successful bidder receive \$520,000 or would that amount be adjusted?

A: The start-up year will be prorated for the number of months it covers.

8. Is Allegheny County supporting the cost of the training for year one or should that amount be included in the budget?

A: The total budget estimate provided includes the cost of training and consultation. The expected training and consultation costs to support one HOMEBUILDERS® team of four therapists and one supervisor over a three year period is Appendix F of the RFP. Proposers should incorporate the cost of training and consultation into their budget.

7. Is it possible to get the budget in an excel format?

*A: A link to the budget in excel format is available on DHS' Solicitation Webpage, listed under Active Solicitations; Provide the HOMEBUILDERS® Intensive Family Preservation Program.
<http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.aspx>*

Posted: July 22, 2014

6. Our administrative staff number over 80 in support of all services. Is it necessary to list all administrative staff individually or is it possible to list total program salaries, such as Information Technology, Research & Development, Compliance, Human Resources, Training etc.? Our administrative costs are allocated over all programs as a % of salary dollars and thus would be a small portion applied to the RFP. We don't want to jeopardize our opportunity in the process and so will comply with whatever advise you may have.

A: When completing the indirect administrative staff roster, if administrative costs are allocated over all programs as a percentage of salary dollars, proposers may list the percentage of salary dollars per program office, as long as they clearly explain what the percentage represents.

5. In the staffing requirement section (page 11, section b) it does not state that an active license is required for any of the listed positions. Further down (page 11, section c) it refers to 'confirmation that staff has an active social work or related license in good standing.' I would like to clarify whether or not a license will be required for any of these positions?

A: We apologize for the confusion. The HOMEBUILDERS model does not require staff to have an active social work license.

Posted: July 9, 2014

4. Has Allegheny County negotiated and confirmed prices for the HOMEBUILDERS training provided by Institute for Family Development?

A: Yes, Allegheny County has confirmed the cost of trainings that will be provided by the Institute of Family Development.

3. Will there be any additional costs associated with using the HOMEBUILDERS Model?

A: We have done our best to capture all costs related to installation and early implementation; however, we are unable to foresee all potential costs that a proposer may incur. For example, depending on the nature of the proposer's current IT system, they may incur additional costs related to data exchange between data management systems. If you anticipate that implementing this model will require you to incur costs beyond those listed, please include those costs in your budget.

2. Just to clarify, are the training costs part of the \$520,000 funding available for one team of therapists?

A: Yes, the training costs are part of the \$520,000 funding available for one team of therapists.

1. With respect to the MWBE forms/waiver: since subcontractors are not allowed in this program, may we count supply services, janitorial services, etc.?

A: Yes, services for supplies, janitorial services, accounting, and legal are all examples of the types of contractual relationships that can count towards M/W/DBE goals. This list is not exhaustive, so for more information, please see <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdbbe/index.aspx>