



# Request for Proposals

## Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

**RFP Posting:** Thursday, January 25, 2018

**Deadline for Questions:** Friday, February 16, 2018

**Submission Deadline:** 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, February 23, 2018

**Estimated Award Decision/Notification:** April 2018

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

# **Contents**

Definitions

The RFP at a Glance

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

# 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. Continuum of Care (CoC): A HUD-designated group organized to carry out community responsibilities related to ending homelessness
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. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
6. Data Warehouse: The Data Warehouse is a central repository of social and human services data related to DHS clients and the services they receive through DHS as well as through a number of other public entities
7. Homeless Advisory Board (HAB): The decision-making body of the Allegheny County Continuum of Care
8. HMIS: Homeless Management Information System, a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
9. HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
10. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
11. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
12. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
13. RFP: Request for Proposals
14. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

## **The RFP at a Glance**

### ***What we need***

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS), on behalf of the PA-600 Pittsburgh/McKeesport/Penn Hills/Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC) and its Homeless Advisory Board (HAB), is seeking proposals from qualified Proposers to provide software for a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) that complies with federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations. The HMIS should include functionality for homeless coordinated entry<sup>1</sup> or be compatible with DHS's custom coordinated entry solution. The County expects to enter into an Agreement with a Successful Proposer beginning in 2018 for a term of one year with a County option to extend the Agreement. The budget is negotiable, depending on the best software and service offering at the most competitive price.

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

DHS seeks a commercially available software that provides the following:

1. a customizable, user-friendly interface;
2. ability to integrate with other DHS software applications;
3. data analysis tools and customized reporting options;
5. a strong track record of compliance with all U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements, including data standards and report requirements; and
6. strong references from other CoCs.

Proposers may submit a Proposal if their software does not currently include a homeless coordinated entry component as long as the software is able to integrate with DHS's current custom coordinated entry solution.

### ***Award Details***

Allegheny County intends to enter into an Agreement with one Successful Proposer for a term of one year with a County option to extend the term of the Agreement.

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

All entities, including but not limited to, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses and individuals, are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Entities do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> Coordinated entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. (HUD Exchange HMIS FAQ:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-and-HMIS-FAQs.pdf>)

### ***Timeline***

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions about this RFP is Friday, February 16, 2018  
Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, February 23, 2018.  
Proposers will be notified of the County's decision to award an Agreement in Spring 2018.

### ***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**

Allegheny County DHS is the designated HMIS Lead Agency for the Allegheny County Continuum of Care Homeless Advisory Board (HAB). As such, DHS is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the County's HMIS. The County's current HMIS system has approximately 350 users from 35 agencies, entering data regarding approximately 150 different homeless programs. These programs include street outreach, homeless prevention, emergency shelter, transitional and bridge housing, permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, day shelter and other supportive service programs. Over a recent 12-month period (10/1/16 – 9/30/17), there were 11,600 active clients whose data is recorded in HMIS, including 8,069 clients entering programs stated above during this period.

Allegheny County currently uses a custom HMIS solution which is integrated into a separate custom homeless coordinated entry solution, and whose data is exported into the Data Warehouse. The solution is highly customizable to meet Allegheny County's business needs and the County receives excellent customer support. However, ensuring that the HMIS remains compliant with HUD data and reporting standards has become a significant resource and staff burden. Following a recent assessment of its HMIS, DHS has decided to solicit Proposals for a new commercially available HMIS solution.

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

DHS seeks a Successful Proposer to provide a cost-effective and HUD-compliant HMIS. HUD has developed data, security and privacy standards which it continually updates and communicates with HMIS vendors, HMIS lead agency staff and other stakeholders. Additional information about these HMIS requirements can be found here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/>

In addition to the custom HMIS, DHS currently utilizes a custom solution for its homeless coordinated entry system that integrates with its HMIS to create and prioritize client program referrals based on client assessment information. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must be able to integrate with DHS's current, custom coordinated entry solution OR provide a feasible, built-in coordinated entry system that

could replace the custom system and satisfy DHS's business needs. Proposers should describe how their HMIS could satisfy either one or both of these requirements.

## **Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals are evaluated based upon the following evaluation criteria. Proposers must address their qualifications in their Proposal 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations). The maximum score that a Proposal can receive is 200 points, as outlined in the following sections.

### **A. Administrative (10 points possible)**

1. The Successful Proposer must have the capacity and a demonstrated reputation for providing quick and responsive customer support. The Successful Proposer must clearly describe how its customer support will work with DHS staff and end users. (5 points)
2. The Successful Proposer must provide all necessary documentation to support administration and use of the software (i.e., system and reporting functionality, end user guides, etc.). (5 points)

### **B. HUD Compliance (15 points possible)**

1. The Successful Proposer's HMIS software must adhere to HUD's current and future data and technical standards. (5 points)
2. The Successful Proposer's HMIS software must be kept up to date with all HUD-mandated requirements in a timely manner, as established by HUD. (5 points)
3. The Successful Proposer must demonstrate regular and active participation in HUD's monthly HMIS vendor calls and meetings. (5 points)

### **C. Usability/Functionality (60 points possible)**

1. The Successful Proposer must provide the ability for DHS to access all underlying data as needed. (5 points)
2. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must have a responsively designed, web-based interface and positive user experience. (5 points)
3. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide the administrative access to efficiently manage business operations (i.e., ability to create/edit/delete projects and project level information, ability to add/modify/delete questions for assessments, etc.), including ability to audit client and user activities. (5 points)
4. The Successful Proposer must provide both testing and training environments which replicate the live environment. (5 points)
5. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must have a track record of being stable, responsive, and available for use 24/7/365 except for scheduled downtimes. (5 points)
6. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide the ability to implement data validations to help ensure good data quality (e.g., no dates of birth from 1800s, client cannot be a veteran and under 18, etc.). (5 points)

7. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide ability to share client level data across service providers, as needed. (5 points)
8. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must allow DHS to upload client level data into the HMIS from external sources (e.g. CSV or XML files from service provider data systems). (10 points)
9. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide the ability to de-duplicate client and household records across the HMIS implementation, including system administrator ability to manage client and household duplications to maintain data integrity. The HMIS should offer processes for de-duplication and monitoring for data quality assurance. (5 points)
10. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must include ability to add customized fields that are easily reportable. (5 points)
11. The Successful Proposer's HMIS should allow system administrators to impersonate or shadow end users to assist with troubleshooting (i.e., ability to see system from end user's perspective). (5 points)

**D. Reporting (25 points possible)**

1. The Successful Proposer must ensure all mandated reports (per HUD) are developed, tested and released for use on-time per HUD-defined deadlines. (5 points)
2. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must allow end users to run reports on their own as needed, such as using report input controls (e.g., program, date range, etc.). (5 points)
3. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must contain data analysis and ad hoc reporting tools for use by both system administrators and end users. (10 points)
4. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must have a drag and drop, or similar style customizable reporting platform that is user friendly and does not presuppose the users have in-depth knowledge of back end data structures, with ability to establish and run reports at the client, program, agency and system levels. (5 points)

**E. Integration and Customization (65 points possible)**

1. The Successful Proposer must have the capacity, willingness and proven track record to provide software customization and custom report development to meet customer needs in a timely manner. (15 points)
2. The Successful Proposer must be able to implement a solution that integrates its HMIS software with DHS's existing homeless coordinated entry software, or the Successful Proposer has a satisfactory homeless coordinated entry module that can be used satisfactorily to meet Allegheny County business needs. (15 points)
3. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide the ability to support data integration with the Data Warehouse and other relevant applications, such as DHS's contract administration software, the Master Provider Enterprise Repository (MPER). Successful Proposer must describe its methods of integration, such as direct database connection, reports and exports, web services or other application program interfaces (APIs). (15 points)
4. The Successful Proposer's HMIS must provide the ability to integrate easily with data visualization software, such as Tableau. (5 points)
5. The Successful Proposer must have a clear, effective and efficient approach to legacy data migration. (15 points)

## F. Budget (25 points possible)

1. The Successful Proposer must provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies the line items in the proposed budget. (10 points)
2. Successful Proposer must provide a budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the HMIS and offers a good value to the County. (15 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 documents
  - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
  - Audited financial reports for the last three years
  - W-9
- d. Proposer 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](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us) no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, February 23, 2018 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@allegheycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@allegheycounty.us)
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to questions, changes and clarifications will be posted at our Active Solicitations website at [www.allegheycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](http://www.allegheycounty.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. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposer(s).
- f. Proposers also should be aware that all documents and materials submitted in response to this RFP are subject to requests made pursuant to Pennsylvania's Right-To-Know Law and that the County may have to make submitted documents and materials available to a requestor after an award of an Agreement is made.

## **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:
  - Content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
  - 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. The Evaluation Committee members then will meet collectively to discuss the individual scores and evaluations of each committee member.
- d. DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have 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 and software demonstration to the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee will score the oral presentation and software demonstration and add it to the Proposer's Proposal score. The oral presentation will be scored using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that an oral presentation and software demonstration can receive is 100 points:
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide all necessary documentation and support administration and use of the software (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide access to underlying data as needed (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide a responsively-designed, web-based interface and positive user experience (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide administrative access to efficiently manage business operations (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide both a test and training environment which replicate the live environment (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement data validations to help ensure good data quality (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to upload client level data into HMIS from external sources (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to add customized fields that are easily reportable (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to allow system administrators to impersonate or shadow end users to assist with troubleshooting (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability for end users to run reports as needed, such as through the use of report input controls (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide data analysis and ad hoc reporting tools (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to provide software customization to meet customer needs (10 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement a solution that integrates its HMIS software with DHS' existing homeless coordinated entry software, or the HMIS vendor has a homeless coordinated entry module that can be used satisfactorily to meet Allegheny County business needs (10 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement a solution with the ability to support data integration with the Allegheny County Data Warehouse and other relevant applications, such as DHS' MPER contract administration software. (5 points)

- Presentation demonstrates Proposer’s ability to integrate easily with data visualization software, such as Tableau. (5 points)
  - Presentation demonstrates Proposer has a clear, effective and efficient approach to legacy data migration (5 points)
  - Proposer’s answers to Evaluation Committee’s questions (5 points)
  - Proposer’s presentation is thoughtful and professional (5 points)
- e. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
  - f. 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).
  - g. All Proposers’ financial audits or other documentation will be reviewed by DHS fiscal analysts to ensure Proposers’ eligibility to enter into a contract with Allegheny County.
  - h. 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.**
  - 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@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.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 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations), 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 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 your organization 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 your organization will request 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](#)
- 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](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).

## 6.4 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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-), 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.