



Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals

**U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development (HUD)
Permanent Supportive Housing and
Rapid Re-Housing Programs
(2019 Bonus Funding RFP)**

RFP Posting:

Thursday, August 8, 2019

Deadline for Questions:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 21, 2019

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 28, 2019

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

October 2019

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. Bonus Project: A project submitted under the CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) that is over and above the pro rata of need established by HUD and can be funded if HUD chooses to fund the project in accordance with CoC need and program quality.
4. Continuum of Care (CoC): A geographically-based group of representatives which carries out the planning responsibilities of the HUD Continuum of Care Program.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Coordinated Entry: A standardized method for connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a given geographic area.
8. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services.
9. 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
10. HEARTH Act: Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009.
11. 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
12. Housing First: A model to address homelessness, based on the following principles: 1) the provision of safe and affordable housing; 2) all people experiencing homelessness can achieve housing stability in permanent housing; 3) everyone is "housing ready;" 4) many people experience improvements in quality of life as a result of achieving housing; 5) people experiencing homelessness have the right to self-determination and should be treated with dignity and respect; and 6) the exact configuration of housing and services depends upon the needs and preferences of the population served.
13. HUD: [United States Department of] Housing and Urban Development
14. NOFA: Notice of Funding Availability

15. Participant: An individual or family served by a proposed Permanent Supportive Housing or Rapid Re-Housing Program
16. PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing, which is long-term housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with disabilities.
17. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP.
18. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP.
19. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP.
20. RFP: Request for Proposals.
21. Rapid Re-Housing: Programs to assist 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.
22. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services.
23. Supportive Services: Services designed to prepare a Participant to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence.

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

As recommended by the Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board (HAB), through the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and on behalf of the Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC)¹, Allegheny County is soliciting Proposals from one or more Proposers to provide housing, housing assistance and supportive services to individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness, through Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs and Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Programs (hereinafter referred to separately as PSH Programs and RRH Programs and collectively as the Programs). Individuals receiving PSH Program and RRH Program services will hereinafter be referred to as Participants.

Specifically, the County is seeking the following: Proposals for PSH and RRH Programs that will be supported by funding as made available by HUD or through reallocation. The County recommends that programs consider expanding an existing HUD grant that is successful in meeting the CoC performance measures and received a high-ranking score.

The PSH and RRH Programs which are the subject of this RFP are being developed in anticipation of the receipt of HUD funding: the availability of bonus funding and any potential reallocated project, per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice

¹ The Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board has designated the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as the entity authorized to apply for and carry out activities on behalf of the CoC (the Collaborative Applicant).

of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the CoC, released July 3, 2019. The amount of bonus funding available is expected to be \$1,036,692.

Award Details

If the CoC is successful in the NOFA process, the PSH and RRH Programs for which this RFP is being issued would begin in July 1, 2020.

Successful Proposals will be included in DHS's annual response to HUD's NOFA. Dependent upon HUD's approval of DHS's response to the NOFA, DHS intends to enter into one or more Agreements in 2020 with one or more Successful Proposer(s) to provide PSH and RRH Programs for a term of one year if awarded a project by HUD. DHS cannot anticipate the number of projects that may be funded at this time and there is no guarantee that HUD will award additional funding to ACDHS for additional projects. Proposers may submit a Proposal for one PSH Program, one RRH Program or one of each type of Program.

Who can apply

All non-profit entities are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Entities do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County to submit a Proposal, but 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.

What's important to us

Since the adoption of "Opening Doors," the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, the federal government has emphasized the importance of understanding Housing First not just as a program model, but as an overall orientation in communities' response to homelessness. Housing First strategies incorporate few programmatic prerequisites, utilize proactive outreach and engagement efforts, implement low-barrier admission policies, create rapid and streamlined entry into permanent housing, offer voluntary and engaging supportive services, and focus on housing stability.

As a Continuum of Care, the County is committed to these Housing First principles. This RFP aims to contribute to long-term efforts to more fully integrate Housing First models into the Allegheny County CoC. As supportive, low-barrier housing, RRH and PSH Programs help Allegheny County increase Housing First options in its network of housing supports.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions about this RFP is 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 21, 2019.

Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 28, 2019. DHS anticipates notifying Proposers of the County's decision in October 2019.

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, intellectual disability, 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

DHS administers a HUD grant of approximately \$20 million, approximately \$13.5 million of which is currently allocated to PSH Programs and approximately \$4.4 million of which is currently allocated to RRH Programs across Allegheny County.

PSH Programs provide long-term housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities. This type of supportive housing enables these individuals to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting. RRH Programs assist individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and to achieve stability through a combination of rental assistance, housing search and supportive services.

To inform planning and reallocation decision-making for the Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board (HAB), the Department of Human Services assessed homeless housing needs and turnover for longer term (non-emergency shelter) homeless programs. Data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), 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, and Allegheny County's coordinated intake (through the Allegheny Link, an office that connects people in need to available resources) were analyzed. Available data included information from homeless assessments; scores from the Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), a pre-screening tool for assessing homeless individuals' needs and matching them with the most appropriate support; homeless unit capacity and turnover; and other relevant data. The study period covered 12 months from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. The analysis examined the capacity and demand for units for single adults and families with children, as well as exploring the differing demands for units for people with different levels of service need.

The analysis demonstrated the following key gaps in housing services. Of those assessed for services,

1. 41% of singles/households without children have high service needs scores, with PSH being the most appropriate housing option. Analysis indicates a shortage of 460 units

between current demand and the capacity to house these individuals via normal unit turnover.²

2. 59% of singles/households without children have moderate service needs scores, with RRH being the most appropriate housing option. Analysis indicates a shortage of 594 units between current demand and the capacity to house these individuals via normal unit turnover.
3. 41% of families/households with children have high service needs scores, with PSH being the most appropriate housing option. Analysis indicates a shortage of 246 units between current demand and the capacity to house these individuals via normal unit turnover.
4. 59% of families/households with children have moderate service needs scores, with RRH being the most appropriate housing option. Analysis indicates a shortage of 343 units between current demand and the capacity to house these individuals via normal unit turnover.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

DHS is requesting Proposals for PSH and RRH Programs that will be supported by the funding available through expanded HUD funding. The Programs must adhere to Housing First principles as well as all rules and regulations of: 1) the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act),³ HUD’s Homeless Emergency Assistance, Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program (CoC) Rules and Regulations (“CoC Regulations”),⁴ found at 24 CFR 578 and 2) the Fair Housing Act.⁵

When designing their Programs, Proposers should consider the system needs analysis described in Section 1 of this RFP. The 2019 fair market rate (FMR), as documented by HUD, will determine the number of units to be funded. If a HUD bonus project allocation is available, any funding received through a successful project allocation will be added to the CoC’s current funding level to support additional PSH and RRH Programs. Proposers may propose to develop one PSH Program, one RRH Program or one of each type of Program. Proposers are encouraged to consider expansions of existing high-performing Programs.

A. Target Population

Proposed Programs must provide both housing and supportive services, as described under *Section 3.1, B: Service Description*. Programs may serve single or family households—with or without children—who are experiencing homelessness. In addition:

- New PSH Programs must serve chronically homeless individuals and/or families meeting HUD disability requirements.

² A small percentage of this PSH demand could be met with the Veteran Administration’s HUD-VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) program for those that meet its eligibility criteria. Data from the HUD-VASH program is not included in this analysis.

³ <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessAssistanceActAmendedbyHEARTH.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoCProgramInterimRule.pdf>

⁵ http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/FHLaws/yourrights

- New RRH Programs must serve homeless individuals and/or families coming directly from the streets or emergency shelter or fleeing domestic violence situations.

Programs must follow a Housing First model⁶ and serve Participants without regard to previous criminal history, clean time, employment, credit worthiness or other barriers.

B. Service Description

Housing for PSH Programs

For a PSH Program, Successful Proposer(s) will be expected to offer facility-based and/or scattered site housing units in Allegheny County. The rent for all units must be reasonable for the area and units must meet all housing quality standards.

Housing for RRH Programs

For a RRH Program, Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for offering short-term rental assistance (up to 3 months) or medium-term rental assistance (4-24 months) for Participants. 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, with assistance from the Successful Proposer as needed. If a Participant later moves to another suitable unit, the rental assistance may be applied to the new unit.

All RRH Program units must: 1) pass a housing quality inspection; 2) meet all requirements identified in the HEARTH Act, CoC regulations and the Fair Housing Act, and; 3) meet reasonable rent standards. The Successful Proposer(s) also will be responsible for working with landlords and other service providers to ensure that Participants remain successfully housed and to facilitate their transition out of the RRH Program. Further, the Successful Proposer(s) must ensure timely and accurate payment to the landlord on behalf of the Participant. The Successful Proposer(s) must follow the rental assistance regulations for RRH,⁷ including having all leases in the name of the Participant.

Per HUD requirements, to remain in an RRH Program, Participants must demonstrate that they continue to lack sufficient resources and support networks necessary 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.

Supportive Services for PSH and RRH Programs

In addition to appropriate housing for PSH and RRH Programs described above, the Successful Proposer(s) must provide supportive services designed to prepare Participants to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence. Supportive services are aimed at long-term recovery and may focus on social, vocational, educational, behavioral or cognitive skills.

⁶ https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf

⁷ <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/program-components-and-eligible-costs/> and <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessAssistanceActAmendedbyHEARTH.pdf>

Services may be provided by the Successful Proposer(s) directly or by another agency under contract with the Successful Proposer(s). Supportive services include the following:

- Assessment of service needs
- Assistance with moving costs
- Case management
- Child Care
- 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
- Utility deposits

C. Referral and Outreach

DHS expects that all referrals to the PSH and RRH Programs managed by Successful Proposer(s) will be made through DHS's Coordinated Entry Unit (Allegheny Link). Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for accepting a referral and quickly securing the Participant's appropriate housing placement.

D. Performance Outcomes for Both Program Types

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for tracking outcomes and meeting the following HUD performance standards for the PSH and RRH Programs within one year.

Performance standards for a PSH Program:

1. Program utilization rate of units will reach or surpass 95% (measured quarterly).
2. Average length of time from program enrollment to move-in date is 30 days.
3. 85% of Participants will maintain or increase their income.
4. 20% of Participants will obtain or maintain employment (part-time or full-time).
5. 100% of Participants will maintain or increase non-cash benefits (e.g., Food Stamps).
6. 100% of Participants will maintain or secure Medicaid or private health insurance.
7. 85% of Participants will maintain permanent housing or exit to other permanent housing.
8. Fewer than 5% of Participants that exit from PSH Program to permanent housing destination return to homeless system within 6 months.

Performance standards for an RRH Program:

1. Program utilization rate of units will reach or surpass 95% (measured quarterly).
2. Average length of time from program enrollment to move-in date is 30 days.

3. 85% of Participants will maintain or increase their income.
4. 20% of Participants will obtain or maintain employment (part-time or full-time).
5. 100% of Participants will maintain or increase non-cash benefits.
6. 100% of Participants will maintain or secure Medicaid or private health insurance.
7. 85% of participants will exit the program within nine months.
8. 85% of Participants will maintain permanent housing upon exit.
9. Fewer than 5% of Participants that exit from RRH Program to permanent housing destination return to homeless system within 6 months.

Beyond HUD's performance outcomes, DHS expects that the Successful Proposer(s) will establish additional goals for the PSH and RRH Programs (e.g., Participants will secure health care through public or private sources, Participants will be linked to mental health outpatient services, Participants will enroll in life skills courses).

E. HMIS

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for participating in the Allegheny Link process and for entering all data into HMIS within the parameters established by the HUD regulations. 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 as well as run periodic data quality reports to ensure all data is correct in their system, per the most recent HUD data specifications.

F. Budget

Because DHS expects that there will be more than one Successful Proposer, funding will be divided among Successful Proposers according to Program size and needs. Successful Proposers' Programs will be included in the County's response to HUD's annual NOFA. Contingent on HUD approval, the County expects to award Agreements for a term of one year.

A 25% match from the Successful Proposer(s) is required to be documented for all line items except leasing. The match may be in-kind or additionally-raised funds. 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.

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

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and must 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 100 points for each Program proposed, as outlined in the following sections.

Organizational Experience for PSH and RRH Programs (40 points total)

All Proposers should demonstrate, in their responses to the items in the Response Form, that they have:

- Experience providing housing and supportive services with at least an 85% utilization rate. (5 points)
- Strong organizational and management structure including evidence of internal communication, external coordination and an adequate financial accounting system. (5 points)
- Absence of any unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants. (5 points)
- A strong staffing plan including staff qualifications, recruitment, training and performance management (5 points)
- Experience and demonstrated success in meeting standards for managing data with HMIS. (5 points)
- Clear understanding of and commitment to the Housing First model. (5 points)
- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits or other supporting financial documentation. (5 points)
- High-performing projects under the 2019 ranking performance measures for the HUD 2019 renewal applications will be awarded up to five points. (5 points)
 - DHS Housing Analysts will review ranking performance measure scores and assign points based on the following scale:
 - 85 or less: 0
 - 86 – 89: 1 point
 - 90 – 98: 3 points
 - 99 and up: 5 points

PSH Program Standards (60 points total)

PSH Program Proposers should demonstrate, in their responses to the items in the Response Form, that they have:

- A well-defined strategy to serve PSH Program Participants. (10 points)
- An appropriate schedule for the proposed activities, a management plan, and a method for assuring effective and timely completion of all work for the PSH Program. (5 points)
- Experience serving the PSH target population, including any specified subpopulation. (5 points)
- An appropriate housing facility (including scattered site) that supports PSH Program goals. (10 points)
- A comprehensive plan for coordinating with outside partners to provide a variety of supportive services, with appropriate frequency, for PSH Program Participants.

Comprehensive plan must include specific names of partners and examples of collaboration. (5 points)

- Ability to manage referrals of individuals with a documented disability, who are experiencing homelessness. (5 points)
- A strategy to effectively use funds for performing the scope of services within funding and time specifications. (5 points)
- A budget narrative that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the PSH Program. (5 points)
- HUD budget charts that demonstrate fiscal and management capacity to manage program funds in a fiscally responsible manner. (5 points)
- DHS Housing Analysts will perform a review of HMIS data to evaluate Proposers' data quality and performance outcomes using the five-point scale described in Section 5.1. Strong past performance and complete, accurate data entry are worth a total of five possible points. (5 points)

RRH Program Standards (60 points total)

RRH Program Proposers should demonstrate, in their responses to the items in the Response Form, that they have:

- A well-defined strategy to serve RRH Program Participants. (10 points)
- An appropriate schedule for the proposed activities, a management plan, and a method for assuring effective and timely completion of all work for the RRH Program. (5 points)
- Experience serving the RRH target population, including any specified subpopulation. (5 points)
- An appropriate housing plan that supports RRH Program goals including resolution of housing crises in a short period of time. (10 points)
- A comprehensive plan for coordinating with outside partners to provide a variety of supportive services, with appropriate frequency, for RRH Program Participants. (5 points)
- Ability to manage referrals for individuals experiencing homelessness. (5 points)
- A strategy to effectively use funds for performing the scope of services within funding and time specifications. (5 points)
- A budget narrative that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the RRH Program. (5 points)
- HUD budget charts that demonstrate fiscal and management capacity to manage program funds in a fiscally responsible manner. (5 points)
- DHS Housing Analysts will perform a review of HMIS data to evaluate Proposers' data quality and performance outcomes using the five-point scale described in Section 5.1. Strong past performance and complete, accurate data entry are worth a total of five possible points. (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.
- c. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - MWDBE 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 you do not have audited financial reports for the last three years, you may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing 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 no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 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.

4.2 How to Contact DHS about this RFP

- 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.

4.3 Other Information

- a. **The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all of 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 based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria using the scale listed in Section 5.1 b.

5.1 Evaluation Model

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An Evaluation Committee will be formed by DHS and may consist of some or all of the following:
 - a. Content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
 - b. Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- 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 according to their 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 Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the Committee. The Committee members will meet to discuss the average scores and their individual evaluations as part of the deliberation process.
- d. 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 using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that an 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 Committee. The Committee members will meet to discuss the average scores and their individual evaluations as part of the deliberation process.
- 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. As part of determining Proposers' 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 Proposers' financial stability.
- h. The Evaluation 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).
- 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 their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.

- k. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

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

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

Proposals which do not meet the above requirements will be automatically rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee.

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.

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 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:
 - 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 MWDBE website](#).

6.2 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.

6.3 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).

6.4 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.

6.5 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](#), 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.