

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

RFP for Process and Outcome Evaluation of Hello Baby, a Tiered Intervention Program for New  
Parents and Their Babies

**December 11, 2019**

**1. We are contemplating a proposal submission to the subject RFP and have a question regarding the following statement from the RFP: “Allegheny County intends to award up to two contracts to perform the evaluation(s) for a total cost not to exceed \$300,000.” It is unclear if the total amount of funding between both contracts is \$300K, or if the ceiling price for each contract is \$300k.**

\$300,000 is the total amount for both contracts; however, Proposers may submit budgets above that threshold, so long as the costs are clearly explained and justified. Additionally, please note that we do anticipate working with the Successful Proposer to secure additional funding.

**December 19, 2019**

**2. Does Allegheny County DHS have a set indirect rate for this RFP? Is the total budget inclusive of indirects, if permitted? Are Federal funds part of the budget (in determining the indirect rate for budgeting, if not set by the County)?**

Allegheny County does not have a set indirect rate. However, this project is funded with a federal grant that is subject to the federal Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Guidance, which allows a de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Proposers may consider the stated budget in the RFP to be exclusive of indirect costs, i.e., \$300,000 for direct costs. Please also refer to Question 3 below.

**3. Would the County please confirm if they would accept an organizations federally approved indirect/overhead rate?**

Yes. The County will require proof of the federally approved rate. If the approved rate is very high, DHS may need to cap the total amount invoiced for administration, depending on funds available.

**4. What type of contract does the County expect to issue? I.e., Cost Reimbursement Contract, Firm + Fixed Price Contract, or another type?**

DHS will negotiate a final budget with the Successful Proposer(s). The Successful Proposer(s) will submit itemized invoices monthly (or on another agreed-upon periodic schedule) through DHS’s online contracting system based on the agreed-upon budget.

**5. What is the expected page length for the Response Form?**

Page limits for each section are stated in the Response Form.

**6. We appreciate your response to our original question [Question 1]. The answer provided, “\$300,000 is the total amount for both contracts...” can still be interpreted in different ways, and we are seeking additional clarity on the ceiling prices of the two contracts. Asked a different way, for contract #1, is the ceiling price \$150,000 or \$300,000; and for contract #2, is the ceiling price \$150,000 or \$300,000?**

We currently have \$300,000 available, not \$600,000. The breakdown between the two contracts will depend on final negotiation with the Successful Proposer(s) and may not be an even split of \$150,000 each. Again, please note that Proposers may submit budgets over that threshold as long as costs are explained and justified. Please also refer to Question 2, clarifying that the stated \$300,000 can be considered to be for direct costs, with indirect costs as an additional expense.

**January 9, 2020**

**7. If a proposal is including both the process and evaluation components, should all responses in Section B and C be repeated? There seems to be considerable overlap in some areas. Would it be acceptable to combine sections into one narrative with clear labels for activities pertaining to the process and/or outcome evaluation?**

No. Because Proposers may propose only one evaluation, we need to be able to evaluate Proposals separately to ensure a fair process. Please respond to all questions in both parts of the Response Form; each question will receive a numerical score as outlined in the RFP. However, it is acceptable if some of the answers in Section C are identical to answers in Section B.

**8. We are submitting with a subcontractor. What supporting docs (e.g. financial records) need to be submitted from both organizations as opposed to only from the prime?**

Only the lead Proposer’s documentation needs to be included, since the lead Proposer will hold the contract with DHS and bear responsibility for any subcontract.

**9. Does the budget narrative count toward the page count (question 14)?**

Yes, the budget narrative should be entered into the response form and included in the page count.

**10. Is the Word document for the Response Form formatted in the way you wish to receive responses inside the boxes (single spaced, red text, Times New Roman 12)?**

The red text was unintentional, but please keep responses in 12 point Times New Roman, single spaced.

**11. Does the County want staff resumes/CVs included in the proposal? And would they count toward the page count for the narrative?**

You may include resumes/CVs if you would like, but it is not a requirement. If included they will not count toward the page count.

**12. Given the holidays, the meetings of the Society of Social Work and Research (January 15-19) and MLK Day, would you consider extending the deadline by one week?**

Yes, we will extend the deadline one week, from January 24, 2020 to January 31, 2020. The RFP has been amended accordingly.

**January 17, 2020**

**13. Does Allegheny County currently have permission or authorization to use SMS to collect data from the universal and/or differentiated populations?**

We only have phone numbers for clients served by DHS. We have permission to send SMS to these clients, but they have to opt-in. If they don't opt-in, we cannot ask them any further questions.

**14. Is the County willing to use a financial incentive to encourage parents to participate in the evaluation? If yes, would you consider this a direct or indirect expense?**

Yes, we are willing to use financial incentives; we would consider this a direct expense.

**15. Will the County have email addresses available for parents in all three tiers: universal, differentiated and priority? If not for all tiers, which tiers might be affected?**

We have email addresses for some clients who have previously received services through DHS. However, we do not have great coverage as not many clients provide their email. Clients in the universal tier are least likely to be DHS-involved, so we would have fewest addresses for this tier overall.

**January 21, 2020**

**16. The data warehouse description mentions the availability of data on health care coverage, but it is not emphasized. Does this include Medicaid claims or other ways to measure healthcare utilization?**

We received the first dataset from our medical assistance provider in November 2019 and are actively working with them to define events/visits for hospitalizations and ED visits. We received data related to administrative claims for outpatient, inpatient, and pharmacy services as well as information regarding diagnoses, providers, and demographic information. Once we have the logic developed, all of the data will be available to the Successful Proposer. We also recently received commercial physical health data from UPMC.

**17. In particular, below is a prioritized wishlist; it would be very useful to know the following.**

We were able to complete the majority of these analyses. Please find the available data linked at: [www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations) with the title "Supporting Q&A Data."

There are a few limitations with the data, which are noted below each item of the “wishlist” that is impacted.

**For newborns during 2014-2016 and each vigintile (5% "buckets") of the predictive risk score, the mean and standard deviation of:**

**For 1, 2, and 3 years after birth:**

**From health care data:**

**1. Number of hospitalizations for the newborn and, separately, for the mother**

This analysis was completed using 2012-2015 births with a data set that our team in New Zealand had from our work on the Allegheny Family Screening Tool. We are aware that the births are for different years than you requested, but we are still refining the data in our data warehouse for physical health data, and this data was readily available.

**2. Number of ED visits for the newborn and, separately, for the mother**

Same as above.

**3. Height and Weight for the newborn and, separately, for siblings of the newborn**

We do not have data on the height of the newborn and siblings.

**From child welfare data:**

**4. Child protection referrals for the newborn and, separately, for siblings of the newborn**

**5. Foster care placement for the newborn and, separately, for siblings of the newborn**

**From vital statistics data:**

**6. Number of subsequent births for the mother**

**7. Birthweight for subsequent births for the mother**

**8. Mortality**

**From employment records:**

We have all of this data. The data goes back to January 1, 2017, so we did not analyze it for the requested cohort. This data will be available to the selected evaluator.

9. **Employment status of the mother**
10. **Earnings of the mother**
11. **Employment status of other adults in the household**
12. **Earnings of other adults in the household**

**To measure service connections:**

13. **Family support center usage (number of visits)**  
Data not included as contacts were not tracked until 2017.
14. **Early childhood services (indicators for receipt of various programs)**
15. **Public benefit receipt (various programs)**

<b>Amendments</b>
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**December 19, 2019** – we amended the Award Details section of the RFP to clarify that the stated budget of \$300,000 is exclusive of indirect costs. The amended paragraph is reproduced below, with the new text in red:

Allegheny County intends to award up to two contracts to perform the evaluation(s) for a total cost not to exceed \$300,000 **for direct costs. Proposed budgets may include indirect costs in addition to this amount.** DHS expects to work in partnership with the Successful Proposer to secure additional resources, should the evaluation require it.

**January 9, 2020** – We amended the RFP and website to reflect a new proposal submission deadline of 3 p.m. Eastern time on Friday, January 31, 2020 (previously January 24, 2020), in accordance with our response to Question 12.

Correspondingly, we updated the deadline to submit questions to January 24, 2020 (previously January 17, 2020).