



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Request for Proposals

Out-of-School Time Programs

RFP Posting:

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Office Hours:

11 a.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Deadline for Questions:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

April 2022

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

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Acronyms and Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following capitalized words are defined as follows for purposes of this RFP:

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST): A partnership of funders, intermediaries and providers dedicated to building a quality OST system that will contribute to the healthy successful development of young people as they progress through their school years, graduate from high school, and enter adulthood
4. Contract Services: The specific services that 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. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
7. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
8. Out-of-School Time (OST): Programs offering a safe place for children to go after their school day ends (and during the summer as well) and generally offers academic assistance, supplemented with enrichment activities
9. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
10. RFP: Request for Proposals
11. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

Other terms shall have the meaning or definition as stated in the RFP.

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

The Department of Human Services (DHS), on behalf of Allegheny County, is soliciting Proposals for [Out-of-School Time \(OST\) programs](#) (henceforth referred to as OST Programming, OST Program, Programming or Program). OST programs offer a safe place for children to go after their school day ends (and during the summer as well) and generally offer academic assistance, supplemented with enrichment activities. DHS currently invests over \$11 million in OST programs, funding 27 providers who operate in communities across the County. In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, DHS intends to: expand its investment in OST Programming up to \$13 million; reset expectations for providers; align community need with OST Program placement; and create consistency in payment and contracting.

Award Details

DHS intends to award a contract to multiple Successful Proposers for a one-year term with the possibility of renewal based on the Successful Proposers' performance. The combined funding for all Successful Proposers will not exceed \$13 million per year and will be divided among the Successful Proposers according to OST Programming size and needs. There is no limit to the total yearly budget that Proposers may propose; however, all costs must be justified and explained in Proposals. DHS will consider all proposed costs for reasonableness and will negotiate final budgets with Successful Proposers.

Who can submit a Proposal

Anyone, including but not limited to non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses and individuals, is eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Proposers do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County to apply, but they must meet all of Allegheny County's contractual requirements (see Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers) and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capabilities to provide the Contracted Services.

Current OST Program providers must submit a Proposal in response to this RFP if they are interested in continuing to provide OST Program services through DHS. Organizations that do not currently provide OST Program services through DHS are encouraged to submit a Proposal.

Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more organizations partner together submit to one Proposal, are permitted. See Section 4.2.c for details.

Related RFPs

Allegheny County is releasing three RFPs related to OST Programming at the same time:

1. RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs: This RFP is seeking traditional OST Programs that offer a safe place for children to go after their school day ends (and during the summer) and that typically offer academic assistance, supplemented with enrichment activities. The contract award for the DHS OST RFP has the possibility to be renewed and sustained, based on the Successor Proposers' performance.
2. RFP for Out-of-School Time Capacity Building: This RFP is seeking to fund creative proposals for OST capacity-building supports, including, but not limited to: start-up and operating costs to build OST slots in a community that lacks them; planning funding to support elementary and/or middle schools working in partnership with community partners to increase the number of OST opportunities in their community; and/or funding for facilities upgrades or expansions. Although DCI is the issuing department, DHS is handling the RFP process. Funding for any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP will be available to Successful Proposers only for up to two years, based on the Successor Proposers' performance and availability of funding.
3. RFP for Teen Programming: This RFP is seeking creative programming that occurs outside of traditional school hours for school-aged teens, ages 13 through 19, living in high-need communities. Traditional OST Programs are not within the scope of this RFP. The Teen Programming contract award has the possibility to be renewed and sustained, based on the Successor Proposers' performance.

DCI encourages organizations to review the related RFPs to understand how they connect, and to consider applying for more than one where they have strong interest and capacity. All information regarding all RFPs (including the DCI RFP) will be posted on DHS's solicitations website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

Timeline

Office Hours (see section 4.1 for details)	Tuesday, February 8 at 11 a.m. Eastern
Deadline for Questions	Wednesday, February 23 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Deadline for Proposals	Wednesday, March 2 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Estimated Award Decision/Notification	April 2022

Who we are

DHS is issuing this RFP on behalf of Allegheny County.

DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, developmental supports, homelessness and community services.

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

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

OST Programs engage youth in ways unique from schools, home or other activities with peers. Offered after school and during the summer, OST programs provide school-aged children and youth with access to a safe place that is supervised by caring adults. OST programs also provide enriching activities designed to help youth explore their interests and develop skills. DHS funds a network of 27 providers and invests over \$11 million in OST Programs. DHS makes this level of investment because we understand that OST programs are critical in providing youth and families with:

- **A safe space to spend time:** OST programs are places where youth feel safe (physically and emotionally), comfortable and free to be themselves. Because school hours do not align with typical workday schedules, without OST youth may be unsupervised after school while their parents or caregivers are at work. When left unsupervised, youth can engage in risky behaviors and/or become victims or perpetrators of violence. Youth and the community both benefit when they have a safe place to spend time outside of school.
- **Access to enriching activities and nutrition:** A youth's ability to access enriching activities (e.g., arts, sports, music) depends on their family's disposable income. The highest-income families spend almost seven times more on enrichment activities for their children than low-income families. For example, 59 percent of school-aged youth from low-income families participate in sports, compared with 84 percent of those from families with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more. Similar gaps exist for private lessons and participation in specialized clubs.¹ Enrichment activities help develop and define youth's interests and skills. OST programs can offer experiences that youth from families who earn a low income are likely not getting elsewhere. These programs allow youth to gain valuable experiences and can help to close the opportunity gap between low-income children and their higher-income peers. Further, OST programs provide them with nutrition – a healthy snack after school and snacks and lunch during the summer and at other times when families can't depend on school breakfast and lunch.
- **A chance to build positive relationships:** Successful Proposers must staff OST Programs with caring, warm adults. Ideally, staff should be members of the community that the OST Program serves, or, at minimum, should have the ability to empathize with and understand the experiences of the families who live in the communities they serve. DHS hopes that youth who attend OST Programs will view program staff as trusted adults and look to the staff as models of strong leadership and communication skills. Staff must work to build connections with the youth and foster positive relationships between them and their peers and communities.

¹ [The Value of Out-of-School Time Programs \(rand.org\)](http://rand.org)

Given the critical nature of OST Programs in promoting safety and opportunity for children in high-need communities, DHS is issuing this RFP to reset expectations for providers (more on this in Section 2). Over the past several years (and especially throughout the pandemic), we have learned valuable lessons about strengthening partnerships between OSTs and both schools and communities. We have also experienced challenges that have forced us to deliver OST in non-traditional ways. With those lessons in mind, this RFP is intended to restructure and build an OST network with clear expectations and measures of effectiveness, especially in the areas of quality, equity and inclusivity.

- **Quality:** Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST) describes OST quality as programs that “inspire and promote learning and positive youth development by providing opportunities for autonomy and leadership, caring relationships, connections to family, community and school, safe environments, and engaging activities.”² DHS is interested in investing in OST Programs that embrace this standard of quality and intends to measure quality via these metrics through bi-annual parent/child surveys and regularly scheduled contract monitor observations.
- **Equity:** DHS is interested in advancing equity in OST Programming by funding programs that serve underserved populations, especially those marginalized due to race. Through this RFP, DHS intends to align community need with OST Program placement. We are aware that we are not currently funding OST programs in every community with high need. A 2017 RAND study suggests that parents of 19.4 million children not currently in an OST program would enroll their kids if one was made available to them.³ DHS wants to think more strategically about the number of OST Programs we procure through our OST contracts and give Proposers that do not currently receive funding from DHS a chance to apply. We are also interested in funding Programming in communities that do not have, but could benefit from, a quality OST program (see Figure 1). Successful Proposers must take a creative, culturally competent approach to supporting caretakers and children. We intend to hold ourselves accountable to advancing equity by taking a critical look at our portfolio of programming each year, analyzing our data, sharing information about who received OST Programming and which communities had access to OST Programs, and highlighting the overlay with community need each year.
- **Inclusivity:** Successful Proposers must share DHS’s commitment to serving all youth, regardless of their circumstances or needs. Successful Proposers must have an open-door policy and accept all interested children and families into their programming. If a child or family has a need that requires specialized support outside of the scope of the Successful Proposer’s skillset or training, we expect that the Successful Proposer will work together with DHS to connect families to the right set of supports. Populations of interest include children with language barriers, special needs and/or transportation challenges.

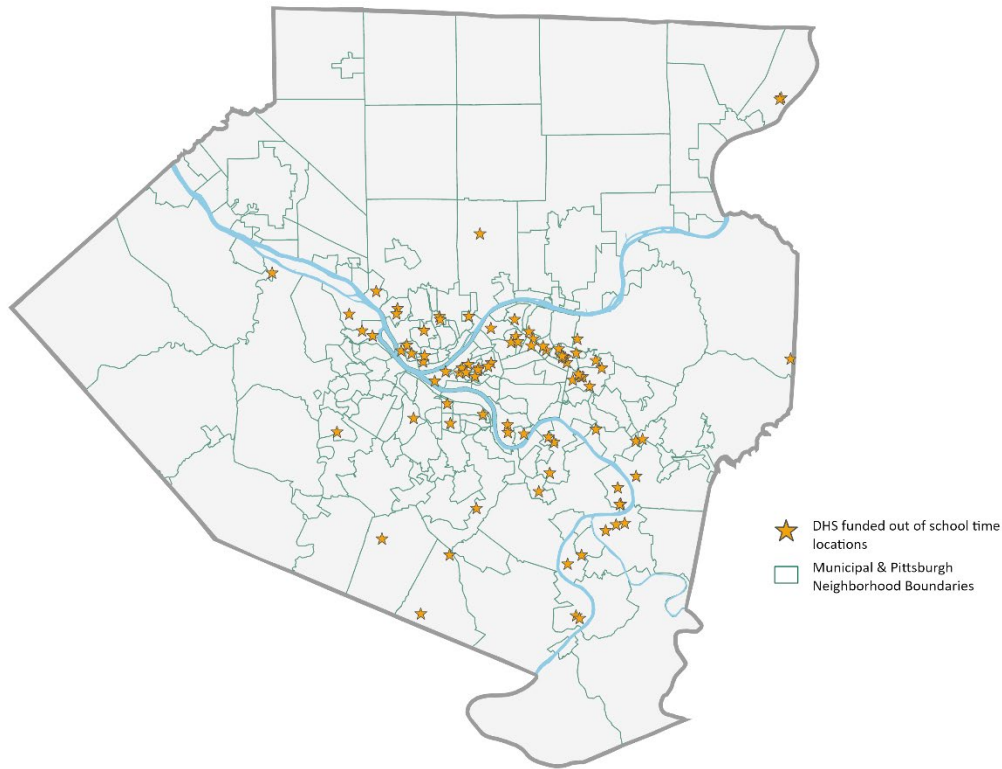
Another key objective of this RFP is to create consistency in payment and contracting. With this RFP, DHS wants to improve the way that we pay for OST Program services by changing from a

² [Statement of Quality \(afterschoolpgh.org\)](https://www.afterschoolpgh.org/)

³ [The Value of Out-of-School Time Programs \(rand.org\)](https://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/20170701/)

fee-for-service model to purchasing slots that are funded for the year. DHS will monitor attendance throughout the year and adjust contracts on an annual basis to ensure that funding aligns with community need. This model allows OST programs to use funding more effectively and provides flexibility to pay for things that a provider could not bill for under a fee-for-service model and gives DHS a chance to better match supply with demand for services.

Figure 1. Map of OST Programs in Allegheny County



Section 2: What We Are Looking For

Currently, OST Programming in Allegheny County is offered in group settings after school and during the summer. OST Programs include those that are multipurpose (offering a mix of academic support and opportunities for play), academically oriented, or related to a specific interest such as learning a craft or playing a sport. Over the past three years, an average of approximately 4,900 children in Allegheny County participated in OST Programming each year (3,800 during the school year and 2,500 in the summer). Most OST Programs serve children ages five through 14; the average age of OST Program participants was 11 years old.

Location, Logistics and Hours

DHS intends to invest in OST Programming in communities with high rates of risk factors including poverty, lack of educational attainment, unemployment, single parenthood and gun violence. For more information on how we determined community need, read DHS's report [here](#).

In addition to prioritizing high-need communities, DHS is seeking to fill gaps and is interested in Proposals to serve youth in communities with insufficient OST Programming.

Within the community itself, Successful Proposers must locate OST Programs in locations that are convenient and easily accessible. The location should feel safe to both children and parents, be clean and comfortable, and have clear signage. OST Programs must operate directly after the close of school, to ensure continuity of care for participants. During the school year, Successful Proposers must offer a minimum of two hours of after-school Programming every Monday through Friday. During the summer, OST Programming must operate Monday through Friday for a minimum of eight hours each day. Successful Proposers should operate with consistent hours and clearly state those hours to children, caregivers, schools and the community.

Successful Proposers must provide a healthy snack during the school year and breakfast, lunch and a snack during the summer. Further, Successful Proposers must work with families and DHS to address transportation challenges and may choose to provide transportation when necessary.

Presence in the Community

Successful Proposers must build strong relationships with elementary and middle schools in the communities they serve by increasing their awareness of the Program and encouraging them to promote the Program to parents as a resource. Schools and OST Programs must communicate with one another frequently and work in partnership to make sure that children transition smoothly from school to the OST Program.

Successful Proposers must market their programs strategically and clearly, so that community members know about the Program, including how to enroll, what the program offers and hours of operation.

Successful Proposers must do their own recruitment, with the expectation that they serve all eligible youth, especially those with families that need childcare, those referred from a school social worker/counselor or community-based programs, those active in the child welfare system and/or the homelessness system, those with transportation challenges, and those with language barriers or special needs.

Experience of Youth and Parents

Successful Proposers must operate well-attended Programs, responsive to the needs of the communities that they serve. Parents/caregivers should feel confident that their children are safe and well cared for during their time spent at an OST Program. Further, parents/caregivers should be able to expect that OST Programs will contact them when issues arise or schedules change. Successful Proposers must share contact information with parents when they enroll, so that parents know how to reach their child during their time at an OST Program. DHS will measure parent experience through bi-annual surveys.

Successful Proposers must offer engaging Programming that children *want* to attend and provide a setting in which they feel safe, interact with respectful and kind adults, and engage in enriching and interesting activities. DHS will measure children's satisfaction with OST Programming through bi-annual survey. We will share the results of the surveys with Successful Proposers and expect them to use the results to improve the quality of their Programming.

Programmatic Content

Successful Proposers must operate Programming that is responsive to the unique needs and interests of the communities that they serve. Because this varies across communities, DHS is not prescribing a one-size-fits-all model to OST Programming. Proposers who propose OST Programming in multiple communities or sites must tailor the Programming at each site to the community being served. Successful Proposers must intentionally design age-appropriate activities that promote learning and skill development. OST Program activities should be varied and can include academic, recreational and/or cultural elements, but all must be youth-centered and responsive to their interests. DHS expects that Successful Proposers will offer activities that promote community-specific cultural understanding.

Ideally, Successful Proposers will involve families in the community in the development, planning and design of Programming.

Successful Proposers must work to continuously improve Programming and adjust to make sure that it is most responsive to ever-changing community need and in line with expected standards of quality.

Management

Successful Proposers must have strong management skills. They must have written policies and procedures for Programming that staff, parents and youth agree to follow. A management-level staff person always must be on site. Prior to working with children, all staff must have required clearances on file. Staff must be well-trained, consistent and representative of the communities they serve. Most importantly, staff must be kind, respectful and interested in the wellbeing of youth and their families.

Successful Proposers must have a robust staffing plan to ensure that they deliver reliable, consistent staffing and operations, including a back-up plan to ensure that staff are always available to operate the Program every school day and at the hours set during the summer.

Critical to retaining and recruiting staff is providing an attractive wage. DHS supports providing a living wage for staff members.

Funding

Successful Proposers **should not rely on DHS as a sole funder** but instead secure funding from multiple sources. We expect that Successful Proposers will depend on public support (federal, state and local grants) as well as some private support from tuition and donations. Successful Proposers must demonstrate sustainable funding and sound fiscal management.

DHS is changing the way we currently fund OST Programs. Rather than using a traditional fee-for-service model, which reimburses providers based on daily attendance, DHS will purchase a set number of slots at OST Programs at a rate of \$27 per day per child during the school year and \$40 per day per child during the summer. Successful Proposers will receive a program-funded amount based on the number of slots allocated to them which they will draw down by submitting regular invoices. DHS will monitor attendance throughout the year. If attendance is low, DHS

will right-size and purchase fewer seats the following year. If attendance is high, DHS reserves the right to right-size and purchase more seats the following year.

Proposers should base their budgets on the number of youth that they expect to serve daily during the school year and during the summer. DHS expects that Successful Proposers will provide OST Programming every day that school is open (180 days) and a minimum of 35 days or (seven weeks) during the summer. If a Proposer has a compelling reason why it cannot remain open 180 days, the Proposer should detail that in their Proposal and calculate their budget accordingly. See the example below:

Children served	Rate set by DHS	Days served	Funding request
20	\$27 (after school)	180	\$97,200
35	\$40 (summer)	40	\$56,000
		Total:	\$153,200

Most Successful Proposers should have a mixed model of private pay, subsidized and free OST Programming. The DHS funding is designated for free Programming (nominal one-time fees are allowed, but Successful Proposers may never turn away a family for their inability to pay). The funding will be for Fiscal Year 22/23, beginning July 1, 2022.

Monitoring and Reporting

Successful Proposers must enter daily attendance data into KIDS (Key Information and Demographics System), DHS’s database for all child welfare case management and operations data tracking. Successful Proposers also must administer bi-annual client experience surveys to parents and youth, welcome DHS contract monitors for scheduled visits, provide monthly reports, and review quarterly data analytic reports with DHS. DHS contract monitors will assess Successful Proposers for compliance with safety regulations, clearances and calendars of activities.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

DHS will evaluate Proposals based upon the evaluation criteria listed below. Proposers must address their qualifications in their Proposal by responding to the requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. The maximum score that a Proposal can receive is 125 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Organizational Experience (15 points possible)

- Organizational experience providing OST Programming or programming that works with youth and families (10 points)

- Organizational experience working in high-need communities (5 points)

Program Design (40 points possible)

- Overall Program design, including:
 - Plan for providing children with a physically and emotionally safe space to spend time, including policies and procedures and a description of the physical location (10 points)
 - Plan for providing opportunities for children to engage in enriching activities and a description of how they align with the Programmatic Content expectations outlined in Section 2, including a week’s schedule of activities (10 points)
 - Plan for providing opportunities for youth to make positive connections with peers, adults and their community, including a code of conduct for staff, staff training expectations, and policies and procedures (10 points)
 - Description of the community(ies) where the proposed OST Programming will be located, including why they were selected and how Programming will be tailored for the selected community(ies) (10 points)

Child and Parent Experience (10 points)

- Description of methods of engagement and an explanation of why youth will want to participate in the proposed Programming (5 points)
- Plan for communicating with parents/caregivers, including approach to ensuring that parents/caregivers feel comfortable with the Program and are confident that their child is safe and well cared for (5 points)

Operations (20 points)

- Plan for marketing the Programming, how it will receive referrals, and how relationships with schools will be built and sustained (5 points)
- Plan for staffing the Programming and strategies to recruit, hire and retain racially diverse staff, staff with relevant lived experience and staff that reflect the population served (5 points)
- Hours and days of operation during the school year and summer (5 points)
- Plan, including food storage methods, for providing healthy snacks and meals during the school year and summer (5 points)

Implementation Challenges (20 points)

- Strategies to engage more children if Program attendance is low (5 points)
- Strategies to help a child experiencing behavioral or mental health issues (5 points)
- Strategies to improve the Program when the results of the bi-annual parent survey indicate that parents are not satisfied with their children’s experiences (5 points)
- Strategies to help a child’s family with a transportation issue (5 points)

Financial Management and Budget (20 points)

- Line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Programming (10 points)
- Budget narrative that explains and justifies all line items in the proposed line-item budget (5 points)
- Description of the funding model (5 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Prepare

a. Office Hours

- There will be “RFP open office hours” at 11 a.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. Anyone interested in the RFP and in submitting a Proposal may drop in at any time to ask questions.
- Attendance at the office hours is not required in order to submit a Proposal. Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the office hours. Final, definitive answers will be posted in writing on the DHS Solicitations webpage.
- Please join the office hours by:
 - Calling (267)368-7515 and using Conference ID 585 128 954#
 - Or following this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Or copying and pasting this link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Y2M5ZWRlZjctY2NiYy00MDllLWE2MjktM2ZlMThhNGU4MjUx%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%224c7924c5-3d5a-494b-ba54-242fc5f6db86%22%7d

4.2 Submit a Proposal

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What We Are Looking For)
 - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal)
- b. Proposers must use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available at our Active Solicitations website with the RFP announcement at www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- c. Collaborative Proposals

- a. Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner to apply together, are permitted. Collaborative Proposals can include:
 - i. Lead Agency: The County can enter a contract with only one partner of a collaborative Proposal. Therefore, a collaborative Proposal must identify one entity as the Lead Agency that will be the contracting party with the County. The Lead Agency should be the Proposer.
 - ii. Partners: Partners must be committed to a role in carrying out the Contract Services and will be compensated for that role. Collaborative Proposals must attach a signed letter of commitment from each Partner that details and agrees to their role in the Contract Services.
- b. Entities may participate in more than one Collaborative Proposal.
- d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - Partner commitment letters
 - Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 7.1 and 7.2)
 - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
 - Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
 - Internal Revenue Service Form W-9
- e. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed either above or in the Response Form.
- f. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer must submit other financial documentation that attest to the Proposer's financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting with Allegheny County.
- g. Proposers must 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.
- h. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, March 2, 2022 to be considered for review.**
- i. All Proposals must be submitted before the deadline! If a Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee (as described in Section 5 below) for review and scoring.
- j. Proposers will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their Proposal. If a Proposer does not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting their Proposal, please contact: DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

4.3 How to Contact DHS about this RFP

- a. All inquiries and questions must be submitted via email to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us by 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, February 23, 2022.

- 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 check this website regularly for answers to questions, additional information or changes to the RFP or the RFP process.

4.4 Other Information

- a. **The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to accept any Proposal or enter into an Agreement with any Proposers. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and not to enter into an Agreement for the Contracted Services.**
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all the Terms and Conditions specified in Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers.
- c. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of a Proposal.
- d. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- e. Successful Proposal(s) will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposer(s).

4.5 Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know Law

Proposers should be aware that all documents and materials submitted in response to this RFP may be subject to requests for access to public records made pursuant to Pennsylvania’s Right-To-Know Law (RTKL). Under the RTKL, records in the possession of a public agency like the County are presumed to be public records and the County may have to make documents and materials submitted by the Proposer available to a requestor after an award of an Agreement is made.

If the Proposer includes any information within its Proposal that the Proposer asserts is either a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information,” as those terms are defined under the RTKL, the Proposer must include with its Proposal a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer identifying those portions or parts of its Proposal that the Proposer believes constitute a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information” and provide contact information to enable DHS to contact the Proposer in the event that the County receives a Right-To-Know request for the Proposal. The Proposer shall have five (5) business days from date of receipt of any notification from the County to provide a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer explaining why the Proposal or any portion thereof is exempt from disclosure as a trade secret, confidential proprietary information or other legal reason. The County shall consider this statement in either granting or denying a request for public access to the Proposal or any portion thereof. The County will notify the Proposer of its decision whether to grant or deny the request either in whole or in part.

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

DHS will convene an Evaluation Committee to evaluate Proposals. The Evaluation Committee will assign scores to each Proposal by awarding points based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria, by using the point scale listed in Section 5.1 b.

5.1 Evaluation of Proposals

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. DHS will form an Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee, which will be comprised of evaluators with expertise in the subject matter of this RFP, may include: community members with lived experience, external subject matter experts or provider representative(s), representative(s) from key partners or funders and DHS internal staff.
- b. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points for each response on a Proposer's Response Form utilizing their personal expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in Section 3 using the following scale:
 - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Below expectations
 - 3 – Meets expectations
 - 4 – Exceeds expectations
 - 5 – Outstanding
- c. Each 0-5 score will be multiplied by the appropriate weight for the number of possible points noted after each evaluation criterion in Section 3. For example, for a criterion worth 15 points, the 0-5 score would be multiplied by three. An "Outstanding" response would receive 15 points, while one that "Meets Expectations" would receive nine points.
- d. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the average scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP. The Committee will have the discretion to proceed as follows: (i) to recommend to the Director of DHS that a reduced number of Proposals be shortlisted for more extensive review through a formal oral presentation to the Committee; or (ii) to recommend to the Director of DHS that DHS request authorization for the County to enter into an Agreement(s) with the Successful Proposer(s).
- e. As described in c above, DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have the exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make a formal oral presentation to the Evaluation Committee. Each Committee member will individually score the oral presentation of the shortlisted Proposers using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that a shortlisted Proposer's oral presentation can receive is 15 points:

- Presentation demonstrates Proposer’s ability to implement the Contract Services effectively (5 points)
 - Proposer’s answers to Evaluation Committee’s questions demonstrate Proposer’s ability to implement the Contract Services (5 points)
 - Proposer’s presentation is thoughtful and professional (5 points)
- f. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee to the shortlisted Proposer formal oral presentations and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP.
 - g. The Committee will submit its recommendation for award of an Agreement or Agreements to the Director of DHS for approval. The Director will, in turn, submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement or Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).
 - h. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
 - i. As part of determining a Proposer’s eligibility to enter a contract with Allegheny County, all Proposers’ financial audits or other documentation will be reviewed by DHS fiscal analysts to ensure a Proposer’s financial stability.
 - j. 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.**
 - k. All Proposers will be notified of the County’s final decision of which Proposer(s) will be awarded an Agreement.
 - l. Proposers that are not awarded an Agreement but who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

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

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

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

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must 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.

6.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Requirements

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

- a. All Proposals must include a completed Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form and supporting documents. The Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form should be completed as follows:
 - All Proposers must complete Section 1 – Contact Information and attach their MWDBE Diversity Plan (see Section 4 – Sample Diversity Policy).
 - If the Proposer is able to meet the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement. Proposers also must attach the MWDBE certifications of the firms cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer would like to request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement and Section 3 – MWDBE Participation Waiver Request Form.
- b. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - [Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form](#)
 - MWDBE Resources
 - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
 - [MWDBE Guide for DHS Proposers](#)
- c. For more information about MWDBEs, visit the [Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion website](#).

6.2 Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) Requirement

Allegheny County also has a goal of 5% participation for veteran-owned small businesses (VOSB) in all contracts. The County, therefore, expects that Successful Proposers will make a “good faith effort” in assisting the County in meeting this goal.

- a. A veteran-owned small business is defined by the County as a business having 100 or fewer full-time employees and not less than 51% of which is owned by one or more veterans, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans, and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans. The VOSB vendor **MUST** provide proof of veteran ownership including percentage and name and address of business.
 - For contracts under \$100,000, VOSB vendors shall be exempt from all bonding requirements.
- b. All Proposals must include either of the following:

- If the Proposer can meet the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement is required. You must also attach a copy of the VOSB vendor(s) DD 214 discharge form(s) cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer requests a waiver from participating in the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement and VOSB Waiver Request are required.
- c. VOSB forms can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
- [VOSB Participation Statement](#)
 - [VOSB Waiver Request](#)

6.3 HIPAA Compliance

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

6.4 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications that 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).

6.5 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

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

6.6 Language Diversity Requirements

Successful Proposer(s) must assure resources are secured and/or made available for participants/consumers/clients with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers. Such actions shall include but not be limited to assessing the need for interpreters, evaluating the need for alternate language materials, identifying internal and external resources to meet identified needs, and accessing services contracted by DHS through their assigned contract monitor(s).

6.7 New Provider Requirements

If awarded an Agreement, Successful Proposers who do not have current Allegheny County contracts will be required to complete the DHS New Provider Application.

