



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# Request for Proposals

## Additional Rapid Re-Housing Units for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)

**RFP Posting:**

Thursday, October 29, 2020

**Pre-proposal conference:**

3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 via Microsoft Teams

**Deadline for Questions:**

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, November 17, 2020

**Submission Deadline:**

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, November 24, 2020

**Estimated Award Decision/Notification:**

December 2020

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 to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. CoC: Continuum of Care, which is a geographically-based group of representatives that carries out the planning responsibilities of the HUD Continuum of Care Program
4. CoC Regulations: HUD's rules and regulations under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act). The rules and regulations are titled "Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program; Interim Final Rule" and can be found at 24 CFR Part 578 or by visiting: <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=24%3A3.1.1.3.9> .
5. CoC Program Competition: A competitive process through which CoCs apply for funding from HUD
6. Contract Services: The specific services that the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
7. Coordinated Community Plan (CCP): Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness, also referred to as the Coordinated Community Plan. CCP is a youth and community-led strategic plan to dramatically reduce youth homelessness. All YHDP communities are required to develop a CCP that includes a shared community vision, guiding principles, needs assessment, goals and strategies.
8. Coordinated Entry: A standardized method for connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a given geographic area
9. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
10. FMR: Fair market rent
11. HAB: [Allegheny County] Homeless Advisory Board, a public/private partnership formed to assist Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills in efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the well-being of homeless individuals and families

12. HEARTH Act: Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009
13. HMIS: Homeless Management Information System, an information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and people at risk of homelessness
14. Housing First: A homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make clients more successful in remaining housed and improving their lives.
15. HUD: [United States Department of] Housing and Urban Development
16. LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and/or Asexual, including other non-heterosexual and non-cisgender orientations
17. Motivational Interviewing: A clinical approach that helps people with mental health and substance use disorders and other chronic conditions make positive behavioral changes to support better health
18. MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
19. NOFA: Notice of Funding Availability
20. Participant: An individual or family served by a proposed YHDP program
21. PYD: Positive Youth Development, an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. See the page titled "Positive Youth Development" at: <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>.
22. Pregnant or Parenting Youth: Individuals, age 24 or younger, who are pregnant or the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, and where there is no person over age 24 in the household

23. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
24. Proposer: The individual, nonprofit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
25. PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing, long-term housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with disabilities
26. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
27. RFP: Request for Proposals
28. RRH: Rapid Re-Housing, a program model that assists individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and to achieve stability in that housing through a combination of rental assistance, housing search and supportive services
29. Shared Housing: Long-term living arrangement between two unrelated people who choose to live together as a way of sharing costs and building a community of support
30. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County and approved by HUD to provide the Contract Services
31. Supportive Services: Services designed to prepare a Participant to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence
32. Transition Age Youth: Individuals ages 18 through 24
33. TIC: Trauma-Informed Care, an approach that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others; responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices; and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization
34. Unaccompanied Youth: Individuals age 24 or younger, who are not part of a family with children and who are not accompanied by their parent or guardian during their episode of homelessness. This also includes two or more youth age 24 or younger who are presenting together as a family without children.
35. YAB: Youth Action Board, a group of youth included in CoC decisions, particularly on policies that relate to preventing and ending youth homelessness. Each YAB member is age 24 or younger and at least two-thirds of the YAB members are homeless or formerly homeless.

36. YHDP: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program, a HUD initiative to help communities drastically reduce youth homelessness through innovative strategies
37. Youth: For the purposes of this RFP, the term “youth” will refer to individuals ages 18 through 24 (who have not yet reached their 25th birthday).

# The RFP at a Glance

## *Purpose*

In 2019, Allegheny County was competitively selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to become a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) community and receive \$3.49 million in grant funding to expand services for unstably housed youth. As part of this initiative, DHS seeks to increase the County's supply of youth-dedicated Rapid Re-Housing units to meet demand and to provide faster connections to permanent housing for young adults and families experiencing homelessness.

On behalf of the Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC), DHS is seeking Proposals from qualified Proposers to provide Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) services to youth experiencing homelessness (hereinafter referred to collectively as the Program). For purposes of this RFP, youth are defined as either individuals or heads of household who are ages 18 through 24 at time of enrollment (i.e., have not reached their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday). Individuals receiving Program services will hereinafter be referred to as Participants.

## *Award Details*

Successful Proposers' Programs will be funded by the Allegheny County Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grant. Programs will have an anticipated start date of January 1, 2021 and an end date of June 30, 2022.

This RFP is a re-release of the YHDP RFP initially published on April 1, 2020. DHS did not award all funding in the initial RFP and is seeking new Proposals for youth RRH services. The initial grant term will be approximately 18 months or less. If selected, Proposers must be prepared to quickly launch and scale programming to serve the proposed maximum number of Participants.

After the initial grant term expires, Programs may be eligible for one-year renewal terms beginning with the next CoC Program Competition. When/if the project renews, funding will be prorated to reflect a one-year grant term. DHS will support and provide technical assistance to the agency awarded funds to ensure full understanding of the renewal process.

YHDP is a youth-led initiative, meaning that young people, including those who have lived experience with homelessness, are involved in every step of YHDP decision-making. The Allegheny County Youth Action Board (YAB), along with the Homeless Advisory Board (HAB), will review and approve Successful Proposals under this RFP.

If there is more than one Successful Proposer, funding will be divided among Successful Proposers according to Program size and needs, as well as to overall CoC needs. Proposers should ensure that the budgets requested will be adequate to fund each Program for the full grant term.

Programs must operate in accordance with HUD Continuum of Care interim regulations (24 CFR 578) and other applicable federal, state, local and community requirements. However, HUD permits YHDP communities to request exceptions to certain non-statutory CoC regulations as necessary to test new approaches to reducing youth homelessness. The YAB and other YHDP stakeholders have identified several proposed exceptions which are noted throughout this RFP.

### ***Who can apply***

Nonprofit organizations, states, local governments and instrumentalities of state and local governments are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. For-profit entities are not eligible to receive YHDP grant funds.

Proposers do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County to apply, but Proposers must meet all of Allegheny County's contractual requirements (see Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers) and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capability to provide the Contract Services.

Agencies that currently receive HUD CoC funding may submit Proposals; however, the Programs proposed must be new. Per HUD guidelines, YHDP funding may not be used to increase the capacity of current HUD CoC-funded projects even when this results in more youth being served.

Collaborative Proposals are strongly encouraged. For example, we recommend that entities that have not operated RRH programs in the past partner with an agency that can provide technical assistance and/or deliver a component of services. Collaborative Proposals must identify a lead organization to apply for funds and include MOUs with proposed subcontractors.

### ***What's important to us***

DHS is looking for partners that:

- Can quickly launch and ramp up programming.
- Listen to youth's housing priorities and support them in finding options tailored to their needs and preferences.
- Demonstrate both optimism (high expectations of what youth can achieve) and open-mindedness (the ability to meet youth where they are today, free of judgement).
- Are flexible, eager to grow and unafraid to make changes based on youth feedback.
- Focus on solving problems *with* youth, not *for* youth.
- Provide services that are Trauma-Informed and demonstrate deep understanding of the social and developmental characteristics of transition age youth.
- Attract and retain diverse staff with outstanding youth engagement abilities.
- Have well-defined community partnerships across multiple domains, including but not limited to housing, healthcare, education and workforce development.
- Actively practice inclusion and consider the unique strengths and characteristics of different subpopulations, including youth of color, LGBTQIA+ youth, pregnant and parenting youth, youth with justice system-involvement, youth transitioning out of foster care, survivors of violence or sexual exploitation, and others.



- Are committed to offering racially equitable services, meaning that race does not predict Participants’ success or impact the type of services they receive.
- Have a positive reputation among youth in Allegheny County.

***What we don’t want***

DHS is not interested in Programs that:

- Are strictly place-based: while a project may offer units in a specific building, facility or neighborhood as part of its overall housing inventory, alternatives must be available for youth who wish to live off-site.
- Do not align with Housing First principles or the housing models outlined in this RFP.
- Offer highly prescriptive or “one-size-fits-all” services.
- Lack clear strategies or partnerships to advance equity and inclusion.

***Timeline***

Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. Eastern on Tuesday, November 24, 2020.

The deadline to submit questions about this RFP is 3 p.m. Eastern on Tuesday, November 17, 2020.

There will be a Pre-Proposal Conference at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10 via Microsoft Teams. Attendance is not required in order to submit a Proposal. Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the conference. Final, definitive answers to questions asked during the conference will be posted in writing on the DHS Solicitations webpage. Please join the pre-proposal conference by:

- Calling: 267-368-7515 and using Conference ID 398 661 778#
- Or following this link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)
- Or copying and pasting this link: [https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_MDY1MjMwY2EtMjRmZS00YmExLWIxYjQtZmEzN2UxMmVhNDQ0%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%224c7924c5-3d5a-494b-ba54-242fc5f6db86%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MDY1MjMwY2EtMjRmZS00YmExLWIxYjQtZmEzN2UxMmVhNDQ0%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%224c7924c5-3d5a-494b-ba54-242fc5f6db86%22%7d).

The Evaluation Committee may recommend that some Proposals be shortlisted for further consideration. If so, the Committee may invite those Proposers to give a presentation via Microsoft Teams on Friday, December 18, 2020. If a presentation is requested, shortlisted Proposers will be notified on Friday, December 11, 2020.

We expect to notify Proposers of the County’s decision to select Successful Proposers for funding in December 2020.

Programs are expected to begin in January 2021.

***Who we are***

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

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 We Are Issuing this RFP**

HUD, its federal partners and youth with lived experience of homelessness designed the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) to drastically reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness in selected communities across the country. On April 1, 2020, DHS released the first RFP for a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). Through the RFP evaluation process, DHS selected one Mobile Prevention and Diversion Program, one Host Home Program and one RRH Program (see the [RFP Archive](#) for more information). However, DHS did not award all YHDP funding in this initial RFP.

YHDP brings together a wide variety of stakeholders, including youth who have lived experience with homelessness, to create a Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness (CCP) that addresses the local needs of youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness. Allegheny County's CCP was finalized in spring 2020 after a six-month planning period and was crafted with substantial input from youth with lived homeless experience, advocates, homeless service programs, secondary and post-secondary institutions, child welfare, and many different community agencies. A key goal of the plan is to significantly increase investment in youth-focused RRH programs in order to meet the demand for housing and provide faster connections to permanent housing for youth who are experiencing homelessness. The CCP is available for download here: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/News-Events/Accomplishments-and-Innovations.aspx>.

## **Section 2: What We Are Looking For**

DHS is interested in funding new RRH Programs that incorporate several innovations proposed in the CCP:

- Creating intentional opportunities for peer-to-peer support and community-building
- Helping develop a systematic approach and an evidence base for how to facilitate successful Shared Housing opportunities for youth who are interested in living with roommates
- Expanding collaboration between RRH providers and key education, workforce and community partners to increase youth's access to and participation in opportunities that support their learning and employment goals
- Offering extended RRH rental assistance and supportive services, based on demonstrated need and when additional time will enable a youth to remain permanently housed

As a condition of award, Successful Proposers will participate in a local YHDP Community of Practice, a collaborative process including DHS, the YAB, YHDP-funded providers and other key stakeholders. The YHDP Community of Practice is meant to ensure that Program design, implementation and continuous improvement activities are established in authentic partnership with young adults who have lived experience with homelessness. Successful Proposers will be expected to implement YAB feedback to the extent that it is feasible within statutory and regulatory guidelines.

## **2.1 Target Population**

The target population for Allegheny County's YHDP Programs are youth ages 18 through 24 who are unaccompanied, including those who are pregnant and/or parenting. The following categories of youth experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness may be eligible for YHDP-funded RRH Programs.

HUD Category 1: Youth considered literally homeless include those who are:

- In shelter including emergency shelter, transitional housing, or hotel or motel paid by government or charity; OR
- On the street or another place not meant for human habitation (e.g., car, garage, park, abandoned building); OR
- In an institution (e.g., jail, hospital, juvenile detention) that the youth is exiting and where youth was a resident for 90 days or less AND the youth resided in emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering that institution.

HUD Category 2: Youth considered at imminent risk of homelessness include those who are:

- In own housing, but being evicted within 14 days; OR
- In a hotel or motel paid for by the youth, family or friends and cannot stay for more than 14 days (often due to lack of ability to continue paying); OR
- With family or friends and being asked to leave within 14 days; AND
- Have no safe alternative housing, resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing.

HUD Category 4<sup>1</sup>: Youth considered homeless and fleeing domestic violence include those who are fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including:

- Trading sex for housing
- Trafficking
- Physical abuse
- Violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation

Additionally, the youth must have no safe alternative housing, resources or support networks to maintain or obtain permanent housing.

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<sup>1</sup> The target population for Programs solicited through this RFP does not include HUD Category 3.

All RRH Programs proposed should be designed with expertise and compassion to serve a diverse population. Successful Proposer(s) must have thoughtful strategies for sensitively and respectfully engaging subpopulations of youth that may have may have greater exposure to homelessness and other forms of trauma, such as LGBTQIA+ youth, youth of color, youth with past involvement with juvenile justice and child welfare systems, and survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation. Programs must follow a Housing First model and serve Participants without regard to previous criminal history, clean time, employment, credit worthiness or other barriers.

## **2.2 Rapid Re-Housing Program**

### *Overview*

DHS seeks Successful Proposer(s) to provide a youth-focused Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Program, with the goal of helping young adults experiencing homelessness or at imminent at risk for homelessness to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing through a combination of rental assistance and supportive services.

DHS is interested in Programs that help youth build authentic communities of peers and natural supports. We are especially interested in Proposals that thoughtfully integrate Shared Housing strategies (described in more detail below). This does not mean that all Participants must be living with roommates – rather, it means that when Shared Housing is the Participant’s preference, the Successful Proposer(s) will have the necessary expertise, strategies and staff capacity to help Participants be successful with this housing goal.

Through this RFP, DHS anticipates funding one or more Programs with a combined maximum point-in-time capacity of 25 rental units. Since this project emphasizes Shared Housing strategies, we expect that the Successful Proposal(s) will serve more than 25 households at any given time and over the duration of grant period.

### *Target Population*

The target population includes any homeless individuals who are age 18 through 24 *and* are without a head of household older than 24. Youth who are living with family members who are older than 24 years old are *not* eligible to be served in this program (but could be housed through other CoC programs). Age is measured at the time of enrollment, and a client who turns 25 while enrolled in a program may continue to be served until they reach the maximum length of stay.

This Program is intended to serve homeless households of various compositions, including but not limited to single adults, couples, young families with children, and/or roommates.

### *Recruitment and Intake*

All referrals to the RRH Program will be prioritized and coordinated through the Allegheny Link based on the Participant’s current housing status and level of assessed risk. Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for accepting a referral and quickly securing the Participant’s

appropriate housing placement. The average time from Participant enrollment to move-in will be 30 days or less.

Upon enrollment in the RRH Program, Successful Proposer(s) will conduct an initial intake assessment to identify Participant strengths, needs and goals. Between enrollment and move-in, the Successful Proposer(s) will initiate supportive services and help the Participant access or maintain safe, temporary housing such as shelter.

### *Housing Services*

As part of its proposed RRH program, Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for providing housing and rental assistance for Participants. Successful Proposer(s) will have well-defined strategies for each of the following:

- Providing young people with choice in where they live, including opportunities for market rate housing and Shared Housing with roommates
- Recruiting and working with landlords who are willing to rent to young people
- Identifying appropriate scattered site units and ensuring that rents are reasonable
- Facilitating Shared Housing arrangements when requested by the Participant
- Completing required Housing Quality Standards (HQS) assessments of scattered site units for habitation by RRH Participants
- Ensuring timely and accurate payment to landlords on behalf of Participants
- Working with landlords and other service providers to ensure that Participants remain successfully housed and to facilitate their transition out of the RRH Program
- Documenting Participants' goals and case plans, including income changes and expected rental payments
- Completing annual certification of need for young people who stay longer than 12 months in the program

All rental assistance will be for tenant-based scattered site units, meaning that Participants may locate the housing of their choice in the private rental market. If a Participant later moves into another suitable unit, the rental assistance may be applied to the new unit. Successful Proposer(s) are expected to work with young people if a change in housing is needed and be especially diligent to avoid eviction. Under Housing First philosophies, if a participant does get evicted while in the program, the Successful Proposer(s) are required to re-house the Participant.

A Successful Proposer may offer units at a specific facility or site as part of its overall housing inventory, provided this does not limit Participant choice. Participants must be free to locate housing in the location and community of their choosing and may not be required to move into a unit at a given site or building operated by the Proposer. For that reason, Successful Proposer(s) must be able to facilitate scattered site housing in addition to offering facility-based units. If needed, this may be accomplished in partnership with another agency that has expertise with scattered site housing.

## *Shared Housing Considerations*

As noted above, DHS is especially interested in funding RRH Programs that offer Participants the choice to pursue single occupancy or Shared Housing depending on their individual needs and preferences. To earn the maximum number of points for this RFP, Proposals must outline a clear Shared Housing strategy.

Shared Housing refers to long-term living arrangements between two or more unrelated people who choose to live together as a way of sharing costs and building a community of support, or more simply stated, living with roommates. This approach offers numerous advantages for younger adults, including increasing affordability of housing, built-in support from peers, buy-in from landlords and the ability to solve housing issues for multiple people at a time. Examples of Shared Housing strategies being implemented in other CoCs can be found here:

<http://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/shared-housing-as-a-solution-slides.pdf>

Shared Housing can take several forms in the context of RRH. Roommates may be self-identified by the Participant or identified through a match with another RRH Participant. If the Shared Housing situation is between more than one Participant enrolled in the Program, each Participant should be treated equally but individually (and ideally matched to separate case managers). If the Shared Housing situation is between an RRH Participant and another person who is not enrolled in the Program (e.g., a Participant's friend), the Successful Proposer will provide rental assistance and supportive services to the RRH Participant only.

Proposers should consider procedures they would have in place to address challenges youth may face in Shared Housing, including landlord disagreements, roommate disagreements and rental payments.

Successful Proposer(s) must have clear strategies and the necessary infrastructure in place to facilitate Shared Housing,<sup>2</sup> including but not limited to:

- Identifying Participants' interest in Shared Housing and assessing whether it is a strong fit based on Participant preferences and needs
- Assisting Participants with identifying potential Shared Housing partners, either within or outside their existing social networks
- Assisting Participants with finding housing
- Assisting with lease execution, ensuring that each individual or family receiving rental assistance has its own, separate lease with the landlord
- Helping Participants to establish clear rules and expectations through Shared Housing agreements

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of CoC Program eligibility, each individual or family unit receiving rental assistance in a Shared Housing situation must have its own, separate lease with the property owner in order to be considered a separate household. Per the HUD NOFA for Programs receiving YHDP funding, rental assistance *cannot* be provided to a youth to reside in a unit occupied by its owner or occupied by a person with any interest in the unit if the youth is an immediate family member, defined by HUD as a parent, grandparent, sibling or legal guardian. YHDP rental assistance may be provided to a youth in a shared housing unit leased by a family if both the family and the youth are unrelated to the property owner or landlord.

- Offering mediation and support to Participants, Shared Housing partners and landlords when issues arise

### *Supportive Services*

As part of its Proposal for providing an RRH program, Proposer(s) must describe how they will provide ongoing, flexible support to Participants for the duration of their time in the RRH Program, including offering Participant-driven case management, goal-setting, transition planning and supportive services to Participants. The Successful Proposer must include strategies to support Participants in the RRH Program in achieving the following outcomes:

- Permanent connections to caring adults, peers, community networks or other natural supports (friends or chosen family)
- Progress toward education and/or employment goals
- Improved health and social-emotional well-being
- Development of life skills

Supportive services will begin with a strengths-based conversation at the time of enrollment. The Successful Proposer will use Motivational Interviewing to help Participants set goals and identify clear, simple action steps for achieving them. Case management will look different for each Participant, and the Successful Proposer will have the flexibility to tailor the type and intensity of services to each Participant.

The Successful Proposer will work with all Participants throughout their participation in the Program to reassess Participant strengths and goals, monitor progress toward goals, and assist Participants in identifying and connecting to interventions that support Participants' goals.

Proposers should take into careful consideration ways to leverage and avoid duplication of supportive services that are available through community partners. Proposers must clearly indicate which services will be provided directly by the Successful Proposer or by another agency under contract with the Successful Proposer through a referral to outside partners.

Eligible supportive services may include the following:

- Assessment of service needs
- Assistance with moving costs
- Case management, including family mediation and reconnections that increase housing stability
- Childcare
- Education services
- Employment assistance and job training
- Food assistance
- Housing search and counseling services
- Legal services related to securing/maintaining rental housing
- Life skills training
- Mental health services
- Outpatient health services

- Outreach services
- Substance use disorder treatment
- Transportation assistance
- Utility deposits

Proposer(s) should refer to the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, Subpart D for a complete list of eligible costs for supportive services, available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=24%3A3.1.1.3.9>

### *Length of Participation*

To remain in an RRH Program, Participants must demonstrate that they continue to lack sufficient resources and support networks to retain housing without assistance. If Participants no longer require assistance through an RRH Program, they must be permitted to remain in the housing unit (if they choose) and assume full responsibility for payment of rent and utilities.

Per HUD guidelines, participation in an RRH Program may not exceed 24 months. However, local YHDP stakeholders recognize that some youth may be better served in an extended-length RRH Program. For example, a parenting youth who is working and attending school part-time may require rental assistance for a longer period of time to complete their education and find a job with livable wages. DHS has requested an exception from HUD to extend the maximum length of stay to 36 months for YHDP-funded RRH Programs.

Should HUD approve this exception, Successful Proposer(s) may extend programming (including both rental assistance and supportive services) for certain Participants based on their need. Successful Proposer(s) must outline a thoughtful strategy for determining when a Participant requires additional rental assistance beyond 24 months. DHS expects that extended rental assistance will be limited to a small number of Participants so that RRH programs can serve as many youth as possible.

## **2.3 Performance Outcomes**

As part of the provision of Program services described herein, Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for tracking outcomes and meeting CoC performance standards. In addition to performance standards tracked in HMIS, Successful Proposer(s) will be evaluated based on Participant feedback.

Performance standards for all Programs:

- Program serves special populations including LGBTQIA+ youth (specific benchmarks TBD).
- 85% of Participants will exit to Permanent Housing Destinations<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> HUD-defined Permanent Housing Destinations (as defined by HUD System Performance Measures and Annual Performance Report specifications): 1) Owned by client, no ongoing housing subsidy; 2) Owned by client, with ongoing housing subsidy; 3) Permanent housing (other than RRH) for formerly homeless persons; 4) Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy; 5) Rental by client, with RRH or equivalent subsidy; 6) Rental by client, with



- 90% of Participants will identify permanent connections to caring adults, peers, community networks or other natural supports at time of exit from the Program.
- Fewer than 5% of Participants that exit from the Program to Permanent Housing Destinations will return to the homeless system within 6 months.
- Utilization rate of units will reach or surpass 85%.
- Average time from enrollment to move-in date will be 30 days or less.
- 85% of Participants will maintain or increase employment, obtain a degree or credential, or be working toward a degree or credential.
- 85% of Participants will maintain or increase their income.
- 85% of non-employed Participants will maintain or increase non-cash benefits.
- 90% of Participants (and their children if applicable) will have health insurance.

#### 2.4 Homeless Information Management System (HMIS)

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for participating in the Allegheny Link process and for entering all data into HMIS in a timely manner. All data must be submitted within three days for entry, annual and exit assessments. Victim services providers are not required to participate in HMIS, per HMIS regulations. However, victim services providers must have a comparable database to produce the required reports to HUD on an annual basis, per HUD 2016, 2017 and 2019 data specifications.

Successful Proposer(s)' HMIS data will be monitored for data quality and program performance on an ongoing basis. Additionally, data for all CoC-funded Programs are reported publicly on a quarterly basis in the CoC Performance Management Plan.

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for meeting the following data quality standards:

Completeness (# of fields less than 5% error/total # of fields)	100%
Timeliness for program entries (within three days of entry)	90%
Timeliness for program exits (within three days of exit)	85%

#### 2.5 Budget

Proposers must submit a complete budget that includes all projected costs for an assumed 18-month project period beginning January 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. Eligible costs include rental assistance, supportive services and administrative expenses. Operating expenses are not an allowable expense for this Program. Proposers should refer to the HUD CoC Program Interim

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Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) housing subsidy; 7) Rental by client, with Grant and Per Diem Transition in Place (GPD TIP) subsidy; 8) Rental by client, with other ongoing housing subsidy; 9) Staying or living with friends, permanent tenure; 10) Staying or living with family, permanent tenure

Rule, Subpart D for a complete list of eligible costs for Rapid Re-Housing projects, available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=24%3A3.1.1.3.9>

All costs must be reasonable and necessary to carry out project goals and should be clearly explained in the budget narrative. Please note that if/when a Program renews under the CoC competition, the cost of the project will be measured against all other RRH projects receiving CoC funds. For RRH programs receiving HUD CoC funding, the average *annual* cost-per-unit ranges from \$12,000 to \$15,000 depending on size of unit, household size and other factors. DHS recommends that Proposers do not exceed this range. However, since YHDP is a demonstration project, DHS will consider higher-cost models if the Proposal offers strong justification for why the additional costs are necessary to achieve project outcomes.

### *Special Considerations for Shared Housing*

For the purposes of this RFP, Proposers should calculate rental assistance budgets by applying the full fair market rent (FMR) for the total number of households the project can support ***at any given time when operating at maximum capacity.***

- Example: For a Program that has a maximum point-in-time capacity of 5 households, each consisting of single youth, the rental assistance budget would be calculated by multiplying the FMR for a 1-bedroom unit (\$725) by the maximum number of households to be served (5) and by the total number of months in the contract period (18), for a total of \$65,250.

Proposers should keep in mind that actual rental assistance expenditures will be lower for Participants who choose Shared Housing arrangements, because those costs must reflect the Participant's pro-rata share of FMR for the housing unit.

- Example 1: In the case of a single Participant who will occupy one bedroom in a four-bedroom house, the FMR used would be the Participant's pro-rata share of the four-bedroom FMR (i.e.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the four-bedroom FMR).
- Example 2: In the case of two Participants who are separate households living together in a two-bedroom apartment as roommates, each Participant's pro-rata share of the unit would be  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the two-bedroom FMR.

**By reducing the cost of housing for individual households, Shared Housing can cause Successful Proposer(s) to spend less on rental assistance than budgeted. This can in turn create opportunities for the Successful Proposer(s) to serve a greater number of Participants. DHS will work with Successful Proposer(s) to closely monitor program spending and maximize project impact. Successful Proposer(s) should anticipate these types of scenarios and have a flexible approach, including a willingness to increase program enrollments in situations where there is a surplus of funding.**

### *Matching Funds*

A 25% match from the Successful Proposer(s) is required to be documented for all line items except leasing. The match may be cash, through additionally raised funds, or in-kind. Match may not include CoC funding that a Proposer currently receives. If in-kind services are secured from

another organization for this match, the organization must have a memorandum of understanding in place prior to the executed contract.

### *Administrative Funds*

No more than 3.5% of HUD funds may be used for a Successful Proposer's project administrative expenses (e.g., staffing, computers, office supplies). Matching funds, cash and in-kind resources may be used for additional administrative costs.

## **2.6 Staff Qualifications and Training**

Successful Proposer(s) must provide highly qualified staff who have a deep understanding of youth development and can apply this knowledge to deliver effective strategies for youth-centered outreach, engagement, problem-solving, case management, service coordination and housing stabilization. The ability to cultivate positive relationships with youth is an essential competency for all staff who interact with youth. Successful Proposer(s) must hire diverse staff including individuals with lived experience with homelessness.

Successful Proposer(s) must have an organizational culture that embraces diversity and demonstrates cultural humility, respects youth voice and choice, and adopts a "do whatever it takes" mentality to help young people overcome barriers. Additionally, Successful Proposer(s) will provide a supervision model that ensures that staff receive reflective supervision and offer empathetic and client-centered services.

Successful Proposer(s) must ensure that all paid and volunteer workers are trained on the core competencies of youth workers necessary to carry out the objectives and activities of the Program. These include but are not limited to:

- Assessment and Case Management
- Education and Employment Pathways
- Community Resources for Well-Being and Self-Sufficiency
- Harm Reduction
- Housing First
- Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation
- LGBTQIA+/SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity and expression) Standards of Practice
- Motivational Interviewing
- Positive Youth Development
- Racial Equity
- Safe and Ethical Practices
- Street Outreach and Intervention
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Worker Safety

Training elements can be delivered by DHS, by the Successful Proposer(s) or by a combination of the two, depending on the strengths and capacity of the Successful Proposer(s). Successful Proposer(s) must ensure staff participation in ongoing professional development.

## **2.7 Partnerships**

DHS strongly encourages Proposals that demonstrate collaboration with partners to enhance or complement the Proposer's ability to meet Program goals. This may include subcontracting with agencies that offer a key service component in which the Successful Proposer lacks expertise (such as family mediation) or establishing MOUs with referral partners that will provide services using other funding streams (such as employment training or childcare services).

Additionally, DHS and YHDP stakeholders recognize the critical importance of expanding homeless outreach and service efforts within communities of color, spaces led by LGBTQIA+ individuals and grassroots organizations that engage youth populations that experience disproportionate rates of homelessness. Proposers that do not have organizational expertise serving one or more priority youth subpopulations should ensure that their proposed staffing and/or subcontracting plan addresses these gaps.

## **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.allegheycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://www.allegheycounty.us/dhs/solicitations). The maximum score that a Proposal can receive is 135 points, as outlined in the following sections.

### **3.1 Commitment to YHDP Vision and Principles (15 points)**

- Unique qualifications to provide services to youth experiencing homelessness, including evidence of a positive track record in helping transition-age youth experiencing homelessness obtain safe, stable and reliable housing (5 points)
- An organizational culture that engages youth as leaders and decision-makers, including specific strategies that promote youth voice (5 points)
- A plan to ensure that the proposed RRH Program is delivered in ways that reflect the principles of Trauma-Informed Care, Positive Youth Development, Equity and Inclusion, and Housing First (5 points)

### **3.2 Organizational Experience and Staffing (30 points)**

- An organizational and management structure that can support the proposed RRH Program, including evidence of effective internal communication, external coordination and an adequate accounting system (5 points)
- Established crisis response systems, including the ability to provide compassionate and appropriate supports to youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis, violence or sexual exploitation (5 points)

- A reflective self-assessment of areas for organizational growth or improvement, including how Proposer plans to address them (5 points)
- Experience and demonstrated success in meeting standards for managing data with HMIS (or similar data management systems for Proposers who have not previously received CoC funding or who are victim services providers) (5 points)
- A strategy for hiring, training and retaining high quality, diverse staff with exceptional youth engagement skills (5 points)
- Strong past performance and complete, accurate data entry. DHS Housing Analysts will perform a review of HMIS data to evaluate Proposers' data quality and performance outcomes, including an absence of any unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any HUD grants. (5 points)

### **3.3 Program Strategy (50 points)**

- A plan that supports Participants in quickly identifying housing and eliminating housing-related barriers, including all service components described in the Rapid Re-Housing section of this RFP (10 points)
- A description of how Proposer will incorporate Shared Housing strategies into its RRH Program, including how it will support interested youth in finding units, establishing roommate agreements, offering mediation, and handling situations in which both households are enrolled as Participants (15 points)
- A plan for providing individualized case management, transition planning and follow-up services to Participants, including a rationale for determining which Participants qualify for extended program participation (5 points)
- Strategies, including any relevant community partnerships and programming, to help youth achieve the following outcomes:
  - Permanent connections to caring adults, peers, community networks or other natural supports (5 points)
  - Progress toward education and/or employment goals (5 points)
  - Improved health and social-emotional well-being (5 points)
- An appropriate schedule for the proposed Program activities and a plan for effective and timely implementation of all Program activities that reflects the expectation of a fast-paced project launch (5 points)

### **3.4 Staffing (10 points)**

- A staffing plan to support the programmatic, administrative and executive components of the RRH Program, including appropriate job descriptions, skill sets or certifications held by key staff (10 points)

### **3.5 Supportive Services and Partnerships (15 points)**

- A detailed plan for achieving Program goals through collaboration with partners, including with one or more grassroots and/or community-based nonprofit agencies that have expertise serving youth whose identities are often marginalized, or an explanation of how your organization fulfills these requirements. For partnerships, a clear indication of

what role each partner will play, including services to be provided and the nature of your relationship with the partner (e.g., subcontract, MOU, referral partner) (15 points)

### **3.6 Program Budget (10 points)**

- A budget and accompanying narrative that reflects a realistic estimate of the Rental Assistance, Supportive Service and Administrative costs associated with implementing the Program over an 18 month period, including how the Proposer will effectively use funds to perform the scope of services within funding and time specifications. Additionally, completion of HUD budget charts and accompanying questions in the Response Form (10 points)

### **3.7 Program Match (5 points)**

- A narrative identifying planned sources of match, which may include in-kind or additionally raised funds (25% match required for all line items except leasing), and completion of HUD Match Summary Chart in Response Form (5 points)

## **Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal**

### **4.1 Submission Process**

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
  - The background (see Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP)
  - The narrative (see Section 2: What We Are Looking For)
  - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
  - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How We 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations).
- c. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
  - Response Form
  - MWDBE and VOSB documents
  - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
  - Audited financial reports for the last three years
  - W-9
- d. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.
- e. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer may submit other financial documentation that attest to the Proposer's financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.

- f. 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.
- g. **Proposals must be submitted electronically to [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us) no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 to be considered for review.**
- h. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee for review and scoring, as described in Section 5 below.
- 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: [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us).

#### **4.2 How to Contact DHS about this RFP**

- a. All inquiries and questions must be submitted via email to [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto: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](http://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.

#### **4.3 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 Proposer(s).

#### **4.4 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 We Will Evaluate Your Proposal**

Proposals will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee convened by DHS. The Evaluation Committee will assign scores to each Proposal by award points based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria 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 may consist of DHS employees and subject matter representatives from external organizations.
- 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. 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 Proposer(s) 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 Proposer(s).

- d. As described in c 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. Each Committee member will individually score the oral presentation 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 demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement the proposed program effectively (5 points)
  - Proposer's answers to Evaluation Committee's questions (5 points)
  - Proposer's presentation is thoughtful and professional (5 points)
- e. DHS will tally the average scores of the Evaluation Committee 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 Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP.
- f. 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 Proposer(s).
- g. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- h. As part of determining a Proposer's eligibility to enter into 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.
- i. 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.**
- j. All Proposers will be notified of the County's final decision of which Proposer(s) will be awarded an Agreement.
- k. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto: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.

## Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

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.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://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 either of the following:
  - If the Proposer is able to meet the MWDBE contract goals, a completed MWDBE Participation Statement and MWDBE Contact Information form is required. You must also attach the MWDBE certifications of the firms you intend to use with the Participation Statement.
  - If the Proposer requests a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, a completed MWDBE Participation Statement, MWDBE Contact Information form and MWDBE Waiver Request are required.
- b. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at [www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations):
  - MWDBE Forms
    - [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
    - [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
    - [MWDBE Contact Information form](#)
  - MWDBE Resources
    - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
    - [MWDBE Response Checklist](#)
    - [Guide for completing the MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
    - [Sample Diversity Policy](#)
    - [MWDBE Presentation for 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 has a VOSB goal of 5% participation for veteran-owned small businesses 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 is able to 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) that you intend to use with 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations):
- [VOSB Participation Statement](#)
  - [VSOB 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 which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at [www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://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 Proposer(s) 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).

## **6.7 New Provider Requirements**

If awarded an Agreement, Successful Proposers who do not have current Allegheny County contracts will be required to complete the [DHS New Provider Application](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx), available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx>. While not required as part of your Proposal, Proposers may wish to review the requirements of this application.

# Appendix 1

## Allegheny County Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

### Vision

Our vision is a community in which all young adults are stably housed and have access to the supports they need to thrive in their transition to adulthood. We aim to dramatically reduce youth homelessness by implementing prevention strategies that consider the root causes of housing instability, as well as by proactively addressing early warning signs to avert or quickly resolve a housing crisis. We are committed to partnering with youth to design strengths-based services that prioritize youth's safety and wellbeing, honor youth voice and choice, respect youth's individuality, and foster positive relationships with adults and peers. No single organization or entity can end youth homelessness on its own, therefore we are committed to collaborating across diverse systems and communities to build the capacity and resources needed to create holistic, effective and sustainable solutions.

### Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were developed through visioning workshops with the Allegheny County YAB and the YHDP Leadership Council.

- **Safety and Well-Being** – Our community will prioritize the safety of young adults experiencing homelessness. We will hold one another accountable for serving youth in ways that foster their physical, emotional, psychological and social well-being, including adherence to the principles of Trauma-Informed Care.
- **Accessibility** – When a young person experiences a housing crisis, our community will quickly mobilize to offer low-barrier housing options. Embracing a *Housing First* philosophy, we seek to connect youth to permanent housing with no preconditions and to offer individualized and client-driven supports to help them remain stably housed.
- **Equity and Inclusion** – Our community will act with intention to identify and understand the disparities that exist for youth who are part of different social groups and to co-design culturally competent services and interventions to eliminate disparities.
- **Youth-Centered Practices** – Our community will ensure that all systems and programs supporting unstably housed youth adopt the principals of Positive Youth Development, with an emphasis on nurturing young people's strengths and communicating our high expectations for what they can accomplish in life. We will promote protective factors that are known to help youth overcome adversity, including access to caring adults and peers, a strong sense of self, and engagement in school and community activities.

- **Youth Voice** – Youth leadership will be an integral part of community decision-making, with adults and youth working in partnership to design programs, services and systems that prevent and end youth homelessness.
- **Youth Choice** – Our community will recognize that young adults have agency and the freedom to make their own decisions. Youth will be empowered to choose their own support networks and pathways out of homelessness. Service providers will seek to understand, encourage and support youth at each step along the way.
- **Collaboration** – We will prioritize collaboration among the many different systems, programs and communities with which youth experiencing homelessness interact. Together, we will work not only to keep young adults from falling through the cracks, but to help young people thrive.

## Appendix 2

### HUD Principles to Be Addressed in the Coordinated Community Plan

HUD required a YHDP Coordinated Community Plan to address how the following principles would be incorporated into the community's overall approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness as well as the individual interventions that support such an approach.

#### *U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Youth Framework and the Four Core Outcomes*

The Coordinated Community Plan must demonstrate a commitment to the following principles of the USICH Framework to End Youth Homelessness published in 2012 and to its four core outcomes.

1. Stable housing includes a safe and reliable place to call home.
2. Permanent connections include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools and other positive social networks.
3. Education/employment includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth.
4. Social-emotional wellbeing includes the development of key competencies, attitudes and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, work, relationships and community.

#### *Special Populations*

USICH, together with its partner agencies, has identified several special populations that are especially vulnerable to homelessness and experience homelessness, including pathways to homelessness, in ways that are distinct from the general population of youth. For these vulnerable and often overrepresented young people, there is a need for identification methods, infrastructure considerations, housing and service delivery that are specific to their needs. The Coordinated Community Plan must identify and address the local impact of homelessness on these subpopulations and specifically address how the system will meet the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQIA+) youth; minors (under the age of 18), pregnant and parenting youth; youth involved with juvenile justice and foster care systems; and victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation.

#### *Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Trauma Informed Care (TIC)*

Both PYD and TIC are accepted best practices in housing and service delivery for youth, and include principles and service frameworks endorsed by many branches of the federal government, including HUD, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the US Department of Education (ED). The Coordinated Community Plan must address how PYD and TIC will be incorporated into all aspects of the youth crisis response system.

### *Family Engagement*

HUD believes that the best outcome for young people is to never have to engage with crisis response resources. Further, HUD believes that the best diversion and intervention strategy is to engage families, whenever appropriate, through community partnerships with organizations such as child welfare agencies, schools, youth providers and other community human services and homeless services providers. The Coordinated Community Plan must address family engagement strategies and services designed to strengthen, stabilize and reunify families. Potential services include family counseling, conflict resolution, parenting supports, relative or kinship caregiver resources, and targeted substance abuse and mental health treatment.

### *Immediate Access to Housing with no Preconditions*

Housing is a cornerstone for meeting a multitude of basic needs necessary for success. Young people should be provided with rapid access to safe, secure and stable housing that meets their needs as quickly as possible, without the condition that they are ‘ready’ for housing. The Coordinated Community Plan must address how all youth will be offered immediate access to safe, secure and stable housing with no preconditions.

### *Youth Choice*

The capacity for self-determination may be a critical factor in obtaining many positive outcomes for Transition Age Youth (Carter, Lane, Pierson, & Stang, 2008),[3], and is closely related to the principles of PYD. Consistent with federal policy, allowing youth to exercise self-determination is a youth-centered approach that values youths’ expressed needs, self-awareness and community knowledge. This youth-centered approach emphasizes youth choice in terms of the kind of housing youth need and the extent and nature of supports and services they access; it promotes presenting alternative options for youth who avoid programs with barriers like sobriety or abstinence. The Coordinated Community Plan must address how youth choice will be integrated into all aspects of the youth crisis response system, as well as individualized and client-driven supports. The Coordinated Community Plan must acknowledge that the needs of the young people to be served will be unique. Housing and support packages that help prevent and end homelessness among youth must recognize and respond to individual differences to serve them appropriately and efficiently. Communities must design the system flexibly to accommodate individuals with both high and low service needs, as well as the need for short-term or long-term supports. The Coordinated Community Plan must address how the youth crisis response system will provide individualized and client-driven supports.

### *Social and Community Integration*

The goal of youth homelessness services should be a successful transition to adulthood, including the successful integration into a community as a positive contributing member. Accomplishing this requires the community to provide socially supportive engagement and the opportunity for youth to participate in meaningful community activities.



### *Coordinated Entry*

Coordinated Entry processes are necessary components of a high functioning crisis response system and must be developed intentionally to incorporate youth. The coordinated community plan must address how the CoC will ensure that the coordinated entry process is youth-appropriate.