



Request for Proposals

Technology Solutions to Enhance Client Feedback and Community Engagement

RFP Posting: September 9, 2016

Deadline for Questions: ~~October 24, 2016~~, extended to December 21, 2016

Submission Deadline: ~~October 31, 2016~~, extended to December 30, 2016

Estimated Award Decision/Notification: ~~December 2016~~, extended to March 2017

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
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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. CART: Consumer Action Response Team. A group that interviews consumers who have received behavioral health services to monitor consumer and family satisfaction with services.
4. 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
5. Director's Action Line: A staffed hotline, email, letter and walk-in service that individuals who have questions, concerns, comments or complaints may contact about any aspect of DHS
6. DHS: [The Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
7. Proposal: The response submitted to this RFP
8. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
9. Response Form: The Word document that Proposers fill out to answer questions about the solicitation. A completed Response Form is the Proposal/Application.
10. RFP: Request for Proposal
11. Solution: A technology or group of technologies that proposes to meet the needs of a category as described in this RFP
12. Successful Proposer: the Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services
13. Systems Improvement through Youth: A CYF advisory board comprised of youth who are active in or alumni of DHS child-serving systems

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, through its Department of Human Services (DHS), is seeking to improve service delivery by using technology to greatly expand and enhance the way it understands client experiences and engages individuals and communities in human services planning. Specifically, DHS is interested in using the latest technologies in the following five categories:

- A. Collecting Client Experience Data and Feedback
- B. Harvesting and Analyzing Social Media Content
- C. Implementing New or Existing Rating Tools
- D. Engaging Individuals and Communities in Public Planning Processes
- E. Other Innovative and Creative Solutions

Award Details

Up to \$1 million will be available to design and implement a system of technology Solutions to better understand the effectiveness of our services and engage our clients and communities in how human services are administered.

Innovative Solutions, a technology or group of technologies that proposes to meet the needs of a category as described in this RFP, are being sought from a diverse array of entities, including government organizations, educational institutions, non-profit or for-profit organizations and individuals. Proposers may submit a Proposal for one category or any combination of multiple categories, including all five categories. Proposers may partner to provide more comprehensive Solutions.

DHS expects to make anywhere from one to ten Agreements as a result of this RFP. Each category may be awarded one, multiple or no Agreements. The budget for each Agreement will depend on the Solutions proposed. We expect that Solutions may take one to three years to be fully implemented.

What we don't want

We are not interested in benchmarking DHS with other jurisdictions.

We are not seeking information that identifies individual clients, although collection of demographic information would be an appropriate part of an overall trend analysis. Instead, we are seeking to amplify the voices of our clients.

What's important to us

Solutions that:

- Reach meaningful numbers of hard-to-engage clients, such as clients in homeless shelters, children in out-of-home placements and demographic groups with historically low response rates or who are often un- or under-represented in public decision-making processes (e.g., individuals with low income, youth, ethnic minorities, immigrants, individuals with limited English proficiency)

- Encourage clients to freely voice opinions and ideas without concern that their identity will be disclosed
- Empower clients and communities
- Are flexible, adaptable and scalable as our needs change over time
- Are user-friendly for both DHS staff and clients
- Provide a positive experience or a benefit to clients, so that they generate enough activity to make the information meaningful and useful
- Present easy-to-interpret results and visualizations
- Are broad enough to encompass all or multiple human services or targeted to specific audiences
- Consider how to engage clients with a wide range of technological capacity and/or that target subpopulations, such as people with physical or intellectual disabilities.

Proposers should help us understand the strengths and limitations of their proposed Solutions.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions is Wednesday, December 21, 2016.

Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. EST on Friday, December 30, 2016.

Proposers will be notified of their selection status by March 2017.

Who we are

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

DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides a wide range of publicly-funded services to more than 200,000 people annually. Services include those for older adults; mental health services (includes 24-hour crisis counseling); drug and alcohol services; child protective services; at-risk child development and education; hunger services; emergency shelters and housing for the homeless; energy assistance; non-emergency medical transportation; job training and placement for adults receiving public benefits; and services for individuals with a diagnosis of intellectual disability.

While some services (e.g., child welfare case management, advocacy services to individuals age 60 and over, information and referral services, involuntary commitments) are provided directly by DHS staff, many (e.g., foster care, senior centers, housing, behavioral health treatment) are provided by DHS's network of more than 300 contracted service providers. DHS funds these provider agencies to provide specific services and is responsible for programmatic and fiscal monitoring.

DHS services are funded through a combination of federal, state and county sources, as well as private funding from a number of local and national foundations. Many services are governed by regulatory and statutory guidelines; others are delivered based on assessed needs and best practices. County residents access services in a number of ways. Whereas most services are voluntary, in certain situations (e.g., child protective services and involuntary mental health commitment) service involvement is not a choice.

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

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

For as long as DHS has been an agency, we have attempted to understand clients' service experiences and involve clients and community members in planning for service and system changes and improvements. To inform its improvements, DHS frequently relies on administrative data, such as client demographics and service utilization data (e.g., dates services started/ended, type of services received). While rich and informative, administrative data lacks an understanding of true client experience (e.g., attitudes toward or perceptions of services). Therefore, DHS is working to more fully incorporate clients' voices and experiences into program evaluation and planning.

A recent scan of client engagement activities across DHS demonstrated that there is a wide variety of activities in place to address these needs. Some of these activities are quite effective. For example, client feedback mechanisms such as the Director's Action Line¹ and the Systems Improvement through Youth advisory board² inform service delivery and quality improvements. Through a 17-year partnership with Chatham University, randomly-selected individuals with intellectual disabilities are contacted to provide feedback on the full spectrum of services and satisfaction with their service experiences. Issues identified through this process are reported to DHS and service providers for resolution and improvement. The Consumer Action Response Team (CART) interviews recipients of behavioral health services through a peer-to-peer process in which CART is staffed by consumers of behavioral health services. Interview questions include satisfaction with services and staff, whether basic needs are being met, and level of community involvement. The results are compiled into reports shared with DHS and designed to improve awareness of needs as well as service quality. Additionally, community listening forums and advisory bodies that are open to any member of the community also provide important feedback and input. However, these activities vary widely across service areas and there is no centralized or standardized process.

Even the more effective feedback mechanisms require motivation and effort on the part of the client or community member; we have not yet identified a simple and effective way to reach those who are not inclined to make a call, volunteer to be on an advisory council or provide honest feedback about a service experience. In particular, we are lacking feedback and input from those who have had negative or involuntary experiences. As a result, the feedback and input we receive is incomplete and not fully representative of the community that we serve.

Moreover, these processes have not benefited from the latest technologies to assist us to scale our efforts or to find a way to get more immediate feedback so that real-time changes and program improvements can be made. Furthermore, none of the results have been compiled in a way that allows for a large-scale analysis of service impact and effectiveness. To address these shortcomings, DHS is interested in generating more efficient, consistent and proactive pathways to conversation between the client and the system so that clients can guide our evolution as community needs emerge and change.

How this relates to the network of DHS-contracted providers: Many of DHS's contracted service providers have quality improvement and feedback mechanisms that work well for them, and we are not

¹ For more information, see [http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Director-s-Action-Line-\(DAL\).aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Director-s-Action-Line-(DAL).aspx)

² <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Advisory-Bodies/Systems-Improvement-Through-Youth.aspx>

interested in duplicating these processes. However, we believe that our responsibility should include some measure of accountability for the quality of the services contracted providers deliver to Allegheny County's most vulnerable citizens. Currently, we receive feedback about these services only when a client, family member or advocate is empowered enough to reach out to DHS with a compliment, complaint or a concern. Ultimately, we envision a mechanism through which anybody can easily provide feedback about their service experience and, in fact, it becomes routine to do so. This feedback would serve several purposes: 1) to inform DHS on areas where the system could use improvement or where the public is confused about how to access our services; 2) quality improvement and, if necessary, intervention with specific providers or services and 3) to be a source of information for those who are interested in exercising choice in service provider selection.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

3.1 What we are buying and why

DHS is seeking to improve the delivery of services to our clients by using technology to greatly expand and enhance the way we understand client experiences and engage communities in human services planning. Proposers may submit a Proposal for one or more of the following categories, or one Proposal that provides an innovative Solution to all five identified needs. Proposers may partner to provide more comprehensive Solutions. There may be more than one Successful Proposer for the five categories listed below.

DHS is seeking Proposals for the following five categories:

- A. Collecting Client Experience Data and Feedback
- B. Harvesting and Analyzing Social Media Content
- C. Implementing New or Existing Rating Tools
- D. Engaging Individuals and Communities in Public Planning Processes
- E. Other Innovative and Creative Solutions

We anticipate that there may be a number of challenges/limitations in designing Solutions. We encourage Proposers to be innovative but also require that Proposers clearly state what limitations their proposed Solution will be unable to overcome so we may understand the scope of their Solution. What DHS wants or expects from a Proposer with respect to each of the five categories is described below.

A. Collecting Client Experience Data and Feedback

DHS is seeking (a) Successful Proposer(s) to develop and implement a Solution for collecting and managing client experience data and feedback for specific DHS programs as well as the overall human services system experience, yielding information sufficiently robust to capture an accurate picture of the experiences of significant numbers of clients. The goal is for DHS to better understand client needs, expectations and challenges and to translate those insights into opportunities for program- or system-level improvement.

Solutions under this category may include, but are not limited to: a comprehensive survey software suite; a mobile ethnography platform; a physical device for rating client experience at the time of service; a mobile application; or a combination of technologies. The Solution must be able to regularly

engage clients and be efficiently designed to collect the data that we need to analyze our services while not being overwhelming to clients.

The Solution would ideally be able to collect data about the client journey through the DHS system. A client journey may cross various systems (e.g., a client uses services from behavioral health, child welfare and community services) or cover only one system (e.g., only mental health).

The Solution should be able to collect and manage data from past service interactions and from real-time, point-of-service interactions. Through point-of-service interactions or short surveys that immediately follow a service, DHS could gain important understanding of the client's opinion of the just-completed experience so that we may immediately react to any problem that may have occurred.

Challenges

We anticipate the following potential challenges:

- Deciding how and where to deploy the Solutions, given the size and scale of the DHS system of services and providers.
- Negative client experience – Some DHS clients may have limited interest in re-engaging because of a negative experience with a DHS service.
- Client accessibility – DHS clients may have limited access to technology.

B. Harvesting and Analyzing Social Media Content

Data from social media offer insights directly from clients that can be used to better understand and ultimately improve the client experience. We are seeking an automated Solution to harvest and analyze social media content.

The Solution should mine data from across social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and online review sites. The Solution must be adaptable and customizable as needed, as the utility of the Solution and its applicability to questions we wish to answer will change over time.

The Solution should be able to classify data by sentiment, demographic group (where available), type of content (e.g., reaction to news item, inquiry about services, promotional posts, complaints), intended audience (i.e., direct communication with DHS/Provider or public post), and any other relevant category identified in development. We are especially interested in individuals' reactions to experiences or interactions with DHS and our affiliated provider network. One possible function of the tool could be the ability to identify clusters of data with similar properties/content.

If a data point has location information attached, such as "check-ins" (such as those at DHS or contracted provider locations) on Facebook, we would like to retain that information to be able to later perform geospatial analysis.

Challenges

We anticipate the following challenges in this category:

- Identifying DHS-contracted service providers – We can provide a list of providers and service locations, but the Solution must be able to associate these providers with their social media presence.

- Identifying relevant posts – For example, social media users may use different terms to refer to the same entity or interaction.
- Quantity of data – There may be a relatively small quantity of available data, due to limited relevant social media activity.
- Isolated data – Data may be siloed on different platforms without a single, easily accessible point of data extraction.
- Differences in user interactions – Users interact with each social media network differently, i.e., data and engagement look different from site to site.
- Differences in social media sites – Social media sites make user information, such as location, available to varying degrees.
- Trade-off between depth and breadth of information retrieval – For example, a Solution may provide thorough coverage of one social media platform or topic of interest, but not be adaptable to other platforms or types of analysis.

C. Implementing New or Existing Rating Tools

There are websites and mobile platforms to gather and share customer ratings of everything from restaurants to plumbers to electronics (e.g., Yelp). Sites such as Ratemyprofessors.com and Europe’s Rate My Clinic are attempts to utilize technology to improve transparency in the education and health care fields. For some industries – and on some sites – these ratings are as trusted as personal recommendations. This rating technology also can be applied to human services providers so that clients can inform and help one another find the best provider for their needs while offering providers honest feedback that can help them improve their services.

DHS is looking for new or already-developed Solutions that are adaptable – or able to be customized – for use by human services clients to rate and share their experiences. A Solution may be a specific website framework, mobile application or other technologies that allow clients to rate and share their experiences with DHS or a provider.

A Solution must ensure confidentiality and anonymity so that no sensitive personal client information is unintentionally shared and no negative repercussions occur for honest feedback. The names and personal information of DHS and provider employees also need to be protected from public view. A rating Solution may provide a mechanism for response by the provider to the review. DHS is also interested in Solutions that use the collected data to track how a provider may respond to client reviews and improve the quality of their services over time.

D. Engaging Individuals and Communities in Public Planning Processes

DHS is seeking technology Solutions that allow clients and community members to give feedback, share information and generate ideas about proposed and implemented Allegheny County public planning projects and policies. The goal is to promote citizens’ empowerment in and connection to the County in which they live. We envision implementing an online platform or combination of approaches that allows our community to understand our challenges, react to our solutions and propose their own solutions. The platform would encourage people to give feedback and generate and share ideas.

Initially, the Solutions will be used in human services planning projects and policies such as the child welfare plan, housing services, aging services and behavioral health services. In the future, the Solutions

may be expanded to include broader County efforts such as comprehensive plans, transportation systems planning, infrastructure engineering projects, budgeting, policy issue priorities and other community planning decisions.

We are seeking (a) Successful Proposer(s) to develop effective ways to collect meaningful resident input in human services planning processes and allow DHS to disseminate information about our planning efforts to communities in an easily accessible, user-friendly way. A Solution may include, but is not limited to, online tools, specific website frameworks, social media, interactive kiosks in public locations, mobile applications, hands-on hardware to use in-person during community meetings, or a combination of technologies. Other considerations are:

- The Solution should create a safe space where differing viewpoints are welcomed and participants feel comfortable expressing their opinions on a variety of subjects, even contentious issues.
- The Solution may connect to social media platforms so participants may share ideas and information while encouraging participation from other community members.
- The Solution may collect demographic/geographic data from participants. This will help DHS understand who is participating and evaluate the effectiveness of the tool. These data also will help DHS target information or discussions to specific neighborhoods and stakeholders so that feedback is received from the people who will be most affected by the project or policy in question.
- The Solution may offer the ability for participants to “like” or vote for ideas they support, with the top ideas rising to the top of the page for prioritized viewing.
- The Solution may offer a variety of tools such as customized surveys, event calendars, document libraries and budget simulators.

Challenges

We anticipate a number of challenges to engaging communities in public planning processes, including:

- Ensuring civil discussions and feedback forums but also being transparent so that participants feel their voice is heard and not censored.
- Reaching and engaging those most affected by the issue and getting input that is appropriately representative (i.e., not skewed to a vocal minority).
- Sharing feedback about use – The desired outcome of the Solution is to integrate the collected data and feedback into Allegheny County’s public planning decisions and actions. Communities will not participate if they feel their opinions are not being considered. The Solution should have a way to measure use, such as giving updates on implemented policies and projects and highlighting where public feedback impacted them.

E. Other Innovative and Creative Solutions

The technology field is vast and there are certainly approaches that we have not considered while writing this RFP. Therefore, DHS also is seeking Proposals for Solutions not listed above that can help us understand and improve client experiences and engage community members in public planning processes. Also, if Proposers feel they can meet the goals from all or multiple categories with one Solution, they may propose it under this category.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and should address their qualifications by responding to the specifically-requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

Proposers can propose a Solution for one or more categories. Proposers should submit only one Response Form, even when proposing Solutions for multiple categories. Proposers should leave the sections blank that they are not proposing and complete only the sections for the categories they are proposing. Each category will be scored separately. The maximum score a Proposal can receive for one category is 50 points, as outlined in the following sections.

A. Collecting Client Experience and Feedback (50 points)

- A strong, client-centered plan for the Solution to regularly and efficiently collect client experience and feedback (25 points)
- Strong organizational experience with developing, implementing and evaluating Solutions to regularly and efficiently collect client experience and feedback (10 points)
- Key staff that have availability and solid experience to implement the Solution and a management plan that supports category goals (5 points)
- A detailed budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs that clearly support the proposed Solution, development and implementation plan, and training (5 points)
- A thoughtful identification of the challenges and limitations of the proposed Solution and creative approaches to overcome them (1 point)
- An appropriate timeline for the design and development of the Solution (1 point)
- A strong plan to collaborate with DHS during development, with knowledge transfer and training for DHS staff about how to use the Solution and a maintenance plan, if necessary (1 point)
- A solid strategy to evaluate the success of your proposed Solution (1 point)
- Understand of/mission alignment with the problem this category addresses (1 point)

B. Harvesting and Analyzing Social Media Content (50 points)

- A strong, client-centered plan for the Solution to harvest and analyze social media content (25 points)
- Strong organizational experience with developing, implementing and evaluating Solutions to harvest and analyze social media content (10 points)
- Key staff that have availability and solid experience to implement the Solution and a management plan that supports category goals (5 points)
- A detailed budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs that clearly support the proposed Solution, development and implementation plan, and training (5 points)
- A thoughtful identification of the challenges and limitations of the proposed Solution and creative approaches to overcome them (1 point)
- An appropriate timeline for the design and development of the Solution (1 point)

- A strong plan to collaborate with DHS during development with knowledge transfer and training for DHS staff about how to use the Solution and a maintenance plan, if necessary (1 point)
- A solid strategy to evaluate the success of your proposed Solution (1 point)
- Understand of/mission alignment with the problem this category addresses (1 point)

C. Implementing New or Existing Rating Tools (50 points)

- A strong, client-centered plan for the Solution to implement new or existing rating tools for human services (25 points)
- Strong organizational experience with developing, implementing and evaluating Solutions for rating tools for human services (10 points)
- Key staff that have availability and solid experience to implement the Solution and a management plan that supports category goals (5 points)
- A detailed budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs that clearly support the proposed Solution, development and implementation plan, and training (5 points)
- A thoughtful identification of the challenges and limitations of the proposed Solution and creative approaches to overcome them (1 point)
- An appropriate timeline for the design and development of the Solution (1 point)
- A strong plan to collaborate with DHS during development with knowledge transfer and training for DHS staff about how to use the Solution and a maintenance plan, if necessary (1 point)
- A solid strategy to evaluate the success of your proposed Solution (1 point)
- Understand of/mission alignment with the problem this category addresses (1 point)

D. Engaging Individuals and Communities in Public Planning Processes (50 points)

- A strong, client-centered plan for the Solution to engage communities in public planning processes (25 points)
- Strong organizational experience with developing, implementing and evaluating Solutions to engage communities in public planning processes (10 points)
- Key staff that have availability and solid experience to implement the Solution and a management plan that supports category goals (5 points)
- A detailed budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs that clearly support the proposed Solution, development and implementation plan, and training (5 points)
- A thoughtful identification of the challenges and limitations of the proposed Solution and creative approaches to overcome them (1 point)
- An appropriate timeline for the design and development of the Solution (1 point)
- A strong plan to collaborate with DHS during development with knowledge transfer and training for DHS staff about how to use the Solution and a maintenance plan, if necessary (1 point)
- A solid strategy to evaluate the success of your proposed Solution (1 point)
- Understand of/mission alignment with the problem this category addresses (1 point)

E. Other Innovative and Creative Solutions (50 points)

- A strong, client-centered plan for a Solution to address a well-defined problem that is appropriate for Allegheny County (25 points)
- Strong organizational experience with developing, implementing and evaluating your proposed Solution (10 points)

- Key staff that have availability and solid experience to implement the Solution and a management plan that supports category goals (5 points)
- A detailed budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs that clearly support the proposed Solution, development and implementation plan, and training (5 points)
- A thoughtful identification of the challenges and limitations of the proposed Solution and creative approaches to overcome them (1 point)
- An appropriate timeline for the design and development of the Solution (1 point)
- A strong plan to collaborate with DHS during development with knowledge transfer and training for DHS staff about how to use the Solution and a maintenance plan, if necessary (1 point)
- A solid strategy to evaluate the success of your proposed Solution (1 point)
- Understand of/mission alignment with the problem this category addresses (1 point)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

This RFP is a solicitation to individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations or businesses (Proposers) to submit a Proposal to perform the services as described in *Section 2: What We Are Looking For*. Proposers must have the ability to meet the identified needs and quality standards within the programmatic and funding guidelines specified in this RFP.

4.1 Submission Steps

The Proposal submission process consists of the following steps:

- Please use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available at our Active Solicitations website with the RFP announcement at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Cover Page
 - MWDBE Participation Statement or Waiver Statement
 - W-9
 - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
 - Budgets and budget narratives
- Please do not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.
- Please 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*)
- Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts that may be specified in the Response Form.
- Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. EST on Friday, December 30, 2016 to be considered for review.**
- Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will not be considered.

- h. 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.
- 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. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after contract execution.

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 Program description in *Section 2: What We Are Looking For* and on the evaluation criteria in *Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria* using the scale listed in *Section 5.1 c*.

5.1 Evaluation Model

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An Evaluation Committee will be formed by DHS and will consist of some or all of the following:
 - Content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
 - DHS administration
 - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- b. Each member of the Evaluation Committee will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest agreement.
- c. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points to 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 scales:

5 Point Responses

0 – Not addressed

1 – Poor

2 – Below expectations

3 – Meets expectations

4 – Exceeds expectations

5 – Outstanding

1 Point Responses

0 – Not addressed

1 – Meets expectations

- d. The Evaluation Committee members then will meet collectively to compile and discuss the individual scores and evaluation of each committee member.
- e. The County shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review using the same criteria outlined above. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make modifications to their Proposal or budget or make a formal oral presentation. The Evaluation Committee will review the modifications and/or oral presentation and rescore the shortlisted Proposals using the original evaluation criteria.
- f. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- g. The 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).
- h. The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- i. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.
- j. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegchenycounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

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

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

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

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

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

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.