



Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals

**Meals and Nutrition Services for
Older Adults**

RFP Posting:

Thursday, September 1, 2022

Pre-Proposal Conference:

9 a.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Questions Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, October 14, 2022

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, October 26, 2022

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

January 2023

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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Acronyms and Definitions

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

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer(s) to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. Allegheny County Department of Human Services Area Agency on Aging (ACDHS/AAA): A program office of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services which provides programs and services that enable and empower Allegheny County adults, 60 years of age and older, to lead safe, independent lives
4. Commissary: An establishment where food is stored, prepared, portioned and/or packaged, and where said food is intended for consumption at another establishment or place.
5. Commissary Review Process: A monitoring activity undertaken by the ACDHS/AAA to determine the extent to which applicable aging program policies are being followed
6. Congregate Meals: Meals for consumption by older adults who visit the county's 39 Senior Centers, Monday-Friday, prepared in accordance with state regulations, consumer needs and agreed-upon standards
7. Consumer: Any adult, age 60 or older, or their advocate, who is in contact with ACDHS/AAA or an ACDHS/AAA contractor and is eligible to receive meals
8. Contract Services: The specific services that the Successful Proposer(s) agree to provide to the County in response to this RFP, as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
9. Contractor: An organization, company or entity contracted with DHS to provide services
10. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
11. Dietitian Nutrition Monitoring Process: An ACDHS/AAA monitoring activity conducted by a contracted dietitian, focused on determining the extent to which applicable aging program nutrition policies are being followed
12. Emergency Meals: Shelf-ready meals and emergency weather food boxes needed during an unanticipated event or emergency
13. Home-Delivered Meal (HDM): A meal authorized under Title III Part C Subpart 2 of the Older Americans Act (OAA), which authorizes meals and related nutrition services to older individuals who are homebound
14. Home-Delivered Meal (HDM) Site: An organization contracted with Allegheny County to deliver HDMs directly to consumers' homes
15. Home-Delivered Meal (HDM): Meals prepared, packaged and delivered to HDM Sites for the HDM Site to deliver to consumers' homes in accordance with state regulations, consumer needs and agreed-upon standards.
16. Integrated Monitoring Tool (IMT) Application: the IMT captures key details and summary results from every monitoring visit and shares them across DHS offices.

17. Master Provider Enterprise Repository (MPER): A database DHS and its contractors use to track key information, including (but not limited to) contact information, facility locations, rate and budget information, and invoices
18. Meal and Nutrition Service: Nutritious meals that Successful Proposers will design, prepare, package and deliver to Senior Centers and to HDM Sites, which in turn will deliver them to consumers' homes. It also includes emergency meals in the form of shelf-stable meals and emergency food boxes.
19. Meal: Any foods or combination of foods served which meet the nutritional requirements prescribed in the (OAA) of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§3030 F and G). The meal must meet temperature control or time according to temperature control guidelines.
 - a. Hot Meal: A meal which provides a hot entrée to participants
 - b. Cold Meal: A meal which provides a cold entrée to participants
 - c. Frozen Meal: A meal which provides a frozen entrée or complete meal
 - d. Packaged Meal: A fresh or frozen prepackaged meal that only requires heating (often in a microwave) before being served, sometimes in its own packaging
 - e. Boxed Meal: A box lunch is a style of pre-made lunchtime meal that is typically stored and served in a box-like container, such as a meal prep container. Box lunches can be made individually or mass prepared for a larger group of people. Typically, box lunches include things like sandwiches and wraps, vegetables, fruit, snacks and dessert.
 - f. Modified Diet Meal: A meal based on the regular menu and designed to meet the nutritional requirements of a specific situation. The meal may be modified in consistency, flavor, techniques of service or preparation, content of specific foods or a combination of these factors. Examples include pureeing or chopping a meal, providing alternative condiments (e.g., a salt alternative), or serving a healthier dessert option
 - g. Special Meal: A congregate meal provided to increase Senior Center participation or acknowledge a special holiday or event. Special meals may utilize a traditional menu plan without nutrient analysis.
 - h. Emergency Weather Box: A package of emergency food provided to consumers, typically in advance of inclement weather or on days when Senior Centers are otherwise closed, or when home-delivered meals are not delivered. Each box consists of shelf-stable food products (e.g., canned beef stew, peanut butter, fruit, applesauce, juice, powdered milk, low sodium crackers).
 - i. Shelf-Stable (Emergency) Meal: A meal to be made available during bad weather or during another situation during which home delivered meals or congregate meals cannot be delivered. In these situations, a Successful Proposer delivers, as requested, "shelf-stable meals" to various sites. These meals do not require refrigeration and can be consumed at room temperature if needed.
20. Older Adult: A County resident who is 60 years of age or older
21. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
22. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, for-profit organization or business, or collaborative group that submits a Proposal in response to this RFP
23. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP

24. RFP: Request for Proposals
25. Service Area: The geographic area(s) of Allegheny County that the Successful Proposer covers, providing congregate, HDM and emergency meals for all consumers in that area. DHS will select the final service areas with Successful Proposers.
26. Senior Center: Community centers that provide nutritious meals and offer social activities, a range of informative programs, creative arts, exercise, volunteer opportunities, community service and special events
27. Successful Proposer: The Proposers selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

Other terms shall have the meaning or definition as stated in the RFP.

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) aims to significantly improve its meal and nutrition services for older adults (age 60+) throughout the County by contracting with two or more Successful Proposers to provide a Meals and Nutrition service composed of: Congregate Meals for Senior Centers; Home-Delivered Meals (HDM) that existing HDM Sites then deliver to consumers; and Emergency Meals, when needed.

The goals of this program are to:

- Feed people delicious food that gives them pleasure as it enhances their health
- Ensure that the food is safe and healthy
- Use public funds wisely (e.g., find ever-greater efficiencies in scheduling, packaging, delivery, storage and staffing)

For decades, through its Area Agency on Aging (AAA), DHS has provided supplemental meals that help to meet the nutritional needs of thousands of eligible older adults in the County. Some of these meals are delivered directly to homes, while others are served at Senior Centers located throughout the County. Regardless of where the meals are eaten, they provide essential nutrition that can delay adverse health conditions and prolong independence. The meals also provide an opportunity for the sometimes-isolated population of older adults to socialize and for DHS's partners to check-in with them to identify changes in condition and connect them, as appropriate, to additional resources.

DHS is seeking Proposals, informed by Proposers' deep expertise in food preparation and delivery, to help us solve some of our most pressing challenges and achieve our goals. We also wish to work with Successful Proposers and other partners to determine the optimal Service Area for each that minimizes the time it takes for food to be delivered to Senior Centers or HDM Sites and from HDM Sites to homes. We therefore are seeking Proposers that are willing to be highly collaborative and flexible during the planning period and implementation.

Award Details

DHS intends to enter Agreements with two or more Successful Proposers for a term of three years, with the possibility of renewal for up to two more years based on the Successful Proposers' performance. Recognizing the possibility of sharp increases in food costs, DHS is willing to consider amending the Agreements to ensure continued quality service.

The Agreement also will include a transition period during which the contractors that currently prepare meals will continue to provide meals. DHS will work with the Successful Proposers to design the Service Area each will cover and establish a timeline for implementation.

Based on the current budget, DHS anticipates allocating up to \$50,000 for the initial planning period and up to \$5.3 million per year (across each 12-month period) to a set of Successful Proposers who will, in total/together:

- Plan and prepare approximately 60,000 meals per month to feed approximately 3,300 older adults.
- Deliver the prepared meals for congregate dining to 39 Senior Centers
- Package the meals for home delivery and coordinate delivery of home-delivered meals with HDM Sites
- Prepare and have Emergency Meals available; storage and delivery will be coordinated with DHS

Deliveries directly to homes, wellness checks, nutrition education and other elements of home delivery are not part of this RFP.

Who can submit a Proposal

Any entity that holds a valid PA State Commissary License and can prepare and deliver meals to sites in Allegheny County is eligible to submit a Proposal.

Entities do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County but must meet the County’s contractual requirements (see Section 6).

Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner together to submit one Proposal, are permitted. Entities may participate in more than one collaborative Proposal. See Section 4.2.c for details.

Providers currently under contract with the County to deliver the services listed in this RFP must submit a Proposal in response to this RFP for consideration if they wish to continue providing these services.

What’s important to us

We are particularly interested in:

- Proposals that demonstrate expertise in managing large-scale food preparation and operations that consistently provide quality meals. With thousands of seniors depending on DHS for these supplemental meals, this is not only a large undertaking, but one in which any gap in service is unacceptable and detrimental; experience and consistency are therefore critical.
- Proposals that offer compelling approaches and/or solutions to the changing needs of older adults and the current, pressing challenges within our nutrition services programs

We prefer Proposers with the capacity to:

- Provide all meals and nutrition services listed in this RFP and the ability to quickly adapt and change meal types due to emergent situations and program needs
- Provide meal services to a significant share of the County, either as an individual entity or through a collaboration

Timeline

RFP Posting	Thursday, September 1, 2022
Pre-Proposal Conference (see section 4.1 for details)	Wednesday, September 21 at 9 a.m. Eastern
Questions Deadline	Friday, October 14 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Last Website and Q&A Update	Thursday, October, 20 at 6 p.m. Eastern
Submission Deadline	Wednesday, October 26 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Estimated Award Decision/Notification	January 2023

Who we are

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, developmental supports, homelessness and community services.

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

Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP

The older adult population – both nationally and here in Allegheny County – is growing and changing.

From 2009 to 2019, the total number of older adults¹ in the U.S. increased by 36%;² by 2040, there will be more than twice as many older adults in the U.S. than in 2000. In Allegheny County, nearly one in five adults is currently over the age of 65,³ and demographers anticipate continued growth in the County’s older adult population.⁴

The incoming generation of older adults – aging “baby boomers” – has put greater emphasis on maintaining independence (aging in one’s home and community) and having choice over engaging with services and systems. Advances in healthcare and lifestyle continue to generally increase average life expectancy, and our Senior Centers report that the incoming generation of younger older adults are more physically active.

¹ While much of the demographic research released by the U.S. government on older adults focuses on individuals age 65+, DHS’s nutrition programs are open to individuals 60+.

² <https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/Aging%20and%20Disability%20in%20America/2020ProfileOlderAmericans.Final.pdf>

³ <https://census.gov/quickfacts/alleghenycountypennsylvania>

⁴ <https://ucsur.pitt.edu/files/center/soa/2014/State%20of%20Aging%20in%20Allegheny%20County.pdf>

DHS's nutrition services are one of the primary ways in which the Department serves older adults.

DHS and its partners currently provide congregate meals each weekday for approximately 1,000 individuals, serving anywhere from 2,500 to 4,000 meals per week. Home-Delivered Meals are delivered to 2,000 individuals each week, totaling approximately 10,000 meals per week. Emergency meals are provided during inclement weather and in other unforeseen situations. Annually, this includes 3,500 shelf-stable meals that HDM Sites and Senior Centers can provide to consumers, as well as 1,000 emergency weather boxes of food they can distribute in advance of bad weather.

Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For

DHS is seeking two or more Successful Proposers to operate its Meals and Nutrition Service for older adults. This service includes: 1) Designing, preparing, packaging and delivering Congregate Meals (delivery to our network of Senior Centers); 2) Designing, preparing and packaging HDM meals bound for consumers' homes (which HDM Sites will deliver); and 3) Preparing Emergency Meals for consumers on an as-needed basis.

Successful Proposers will provide all of the following:

- Design and create delicious, healthy meals (including special diet meals). This includes hiring/contracting with an on-staff dietitian to design menus, analyze the nutritional contents of each proposed meal, and submit the analysis to DHS.
- Receive meal orders through an established computer system
- Prepare meals
- Package meals
- Create a streamlined routing system in collaboration with DHS, other Successful Proposer(s) and HDM Sites
- Deliver congregate meals to Senior Centers
- Deliver ready-to-enjoy meals to a set of HDM Sites, who will then deliver to older adults' homes
- Prepare emergency meals and have them ready; coordinate storage and delivery with DHS

A DHS dietitian will monitor and evaluate the compliance of Successful Proposers to nutritional standards.

DHS has sketched three preliminary geographic areas (Central, North and South), with each requiring preparation of approximately 20,000 meals/month. We will work with the Successful Proposers to define the final Service Areas. In the Response Form, Proposers are asked to indicate how many of these areas they could cover and their order of preference.

Addendum A provides the volume of congregate meals and HDM by these geographic areas, as well as more specific locations.

2.1 Requirements, by Component, of the Meals and Nutrition Service

A. Congregate Meals

The Successful Proposers will provide between 2,500 – 4,000 meals⁵ each week across 39 Senior Centers (total is across all Service Areas).

Successful Proposers must work with DHS to do all of the following:

- Design, prepare, package and deliver one meal (lunch) daily on Monday - Friday (5 days) to the Senior Centers in their designated Service Area(s) (with exceptions for any agreed-upon holidays).
- Provide food in accordance with state regulations, which allow for meals to be either hot, cold, frozen, packaged, boxed, modified diet, special or any combination thereof.
- Provide meals in accordance with consumer needs, which may include meals that are hot, cold, frozen, packaged, boxed, modified diet, special or any combination thereof.
- Prepare the food following agreed-upon preparation standards and deliver the food following agreed-upon delivery standards.

A full list of standards is included as an addendum (Addendum B) to this RFP. The Successful Proposers must comply with all agreed-upon standards.

B. HDM

Each week, the Successful Proposers will provide approximately 10,000 ready-to-eat meals⁶ total is across all Service Areas). They will provide these meals to 9 HDM Sites, which will then deliver them to consumers' homes. Currently, food for the HDM Service is delivered three days each week (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) to the HDM Sites throughout the county, where they assemble food for delivery, deliver the meal, conduct wellness checks and provide nutrition education. These agencies also manage enrollment and termination of the HDM Service for consumers and all data entry and reporting requirements.

Since Successful Proposers will now be packaging the meals so that they are ready for older adults to consume, the need for HDM Sites to assemble food or repackage meals bound for home delivery at a staging area is eliminated. We anticipate this will better maintain food quality.

Successful Proposers will work with DHS to do all the following:

- Design, prepare and package meals to serve a minimum of 5 meals each week, per individual, to all HDM consumers in the service area for which they are responsible.

⁵ This is an approximate number, given that the exact number of meals ordered through this program fluctuates. See Section D (Ordering and Cancellation Policy) of Addendum B for more information about how meal ordering and cancellation works.

⁶ See Footnote #5

Note: A few consumers (fewer than 100) currently receive 7 meals per week based on assessed nutritional risk.

- Package food so that it is ready to be delivered without assembly/repackaging.
- Coordinate delivery of the meals to HDM Sites (one or more depending upon geographic area).
- Provide food in accordance with state regulations, which allow for meals to be either hot, cold, frozen, packaged, boxed, modified diet, special or any combination thereof.
- Provide meals in accordance with consumer needs, which may include meals that are hot, cold, frozen, packaged, boxed, modified diet, special or any combination thereof.
- Prepare and deliver the food following agreed-upon standards.

A full list of standards is included as an addendum (Addendum C) to this RFP. The Successful Proposers must comply with all of the agreed-upon standards.

C. Emergency Meals

The Successful Proposers will provide approximately 3,500 shelf-stable meals and 1,000 emergency food boxes each year (total across all Service Areas). Successful Proposers must work with DHS to do the following:

- Provide additional food in the event of an unanticipated occurrence or emergency (e.g., weather, Senior Center closure, pandemic) on a less regular basis, including:
 - Shelf-Stable (Emergency) Meals that contain food that does not require refrigeration
 - Emergency Weather Boxes provided to consumers in advance of upcoming adverse weather, which also typically contain food that does not require refrigeration

2.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Improvement

This section defines anticipated challenges—areas we see as open to innovation, even as DHS operates under constraints.

- Long and Complex Delivery Routes – Currently, our congregate and HDM services are divided into geographic service areas that cover the county. However, with food for congregate meals needing to be delivered to 39 respective Senior Centers, and meals for home delivery traditionally delivered across three separate days each week to eight HDM sites, routes are long and complicated. This has resulted in a wide delivery window (currently 7:00am – 11:30am).
 - DHS hopes to significantly improve the efficiency of these routes and decrease the delivery window by working with Successful Proposers to design optimal routes.
 - DHS is interested in Proposers' ideas for how to design these routes, including the use of technology.
- Maintaining and Increasing Food/Meal Quality – The current delivery window is one factor affecting the quality of the food (particularly hot meals). Quality can diminish as

food sits for hours (in delivery vehicles and subsequently in warming areas such as steam tables at Senior Centers). It also can be difficult to keep food within the required temperature ranges for such a long period of time. In addition to taste and consistency, prolonged heating of food can also affect nutritional value.

- DHS is interested in Proposers' experience and innovation in ways of keeping food quality high from the kitchen to the consumer.
 - DHS is interested in Proposers' ideas for maintaining food quality once it leaves their commissaries.
- Providing “Lighter” Meal Options – We have repeatedly heard from some older adults at Senior Centers that they desire a “lighter” meal option (e.g., salads, wraps, soups). *Note that “lighter” meals must also meet State regulations.*
 - DHS is interested in Proposers' ideas for how to provide lighter meals while meeting nutritional requirements.
- Providing Consumers with Choice and Variety – Our nutrition programs serve thousands of older adults across all parts of Allegheny County, including individuals in urban, suburban and rural communities. The County and its older adults are also culturally and ethnically diverse, which means that consumers have an array of dietary needs and preferences; therefore, choice and food variety are essential. Traditionally, despite differences in the populations they serve, the menus for congregate and home-delivered services have been nearly or completely the same.
 - DHS is interested in Proposers' ideas for how to deliver food that will delight people who have preferences based on culture, ethnicity and religion.
 - DHS is seeking Proposers whose staff has been trained in cultural competency and who will work successfully with a diverse range of individuals, including consumers and program administrators.
- Food Procurement/Supply Chains – Supply chain disruptions and rising costs have become commonplace over the past year, including in food procurement. One aspect of the regulation the Commonwealth requires of our nutrition programs is submitting “menus” in advance (this is how the State works to ensure that meals accomplish a variety of nutritional goals). While there is some leniency in the Commonwealth's regulations concerning substitutions, frequent last-minute difficulties in procuring certain ingredients sometimes result in extra time and effort to ensure that these substitutions comply with regulations.
 - DHS is interested in Proposers' ideas of how to maintain a solid supply chain to prevent disruption of meals.

To aid innovative thinking, DHS has provided several Addenda. Addendum A provides additional information about the locations of Senior Centers and HDM Sites. Addendum D provides a map of the locations of Senior Centers and HDM consumers by service route, and Addendum E provides a layered map with multiple adjustable features.

2.4 Standards of Service

Successful Proposers must maintain standards of quality set out by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Aging.

[Pennsylvania Department of Aging Program Directives - Program Area 03 -- Congregate Meals](#)

[15-03-01 Policies and Standards for Food Safety and Menu Compliance Monitoring](#)

[15-03-02 Policies and Standards for the Department of Aging Nutrition Services \(PDF\)](#)

DHS has some additional standards. Please see Addendum B for standards related to Congregate Meals for Senior Centers and Addendum C for standards related to HDM.

Within the above-listed standards, Proposers should pay particular attention to personnel, commissary and contingency/emergency preparedness plan standards.

We urge Proposers to review these standards in advance of submitting a Proposal.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

DHS will evaluate Proposals based upon the evaluation criteria listed below. Proposers must address their qualifications in their Proposal by responding to the 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 130 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Operational Experience (30 points possible)

- Experience in preparing quality meals at a significant scale, for consumption in congregate or other settings, using one or more commissary kitchens that follow regulations. (15 points)
- Experience planning menus that are enjoyable for consumers, while meeting strict dietary guidelines, including special diets. (5 points)
- Experience in ensuring that staff work successfully with a diverse range of individuals, including in designing meals, in seeking and using consumer feedback to improve quality, and in working with those who consume meals as well as with partner organizations' staff (10 points)

Proposed Approach (75 points possible)

- Proposed approach to designing, preparing and operating the Meals and Nutrition service in a way that meets the requirements laid out in this RFP (40 points)
- Proposed approach to addressing any of the challenges laid out in this RFP (15 Points)
- An appropriate and innovative strategy for addressing the scenario described in the Response Form (5 points)
- A plan for assuring the quality and consistency of food and services for selected meal service(s) (15 points)

Budget and Cost Proposal (25 points possible)

- Cost proposal that aligns with DHS’s available funding and needs, as reflected in the completed Unit Cost Analysis Spreadsheet (20 points)
- Companion budget narrative that provides clear context for the costs in the Unit Cost Analysis Spreadsheet (5 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Prepare

a. Pre-Proposal Conference

- DHS will conduct a pre-proposal conference about this RFP at 9 a.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, via Microsoft Teams. It will include a presentation about the RFP, and DHS staff will answer questions from attendees.
- Attendance at the pre-proposal conference is not required to submit a Proposal. Everything (video recording, slide deck, transcribed Q&A) shared during the pre-proposal conference will be posted afterwards on the DHS Solicitations webpage.
- Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the conference. Final definitive answers will be posted in writing on the DHS Solicitations webpage.
- Prospective Proposers can join the pre-proposal conference by:
 - Calling (267) 368-7515 and using Conference ID: 907 958 111#
 - Or following this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Or copying and pasting this link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MzEzZmNjMDctMmNhNC00M2I1LWI5OTctM2Y3Y2JmYjAxY2U4%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22d14c6dca-47dd-45a0-a62e-11bf0cce95e0%22%7d

4.2 Submit a Proposal

- #### **a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:**
- The background (see Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For)

- The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How DHS 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. Collaborative Proposals
- Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner to apply together, are permitted. Collaborative Proposals can include:
 - Lead Agency: The County can enter a contract with only one partner of a Collaborative Proposal. Therefore, a Collaborative Proposal must identify one entity as the Lead Agency that will be the contracting party with the County. The Lead Agency should be the Proposer.
 - Partners: Partners must be committed to a role in carrying out the Contract Services and will be compensated for that role. Collaborative Proposals must attach a signed letter of commitment from each Partner that details and agrees to their role in the Contract Services.
 - Entities may participate in more than one Collaborative Proposal.
- d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
- Response Form
 - Partner commitment letters, if applicable
 - Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 7.1 and 7.2)
 - W-9
- e. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed either above or in the Response Form.
- f. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer must submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting with Allegheny County.
- g. Proposers must 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.
- h. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, to be considered for review.**
- i. All Proposals must be submitted before the deadline! If a Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee (as described in Section 5 below) for review and scoring.
- j. Proposers will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their Proposal. If a Proposer does not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting their Proposal, please contact: DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

4.3 How to Contact DHS about this RFP and RFP Communications

- a. If you have any questions about this RFP, please email us at DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us.
 - a. All content-related questions must be emailed by the Questions Deadline at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, October 14, 2022.
 - b. You may submit technical or logistical questions at any time, even after the Questions Deadline.
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to all content-related questions and any changes or amendments, will be posted at our Active Solicitations website at www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
 - a. Please check this website regularly for answers to questions, additional information and changes to the RFP or the RFP process.
 - b. The website will be updated only on Thursdays, with any new information visible after 6 p.m.
 - c. The last Q&A and website update for this RFP will be on Thursday, October 20, 2022, at 6 p.m. We will make every effort not to post any new information after this time; however, we reserve the right to post new information in emergency circumstances.

4.4 Other Information

- a. **The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to accept any Proposal or enter into an Agreement with any Proposers. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and not to enter into an Agreement for the Contracted Services.**
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all 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. Successful Proposal(s) will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposers.

4.5 Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know Law

Proposers should be aware that all documents and materials submitted in response to this RFP may be subject to requests for access to public records made pursuant to Pennsylvania’s Right-To-Know Law (RTKL). Under the RTKL, records in the possession of a public agency like the County are presumed to be public records and the County may have to make documents and materials submitted by the Proposer available to a requestor after an award of an Agreement is made.

If the Proposer includes any information within its Proposal that the Proposer asserts is either a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information,” as those terms are defined under the RTKL, the Proposer must include with its Proposal a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer identifying those portions or parts of its Proposal that the Proposer

believes constitute a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information” and provide contact information to enable DHS to contact the Proposer in the event that the County receives a Right-To-Know request for the Proposal. The Proposer shall have five (5) business days from date of receipt of any notification from the County to provide a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer explaining why the Proposal or any portion thereof is exempt from disclosure as a trade secret, confidential proprietary information or other legal reason. The County shall consider this statement in either granting or denying a request for public access to the Proposal or any portion thereof. The County will notify the Proposer of its decision whether to grant or deny the request either in whole or in part.

Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal

DHS will convene an Evaluation Committee to evaluate Proposals. The Evaluation Committee will assign scores to each Proposal by awarding points based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria, by using the point scale listed in Section 5.1 b.

5.1 Evaluation of Proposals

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. DHS will form an Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee, which will be composed of evaluators with expertise in the subject matter of this RFP, may include community members with lived experience, external subject matter experts or provider representative(s), representative(s) from key partners or funders and DHS internal staff.
- 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 utilizing their personal 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. Each 0-5 score will be multiplied by the appropriate weight for the number of possible points noted after each evaluation criterion in Section 3. For example, for a criterion worth 15 points, the 0-5 score would be multiplied by three. An “Outstanding” response would receive 15 points, while one that “Meets Expectations” would receive nine points.
- d. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the average scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposers can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP. The Committee will have the discretion to proceed as follows: (i) to recommend to the Director of DHS that a reduced

number of Proposals be shortlisted for more extensive review through a formal oral presentation to the Committee; or (ii) to recommend to the Director of DHS that DHS request authorization for the County to enter into an Agreement(s) with the Successful Proposers.

- e. As described in d above, DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have the 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 and provide a sample of the type of lunch they would prepare as a home delivered meal for an older adult. Each Committee member will individually score the oral presentation and sample of the shortlisted Proposers using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that a shortlisted Proposer's oral presentation can receive is 15 points:
 - Presentation and sample demonstrate Proposer's ability to implement the Contract Services effectively (5 points)
 - Proposer's answers to Evaluation Committee's questions demonstrate Proposer's ability to implement the Contract Services (5 points)
 - Proposer's presentation is thoughtful and professional (5 points)
- f. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee to the shortlisted Proposer formal oral presentations and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposers can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP.
- g. The Committee will submit its recommendation for award of an Agreement or Agreements to the Director of DHS for approval. The Director will, in turn, submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement or Agreement with the Successful Proposers.
- h. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- i. As part of determining a Proposer's eligibility to enter a contract with Allegheny County, all Proposers' financial audits or other documentation will be reviewed by DHS fiscal analysts to ensure a Proposer's financial stability.
- j. 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.**
- k. All Proposers will be notified of the County's final decision of which Proposers will be awarded an Agreement.
- l. Proposers that are not awarded an Agreement but 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:

- a. Received by the due date/time.
- b. Properly formatted and include responses to all requested information.

- c. 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.

5.3 Appeals Process

After the competitive selection process has been completed and the successful Proposer(s) have been identified, DHS will notify all unsuccessful Proposers, in writing and within 30 days of identification of Successful Proposers, that they were not selected as a Provider. The communication will provide information to the unsuccessful Proposers on the time frames and process to appeal the decision, should they decide to do so. Further information on procurement requirements followed may be found in the Aging Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter I, Administration at: <https://www.aging.pa.gov/publications/policy-procedure-manual/pages/default.aspx> Information on appeals is found in Chapter II, Hearings and Appeals at: <https://www.aging.pa.gov/publications/policy-procedure-manual/Documents/Hearings%20and%20Appeals%20Chapter.pdf>

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations), available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

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 Business 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 a completed Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form and supporting documents. The Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form should be completed as follows:
 - All Proposers must complete Section 1 – Contact Information and attach their MWDBE Diversity Plan (see Section 4 – Sample Diversity Policy).
 - If the Proposer is able to meet the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement. Proposers also must attach the MWDBE certifications of the firms cited in the Participation Statement.

- If the Proposer would like to request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement and Section 3 – MWDBE Participation Waiver Request Form.
- b. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - [Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form](#)
 - MWDBE Resources
 - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
 - [MWDBE Guide for DHS Proposers](#)
- c. For more information about MWDBEs, visit the [Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion website](#).

6.2 Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) Requirement

Allegheny County also has a goal of 5% participation for veteran-owned small businesses (VOSB) in all contracts. The County, therefore, expects that Successful Proposers will make a “good faith effort” in assisting the County in meeting this goal.

- a. A veteran-owned small business is defined by the County as a business having 100 or fewer full-time employees and not less than 51% of which is owned by one or more veterans, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans, and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans. The VOSB vendor **MUST** provide proof of veteran ownership including percentage and name and address of business.
 - For contracts under \$100,000, VOSB vendors shall be exempt from all bonding requirements.
- b. All Proposals must include either of the following:
 - If the Proposer can meet the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement is required. You must also attach a copy of the VOSB vendor(s) DD 214 discharge form(s) cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer requests a waiver from participating in the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement and VOSB Waiver Request are required.
- c. VOSB forms can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - [VOSB Participation Statement](#)
 - [VOSB Waiver Request](#)

6.3 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.

6.4 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications that begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations), 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).

6.5 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.

6.6 Language Diversity Requirements

Successful Proposers must assure resources are secured and/or made available for participants/consumers/clients with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers. Such actions shall include but not be limited to assessing the need for interpreters, evaluating the need for alternate language materials, identifying internal and external resources to meet identified needs, and accessing services contracted by DHS through their assigned contract monitor(s).