



Request for Proposals

Rental Assistance and Connections to Supportive Services for Individuals and Families with a History of Unhealthy Substance Use

RFP Posting: Monday, January 30, 2017

Deadline for Questions: Monday, March 6, 2017

Submission Deadline: 3 p.m. Eastern Time on March 13, 2017

Estimated Award Decision/Notification: June 2017

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
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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

Appendix A: Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Program Standards

Appendix B: Habitability Standards

Appendix C: Consumer Service Termination and Appeal Hearing Process

Appendix D: Sample Program Rules and Regulations

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. BHS: [Department of Human Services] Bureau of Homeless Services
4. COC: [Allegheny County] Continuum of Care
5. Conferencing and Teaming: The DHS standard of practice that engages individuals, families, supports and professionals in assessing strengths and needs and developing a plan for keeping children, youth and adults safe and healthy while continually integrating individual and family actions with professional services
6. Contract Services: The specific services which the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
7. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
8. Harm Reduction: "Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug and alcohol use," (Institute for Research, Education and Training in Addictions)
9. 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.
10. HAB: The Homeless Advisory Board, a public/private partnership formed to assist Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills in reviewing public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the well-being of homeless persons and families
11. HUD: [United States Department of] Housing and Urban Development
12. MAT: Medication Assisted Treatment
13. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
14. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
15. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
16. RFP: Request for Proposals
17. Scattered Site Housing: Affordable, low-density housing units scattered throughout a region rather than concentrated in one location
18. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services (DHS), is soliciting Proposals from one or more qualified Proposers to provide two rental assistance programs for scattered-site housing and connections to supportive services to better serve homeless and unstably housed individuals and families who are affected by unhealthy substance use. First, the Rental Assistance Program (RA Program) will serve individuals and families with members who have a history of unhealthy substance use and who are experiencing homelessness. Second, the Child Welfare Rental Assistance Program (CWRA Program) will serve families that have one or more caregiver(s) with a history of unhealthy substance use, are unstably housed and are involved with the child welfare system in Allegheny County.

Award Details

DHS intends to enter into two or more Agreements with one or more Successful Proposer(s) to provide the Contract Services with funding not to exceed \$945,000 annually: \$730,000 for the RA Program and \$215,000 for the CWRA Program. DHS expects there may be more than one Successful Proposer for the RA Program and that the funding will be divided among Successful Proposers according to Program size and needs. Only one Successful Proposer will be selected to provide the RACW Program. The same Successful Proposer could be selected to provide both Programs.

Who can apply

Non-profit organizations and for-profit organizations or businesses may apply. A Proposer may submit a Proposal for the RA Program and/or the RACW Program.

The RA Program uses funding available through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Penn Free Block Grant (sometimes called "Penn Free Housing") and from DHS's child welfare office. Current providers of Penn Free Housing who wish to continue their Penn Free Housing program must submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. See section 2.8, Budget and Funding, for more information.

What we don't want

We are not interested in a model that creates barriers to entry for Participants into the Programs. Instead, we want Programs based on the Housing First philosophy. The Housing First philosophy adopted by Allegheny County's Homeless Advisory Board¹ prioritizes providing housing to people experiencing homelessness before addressing other challenges so that housing can serve as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. Getting a job, budgeting properly, and tending to unhealthy substance use issues requires people to be able to meet their basic needs for food and a safe place to live. These are goals that are consonant with the recovery-oriented approach of DHS's Bureau of Drug and Alcohol.

¹ The Homeless Advisory Board is a 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.

What's important to us

It is important to us that people in Allegheny County have permanent homes, recover from unhealthy substance use and remain together with their families, so that they may live healthy, happy and productive lives. Providing a safe, stable place to live, with temporary supports, helps individuals and families on their path to housing permanence, sobriety and family reunification.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions is Monday, March 6, 2017.

Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, March 13, 2017.

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

Who we are

DHS, which is issuing this RFP on behalf of Allegheny County, is the largest department of Allegheny County government, providing publicly-funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, intellectual disability, homelessness and community services. 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.

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

The issuance of this RFP and the receipt of any Proposals does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement. The County reserves the right at all times to reject any and all Proposals.

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

While housing is the foundation upon which people build their lives, hundreds of local individuals and families each day are unstably housed or are homeless. Many of these individuals also have a substance use disorder, which may contribute to or be exacerbated by their lack of permanent housing. The overlap between homelessness and substance use is pronounced in Allegheny County. In October 2016, nearly 25% of the people who received services from DHS's Bureau of Homeless Services (BHS) reported a history of unhealthy substance (drug and/or alcohol) use.²

When parents or other caregivers experience homelessness, or live in an unstable environment or one that jeopardizes their recovery,³ it impacts their children as well. Between 2014 and 2015, the percentage of cases in which "substance abuse" was cited by child welfare as a reason for removing children from their homes increased from 20% to 28%.

DHS is seeking to reduce homelessness, enhance recovery, reduce harm, and increase the number of children and families living in permanent, safe housing. This will require providing housing for people in recovery—both individuals and caregivers of families—in a recovery-oriented environment, as well as case management, linkages to recovery supports, and coordination with existing supports (i.e., caseworkers), where appropriate.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

Since 2006, Allegheny County has experienced fatal overdose rates higher than those seen throughout Pennsylvania and many other states in the country. The rash of overdose deaths highlights a significant and local public health crisis and the need for increased use of effective strategies to respond to a growing opioid epidemic. To better serve homeless and unstably housed families and individuals who are affected by unhealthy substance use, DHS is seeking Successful Proposer(s) to provide the RA Program and the CWRA Program. Both Programs will provide rental assistance for up to one year at scattered-site housing units (i.e., independent apartments or homes in the community), case management and linkages to supportive services. A goal is "Harm Reduction," which is a set of strategies and ideas aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with substance use.⁴ The Rental Assistance Program (RA Program) will serve individuals and families with members who have a history of unhealthy substance use and who are experiencing homelessness. The Child Welfare Rental Assistance Program (CWRA Program) will serve families that have one or more caregiver(s) with a history of unhealthy substance use, are unstably housed and are involved with the child welfare system in Allegheny County.

The Successful Proposer(s) should design and operate the RA and CWRA Programs in accordance with the guidelines outlined below and in a manner tailored to the needs and challenges of the target populations. The RA Program must be effectively integrated within the Allegheny County Continuum of

² Pulled from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) on 10/31/16. For the purposes of this RFP, "unhealthy substance use" refers to a substance use disorder that is either self-reported drug and/or alcohol use or a diagnosed disorder.

³ DHS's definition of recovery from a substance use disorder was developed through the collaboration of County stakeholders in the Recovery Advisory Committee. They defined recovery as, "an individualized journey of hope and self-discovery that gives new purpose and meaning to one's life. Individuals find healing and wellbeing through multiple pathways in the context of the chosen communities. This courageous personal choice leads to a richer life experience."

⁴ <http://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

Care's (CoC) overall approach and strategies for addressing homelessness.⁵

The policies and operations of the Successful Proposer(s) should ensure individual rights of privacy, dignity and respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint. All policies and operations should optimize autonomy and independence in making life choices.

2.1 Target Population

For RA Programs

The Successful Proposer(s) of the RA Program will serve individuals and families who:

- Are experiencing literal homelessness (i.e., sleeping on the street or in a place not meant for human habitation); and who
- Have an income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines; and who
- Have a history of unhealthy substance use.

The individuals and families served may be:

- Transitioning out of DHS-funded recovery housing programs (these are short-term/90 days or less) and will be homeless;
- Interested in Harm Reduction but may still be using; or
- Sober for up to two years, but whose homelessness places them at risk of using again.

For the CWRA Program

The Successful Proposer of the CWRA Program will serve families involved in the child welfare system who:

- Have one or more caregiver(s) with a history of unhealthy substance use;
- Are unstably housed or living in an atmosphere that jeopardizes their recovery;
- Have caregivers who have custody of their children but are at risk of losing custody; or
- Have caregivers who are working towards reunifying with their children and who have recovery from substance addiction as a goal.

For Both Programs

Individuals in the target population receiving either Program services will henceforth be referred to as Participants. For both the RA and CWRA Programs, the Successful Proposer(s) must:

- Serve Participants in without regard to clean time,⁶ criminal records, eviction histories,

⁵ For more information about the CoC, see: <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Basic-Needs/Allegheny-County-Continuum-of-Care.aspx>

⁶ Individuals who have been sober for over 2 years are not eligible for the RA Program, however, the Successful Proposer(s) cannot deny someone housing because of a lack of clean time.

employment, credit worthiness, income⁷ or other barriers—key tenets of the Housing First approach. 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

- Serve Participants who have been prescribed Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT),⁸ the use of medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to pursue their journey to recovery. See a Joint Position Statement on MAT for Opioid Use Disorders in Allegheny County: http://www.achd.net/overdoseprevention/010917_Final_MAT_Position_Paper.pdf

2.2 Service Description

DHS will contract with Successful Proposer(s) for the following services:

A. Housing

For Both Programs

The Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for providing rental assistance on a sliding scale for up to one year to Participants living in scattered, independent housing units in Allegheny County communities (also known as scattered-site housing). The Successful Proposer(s) will assess Participants and provide the level of rental assistance that reflects the minimum need of the individual or family to move into permanent, stable housing. When a Participant enters either Program, they must be assessed for level of rent and move-in assistance needed. While up to 100% rental assistance can be provided, the intent is to give Participants what is needed for stability and not more. Participants' required level of assistance must be assessed monthly, while their eligibility for services must be recertified every three months.⁹ Over time, the amount of rental assistance must be reduced as the Participant gains the ability to pay more and prepares for self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

While the lease is in the Participant's name, the Successful Proposer(s) make payment on behalf of the Participant. The Participant provides the agreed upon share of the rent to the Successful Proposer(s), with the amount changing throughout the course of the Programs as the Participant assumes an increasing share of the rent. Upon exit of either Program, the Participant will begin making payments directly to the landlord. When a Participant completes the Programs or terminates their participation, the Participant may continue to reside in the apartment as a long-term resident/lessee but the rental subsidy will be discontinued.

As a tenant, the Participant has full legal rights in the tenant-landlord relationship and must abide by normal standards of behavior and conduct outlined in the lease. The lease signed by the tenant and

⁷ Participants are not required to have income to participate in the Program. If Participants in the RA Program have income, it must be below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.

⁸ <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/mat/mat-overview>

⁹ Programs need to develop a standard assessment process for determining assistance level; [The Road Home Rapid Rehousing Program Stability Conversation Guide](#) and Snohomish County's [Fenn-Jorstad Self Sufficiency Matrix](#) provide examples to guide such assessment.

landlord determines length of stay in the unit. Achieving and sustaining tenancy is a primary goal and focus of both Programs.

Both Programs will follow CoC Rapid Re-Housing Program Standards (see Appendix A). Participants can locate the housing of their choice in the private rental market, with assistance by the Successful Proposer(s) as needed. The Successful Proposer(s) should help Participants consider access to things they need to meet their basic needs (e.g., transportation, groceries) when determining housing. Housing units should be at Fair Market Rent.¹⁰ If a Participant decides to move to another suitable unit, they may apply the rental assistance to the new unit.

The Successful Proposer(s) can cover expenses associated with security deposits, moving costs, rent and utilities. In accordance with the CoC Rapid Re-Housing Program Standards, the Successful Proposer(s) must help Participants plan for a successful exit from the Programs—by maintaining their permanent housing—beginning on day one of admittance to the Programs.

All housing must:

- Pass a housing quality inspection. DHS uses HUD Habitability standards to determine housing quality (see Appendix B). The Successful Proposer(s) is responsible for ensuring that all housing units that Participants live in while in the Programs meet HUD Habitability standards. DHS contract monitors will periodically inspect units to ensure compliance.
- Meet all of the requirements identified in CoC regulations (RA Program) and the U.S. Fair Housing Act¹¹
- Meet Fair Market Rent
- Be within a short distance of public transit

The Successful Proposer(s) must:

- Act as a liaison between the Participant and landlord when appropriate
- Ensure timely and accurate payment to the landlord on behalf of the Participant

B. Case Management and Connections to Services

For Both Programs

The Successful Proposer(s) will engage with the Participants, offer housing search assistance services, provide case management through a case manager, and connect them to supportive services designed to prepare Participants for permanent living arrangements. The Successful Proposer(s) will develop a service plan with and for each Participant that describes how the case manager and Participant will work

¹⁰ https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2017_code/2017summary.odn

¹¹ The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in any aspect of sale, rental, financing, or advertising of dwellings on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex or familial status (the presence of children in the family). The Fair Housing Act also provides that nothing in the Act “limits the applicability of any reasonable local, State, or Federal restrictions regarding the maximum number of occupants permitted to occupy a dwelling.” In most cases, there should be no more than two persons per bedroom. This rule is not steadfast and can change based on the values and preferences of the family.

together in meeting this goal. Risk management and crisis planning should be included in the plan and developed in partnership between the Successful Proposer and Participant.

Along with services to help achieve permanent housing placements and stability, the Successful Proposer(s) will connect Participants to a flexible array of supports and services that align with the Participants' choices and their personal goals for sustained recovery and abstinence from substance use. Research indicates that relapse prevention and management can be an important part of homelessness prevention for Participants. In the event of relapse, the Successful Proposer(s) should connect Participants to a relapse prevention program and recovery supports, which could include: relapse prevention education, transportation to and from treatment and recovery support activities, child care, peer-to-peer mentoring/coaching services, self-help support/discussion groups or education, life skills, spiritual and faith based supports, and intervention services, where appropriate. Successful Proposer(s) also must link Participants to other appropriate treatment services to aid in their recovery. Proposer(s) may not use RA and CWRA Program funding to provide treatment services.

In addition to linking Participants with recovery and treatment-related services, the Successful Proposer(s) must ensure that Participants have access to the services they need to meet their basic needs. For example, if Participants need food, the Successful Proposer will provide assistance with obtaining Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP] benefits. Successful Proposer(s) should be prepared to link Participants to any of the following services:

- Child care
- Education services
- Employment assistance and job training
- Food assistance
- Legal services
- Life skills training
- Mental health services
- Substance use treatment services
- Recovery supports, including peer support (As noted below, the Successful Proposer for the CWRA Program is required to provide peer support groups)
- Physical health services

Participants can accept or refuse referrals to treatment or other services, but Successful Proposer(s) must continue to try flexible engagement strategies to connect Participants to supports. Successful Proposers must consider how to best meet Participants' changing needs by adjusting the type, location, intensity and frequency of services.

If the Program serves families with children, the Successful Proposer should link to an appropriate range of services for all members of the household and form partnerships with existing systems, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and child welfare systems. The Program must also adhere to Title VII of the McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act, including providing a liaison to the school districts and ensuring that school aged children are enrolled in school.

For RA Programs

The Successful Proposer(s) providing the RA Program will provide case management as part of the RA Program, and for up to six months after completion, to support Participants in remaining in stable housing.

For the CWRA Program

For the CWRA Program, the Successful Proposer will provide case management, as well as continue to meet with families for one to three hours per week for a minimum of 90 days after completion of the Program to support Participants in remaining in stable housing. In addition, the Successful Proposer will be expected to:

- Participate in Conferencing and Teaming meetings¹²
- Provide peer support groups for parents¹³

C. Supportive, Recovery-oriented Environment

For Both Programs

Both Programs will create recovery-oriented environments that include community activities. Participants may choose (but are not required) to actively participate in these activities. The Successful Proposer(s) will foster a sense of supportive community among Participants and provide opportunities for Participants to come together for peer support and to develop a social network that supports ongoing sobriety. Those who have been in the Program the longest and who have more time in recovery should especially be encouraged to provide support to new Participants. This type of “giving back” is consistent with a principle of recovery.

For the CWRA Program

The Successful Proposer for the CWRA Program is encouraged to provide onsite and offsite group activities, including field trips and wellness activities (e.g., cooking classes, yoga).

2.3 Program Rules

A. Eviction

Relapse may not be a cause for eviction from housing. Landlords can evict Participants for any tenant-related infractions, but the Successful Proposer(s) should work to avoid this and help to mediate issues between the Participant and landlord if they arise. If a Participant is evicted or the landlord asks a Participant to leave, then the Successful Proposer(s) will work with the Participant to find a new unit as quickly as possible.

B. Program Termination

¹² For more information about Conferencing and Teaming see: <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Children-Families/Conferencing-and-Teaming-in-CYF.aspx>

¹³ DHS is interested in caregiver peer support models that have evidence of effectiveness. For some examples, see: <https://uiowa.edu/nrcihs/parent-peer-support-programs>

Relapse may not be a cause for termination from the Programs. In cases of relapse in which Participants are not able to live in their apartment, Successful Proposer(s) may hold the unit of the Participant for up to 90 days so that the Participant can receive other treatment services and retain their housing. Drug testing may be used as a strategy to keep Participants accountable to themselves and their recovery, but the Successful Proposer(s) may not terminate a Participant from the Programs for the reason of screening positive for drugs or alcohol.

Successful Proposer(s) for both Programs will establish Program Termination Procedures that follow the BHS Consumer Service Termination and Appeal Hearing Process (see Appendix C) for reasons outlined in Appendix C. Before terminating a Participant from a Program, the Successful Proposer(s) are required to contact DHS. DHS will review the case and assist in mediating the issue.¹⁴ Participants may be re-referred to both Programs.

C. Rules and Regulations

Successful Proposer(s) are required to develop rules and regulations for their Programs that Participants must sign and date at their time of entry into the Program. (A copy of proposed rules and regulations is requested from the Proposer as part of the RFP Response Form. See Appendix D for a sample document.) As part of these rules, note that Participants may apply to reenter the Program. Participants who determine that they are no longer interested in participating in a Program, or who are terminated from a Program, must be offered assistance in accessing other housing and services options, including options operated with Harm Reduction principles.

2.4 Staffing

DHS encourages Proposer(s) to include staff who are in recovery themselves. Not only does this type of staffing advance the goals of the Programs through peer support, but it provides Participants, in some cases, with an opportunity to become employed in a mission-oriented work environment. This creates an environment that benefits both the Successful Proposer(s) and the individual Participants.

2.5 Referrals

For RA Programs

Referrals to the RA Program will be made through DHS's Coordinated Entry Unit, which is called the Allegheny Link (Link).¹⁵ Individuals and families who are homeless and are seeking housing will contact the Link. Link staff will assess their level of need and refer them to the Successful Proposer(s) if they have a self-reported history of substance use. When a Successful Proposer has a vacancy, it will reach out to the referred individual or family who can then determine if the Successful Proposer's Program will best support their personal path towards housing independence and recovery. Once an eligible individual or family accepts housing from the Successful Proposer(s), they become a Participant in the

¹⁴ Per state regulations, clients served with Penn Free funding (i.e., Participants in the RA Program) have the right to appeal termination decisions through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Participants in the RACW Program may convene a Conferencing and Teaming meeting to discuss with DHS staff the decision to terminate from the Conferencing and Teaming Program.

¹⁵ <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Link/About-the-Link.aspx>

RA Program. The Successful Proposer(s) will then quickly begin working with Participants to secure an appropriate housing unit.

For the CWRA Program

DHS's child welfare office will make all referrals directly to the Successful Proposer of the CWRA Program. The Successful Proposer of the CWRA Program is required to accept referrals made by DHS. The Successful Proposer will then quickly begin working with Participants to secure an appropriate housing unit.

2.6 Performance Outcomes

For Both Programs

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for tracking performance outcomes and meeting the following performance goals:

- All Participants are housed within 30 days of referral
- Average Program participation is nine months
- At least 75% of Participants maintain or increase their income during Program enrollment
- At least 75% of Participants maintain or increase non-cash benefits (e.g., SNAP benefits, Medicaid or private health insurance)
- At least 20% of Participants obtain or maintain employment while in program
- At least 85% of Participants maintain permanent housing upon exit from the Program
- At least 85% of those have permanent housing upon exit from the Program do not return to homelessness within 12 months

For the CWRA Program

- 100% of Caregivers who enter the Program without the custody of their children achieve reunification
- 100% of Children who are in the care of their parents at the beginning of the Program remain in the care of their parents while in the Program

2.7 Data Systems

For RA Programs

The Successful Proposer(s) of the RA Program will be responsible for participating in the Allegheny County Coordinated Entry process (the Link) and for entering data on entries and exits into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) within 48 hours of a Participant's entry and exit. The Successful Proposer(s) must also update HMIS with Participant information while in the RA Program.

For the CWRA Program

The Successful Proposer of the CWRA Program will be responsible for entering data into the Key Information and Demographics System (KIDS), the child welfare information system.

2.8 Budget and Funding

DHS will make available up to \$945,000 per year to fund both Programs (up to \$730,000 for the RA Program and up to \$215,000 for the CWRA Program). DHS expects there may be more than one Successful Proposer for the RA Program and that the funding will be divided among Successful Proposers according to Program size and needs. Only one Successful Proposer will be selected to provide the CWRA Program.

Successful Proposer(s) must provide a realistic budget for operating their proposed Program(s), including anticipated sources of funding beyond those available through this RFP. This may include funding that your organization has (e.g., from foundations, private sources or public sources) that will support the cost of the proposed Program(s).

The RA Program will use funds from the Penn Free Block Grant, managed by BHS, to serve individuals and families who meet the eligibility requirements but are not involved with child welfare. DHS may select one or more Successful Proposer(s) for this program. The contract and program monitoring will be done by BHS. Currently, the Penn Free Block Grant is distributed among seven organizations and provides a collective 56 units for single adults and 21 multi-bedroom units for families in Penn Free Housing programs. Current providers of Penn Free Housing who wish to continue their Penn Free Housing program must submit a Proposal in response to this RFP.

The CWRA Program will use funding from the child welfare office to serve families with caregivers who have a history of unhealthy substance use, are currently unstably housed, and who are involved with the child welfare system. DHS will select one Successful Proposer for this program. The contract and program monitoring will be done by the child welfare office.

Proposers may submit Proposals to provide one or both Programs. The same Successful Proposer could be selected to provide both Programs but would hold two separate contracts—one with BHS and one with the child welfare office.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and should address their qualifications by responding to the specifically-requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 100 points for the RA Program and 100 points for the CWRA Program, as outlined in the following sections. **The RA Program and CWRA Program will be evaluated and scored separately.**

A. Organizational Experience (20 points total)

- Experience providing housing and linkages to supportive services to individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness or unstable housing situations. For those Proposers with current DHS contracts for homeless services, HMIS performance data for existing programs will be reviewed during the selection process. (5 points)

- Experience working with individuals and/or families with a history of unhealthy substance use (5 points)
- Organizational strength/management health including evidence of internal communication, external coordination and an adequate financial accounting system (5 points)
- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits or other supporting financial documentation (5 points)

B. RA Program Design (80 points total)

Target Population (5 points)

- Description of the population you intend to serve with the funding and a justification of how your proposed Program design best meets the needs of the chosen population (5 points)

Housing Services (20 points)

- A plan for locating scattered site units and connecting Participants to the units in a timely way, including: a strategy for building a network of landlords that will house Participants and meet Participant capacity and a strategy for working as a liaison between Participants and landlords to mediate issues and help Participants retain housing (5 points)
- A plan for evaluating Participants' ability to pay rent, for determining what portion of the rent the Participant will pay and for reassessing the portion of rent that the Participant will pay throughout the Participant's stay in the Program (5 points)
- A description of how your organization uses and your plan for how your RA Program will implement Housing First principles (5 points)
- A plan for providing Participants a voice in the housing selection process and their experience in the Program as well as ensuring that units have access to the things people need to meet their basic needs (e.g., transportation, groceries) (5 points)

Relapse and Eviction (10 points)

- A plan for preventing relapse and supporting Participants if they relapse (5 points)
- A draft set of Program Standards that outline each Program's rules and regulations and grounds for termination by completing the template provided in Appendix D (5 points)

Supportive Services (15 points)

- A plan for providing case management and linkages to supportive services, especially substance use treatment services and supports, including identification of specific partnerships that you plan to leverage to ensure that Participants can be connected to each supportive service (10 points)
- A plan for how case managers will work with Participants to ensure that Participants can successfully assume their lease at Program end (5 points)

Environment (5 points)

- A plan for creating a sense of supportive recovery community among Participants (5 points)

Staffing (10 points total)

- Staffing plan—number of staff, their functions and levels of experience (5 points)
- A plan for recruiting and retaining qualified staff and for ensuring that staff have lived experience and are reflective of the population that they serve (5 points)

Financial Management and Budget (15 points total)

- A completed line-item budget template form and budget narrative that shows all planned expenses, reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the Program and includes a clear plan for providing cash match via federal, state, local and private sector funds to support the Program (15 points)

B. CWRA Program Design (80 points total)

Target Population (5 points)

- Description of the population you intend to serve with the funding and a justification of how your Program design best meets the needs of the chosen population (5 points)

Housing Services (20 points)

- A plan for locating scattered site units and connecting Participants to the units in a timely way, including: a strategy for building a network of landlords that will house Participants and meet Participant capacity and a strategy for working as a liaison between Participants and landlords to mediate issues and help Participants retain housing (5 points)
- A plan for evaluating Participants' ability to pay rent, determining what portion of the rent the Participant will pay and reassessing the portion of rent that the Participant will pay throughout the Participant's stay in the Program (5 points)
- A description of how your organization uses and your plan for how your CWRA Program will implement Housing First principles (5 points)
- A plan for providing Participants a voice in the housing selection process and their experience in the Program as well as ensuring that units have access to the things people need to meet their basic needs (e.g., transportation, groceries) (5 points)

Relapse and Eviction (10 points)

- A plan for preventing relapse and supporting Participants if they relapse (5 points)
- A draft set of Program Standards that outline each Program's rules and regulations and grounds for termination by completing the template provided in Appendix D (5 points)

Supportive Services (15 points)

- A plan for providing case management and linkages to supportive services, especially substance use treatment services and supports, including identification of specific partnerships that you

plan to leverage to ensure that Participants can be connected to each supportive service (10 points). This includes:

- A plan for incorporating peer group support activities into the Program and for providing wellness activities
- A description of the spectrum of services your organization provides and how these services might be used to support Participants in the program
- A plan for how case managers will work with Participants to ensure that Participants can successfully assume their lease at Program end (5 points)

Environment (5 points)

- A plan for creating a sense of supportive recovery community among Participants (5 points)

Staffing (10 points total)

- Staffing plan—number of staff, their functions and levels of experience (5 points)
- A plan for recruiting and retaining qualified staff and for ensuring that staff have lived experience and are reflective of the population that they serve (5 points)

Financial Management and Budget (15 points total)

- A completed line-item budget template form and budget narrative that shows all planned expenses, reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the Program and includes a clear plan for providing cash match via federal, state, local and private sector funds to support the Program (15 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

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

4.1 Submission Process

- a. Please take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see *Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP*)
 - The narrative (see *Section 2: What We Are Looking For*)
 - The requirements (see *Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria*)
 - The evaluation process (see *Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal*)
- 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.
- 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. Please do 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 statements that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing financial statements 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 that may be specified in the Response Form.
 - g. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, March 13, 2017 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 DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us

4.2 How to Contact DHS about this RFP

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

4.3 Other Information

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

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee convened by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based on the Program description in *Section 2: What We Are Looking For* and on the

evaluation criteria in *Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria* using the scale listed in *Section 5.1 c*.

5.1 Evaluation Model

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. DHS will form an Evaluation Committee that will 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 to each response on a Proposer's Response Form according to their expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in *Section 3* using the following 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 compile and discuss the individual scores and evaluation of each committee member.
- d. The County shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review using the same criteria outlined above. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make modifications to their Proposal or budget or make a formal oral presentation. The Evaluation Committee will review the modifications and/or oral presentation and rescore the shortlisted Proposals using the original evaluation criteria.
- 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. **The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- h. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.
- i. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

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

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

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

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must be willing to comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County are provided in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.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 and Disadvantaged 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 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. 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 MWDBE Participation Statement. Registered Proposers are still required to submit the applicable MWDBE forms.
- c. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - MWDBE Forms
 - [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
 - [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
 - [MWDBE Contact Information form](#)
 - MWDBE Resources
 - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
 - [MWDBE Response Checklist](#)
 - [Guide for completing the MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
 - [Sample Diversity Policy](#)
- d. For more information about MWDBEs, including a list of MWDBEs that have been certified by Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program, can be found at the [Allegheny County MWDBE website](#).

6.2 HIPAA Compliance

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

6.3 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. All electronic devices must have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of an information breach.
- c. Successful Proposers must also have policies in place to ensure that electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected).

6.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

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

6.5 New Provider Requirements

If awarded an Agreement, Successful Proposers who do not have current Allegheny County contracts will be required to complete the [DHS New Provider Application](#), available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx>. While not required as part of your Proposal, Proposers may wish to review the requirements of this application.

Appendix A

Allegheny County Continuum of Care Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Program Standards

Introduction

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help families and individuals move quickly out of homelessness and into permanent housing in the community. Built upon Housing First and Progressive Engagement approaches, rapid re-housing seeks to get those experiencing homelessness permanently housed as quickly as possible, utilizing the core components of housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management and services. Within the Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC), rapid re-housing is one form of permanent housing intervention used, aimed at resolving the immediate housing crisis of individuals and families with moderate service needs. In some cases, it can also be used as a short-term bridge to permanent supportive housing (PSH) while an individual or family is waiting for a PSH unit to become available¹⁶.

This document is intended to provide guidance on the expectations of rapid re-housing programs within the Allegheny County CoC. Standards are described around the guiding principles and core service components of rapid re-housing, the existing prioritization process for individuals and families being referred to rapid re-housing, and the current benchmarks intended to be reached by rapid re-housing programs. These program standards have been developed within the planning and operation of the Allegheny County CoC, under the purview of the Homeless Advisory Board and its Committees, and guided by continuum processes and priorities, and best practice research. These standards provide guidance specifically to rapid re-housing programs, and as such supplement but do not replace the contractual standards found in “Contract Manual: HUD Standards and Operating Procedures.” Furthermore, it is important to recognize these standards as a living document that will be updated to reflect changes across the Allegheny County CoC.

Rapid Re-Housing Principles and Services

Rapid re-housing is an intervention directed at resolving the immediate barriers to obtaining permanent housing. Through a tailored package of services which builds on the strengths of the individual or family, rapid re-housing prioritizes long-term housing while providing short-term housing assistance. Rapid re-housing has been shown to be both effective and cost-efficient, getting individuals and families permanently housed while also reducing the time spent homeless and returns to homelessness.

The core premise of rapid re-housing is to meet people where they are, fulfilling their housing need from which supports services can be wrapped around to sustain housing stability. The approaches informing this premise, and the core components implemented to facilitate it are described below.

Housing First

¹⁶ Within the current Allegheny County CoC Coordinated Entry process an individual or family who is assessed to need PSH would need to be manually assigned to a RRH program should it be determined that RRH would be a beneficial step as they wait for a PSH unit to become available.

All rapid re-housing programs follow the principles of Housing First, which centers on getting individuals and families into permanent homes. The National Alliance to End Homelessness¹⁷ identifies the following as the core elements of Housing First programs:

- A focus on helping individuals and families access and sustain permanent rental housing as quickly as possible;
- A variety of services delivered to promote housing stability and individual well-being on an as-needed and entirely voluntary basis; and
- A standard lease agreement to housing – as opposed to mandated therapy or services compliance.

As such, rapid re-housing programs within the Allegheny County CoC will not have any criteria beyond homelessness for entry or retention, such as sobriety, medication/treatment compliance, or employment. Some programs, however, do serve specific sub-populations. These include:

- Youth (ages 18-24), including those transitioning out of foster care
- Individuals and families fleeing domestic violence
- Individuals and families with behavioral health concerns, including drug and alcohol
- Ex-offenders
- Individuals living with HIV/AIDS

Progressive Engagement

All programs are expected to implement Progressive Engagement. Progressive Engagement is a nationally recognized best practice in homeless services which provides customized levels of assistance to participants and preserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success. This allows a program to stretch resources to serve more households, while meeting the appropriate level of need for its participants. Each program is provided the flexibility to most effectively target scarce resources by assessing clients' strengths and challenges over time.¹⁸ Caseworkers must be trained to assess the appropriate level of assistance needed to maintain housing; recognizing when a person has achieved enough stability or when they will need further assistance. At program start, participants should be assessed for level of rent and move-in assistance needed. While up to 100% rental assistance can be provided, the intent of rapid re-housing is to give individuals and families what is needed for stability and not more. Participants' required level of assistance should be assessed monthly, while their eligibility for services should be recertified every three months¹⁹. Over time, the amount of rental assistance should be reduced as the participant gains the ability to pay more and to prepare the participant for self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. Similarly, participants are able to be enrolled in a rapid re-housing program for up to 24 months, but the majority should be able to achieved self-sufficiency in a shorter amount of time and the expectation is that most clients will be enrolled in rapid re-housing for less than 12 months. Case management may continue for no more than 6 months after rental assistance has ended and the total number of months of case management assistance can be received must never exceed 24 months.

¹⁷ http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/housing_first

¹⁸ The exception to this are RRH programs funded with ESG. These programs can only serve participants for up to one year. They provide up to 100% rental assistance for the first 9 months and up to 75% for the last 3 months.

¹⁹ Programs need to develop a standard assessment process for determining assistance level; [The Road Home Rapid Rehousing Program Stability Conversation Guide](#) and Snohomish County's [Fenn-Jorstad Self Sufficiency Matrix](#) provide examples to guide such assessment.

Core Components

Rapid re-housing programs should provide, at minimum, housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management and service linkages. Participants may not require all three components to obtain and maintain permanent housing, but each should be available and accessible given the need. Below, each of these main components are presented with activities that support their effective implementation. The utility of each component should be customized to the needs and strengths of each individual or family, and should be flexible as needs change. As such, it is necessary that individuals and families be reassessed each month so that rapid re-housing services are reflective of their current situation. Further, across these components it is necessary for staff to be appropriately trained and programs to have applicable policies and procedures in place.

Housing Identification

- Support participants in finding and accessing housing that is sustainable, appropriately priced (rent reasonableness), and meets their needs (e.g., location, access, safety)
 - Participants must have a written lease agreement with the landlord/owner of the housing unit; for CoC funded Rapid Rehousing, the lease must be for a term of at least one year that is renewable (for a minimum term of one month) and terminable only for cause
- Establish and foster relationships with landlords who are willing to provide safe housing to participants
- Train staff members on accessing and effectively using housing search resources
- Educate participants on their rights and responsibilities as tenants

Rent and Move-In Assistance

- Assess participants and provide the level of assistance that reflects the minimal need of the individual or family to move into permanent, stable housing and can include expenses around security deposits, moving costs, rent, and utilities
- Provide assistance in a progressive manner, supplying amount that is necessary to stabilize and adjusting as appropriate to needs (whether moving up or down)
- Keep participants updated and engaged around the amount of assistance expected, building towards the individual or family's ability to graduate from the program
- Develop a process for assessing assistance level need; train staff to use the process and make appropriate adjustments to support participants' stability

Case Management and Services

- Initially focused on overcoming immediate barriers to accessing housing, case management adapts to support the individual or family in remaining housed
- On-going case management should connect participants to community and service supports that will help them maintain housing beyond graduation from the rapid re-housing program
- Case management should support the participant's plan towards program graduation, with the ability to continue case management for up to 6 months after rental assistance ends as part of rapid re-housing
- Utilize a strengths-based approach that positions the individual or family to be self-sufficient and continue stable housing

Prioritization within the Allegheny County Continuum of Care

Within the Allegheny County CoC, rapid re-housing referrals are currently being made for individuals and families who are experiencing literal homelessness and have moderate service needs. Literal homelessness includes those who are living on the streets, in emergency shelter, safe haven, or a place not meant for human habitation. Moderate service need is defined as those individuals who receive a score between 4 and 7 (inclusive) or families who receive a score between 4 and 8 (inclusive) on the Vulnerability Index & Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI--SPDAT)²⁰ during the Coordinated Entry intake assessment. In addition, the Bureau of Homeless Services and its Coordinated Entry system can also refer, as needed, individuals or families into rapid re-housing as a short-term bridge as they are waiting for a permanent supportive housing spot to become available. These individuals or families will not lose their (chronically) homeless status for purposes of remaining eligible for permanent housing.

Once participants are identified as literally homeless and having moderate service needs, referrals to rapid re-housing programs are prioritized as follows:

(1) Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families

- The waiting list is then ordered by VI-SPDAT score, from highest to lowest.

(2) Non-chronic Homeless Individuals and Families

- The waiting list is then ordered by VI-SPDAT score, from highest to lowest.

The Allegheny County CoC will follow the order of priority above for all Rapid Re-housing programs. Individual projects may still serve target populations (e.g. veterans, persons with HIV/AIDS, people with mental illness), but individuals will be referred to those projects based on the priorities identified above. In cases where there are multiple individuals or families that have the same prioritization category, veterans and veterans who are ineligible for homeless services under the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), persons and families actively fleeing domestic violence, and youth (ages 18-24) will be prioritized above others. The final tie breaker will be the date and time that the referral for service was made.

Performance Benchmarks

Setting and utilizing performance benchmarks is an important mechanism for evaluating both program and system performance. The Allegheny County CoC intends to track the following performance measures to assess its effectiveness in making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring as well as to identify programs that might require technical assistance. The established benchmarks are CoC goals.

All rapid re-housing programs are expected to work toward achieving the following set of performance benchmarks:

1. All participants are housed within 30 days of referral to RRH.
2. Average program stay is 9 months.
3. At least 75% of participants will maintain or increase their income during program enrollment.
4. At least 75% of participants will maintain or increase non-cash benefits (e.g., Food Stamps, Medicaid or Private Health Insurance).
5. At least 20% of participants will obtain or maintain employment while in program.

²⁰ The VI-SPDAT is a pre-screening tool that is designed to quickly assess the health and social needs of homeless persons and match them with the most appropriate support and housing interventions that are available. Additional details around the VI-SPDAT at its implementation in Allegheny County can be found in the HMIS Phase 3 Manual.

6. At least 85% of participants maintain permanent housing upon exiting RRH.
7. At least 85% of those who exit to permanent housing do not return to homeless within 12 months.

Appendix B

HUD Habitability Standards

Participant Name: _____

Project Name (Grant name): _____

Participant Address:

Complete the HUD Habitability form for any PSH or Shelter plus care subsidy participant. Units should be inspected on an annual basis or with a change in tenancy. If any standard is not met please complete comment section to explain actions to be taken to remediate the problem. Complete a new version of this form when the problem has been remediated and the unit meets the HUD Habitability standards. (Energy Star appliances are not a HUD requirement but are Highly Recommended).

Each condition being reviewed below has a yes, no, or not applicable as a potential choice. For the unit to pass HUD Habitability standards for each condition YES must be the selected answer unless it is not applicable. A **YES** response indicates that the potential negative condition described is not present. For example for the condition, "Floors do not flex when put under strain" in order to pass inspection the box YES must be selected. This shows that the potential negative condition of having floors that flex under strain is not present.

- This form requires that the property owner or a property manager that the owner approves sign the form as well as the BSC.

Part A General Room Standards

	Yes	No	N/A
Foundation is free from overt cracks and appears structurally sound.			
Exterior walls are free from cracks or holes.			
Interior walls are free from cracks or holes.			
Ceilings are free from cracks and do not sag.			
Floors do not flex when put under strain.			
Floors are not missing any floorboards or tiles.			
Interior of building is free from leaks and stains.			
Drains and plumbing are functional and free from clogs.			
Handrails are present on all staircases with 4 or more steps.			
All door locks are in proper working order.			
Bedrooms have either 2 working outlets or 1 outlet and 1 window.			

All other rooms have either a window or functional light fixture.			
Energy Star appliances are being used.			
All appropriate units are wheelchair accessible.			
The hot water tank has a working discharge valve. (If hot water tank is not present in the unit select N/A)			
Is the Unit accessible without going through another unit?			
Is there adequate space for the resident and their belongings?			
Is there an adequate place to sleep?			
Does the unit have some form of natural or mechanical ventilation?			
Does the unit have adequate space and equipment for food Preparation?			

Part B General Health and Safety

	Yes	No	N/A
Smoke detectors are present on every floor.			
Exits are not blocked by debris or furniture.			
Trash receptacles are available in or near the building.			
Adequate heat is provided in the building.			
Space heaters are not present in the building.			
Is there a second means of egress in case of a fire?			
Do Public areas have a smoke detector? (Laundry Room, etc.,)			

Part C Windows

	Yes	No	N/A
All bedrooms have at least 1 fully functional window.			
All bathrooms have either 1 fully functional window or 1 exhaust vent.			
No windows are broken or are missing windowpanes.			
All windows can be securely locked.			
All windows have screens or have screens available to insert.			

Part D Kitchen

	Yes	No	N/A
Kitchen sink has running hot and cold water.			
Kitchen sink has a working gas trap drain.			
Stove burners and oven work properly.			

A functional refrigerator is present.			
Kitchen has 1 working permanent light fixture.			
Food preparation and storage areas are sanitary.			
No evidence of rat or insect infestation is present.			
Outlets are not required, but if one is located within 6 feet of a water source, is it a GFI?			

Part E Bathroom

	Yes	No	N/A
Bathroom has at least 1 working permanent light fixture.			
Bathroom sink has a working gas trap drain.			
Toilet is in working condition.			
Shower has running hot and cold water.			
Bathroom is free from visible water damage.			
Outlets are not required, but if one is located within 6 feet of a water source, is it a GFI?			

Signature of Staff Completing Assessment: _____ Date: _____

Landlord or Property manager Signature: _____ Date: _____

Any Item that was answered with a NO outcome (Other than Energy star appliances) means that the unit does not pass HUD Habitability standards. We cannot process payment until the unit passes HUD Habitability standards. Once the unit passes inspection and a form signed by the BSC and the property owner or property manager then payment will be released. This will include payments for any months the tenant was present and payment is required but was held until the unit passed HUD habitability standards.

If the unit does not meet HUD Habitability standards please use the comment section below to describe a plan for the unit to be made habitable according to these standards. Please include a time frame. Please schedule a time for BSC and property owner or property manager to meet and inspect the unit again according to the timeline outlined in the plan developed.

Comments:

Appendix C

Allegheny County Department of Human Services Bureau of Homeless Services Consumer Service Termination and Appeal Hearing Process

Consumer Service Termination Procedures

This section explains the process to be used when terminating service to a consumer in the Allegheny County Continuum of Care Programs.

Providers and consumers are to follow these procedures when services are being terminated due to breach of contract by a consumer.

Service Termination

The provider must:

- ✓ Upon admittance into the program give the consumer a copy of the rules and regulations of the program and have them **sign and date** a statement indicating the rules and regulations **have been read and are understood**, detailing what is expected of the consumer during their time in the program.
- ✓ Notify the consumer in writing each time he/she is in violation of rules or regulations of the program. The notice should include the violation, the action being taken due to the violation, the effective date of the action, and should be signed and dated by both the consumer and staff member who witnessed the violation. In the event that a consumer refuses to sign a violation, the staff member should document this event.
- ✓ In the event of service termination, notify the consumer in writing on the Notice of Termination Form, provided by Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services, of his/her termination from the program. Please complete the forms as accurately as possible.
- ✓ Explain to the consumer that it is their right to appeal the termination decision within **five (5)** business days of receiving the Notice of Termination. The Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form, along with the Client Summary Sheet, should be attached to the Notice of Termination upon delivery to consumer.
- ✓ Supply appropriate assistance to the consumer in completing the Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form and/or the Client Summary Sheet when needed.
- ✓ Send a copy of the Notice of Termination and Agency Summary of Termination to:
Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Bureau of Homeless Services
Human Services Building
One Smithfield Street, Second Floor
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

After Notice of Termination

- The consumer has **ten (10)** business (not including weekends) from the date the Notice of Termination was delivered, to vacate the premises.
- If the consumer does not appeal their service termination, Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services requests that assistance is offered by the provider when deciding on and preparing to move to the next place of residency.
- If a Termination Appeal Hearing is requested, The Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form must be submitted to Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services within **five (5)** business days from the date of the service termination.
- If a Termination Appeal Hearing is requested, Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services, makes every effort to schedule a hearing within **five (5)** business days after the Right to Appeal and Fair Housing Form is received in our office.

Grounds for Immediate Service Termination

- ◆ Physical attacks
- ◆ Destruction of property
- ◆ Evidence of alcohol or illegal drugs on the facility premises
- ◆ Possession of a weapon on the facility premises
- ◆ Otherwise jeopardizing the safety and welfare of other

Termination Appeal Hearing Process

- The Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services will schedule and notify all involved parties of the date, time, and location of the Termination Appeal Hearing.
- An Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services staff person will chair the Termination Appeal Hearing.
- The Termination Appeal Board will consist of two (2) to five (5) persons with knowledge of homeless programming. These individuals could be:
 1. Members of the Continuum of Care Application Evaluation Committee
 2. Volunteers from other Homeless Programs
 3. Allegheny County Department of Human Services Staff
- The Termination Appeal Board will be given the Notice of Termination, Agency Summary of Termination, The Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form, and Client Summary Sheet to review before the hearing.
- The Termination Appeal Hearing will begin with an introduction of all persons present.
- The service provider will be given five (5) to ten (10) minutes to explain their position, enter any evidence, and present any witnesses on their behalf.
- The consumer will be given five (5) to ten (10) minutes to explain their position, enter any evidence, and present any witnesses on their behalf.
- The Termination Appeal Hearing Board will then ask relevant questions of both the service provider and consumer.
- Both the service provider and the consumer will be given five (5) minutes to make closing statements.
- Both the service provider and the consumer will be asked if they feel that they can both come to a resolution before the board makes a final decision.
- In the event of no resolution, the service provider, the consumer, and a DHS staff member (acting as a buffer between the two parties) will be asked to leave the room and wait in the hallway, while the Termination Appeal Board deliberates over all of the testimony, documentation, and evidence presented.
- The Termination Appeal Board will reach a final decision, as well as make recommendations for both the service provider and the consumer.
- The service provider, the consumer, and the DHS staff member will be asked to re-enter the room, the Programs Chairperson will explain the decision made by the Termination Appeal Board, along with all recommendations.
- A formal letter of the final decision will be sent to both the service provider and the consumer within five (5) business days of the Termination Appeal Hearing.
- HUD and HAP views the decision of the Termination Appeal Board as final action.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Bureau of Homeless Services
Notice of Termination

SECTION I

Name of Consumer _____

Address _____

Date this notice is mailed or hand delivered to Consumer _____

This is to notify you that your participation in the _____
Homeless Program administered by the service provider identified in **SECTION III** below will be terminated
effective ____/____/____.

You are being given this service termination because: _____

SECTION II

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to appeal and request a hearing through the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Bureau of Homeless Services. To request a hearing, you must complete the Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form, and Client Summary Sheet attached to this notice, and return it to the following address within **five (5)** business days after the date this notice is mailed or hand delivered to you.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Bureau of Homeless Services
Human Services Building
One Smithfield Street, Second Floor
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

After this date, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Bureau of Homeless Services, reserves the right to deny the appeal without a hearing. If you do not understand this decision or would like to meet with a representative of the terminating service provider, please contact the service provider representative who is named in **SECTION III** below.

SECTION III

To be completed by terminating service provider and forward to the above listed address.

Terminating Service Provider _____

Address _____

Program Name _____

Printed Name of the Service Provider Representative

Telephone Number

Signature of Service Provider Representative

Date

Signature of Service Provider Executive Director

Date

Signature of Consumer

Date

Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form

You have the right to request an appeal to the Department of Human Services, Bureau of Homeless Services, of the service termination presented to you by your current service provider within **five (5)** business days after receiving the Notice of Termination.

In order to request a hearing you **MUST DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- ✓ State your reason for appealing in the space provided below (otherwise the appeal request will be dismissed without a hearing)
- ✓ Provide a phone number where you can be reached or a message can be left for you
- ✓ Provide your current address
- ✓ Mail or hand deliver this form to:

**Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Bureau of Homeless Services
Human Services Building
One Smithfield Street, Second Floor
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222**

If you have any questions or need assistance completing this form, you can ask for assistance from your current service provider, or you may contact the Allegheny County Department of Human Services at (412) 350-3063.

- ❖ You have the right to be represented at the Termination Appeal Hearing by a legal representative or an advocate.
- ❖ You may ask your current service provider to direct you to the local neighborhood legal aid offices before the scheduled hearing date, if you need information about obtaining a lawyer to represent you at the Termination Appeal Hearing.
- ❖ You and/or your representative have the right to examine all information that the Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services staff has received regarding your Termination Appeal Hearing.
- ❖ A staff member of the Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Homeless Services, will contact you to schedule a date for the Termination Appeal Hearing.

I REQUEST A SERVICE TERMINATION APPEAL HEARING BECAUSE:

(Please state your reason (s) for appealing) Attach additional pages if necessary.

Name of Terminating Service Provider _____

Name of the Program _____ Phone Number _____

Consumer Appealing Service Termination	Advocate/Witness of Consumer (Not Required)
Print Name:	Print Name:
Address:	Address:
City: State: Zip:	City: State: Zip:
Telephone:	Telephone:

Signature of Consumer Date Signature of Advocate/Witness Date

Appendix D

Organizational Name
Name of Program
Program Agreement

Introduction

Provide history, mission, values and vision of the organization.

Program Overview (length of program, goal of program – Self Sufficiency for client)

Would be good to mention step down process of reevaluation every 3 months to determine financial fitness (i.e. This will be a program in which you are reevaluated every 1-3 months for progress and to tailor our assistance to your needs)

Eligibility

[Population focus]

Program Requirements

While we are here to support you in housing, we want you to be as comfortable with your housing as possible. Therefore, it is necessary and important that you locate a landlord willing to rent to you, and that fits your needs and fits within a specific budget within 30 days of being accepted into this program. (Would be good to add: The support that is offered by the organization, the guidelines, etc. All revolving around self-sufficiency with supportive language.)

An individualized Service Plan (ISP) is a plan outlining steps and activities to reach goals and objectives agreed upon between you and your Case Manager. Participation in developing your service plan is required and will help shape your program experiences. Your ISP will be updated every three (3) months, when your stay in the program is reevaluated, to reflect goals and measure progress.

Case management will be a crucial role in progressing towards self-sufficiency. You are required to meet with your case manager at least once per month but can be more frequent if you feel it would be helpful. These meetings will be used to assess your progress towards your goals, discuss any concerns about the program or any issues that may arise, and connect you to supportive services.

Our organization is here to assist you with rent. During your initial intake, your financial fitness will be evaluated. The outcome of this evaluation will determine the amount of assistance you will be eligible to receive from (X ORGANIZATION). The goal is to create a situation in which you are able to take over full payment after you are no longer in the program, so there may be a step down process in rental assistance. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. You will be expected to pay the portion of the rent that we do not cover.

Participant portion of rent is due X day of each month as is covered in the lease.

Change in income must be reported to case manager within X days. Countable income include the following:

Earned Income	Alimony
Unemployment Insurance	Pension
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Private Disability Insurance
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Social Security – Retirement
Veterans Disability	Child Support
Private Disability Insurance	Other Sources
Worker’s Compensation	

Any participant causing property damage will be charged the cost of damages in excess of reasonable wear and tear.

Program Recommendations

With housing being our first priority, we agree to provide you with stable housing until the end of your time here at our program. However, in an effort to assist you in stable housing in the future, we do encourage and offer supportive services. These will be recommended by your case manager but not required for your continued participation in this program. These service can include:

- *House Meetings (if applicable)* – These house meetings can assist in building a community with others who may have faced similar struggles as well as provide an opportunity to voice concerns or positive feedback about the program.
- *Employment services (search/training)* – the best way to maintain stable housing is to maintain a stable job. We have specific resources that can help overcome any barriers to employment you might have [e.g., felonies, mental health, education]
- *AA/NA meeting attendance, frequency (if applicable)* – If you identify with a substance abuse issue and it is part of your goal plan, we can make referrals to drug and alcohol meetings to promote sober living.

Confidentiality

You have the right to confidentiality, which means information about you will be kept private. Information, both written and verbal staff cannot be shared with anyone outside of the agency without written/signed permission from you, or if applicable, your legal guardian. Disclosure of another person’s presence, care or treatment to anyone else inside or outside this facility is considered to be a breach of trust and confidentiality. Protecting confidentiality is both a legal and moral responsibility of this agency.

Situations exist which allow disclosure of Personal Protected Information (PPI). These situations include:

1. Harm to Another Person
2. Suicide
3. Abuse of a child/Vulnerable Adult
4. Court order
5. Contract Monitoring.
6. Medical Emergency

Data Collection notice – (X ORGANIZATION) enters data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is a databases used to coordinate care in an efficient and unified fashion to provide appropriate services.

Release of information (ROI) – You have the right to release your Personal Protected Information (PPI). For information to be released to any person/entity outside this organization a specific, original and written release of information must be submitted to (X ORGANIZATION). Verbal consent is not a valid means to release information. The original written and signed Release of Information will be kept in your personal file.

You are encouraged to contact an (ORGANIZATION X) staff member should you have any further questions about confidentiality.

By signing this document, I attest that I have been informed of my right to confidentiality and I understand this right. I also understand that should I have any further questions or concerns to contact a staff member of (ORGANIZATION X).

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____
Staff Signature _____ Date _____

Mental Health

Verbiage towards Mental Health – why it's necessary, what it will do for them, expectations, etc. Could look like: If you are coping with mental health issues, it is vital that you maintain proper care including medication, therapy, etc. This is necessary for your success, not only in our program, but also your life after the program. If you practice responsible care for your mental health, it demonstrates your progress towards self-sufficiency.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

General alcohol/drug policy – non-threatening language, what working on this could mean for them, etc. Could look like:

We are here to support you through your recovery. We understand this is a difficult, trying time and our only goal is to help you re-stabilize yourself. Drug testing may be done periodically in an effort to keep clients accountable to themselves and their recovery.

Visitation/Guest

[Visitation policy, including requirements, limits and frequency stated here – as per the lease/as long as it doesn't interfere with their progress/goals].

[Overnight guest policy, including requirements, limits, and frequency – as per the lease].

Room/property Search

Explains why this is a part of the program – cleanliness can lead to good life skills, etc.

Rooms and property may be searched at any time without notification. Property searches may be conducted without advanced notice or with advanced notice. Etc.

No copies of keys

Mandated Reporter Notice

All case managers and program staff are mandated reporters of child abuse. This means that if we see any behavior or signs of child abuse, we are required to report it to the proper authorities.

Discipline/Termination

Discipline Policy

A disciplinary action occurs when a rule/regulation has been violated. After three violations, a Continued Stay contract will be drafted. Any rule/regulation that is violated while on a Continued Stay contract will result in termination.

List violations that could result in a Contract for Continued Stay:

Discipline/Termination

Our goal at (Organization X) is to support you through a difficult time in your life and promote self-sufficiency. However, this program is specifically designed to do just that. Therefore, if you do not follow the guidelines, there may be consequences.

Our first course of action is always to give a verbal warning. If after the verbal warning, you do not change the behavior, we will issue a written warning. After three of these cycles, you may be placed on a contract for Continue to Stay. If you incur a further violation while on the Contract for Continue to Stay, you may be asked to leave the program.

Violations that may result in a Contract for Continue to Stay:

- Not participating in your Case Management meetings

- Not practicing good tenant polices (violating your lease).
- Not paying your portion of the rent/utilities.
- Violating the visitation policy.

Disclaimer: Our goal is to support and help you achieve your goals. Our intention is never to return you to homelessness or take away your rights and confidence.

Immediate service termination violation

Immediate termination occurs regardless of previous disciplinary action or behavior. Violation of the behaviors outlined below will supersede progressive discipline. The participant must immediately vacate the property and remove all possession.

1. Physical Attacks
2. Destruction of Property
3. Evidence of alcohol or illegal drugs on the facility premises
4. Possession of a weapon on the facility premises
5. Otherwise jeopardizing the safety and welfare of others.

Voluntary Termination

Participants are not mandated to receive homeless services. Participant may terminate participation of services immediately through verbal or written means of communication. When exiting the program, complete all exit/discharge paperwork.

Appeal (Can be a separate document)

Internal

[State internal appeal process for termination]

External - Allegheny County DHS

You have the right to appeal your termination to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. (DHS).

After termination the consumer has ten (10) business days from the date of the Notice of Termination was delivered to vacate the premises.

The Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form must be submitted to Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of HOMELESS SERVICES within five (5) business days from the date of the service termination. Allegheny County Department of Human Services has the right to extend this time frame at their discretion.

If a Termination Appeal Hearing is requested, Bureau of HOMELESS SERVICES makes effort to schedule a hearing within five (5) days of receiving Right to Appeal and Fair Housing Form.

The Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form, along with the Client Summary Sheet, should be attached to the Notice of Termination upon delivery to the consumer.

Documentation must be sent to the following address within five (5) business days of termination.

Allegheny Department of Human Services
 Bureau of Homeless Services, HUD Programs
 One Smithfield Street, Second Floor
 Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

Termination Appeal Hearing Process:

The Allegheny County DHS, Bureau of Hunger and Housing Services will schedule and notify all involved parties of the date, time and location of Termination Appeal Hearing.

The Termination Appeal Board will be given the Notice of Termination, Agency Summary of Termination, the Right to Appeal and Fair Hearing Form, and Client Summary Sheet to review before the hearing.

The Service Provider will be given five (5) to ten (10) minutes to explain their position, enter any evidence and present any witnesses on their behalf.

The Consumer will be given five (5) to ten (10) minutes to explain their position, enter any evidence and present any witness of their behalf.

The Termination Appeal Hearing Board will then ask relevant questions of both the service provider and consumer.

Both the service provider and consumer will be given five (5) minutes for concluding remarks.

Both service provider and the consumer will be asked if they feel that they can both come to a resolution before the board makes a final decision.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) views this decision of the Termination Appeal Board as final action.