



# Request for Proposals

## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Individuals

**RFP Posting:** April 28, 2016

**Deadline for Questions:** May 19, 2016

**Submission Deadline:** May 26, 2016

**Estimated Award Decision/Notification:** Summer 2016

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

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# Definitions

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

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. Chronically Homeless: An individual with a disability who has been continuously homeless for one year or more or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness, totaling a minimum of 12 months, in the last three years.
4. Continuum of Care (CoC): A geographically-based group of representatives that carries out the planning responsibilities of the HUD Continuum of Care Program. 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).
5. CoC Regulations: HUD's rules and regulations under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act), enacted into law on May 20, 2009. 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 described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement.
7. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services.
8. ESG: Emergency Solutions Grant.
9. HAB: [Allegheny County] Homeless Advisory Board. The public/private partnership formed to assist Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills in reviewing public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the well-being of homeless persons and families.
10. HEARTH Act: Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009, enacted into law on May 20, 2009.
11. HMIS: Homeless Management Information System.
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. PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing. Long-term housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with disabilities.
15. Participant: An adult who is experiencing chronic homelessness, who is without children and who is diagnosed with a disability (e.g., behavioral health issues, substance abuse disorders).
16. Proposal: The response submitted to this RFP.

17. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP.
18. Response Form: The Word document where Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP. A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, is the Proposal.
19. RFP: Request for Proposals.
20. Safe Haven: A form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who come primarily from the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services.
21. Successful Proposer: Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services.
22. Supportive Services: Services designed to prepare Participants to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence.

## **The Basics**

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

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), Allegheny County is soliciting Proposals from qualified Proposers to provide a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-funded Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program (henceforth referred to as the Program). Specifically, the Program will deliver housing and supportive services to adults experiencing chronic homelessness who have a documented disability in a facility-based program in Allegheny County. DHS intends to enter into one or more Agreements with one or more Successful Proposers to provide the Contract Services with HUD provided funding not to exceed \$1,052,752.

### ***What we don't want***

DHS does not want this Program to be based on the Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing or Safe Haven Housing models.

DHS is not interested in serving households with children in this Program.

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

DHS is seeking Proposers with the capacity to provide PSH to adults who are chronically homeless as defined by HUD.

The Program should be based on the Housing First model, as defined previously.

### ***Who we are***

DHS, on behalf of Allegheny County, is the issuing office for this RFP as the designated lead agency for the HAB.

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>

DHS, through its Office of Community Services' Bureau of Homeless Services, provides a safety net of resources to help those in critical need of shelter, with the goal of eventual independence and self-sufficiency.

# Section 1: Key Information

## 1.1 General Information

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

## 1.2 Timeline

- a. Proposals must be submitted by May 26, 2016.
- b. Deadline for Proposers to Submit Questions: May 19, 2016
- c. Proposers will be notified of their selection status by summer 2016.

## 1.3 How to Contact DHS

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

## 1.4 Submitting Your Proposal

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

- The requirements (see *Section 3: Our Requirements*)
  - The evaluation process (see *Section 4: The Evaluation Process*)
- f. Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts that may be specified in the Response Form.
  - g. Proposals must be submitted electronically to [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us) no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2016 to be considered for review.**
  - h. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will not be considered.
  - i. You will receive an email when your Proposal is received.
    - If you do not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting your Proposal, please contact us at [DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us)

## 1.5 Other Information

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

## Section 2: Background

DHS administers a \$16 million HUD grant, \$9.4 million of which is dedicated to a PSH program across Allegheny County. The PSH program provides long-term housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with disabilities. This type of supportive housing enables special needs populations to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting.

DHS service providers who administer a HUD-funded PSH Program are required to comply with all rules and regulations of: 1) the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act), HUD's Homeless Emergency Assistance, Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program (CoC) Rules and Regulations ("CoC Regulations"), found at 24 CFR 578 and 2) the Fair Housing Act. Proposers responding to this RFP will be subject to and should review and familiarize themselves with these federal laws, rules and regulations.

For more information about the HEARTH Act, please see:

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

For more information about CoC Regulations, please see:

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

For more information about the Fair Housing Act, please see:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/FHLaws/yourrights](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/FHLaws/yourrights)

## Section 3: Our Requirements

### 3.1 What we are buying and why

Since the HEARTH Act repealed the “Safe Havens for Homeless Individuals Demonstration Program,” HUD no longer funds new Safe Haven projects under the CoC Program. Although current Safe Haven programs have been grandfathered in under the new federal regulations, the HAB is reallocating Allegheny County’s last three Safe Haven programs to PSH in order to better address the needs of homeless individuals. DHS is soliciting Proposals from qualified Proposers to manage the PSH Program for chronically homeless individuals with a documented disability. DHS will provide a total of \$1,052,752 for at least 40 facility-based housing units with supportive services in Allegheny County. DHS expects there will be multiple awards and Proposers may offer a program for a portion of those beds and funding.

#### A. Target Population

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for supporting adults who are experiencing chronic homelessness, who are without children and who are diagnosed with a disability (e.g., behavioral health issues, substance abuse disorders). Participants in the Program must meet HUD disability requirements and be able to demonstrate the ability to live safely in an apartment. The Program must provide both housing and supportive services, as described under *Section 3.1, B: Service Description*, to Participants.

Participants in the Program must be served without regard to previous criminal history, clean time, employment, credit worthiness or other barriers. The Program should follow a Housing First model. For more information about the Housing First model, please see the federal strategic plan to end homelessness (Open Doors):

[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/USICH\\_OpeningDoors\\_Amendment2015\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf)

#### B. Service Description

##### ***Housing***

Successful Proposer(s) will be expected to offer facility-based housing units in Allegheny County dedicated to chronically homeless individuals.

##### ***Supportive Services***

In addition to appropriate housing, the Successful Proposer will be expected to 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. Services may be provided by the Successful Proposer directly or by another agency under contract with the Successful Proposer. Supportive services include the following:

- Assessment of service needs
- Assistance with moving costs



- Case management
- Education services
- Employment assistance and job training
- Food assistance
- Housing search and counseling services
- Legal services
- 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 Program will be made through DHS's Coordinated Intake Unit. Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for accepting referrals and quickly securing the Participant's bed. All referrals must be accepted unless the participant does not meet HUD disability requirements and/or does not demonstrate the ability to live safely in an apartment.

### **D. Performance Outcomes**

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for tracking outcomes and meeting the following HUD performance standards for the Program within one year:

1. 85% of Participants will maintain permanent housing or exit to other permanent housing.
2. 78% of Participants will maintain or increase their income.
3. 75% of Participants will maintain or increase non-cash benefits (e.g., Food Stamps).

Beyond HUD's performance outcomes, DHS expects that Successful Proposer(s) will establish additional goals for the Program (e.g., 50% of Participants will secure at least part-time employment).

### **E. HMIS**

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for participating in the Allegheny County Coordinated Intake process and for entering all data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

### **F. Budget**

DHS will provide a total of \$1,052,752 per year from its HUD grant to fund housing and supportive services for the Program. DHS expects there will be more than one Successful Proposer and that the \$1,052,752 will be divided among them according to Program size and needs.

Successful Proposer(s) will also be responsible for leveraging 200% of the total grant amount set forth in the Agreement between the County and the Successful Proposer to support the Program. Leverage is all cash and in-kind resources (excluding match) which supplement the HUD grant to support the Successful

Proposer's activities funded by the County as part of the PSH Program. Leverage (other than match, as described in the next paragraph) may support the Program's ineligible activities (e.g., staff training).

A 25% match from the Proposer 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 7% of HUD funds may be used for administration (e.g., staffing, computers, office supplies). Matching funds, cash and in-kind resources may be used for additional administrative costs.

### **3.2 What we require**

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](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations). The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 100 points, as outlined in the following sections.

#### Organizational Experience (25 points total)

- Solid experience providing housing and supportive services with at least 85 percent utilization rate (5 points)
- A thoughtful strategy to effectively use funds for performing the scope of services within funding and time limitations (5 points)
- A positive track record in leveraging federal, state, local and private sector funds (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 HUD grants (5 points)

#### Target Population and Approach (20 points total)

- A strong plan for the Program (5 points)
- An appropriate schedule for the proposed activities, management plan and method for assuring effective and timely completion of all work (5 points)
- A strong staffing plan including staff qualifications, recruitment, training and performance management (5 points)
- A well-defined strategy to serve the Target Population (5 points)

#### Housing Services (10 points total)

- An appropriate housing facility that supports Program goals (5 points)
- Clear understanding of the Housing First model (5 points)

#### Supportive Services (10 points total)

- A strong plan for coordinating with outside partners (5 points)
- A comprehensive plan to provide a variety of supportive services appropriate for the Target Population with appropriate frequency (5 points)

#### Performance Outcomes (10 points total)

- A solid strategy for tracking and achieving HUD performance standards (5 points)
- Appropriate additional performance measures with outcomes that can be tracked and achieved (5 points)

Referral and Outreach (5 points total)

- Strong ability to manage referrals and a solid plan for outreach to chronically homeless individuals (5 points)

HMIS (5 points total)

- Capability with HMIS and a solid strategy for managing data with HMIS (5 points)

Financial Management and Budget (15 points total)

- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits or other supporting financial documentation (5 points)
- Fiscal and management capacity to manage program funds in a fiscally responsible manner (5 points)
- A budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing PSH (5 points)

## Section 4: The Evaluation Process

### 4.1 Evaluation Model

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee created by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based on the Program description in *Section 3.1: What we are buying and why* and on the evaluation criteria in *Section 3.2: What we require* using the scale listed in *Section 4.2, c*.

### 4.2 Evaluation Process

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- An evaluation committee will be formed by the DHS and will consist of some or all of the following:
  - DHS data analysts and content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
  - DHS administration
  - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- Each member of the evaluation committee will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest agreement.
- All committee members individually review and score each Proposal. Evaluators will award points to a Proposer's Response Form responses according to their expertise and best judgment of how each response meets the evaluation criteria using the following scale:
  - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
  - 1 – Poor

- 2 – Below expectations
- 3 – Meets expectations
- 4 – Exceeds expectations
- 5 – Outstanding

- d. If necessary, a response may have a weighted score if it is especially important to the RFP's success. Each bullet in *Section 3.2: What we require* will be scored using the five-point scale shown in *Section 4.2, c*. If a bullet is worth more than five points, then it is weighted by the point's multiple of five. For example, if a bullet is ten points, then it is weighted by two and all evaluator scores will be multiplied by 2, (e.g.,  $2 \times 2 = 4$ ).
- e. The evaluation committee members then will meet collectively to compile and discuss the individual scores and evaluation of each committee member.
- f. The County shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals receiving the highest or most satisfactory evaluations for more extensive review using the same criteria outlined above. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make modifications to their Proposal or budget or to make a formal oral presentation to the evaluation committee.
- g. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- h. The committee will submit their recommendation for award of an Agreement to the Director of DHS for his approval, who in turn will submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s). The County is under no obligation to award a contract as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.
- 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 a contract who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at [DHSProposals@allegchenycounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@allegchenycounty.us).

### **4.3 Other Requirements**

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

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

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

## **Section 5: Contract Information**

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

### **5.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Requirements**

Allegheny County has MWDBE goals of 13% participation for Minority Business Enterprises and 2% participation for Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, and expects that Proposers will make a good faith effort in assisting the County in meeting these goals.

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

## 5.2 HIPAA Compliance

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

## 5.3 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at [www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations](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).

## 5.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

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