



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Request for Proposals

Small Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter

RFP Posting:

Thursday, August 10, 2023

Questions Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, August 18, 2023

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, August 31, 2023

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

September 2023

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

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See the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) or the [Active Solicitations Webpage](#) for the following Appendix:

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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 Link (the Link): The single access point for the Coordinated Entry system in Allegheny County, providing diversion from homelessness, assessment, and referral to housing programs
4. Bonfire: The County's online procurement software. Proposers must have a Bonfire account to submit a Response to this RFP
5. 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
6. Continuum of Care (CoC): The network of housing options and services covering the geographic entirety of Allegheny County for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including shelter, housing and supportive services; outreach, engagement and assessment; and prevention strategies
7. Coordinated Entry: A standardized method for connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a geographic area. The Allegheny Link and the OCS Field Unit are the Coordinated Entry entities in Allegheny County.
8. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
9. DHS Bonfire Portal: A Bonfire webpage specific to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services where Proposers can view open, past and awarded solicitations released through Bonfire
10. Harm Reduction: An evidence-based approach to engaging with people who use drugs; includes equipping them with life-saving tools and information to help create positive change in their lives
11. Homeless Advisory Board (HAB): The public-private partnership that oversees the CoC. The HAB sets the local strategy to end homelessness and reviews public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts to eliminate homelessness and improve the well-being of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
12. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): An information technology system used to collect Client-level data on the provision of housing and supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
13. Housing First: A low-barrier approach to service delivery grounded in the knowledge that everyone is housing ready, the solution to homelessness is affordable permanent housing, and everyone has choice and the agency to make their own decisions

14. The Shelter: The year-round, 24/7 facility and supportive services that the Successful Proposer will operate at 2230 Brownsville Road in the City of Pittsburgh's Carrick neighborhood. The Shelter will align with Housing First, Harm Reduction and Trauma-Informed Care best practices.
15. Motivational Interviewing: An evidence-based intervention that uses a conversational approach designed to help people address their ambivalence to change
16. OCS Field Unit: DHS's enhanced Coordinated Entry team that works to locate individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness within the community and to engage them in services inside and outside of Shelter
17. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
18. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
19. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
20. RFP: Request for Proposals
21. RFP Opportunity Page: The Bonfire webpage where the RFP and all required supporting documents are listed and where the RFP submission documents must be uploaded for a Proposal to be considered for review
22. Trauma-Informed: An organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma and its impact on human behavior
23. Street Outreach: A program designed to identify and serve individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Street Outreach workers identify and address immediate needs and provide connection to longer-term forms of support.
24. 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

Allegheny County, through its Department of Human Services (DHS), is seeking Proposals from qualified Proposers to operate a new low-barrier¹ shelter located at 2230 Brownsville Road in the City of Pittsburgh's Carrick neighborhood (henceforth referred to as the Shelter). The Shelter will be open 24 hours a day, year-round, with a maximum nighttime capacity of 13 people. The Shelter will offer individuals experiencing homelessness a safe and welcoming place to stay, along with housing-focused case management to support Clients' long-term stability and well-being. The Successful Proposer will be responsible for leasing the building (with funding from DHS), employing and supervising staff, managing Client referrals and vacancies in partnership with DHS, and delivering low-barrier, inclusive services that align with Housing First principles.

In this RFP, the individuals served at the Shelter will be referred to as "Clients."

DHS will be releasing another RFP for the identification and operation of additional small size, low-barrier shelters throughout Allegheny County. That RFP will solicit proposals for shelter operations at sites identified by Proposers. Proposers submitting proposals for the current RFP will be eligible to apply to the forthcoming RFP.

Award Details

DHS intends to enter into an agreement with one Successful Proposer for an initial term of one year with a County option to renew. DHS will work collaboratively with the Successful Proposer, other DHS shelter providers and homeless system stakeholders to continue to assess the optimal distribution of shelters across Allegheny County.

We have not identified a comprehensive budget for this Shelter, but instead are interested in reviewing a proposed budget and budget narrative for all costs the Proposer feels necessary for successful operation of the Shelter. Proposers should provide a realistic estimate of costs and strong justification. All proposed costs will be considered for reasonableness, and the final budget and contract terms will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer.

DHS will work collaboratively with the Successful Proposer to begin operation of the Shelter as soon as possible.

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

¹ A low-barrier shelter approach is one in that has 24/7 access without policies that make it difficult to enter/stay in shelter or access housing and income opportunities.

Successful Proposers) and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capabilities to provide the Contracted Services.

Proposals must be submitted electronically by logging into or creating an account on [Bonfire](#) (See Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal).

What’s important to us

We are looking for a Successful Proposer that:

- Provides temporary shelter while helping Clients successfully transition to permanent housing.
- Offers trauma-informed, inclusive and culturally responsive services that align with the Housing First philosophy.
- Embraces low-barrier approaches to service delivery and strives to provide a welcoming space where all people—particularly those who are most marginalized—can be comfortable, feel valued and easily access supports on their own terms.
- Creates a strong sense of community and fosters positive relationships among Clients.
- Collaborates effectively with external partners to help Clients secure permanent housing and other vital resources that promote safety, stability and well-being.
- Ensures the safety and security of the clients residing at the Shelter while promoting a sense of community with the surrounding neighborhood. The Shelter operator must recognize the Shelter’s place in the neighborhood and be a positive contributing member of the community.

Timeline

RFP Posting	Thursday, August 10, 2023
Questions Deadline	Friday, August 18 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Last Website and Q&A Update	Thursday, August 24 at 6 p.m. Eastern
Submission Deadline	Thursday, August 31 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Oral Presentations	Thursday, September 14
Estimated Award Decision/Notification	September 2023

Who we are

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

Over the last six years, DHS has collaborated with a broad coalition of local stakeholders to increase low-barrier shelter options in the community. The most notable of these efforts is Second Avenue Commons (2AC), which opened in Downtown Pittsburgh in late 2022.

DHS seeks to further expand the low-barrier shelter capacity of Allegheny County's Continuum of Care (CoC) by establishing smaller, community-based shelters. DHS has identified a building within the Carrick neighborhood to serve as a Shelter facility. The purpose of this RFP is to identify a qualified provider to operate day-to-day Shelter services at the facility.

Note: DHS will be releasing another RFP for the identification and operation of additional small size, low-barrier shelters throughout Allegheny County. That RFP will solicit proposals for shelter operations at sites identified by the Proposers. Proposers submitting proposals for the current RFP will be eligible to apply to the forthcoming RFP.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

A. Target Population

Shelter Clients will include adults aged 18 and over who are experiencing homelessness, including couples or others who can share a bedroom.

B. Shelter Design

The facility has 7-8 bedrooms and a maximum occupancy of 13 people. The layout is as follows:

- First floor: Living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and office (which may be converted into an additional bedroom)
- Second floor: Five bedrooms, one bathroom, one sunroom and a hallway with storage
- Third floor: Two bedrooms, one bathroom, one extra room that has an external door and one storage room
- Basement: Multiple rooms

The landlord is currently completing repairs to the building, including upgrading the residential kitchen, updating the bathrooms and installing window air conditioning units. The building has existing lockers that can be used as Amnesty Lockers (e.g., secure storage for Clients' personal belongings that are not allowed on the premises).

All rooms are unfurnished. The Successful Proposer will be expected to purchase and install basic furnishings to create a functional and comfortable environment for Clients.

**Several photographs of the site have been included as Appendix A: Site Photographs.*

C. Shelter Services

- **Shelter Operations:** The Successful Proposer will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Shelter, including but not limited to vacancy management, cleaning, maintenance, and establishing and maintaining safety protocols. The Successful Proposer will actively work to create a positive and inclusive community within the Shelter by establishing policies that promote harmony, safety and de-escalation. Shelter policies should be aimed at preventing and mitigating conflict to avoid unnecessary terminations. The Shelter staff will engage Clients in developing shared expectations on matters such as room maintenance, use of common areas and interactions with neighbors.
- **Food Access and Kitchen Operations:** The Shelter facility has a residential kitchen and Clients will be expected to prepare their own meals. Shelter staff must create a plan for day-to-day kitchen use to minimize conflict and ensure that all Clients have access to the kitchen. The Successful Proposer should ensure the kitchen is stocked with essential items and may consider establishing a standing relationship with local food pantries to do so. The Successful Proposer may also consider partnership with an outside food service to provide one prepared meal each day.
- **Housing-Focused Case Management:** Case managers must work with each Client to create a plan for securing permanent housing and provide support to the Client as they implement the plan. The ultimate goal of Shelter case management is to move Clients into permanent housing. The Successful Proposer must provide additional supportive services as needed, including but not limited to access to public benefits, health insurance, community-based behavioral health services, support to find employment and transportation.

Services must follow a Housing First model and serve Clients without regard to previous criminal history, time abstinent from substance use, employment, credit worthiness or other restrictive criteria. The Successful Proposer must be committed to providing high-quality, inclusive and culturally responsive services to all Clients regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), intellectual or physical ability, English language proficiency or life experiences.

D. Referrals, Intake and Collaboration with Coordinated Entry System

The Shelter will operate on an “invitation-only” basis, meaning access will be managed by Coordinated Entry via the Office of Community Services Field Unit (OCS Field Unit). As vacancies arise, individuals will be identified by the OCS Field Unit in collaboration with the local network of street outreach providers. The Successful Proposer must complete intakes within 24 hours of referral (same day intakes are preferred). The Successful Proposer is not expected to reject any referral through this process and cannot enroll Clients who do not come directly from the Coordinated Entry system.

Shelter staff must ensure ongoing communication with the Coordinated Entry system (via the Allegheny Link and/or OCS Field Unit staff) for continued assessment and service planning.

E. Staffing & Staff Qualifications

The Successful Proposer will establish a staffing complement with sufficient full-time staff equivalents with qualifications to address the target population's shelter and housing needs. The Shelter must be staffed 24/7/365.

At a minimum, Shelter staff will have:

- Passion for helping individuals experiencing homelessness find permanent housing.
- Previous experience working successfully with individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Clear understanding of how trauma impacts behavior.
- Training and/or work experience using crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques.
- A toolkit for case management that includes Motivational Interviewing, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care and Mental Health First Aid.
- Strong and up-to-date knowledge of local social services, including those that offer support for individuals experiencing homelessness and additional concerns such as intimate partner violence, Substance Use Disorder (SUD), HIV/AIDS and mental health challenges.

Additionally, the Successful Proposer will ensure that all staff receive ongoing professional development and training in best practices for delivering low-barrier shelter services.

F. Data Collection and Evaluation

The Successful Proposer must collect data in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a database managed by DHS that tracks demographic and outcome data for Clients experiencing homelessness. The Successful Proposer must input data in an accurate and timely manner (e.g., within 48 hours of Clients' entry into and exit from the Shelter.) The Successful Proposer must work closely with DHS staff to continuously monitor and improve the Shelter services and operations. Additionally, the Successful Proposer must participate actively in annual Point-in-Time Count data collection and other initiatives to strengthen the CoC crisis response system.

G. Performance Outcomes

The following are the performance outcome benchmarks for all shelters in the CoC:

- Average length of stay in Shelter of 30 days or fewer
- 60% or more Shelter Clients exit to permanent housing
- 5% or fewer involuntary terminations in the Shelter
- 10% or fewer of Shelter Clients return to homelessness within two years
- Increased percentage of Clients with medical coverage

The Successful Proposer must also meet the following administrative outcomes:

- 5% or less data missing in HMIS
- 75% or more assessments within three days of program entry
- 75% or more assessments within three days of program exit

H. Budget

Proposers must submit a one-year budget and budget narrative for Shelter services, including start-up expenses. The budget may include, but is not limited to, the following categories:

- Start-up costs (e.g., furnishings, supplies)
- Staffing expenses
- Cleaning and maintenance
- Food and meal services (note: this line item may include the cost of providing one prepared meal daily)
- Administrative expenses, not to exceed 10% of total budget

Note: The Successful Proposer is expected to lease the building from the owner, Residential Resources, Inc. (RRI). Rent expenses should not be included in the proposed budget; instead, DHS will add the rent amount to the Successful Proposer's approved budget once finalized.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

DHS will evaluate Proposals based upon the evaluation criteria listed below. Evaluators may also consider any relevant experience DHS may have with a Proposer. Proposers must address their experience and 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 80 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Important Note:

To expedite a thorough evaluation process and begin operation of the Shelter as soon as possible, DHS has pre-scheduled a date for oral presentations (see Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal) for Proposers shortlisted for further review, to learn more about their organization and proposed plan for operating the Shelter.

DHS will invite a shortlist of Proposers to make formal oral presentations to the Evaluation Committee on Thursday, September 14, 2023. Proposers applying for this RFP must be available to present an hour-long presentation on this date, including 30 minutes in total for the presentation followed by a 30-minute question and answer period. The oral presentation invitation will be sent by email from DHSProposals@Alleghenycounty.US to the authorized representative listed on your Response Form, with high importance, and the email subject line, "Allegheny County DHS Oral Presentation Invitation: Small Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter RFP."

The oral presentations should supplement, not duplicate, the information included in the written proposal and include an in-depth discussion of anticipated implementation challenges and

strategies to address those challenges. Further criteria for oral presentations are outlined below *Budget and Budget narrative.*

Organizational Experience (20 points total)

- Past success delivering high quality, low-barrier services to individuals experiencing homelessness, including how the organization implements principles of Housing First, Harm Reduction and Trauma-Informed Care (10 points)
- Strong organizational and management structure, including evidence of internal communication, external coordination, a strong financial accounting system, and absence of unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants (5 points)
- Experience and demonstrated success in meeting standards for managing data entry (5 points)

Program Strategy (40 points total)

- Comprehensive plan for delivering each of the Shelter program components outlined in the Service Description (15 points):
 - Shelter Operations including Food Access and Kitchen Operations
 - Housing-Focused Case Management
- Approach to creating a safe and inclusive community and fostering positive relationships among Clients, staff and the local neighborhood (15 points)
- Strategy to quickly manage referrals and Client intake (5 points)
- Identification of key external partners and a description of their roles within the proposed program strategy (5 points)

Program Staffing and Administration (10 points total)

- Justified staffing plan including a list of all staff positions, number of staff and work hours for each position, qualifications, recruitment, training and performance management (10 points)

Budget and Budget Narrative (10 points total)

- Detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic and cost-effective estimate of the start-up and operational costs associated with the first year of Shelter services (5 points)
- Budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed budget (5 points)

Oral Presentations

Oral Presentations will be scored according to the criteria outlined in Section 5.1.e. Oral presentations may include specifics not listed here as long as they stay within the 30-minute time period, but, in general, your presentation should focus on the specifics outlined below:

- Brief overview of your organization
 - Discussion of experience handling government funding, fiscal oversight and data accountability

- Brief overview of your Proposal
 - Highlight the three (3) most critical components of your shelter operation approach and why they're crucial to successful operation of the Shelter.
- Discussion of potential implementation challenges and a plan for overcoming them
- Open Question & Answer with the Evaluation Committee

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Submit a Proposal

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For)
 - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How DHS 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 on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) on our [DHS Bonfire Portal](#) and on our Active Solicitations webpage with the RFP announcement at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- c. Collaborative Proposals
 - Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner to apply together, are permitted. Collaborative Proposals should include:
 - i. Lead Agency: The County can enter into 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 commits to their role in providing the Contract Services.
 - Entities may participate in more than one Collaborative Proposal.
- d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - Partner commitment letters, if applicable
 - W-9
 - Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 7.1 and 7.2)
- e. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed either above or in the Response Form.
- f. Proposers must make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts or page limits specified in the Response Form.
- g. **Proposals must be submitted electronically by logging into or creating an account on Bonfire at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> and uploading the required**

submission documents to the appropriate [RFP Opportunity Page](#) no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, August 31, 2023, to be considered for review. If you are having trouble making an account or uploading your documents, please contact Bonfire Support. You can also reach out to the DHS Procurement Team at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us or (412) 350-6352.

- h. All Proposals must be submitted before the deadline! Once the deadline has passed, the RFP Opportunity Page will no longer accept Proposals. 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.
- i. 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 and RFP Communications

- a. If you have any questions about this RFP, please use the Vendor Discussion feature through the DHS Bonfire Portal at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> on the RFQ Opportunity Page, or email us at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.
 - a. All content-related questions must be submitted by the Questions Deadline at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, August 18, 2023.
 - b. You may submit technical or logistical questions at any time, even after the Questions Deadline.
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to all content-related questions and any changes or amendments, will be posted on the Bonfire RFP Opportunity Page and on our Active Solicitations website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. Once you have created an account and indicated you are interested in this RFP, you will receive automatic email updates through Bonfire when any questions, changes or amendments are available.
 - a. Please check our DHS Bonfire Portal and the website regularly for answers to questions, additional information and changes to the RFP or the RFP process.
 - b. The webpage will be updated only on Thursdays, with any new information visible after 6 p.m.
 - c. The last Q&A and website update for this RFP will be on Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 6 p.m. We will make every effort not to post any new information after this time; however, we reserve the right to post new information in emergency circumstances.

4.4 New Provider Requirements

Any Successful Proposer(s) who does not have a current Allegheny County DHS contract must submit the DHS New Provider Application and its supporting documents upon Notice of Intent to Award. Proposers are not required to submit this documentation with their Proposal.

- a. The DHS New Provider Application is available at our Active Solicitations website under the “Required documents” bar at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

- b. The DHS New Provider Application asks for audited financial reports for the last three years. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer may submit other financial documentation that attests to the financial health of the organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.

4.5 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 to not 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).

4.6 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, provider representative(s), representative(s) from key partners or funders, and DHS 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 discretion to either: (1) recommend to the DHS Director that a reduced number of Proposals be shortlisted for more extensive review through a formal oral presentation to the Committee, interview or a site visit or (2) recommend to the DHS Director that DHS request authorization for the County to enter into an Agreement(s) with the Successful Proposer(s).
- e. As described in d 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 well prepared (5 points)
- f. DHS will tally the 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 scores and arrive at a consensus as to 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 DHS Director for approval. The Director will, in turn, submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an 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. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer’s references.
 - j. 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.
 - k. 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.**
 - l. All Proposers will be notified of the County’s final decision of which Proposer(s) will be awarded an Agreement.
 - m. 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, Successful 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. In addition, Successful Proposers must be able to meet the insurance requirements necessary to provide the Contract Services. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County and the insurance requirements are available in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#) and the [Insurance Requirements Overview](#) at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations under the “Required documents.”

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” to help the County meet 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 can 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” to help the County meet 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 are 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 that language resources are secured and/or made available for participants/consumers/clients with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers. Such actions may 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).