



Request for Proposals

Residential Treatment Facility Step-Down Program for Children and Youth

RFP Posting: May 13, 2016

Deadline for Questions: June 3, 2016

Submission Deadline: June 10, 2016

Estimated Award Decision/Notification: Summer 2016

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
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Definitions

The following words are used in this RFP and are capitalized to indicate their special meaning:

1. 55 Pa. Code Chapter 3800: Regulations that protect the health, safety and well-being of children and youth receiving care in a residential facility.
2. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services.
3. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
4. Conferencing and Teaming: The DHS model of practice that engages individuals, families, supports and professionals in assessing strengths and needs and developing a plan for keeping children, young people and adults safe and healthy while continually integrating individual and family actions with professional services.
5. Contract Services: The specific services which the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement.
6. CYF: [Allegheny County Department of Human Services] Office of Children, Youth and Families.
7. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services.
8. HSAO: [Allegheny County Department of Human Services] Human Services Administration Organization
9. KIDS: Key Information and Demographic System. The records management software application for CYF.
10. Proposal: The Response Form submitted by a Proposer in response to this RFP.
11. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP.
12. Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard: The standard designed to support normalcy and promote permanency by requiring age-appropriate activities and experiences for children and youth in out-of-home placements.
13. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP. A completed Response Form is the Proposal.
14. RFP: Request for Proposals.
15. RTF: Residential Treatment Facility. A licensed facility where an individual can live while receiving treatment for a mental health and/or substance use disorder or other behavioral issue.
16. Sanctuary Model: A model of practice that promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community.
17. Successful Proposer: the Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services.
18. Youth Mental Health First Aid: A model of practice specifically designed to help a youth who is experiencing a crisis (e.g., mental health or substance use).

The Basics

What we need

Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services' (DHS) child welfare office (the Office of Children, Youth and Families, or CYF), is seeking Proposals to establish and provide a new step-down program that will provide housing and transition planning for children and youth exiting a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF), hereafter referred to as the Program. An RTF is a licensed facility where an individual can live while receiving treatment for a mental health and/or substance use disorder or other behavioral challenge. The Program will target children and youth who do not have their next housing placement (e.g., a group home, foster or kinship care home, host home, family home) secured when leaving an RTF but who still require intensive supports. Successful Proposer(s) will provide four beds for girls and four beds for boys with transition plans for entry into and exit from the Program. DHS anticipates there may be more than one Successful Proposer. Therefore, Proposers may submit a Proposal to provide a portion of the required beds. The total annual budget for all beds will not exceed \$512,000.

What we don't want

DHS is not interested in programs that offer long term housing or housing that disrupts existing successful interventions and/or therapeutic relationships.

What's important to us

The Program should help children and youth feel secure and supported during their transition from an RTF to the Program and during their transition from the Program to their next placement.

The Program must ensure that there is no disruption in treatment or services that could cause a set-back in progress and successes achieved in the RTF.

Who we are

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

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

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

CYF is the Office of Children, Youth and Families, and its mission is to protect children from abuse and neglect; to preserve families, whenever possible; and to provide permanent, safe homes for children either by assuring safety within the child's own family or by finding an adoptive home or another permanent setting for those children who cannot be reunified with their family. To achieve its mission, CYF provides a wide range of preventive, protective, supportive and direct services through its own caseworkers, case aides and other support staff as well as a network of contracted agencies.

Section 1: Key Information

1.1 General Information

- a. This RFP is a solicitation to individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations or businesses (Proposers) to submit a Proposal to perform the services as described in *Section 3.1: What we are buying and why*. Proposers must have the ability to meet the identified needs and quality standards within the program and funding guidelines specified in this RFP.
- b. The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers.

1.2 Timeline

- a. Proposals must be submitted by June 10, 2016.
- b. Deadline for Proposers to Submit Questions: May 31, 2016
- c. Proposers will be notified of their selection status by summer 2016.

1.3 How to Contact DHS

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

1.4 Submitting Your Proposal

- a. This RFP provides detailed information about the Proposal and Proposer requirements, the evaluation process and how to develop your Proposal.
- b. Please use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available at our Active Solicitations website with the RFP announcement at www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- c. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following, available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - Cover Page
 - MWDBE Participation Statement or MWDBE Waiver and Participation Statements
 - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
 - Audited Financial Report
 - W-9
- d. Please do not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.
- e. Please take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:

- The requirements (see *Section 3: Our Requirements*)
 - The evaluation process (see *Section 4: The Evaluation Process*)
- f. Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts that may be specified in the Response Form.
 - g. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. EST on Friday, June 10, 2016 to be considered for review.**
 - h. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will not be considered.
 - i. You will receive an email when your Proposal is received.
 - If you do not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting your Proposal, please contact us at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us

1.5 Other Information

- a. The Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all of the Terms and Conditions specified in *Section 5: Contract Information*.
- b. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of their Proposal.
- c. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- d. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive.

Section 2: Background

On occasion, children and youth in the care of child welfare may face discharge from a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) with an unclear and inadequate plan for appropriate post-treatment housing placement. The next placement for children and youth exiting an RTF could be a group home, a foster home, host home, or the home of their natural parents or a relative. Sometimes these options are not immediately available. If secure housing is not available in the interim, the child or youth may be placed in a shelter (i.e., temporary housing intended for a length of stay of 30 days or less), which is not equipped to offer the support required to address their complex needs. These children and youth need ongoing services to support their progress in areas such as health and wellness, habilitation, substance use and mental health recovery, medication management, and educational placement and advancement. It is crucial that stable housing and services are in place at the time of discharge from the RTF in order to ensure that these needs are met.

Section 3: Our Requirements

3.1 What we are buying and why

To support CYF-involved children and youth who have been discharged from an RTF without adequate housing and transition planning, DHS seeks to develop a new residential Program that will provide step-down housing and a plan to support the child or youth (henceforth referred to as Participant) through the transition processes of entry into the Program and exit into the next placement after the Program. Although Successful Proposer(s) are not required to provide behavioral and mental health services on-site, they must support a Participant's individualized treatment plan and coordinate with other agencies

so that services remain intact and continue during the Participant's time in the Program and the transition into the next placement after the Program.

A. Target Population

The Program will serve Participants, ages 10 through 21, who are in the care of CYF and who do not have a housing placement identified post-discharge from an RTF. DHS expects that approximately seven to 25 children and youth will qualify for the Program per year, with a maximum of seven cases active at any given time. Successful Proposer(s) must accept all referrals received from CYF. DHS Human Services Administration Organization (HSAO) will assist in the identification of potential Participants. DHS Multisystem Specialist or CYF Resource Coordinator will call Successful Proposer(s) with a referral. For records management, Successful Proposer(s) must have access to the KIDS software application.

The Program will support a diverse population of Participants with multiple needs, who have either received maximum benefit from the highly restrictive setting of an RTF or, having been maintained in such a setting, are not yet ready for placement in a less restrictive or community setting. The Successful Proposer(s) should be prepared, with expertise and compassion, to serve this diverse population. All children and youth should feel welcomed, well-served and supported, regardless of their ethnic or racial heritage, sexual orientation or gender identity, intellectual or physical disability, English language proficiency or life experiences.

B. Service Description

The Successful Proposer(s) must provide trauma-focused living arrangements and assist with transition planning for a Participant's entry into and exit from the Program. The Successful Proposer(s) must recognize the stressful and overwhelming events of a Participant's life and encourage healthy ways of coping and adapting. The Successful Proposer(s) must provide support tailored to the Participant and his or her family's strengths, needs and culture. The Successful Proposer(s) must use DHS's standard of practice Conferencing and Teaming¹ to integrate care and plan multi-agency and multi-system services in a culturally-competent way. The Successful Proposer(s) must abide by the mandates of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard² (i.e., the standard requiring activities and experiences for children and youth in out-of-home placement) and 55 Pa. Code Chapter 3800³ (i.e., the regulations for protecting the health, safety and well-being of children and youth receiving care in a residential facility).

Housing

The Program must provide housing for Participants exiting an RTF. Housing may be facility-based or in a licensed home. The Program must make every effort to ensure that placement after the RTF is a safe, positive and stable environment for the Participant.

¹ <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Children-Families/Conferencing-and-Teaming-in-CYF.aspx>

² http://jlc.org/sites/default/files/publication_pdfs/JLC-NormalcyGuide-2015FINAL.pdf

³ http://www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/communication/p_023326.pdf

The Program will provide four beds for girls and four beds for boys. DHS anticipates there may be more than one Successful Proposer. Therefore, Proposers may propose to offer a portion of the total beds.

All staff are required to be trained in and implement the Sanctuary Model⁴ and Youth Mental Health First Aid.⁵ The Sanctuary Model will provide a trauma-informed living arrangement that promotes safety and recovery. Youth Mental Health First Aid will help staff identify mental health risks and assist in crisis situations. When a Participant first enters the Program, Successful Proposer(s) must provide at least a 1:1 staff-to-client ratio with direct-care staff available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Staff-to-client ratios may be re-evaluated every 30 days and reduced if determined appropriate. Successful Proposer(s) must have a recruitment and retention plan to maintain experienced, qualified staff who can address the needs of the target population.

The Program is intended to serve as an interim measure, not long-term housing. The goal is to move Participants into a more permanent, long-term placement as quickly as possible. DHS expects Participants to be housed in the Program for approximately 30 to 60 days; however, Participants may need housing for up to 90 days.

Transition Planning

The DHS HSAO RTF group will work with the Successful Proposer(s) to plan for a Participant's placement 30 days before discharge from the RTF. When a Participant exits the Program, Successful Proposer(s) must plan 30 days before discharge for the Participant's next appropriate level of care. Transition planning must involve a Participant's input. Successful Proposer(s)' transition plans must be individualized for each Participant and may include:

- Identifying barriers to the transition
- Anticipating problems and planning solutions
- Arranging immediate access to treatment and medication monitoring
- Engaging and hosting family meetings
- Fostering connections with siblings and extended kin
- Hosting teaming meetings
- Attending treatment team meetings at the RTF prior to discharge
- Fostering bonds and connections among staff and Participants
- Coordinating visits with staff and Participants prior to RTF discharge
- Providing visits to the next housing placement after the Program
- Assisting with school enrollment
- Providing a welcome kit designed to introduce the Participant to his or her new housing placement

C. Outcomes

As a result of the Program, DHS hopes to achieve the following outcomes:

- Shortened length of stay in out-of-home care
- Improved permanency outcomes

⁴ <http://thesanctuaryinstitute.org/about-us/the-sanctuary-model>

⁵ <http://www.thenationalcouncil.org/about/mental-health-first-aid/>

- Decreased utilization of more expensive and/or restrictive services such as hospital inpatient stays or Diversion and Stabilization (DAS) units
- Decreased re-entry to RTFs
- Increased collaboration among Successful Proposer(s) and school district
- Increased use of natural supports for the youth and family

D. Budget

The total annual budget for the Program will not exceed \$512,000.

3.2 What we require

Successful Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and should address their qualifications by responding to the specifically requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 95 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Organizational Experience (30 points)

A Proposer must demonstrate:

- Strong experience in serving the target population, as described in *Section 3.1, A* (10 points)
- A positive track record in providing similar services, particularly supportive housing and service coordination (10 points)
- Strong experience providing culturally-competent, linguistically appropriate and gender-responsive services (5 points)
- Compliance with mandates of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard and 55 Pa. Code Chapter 3800; all appropriate licenses, accreditations and certifications to operate a residential housing program (5 points)

Program Standards (50 points)

A Proposer must demonstrate:

- A solid plan to provide supportive housing (10 points)
- A solid strategy to offer individualized planning for a Participant's transitions into and from the Program (10 points)
- A clear plan for partnering with outside agencies for services (10 points)
- A solid strategy to staff the Program and to recruit and retain qualified staff with the experience and ability to address the needs of the target population (10 points)
- Clear understanding of the challenges inherent in implementing the RTF Step-Down Program (10 points)

Financial Management and Budget (15 points)

A Proposer must demonstrate:

- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits or other supporting financial documentation
- Fiscal and management capacity to manage Program funds in a fiscally responsible manner
- A budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the RTF Step-Down Program

Section 4: The Evaluation Process

4.1 Evaluation Model

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee created by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based on evaluation criteria specified in *Section 3.1: What we are buying and why* and *Section 3.2: What we require* and further identified in the Response Form.

4.2 Evaluation Process

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An evaluation committee will be formed by the DHS and will consist of some or all of the following:
 - DHS data analysts and content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
 - DHS administration
 - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- b. Each member of the evaluation committee will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest agreement.
- c. All committee members individually review and score each Proposal. Evaluators will award points to a Proposer's Response Form responses according to their expertise and best judgment of how each response meets the evaluation criteria using the following scale:
 - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Below expectations
 - 3 – Meets expectations
 - 4 – Exceeds expectations
 - 5 – Outstanding
- d. The evaluation committee members then will meet collectively to compile and discuss the individual scores and evaluation of each committee member.
- e. The County shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals receiving the highest or most satisfactory evaluations for more extensive review using the same criteria outlined above. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make modifications to their Proposal or budget or make a formal oral presentation. The evaluation committee will review the modifications and/or oral presentation and rescore the shortlisted Proposals using the original evaluation criteria.
- f. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- g. The committee will submit their recommendation for award of an Agreement to the Director of DHS for his approval, who in turn will submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s). The County is under no obligation to award a contract as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.

- h. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.
- i. Proposers not awarded a contract who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegheycounty.us.

4.3 Other Requirements

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

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

Proposals which do not meet the above requirements will not be considered.

Section 5: Contract Information

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

5.1 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 and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, and expects that Proposers will make a good faith effort in assisting the County in meeting these goals.

- a. Proposers may be registered and certified with the Allegheny County Department of Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. If so, please indicate registration on the RFP cover page.
- b. Regardless of registration status, Proposals must include either of the following:
 - 1. If your organization is able to meet the MWDBE contract goals, an MWDBE Participation Statement is REQUIRED.
 - 2. If your organization will request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, an MWDBE Participation Statement and a Waiver Statement are REQUIRED. Please attach the required explanations with the waiver statement.
- c. MWDBE statements and resources can be found at:
 - [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
 - [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
 - A list of MWDBEs that have been certified by Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program can be found at <http://www.county.allegheycounty.pa.us/mwdbbe/index.aspx>
- d. For more information about MWDBEs, please review the following: [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)

5.2 HIPAA Compliance

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

5.3 Cyber Security

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

5.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

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