



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# RFQ Response Form

## RFQ for Student Assistance Programs

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name: Holy Family Institute

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Susan Neszpaul, EVP of Philanthropy; Anita Kinsley, EVP of Social Services

Address: 8235 Ohio River Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15202

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: www.hfi-pgh.org

Legal Status:  For-Profit Corp.  Nonprofit Corp.  Sole Proprietor  Partnership

Date Incorporated: 1905

Partners and/or Subcontractors included in this Application: N/A

How did you hear about this RFQ? *Please be specific.* Allegheny County DHS email list

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing?  Yes  No

### REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Sister Linda Yankoski	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Contract Processing Contact	Susan Neszpaul	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Information Officer	Jeffrey Overman	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Financial Officer	Mark Palastro	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Darlene Ward	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

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\* [MPER](#) is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.

### BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.  
See attachment.

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Staci L. Brogan, Chair, Board of Directors

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: [REDACTED]

### REFERENCES

**Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization.**

*Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

Joe Martonik  
MAPS Coordinator  
Moon Area School District

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Relationship: September 2015 to present, provide Mental Health Outpatient Counseling within Moon Area School District, July 2017 to present, provide SAP services within the Moon Area School District

Carla Antoniades  
Special Education Supervisor  
Cornell School District

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Relationship: September 2015 to present, provide Mental Health Outpatient Counseling within Cornell School District and Holy Family Institute's SNAP behavior intervention for children ages 6-11, July 2017 to present, provide SAP services within the Cornell School District

Eric Sparkenbaugh  
Assistant Superintendent

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Montour School District  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Relationship: September 2015 to present, provide Mental Health Outpatient Counseling within Montour School District, July 2017 to present, provide SAP services within the Montour School District

### **APPLICATION INFORMATION**

Date Submitted 1/21/2022

Amount Requested: \$1,610,400

### **CERTIFICATION**

Please check the following before submitting your Application, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Application, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFQ.

Choose one:

My Application contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Application and providing contact information.

OR

My Application does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

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- Current mental health- and drug and alcohol-related licensures and certificates of compliance
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9

### **CAPACITY AND PREFERENCE**

**List your top three preferences for school districts that you would like to serve.**

Northgate, Cornell, Moon, Montour, Baldwin, Brentwood, Deer Lakes, North Hills, South Fayette, Quaker Valley

**List your current SAP capacity, if any (e.g., how many school districts do you currently serve? How many SAP Liaisons do you currently employ?).**

HFI currently employs two full-time SAP Liaisons and a SAP Coordinator who provides assessments and referrals to assigned schools. We serve 10 school districts:

- Northgate
- Cornell
- Moon
- Montour
- Baldwin
- Brentwood
- Deer Lakes
- North Hills
- South Fayette
- Quaker Valley

During the last year, our SAP served 484 students in these districts.

**List your ideal SAP capacity (i.e., I currently serve 2 school districts, but I hope to serve 5).**

HFI wishes to maintain our current coverage area and partnerships with these 10 school districts. However, demand for SAP has risen dramatically in almost every district over the past year. For example, in the first four months of the 2021-22 school year, our SAP team performed 431 screens – more than 85% of the total screening volume from the full 2020-21 year. Due to this increased demand, HFI wishes to continue providing quality service by adding two SAP Liaisons and additional supervisory support to our team.

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### QUALIFICATIONS

Please respond to the following questions. The maximum score an Application can receive is 105 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 15 pages.

#### Organizational Experience (25 points)

1. Describe your experience identifying children and families in need of mental health supports and connecting them to appropriate services based on your working knowledge of the mental health system in Allegheny County.

The mission of Holy Family Institute (HFI) is to help children and families develop healthy and responsible lives based on faith, hope and love. For the last 120 years, HFI has adapted to the changing needs of families and collaborated with partners to develop innovative models of care. Although the agency's scope has evolved in recent years – from an orphanage, to a community residential care center, to a social services agency – our mission remains unchanged. HFI's capacity to provide mental health support is based on this deep history of residential and community-based care.

HFI launched our Outpatient Mental Health services in 1998, and today holds licenses in 28 school districts and community offices. Last year, the program served 363 clients with an average length of service at almost eight months. This includes 109 clients ages 6-13; 77 clients ages 14-17; 139 clients ages 18-59; and 9 clients over age 60. As a current SAP provider and one of the region's most visible mental health care providers, HFI specializes in engaging whole families in service, building resilient connections with school staff, and maintaining strong connections to the wider community of care.

HFI currently offers comprehensive, culturally sensitive mental health services that include psychological and trauma assessments, clinical counseling (individual/family/group), medication management, and drug and alcohol counseling. The agency takes a trauma-informed approach that prioritizes psychoeducation, emotional regulation, and family/community support. Our current service lines include outpatient mental health counseling (in schools and community offices), mobile drug and alcohol counseling (for adults, adolescents, and students), In-Home Family Services (in Allegheny and Armstrong), and child- and family-serving, evidence-based programs including Stop Now And Plan, Visit Coaching, and Parents and Children Together.

Our mental health service lines provide counseling for students of all ages, clients from diverse ethnic backgrounds, families seeking therapy together, and individuals involved with the court and juvenile probation systems. Each of these programs also coordinates heavily with the community of local providers, making referrals if its service offerings are not the appropriate type or level of care (*please see list of referral partners in answer to Question 6*). Our capacity to build strong school partnerships, provide quality care, and make knowledgeable referrals demonstrate our capacity to continue delivering SAP.

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2. Describe your experience identifying children and families in need of drug and alcohol supports and connecting them to appropriate services based on your working knowledge of the drug and alcohol system in Allegheny County.

HFI has a long history of supporting young clients in need of drug and alcohol supports, first through our Shores program and later through SAP and evidence-based programs. Shores, which has operated in Allegheny County for more than 20 years, is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) and currently serves an average of 550 clients each year. Shores is the only licensed drug and alcohol provider in Allegheny County to offer extensive, mobile in-home and school-based treatment services. Its counselors provide services in homes, schools, and community offices throughout Allegheny County. When working in schools, Shores clinicians work in conjunction with school staff (guidance counselors, social workers, school psychologists, SAP personnel, and school-based probation officers) to meet the needs of the children and the school's administration and faculty.

HFI's other drug and alcohol treatment programs include Home-Based Family Recovery (long-term counseling and service coordination for families), Family and Recovery Services (service coordination and psychoeducation), and Intervention Services (group counseling and case coordination for adolescents). Together, these programs served more than 400 individuals and families last year. Each program has its own referral sources, but routinely connect with CYF offices, schools, social service agencies, and other drug and alcohol providers to introduce the services and their benefits.

Our drug and alcohol treatment professionals are skilled at coordinating intakes and making referrals to the appropriate level of care. Many Shores clients are referred from the Allegheny County Court System (including Juvenile Probation), and Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth and Families. We receive counseling referrals from a range of sources, perform thorough assessment and evaluation, and deliver quality outpatient treatment or make a referral to a more appropriate level of care (*please see list of referral partners in answer to Question 6*). When higher levels of client care are needed, referrals are made within 5-7 days. Once any HFI services are complete, a follow-up is completed after 30 days to determine if more supports and services are needed.

3. Discuss your experience working in schools or with school-aged children and their families, including school-aged children and families from diverse backgrounds.

Included in HFI's current service array are many programs that serve school-age children and families from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse communities. As described above, our mental health and substance use treatment service lines are both active in local school districts. Our In-Home Family Services program has also worked with a diverse clientele for decades. (During the last fiscal year, for example, 38% of families identified as African American, 28% as white, and 10% as more than one race.) Our other in-home child welfare programs, such as Visit Coaching, Family Group Decision Making, and Family-Focused Services, serve a similarly diverse clientele. Additionally, HFI operates a bilingual, trauma-informed residential program for Spanish-speaking migrant children from Central America, and our Nazareth Prep high school is the largest private school in the region primarily serving

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African American youth (more than 80% of the student body). Serving these populations has helped the agency incorporate linguistic and cultural sensitivity into services from the point of referral.

HFI understands that cultural sensitivity is the key to genuinely transformative care that centers the needs and draws on the strengths of our clients. We have adopted a treatment philosophy that positions our staff as guides – rather than authorities – and views the culture, experiences, values, and beliefs of each family as essential ingredients to create change. Our strengths-based approach asks families to take an active role in identifying goals, deciding how to address them, and connecting with sources of cultural and community support that will remain in place after their discharge. Staff familiarize themselves with the cultural norms of their clients, including common cultural memories, religious and spiritual beliefs, attitudes toward drugs/alcohol, perception of welfare and healthcare systems, relationship and parenting norms, communication styles, and expectations about help-seeking and family involvement. They also research successful interventions in the client demographic and utilize welcoming behaviors and active listening.

Our hiring practices, training regimen and supervisory model are also designed to promote staff diversity and recognize how cultural biases interfere with care. As described further below, all staff receive training in trauma-informed and culturally-informed practices designed to increase cultural knowledge and reinforce culturally responsive policies. We have a longitudinal training schedule that emphasizes experiential learning and ongoing mentorship to help counselors align their services with our ethos of culturally relevant care. Past sessions have covered trauma theory and active listening, SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), and cultural competence within the American Indian, African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and LGBTQ+ communities. This approach helps staff examine personal knowledge and biases while self-assessing their attitudes and response toward individuals of different cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

4. Please attach your current mental health- and drug and alcohol-related licensures and certificates of compliance. These attachments are not included in page count.

### **Service Delivery (50 points)**

5. Describe your plan for providing screenings within 30 days of the SAP Team's recommendation for screening. What obstacles do you foresee in completing screenings in a timely manner and how will you overcome them?

Upon identification of the student to receive service, HFI SAP Liaisons contact the family before the end of the day. After gaining parental permission for service, the Liaison schedules a screening with the student. (If the family does not immediately respond, SAP counselors work with school personnel to make contact as quickly as possible.) Screenings are performed within 30 days, in order of referral. Some students also need prompt screening for substance use and/or mental health concerns. In these cases, the SAP counselor makes a referral to HFI's Shores program. A licensed clinician then performs the appropriate assessment, following DDAP

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standards, within 48 hours for priority populations and within 7 days for all other referrals. After discussing initial results with parents, the SAP liaison provides recommendations for further screenings, assessments, and services.

Over the past few years, our SAP team has observed several common barriers to timely intake and service. The first is lack of family response and permission, particularly in cases when the student expresses a desire for service. If youth are not of consenting age, the SAP Liaison reaches back out to school administrators to intensify efforts to connect with the family. Another barrier is students who do not desire/refuse the service. In these cases, the SAP counselor attempts to complete three meetings before evaluating the student's engagement. Students often resist early in the process, then begin to see the benefits of service after they build rapport with their counselor.

Other common issues include student absence from school and decreasing family engagement during the period of service. HFI SAP has addressed these by gathering contextual information about family background (usually with help from school administration) prior to start of service, checking in frequently with families to understand when scheduling obstacles arise, and occasionally making in-person visits to the student's home.

6. Describe your plan for involving diverse families in initial SAP activities, especially your approach to engaging with parents.

HFI has expertise achieving buy-in from families from a variety of backgrounds, including many who are required to receive services and are not enthusiastic about participating. Achieving buy-in from everyone is critical to ensuring that families actually follow up on referrals and support their child appropriately throughout treatment. Rather than dismissing parent concerns, SAP Liaisons see resistance as an adaptive response. They build relationships by asking open-ended questions that invite clients to share about their experiences, affirm shared family strengths, and help clients clarify their needs rather than assigning a "to-do list." Using this model will position Liaisons as guides who listen to the student's needs and find the best way forward, rather than simply "telling them what to do."

Engaging families always depends on open communication and pragmatic rapport-building. SAP Liaisons build a trusting relationship with parents by emphasizing the importance of mental health care and their willingness to mitigate common service barriers. The best way to establish a relationship with a family is often finding ways to solve urgent issues, such as by scheduling medical appointments or negotiating utility bills. This process unifies the family and SAP Liaison around common goals and achieves buy-in from everyone. Respectful, honest communication are essential to helping clients identify stressors, resolve conflicts, and develop effective solutions. For these reasons, the SAP Liaison must remain aware of and sensitive to evolving family dynamics and needs throughout the duration of the service. This awareness is only possible through continued check-ins and follow-ups with everyone involved in the service coordination process, including parents, teachers, and school staff.



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In addition, HFI regularly uses the following rapport-building strategies to engage clients:

- Employing staff members who share a common culture and language with client families
- Verbally validating the experiences and perspectives of each family member
- Remaining consistently accessible, both remotely (phone, video chat) and in-person
- Reaching out frequently to monitor progress and discuss successes, obstacles, and goals
- Soliciting feedback on the service plan to ensure it aligns with evolving priorities
- Providing written materials that are suited to the family's needs, culture and education
- Providing reference checklists to guide clients independently through complex processes
- Respecting familial and cultural norms around leisure, recreation, spirituality, etc.

HFI will work with the SAP Core Team at each individual school to determine which engagement strategies are likely to be most successful for each family.

7. As stated in the RFP, DHS expects that Qualified Applicants will collaborate with the existing network of human service providers in Allegheny County to find service(s) and assistance that best fit the needs of the student and family even if the Qualified Applicant offers the needed service(s) and assistance themselves. Qualified Applicant's only priority in making referrals should be the best interest of the student and family. Describe your plan for ensuring that students and families are connected to the kinds of services and supports that best meet their needs.

HFI will encourage families to utilize other existing systems and connections to access the services they need. We know that families do not always understand how many support opportunities exist within the child welfare system. SAP Liaisons will inform students and families of the concrete supports available, help them take full advantage of services in which they are already enrolled, and identify natural supports within their cultural and spiritual communities, as described in more detail below. Additionally, group meetings with the SAP Core Team and individual conversations with the student's teachers and other school staff, help to monitor student progress and address new challenges. SAP Liaisons also utilize professional affiliations and network groups to stay abreast of local resources, activities, and opportunities.

As described above, HFI's SAP team has strong long-term referral relationships with many local agencies and organizations that provide services our students/families frequently need. These partnerships include: Human Services Administration Organization (HSAO), Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC), Mercy Behavioral Health, Family Behavioral Resources, Allegheny Health Network, Wesley Family Services, Pressley Ridge, TCV Community Services, South Hills Counseling, AIDBT Associates and Diagnostic Behavioral Testing, Children's Behavioral Services, Duquesne Light Customer Assistance Program (CAP), Dollar Energy, Upstreet, Staunton Clinic, Sprout, and Family Links.

Since HFI also delivers a wide variety of service lines, SAP Liaisons can provide seamless internal referrals to programs and services focused on client or family stabilization, such as outpatient mental health counseling, substance use treatment, or utility assistance. SAP Liaisons

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keep a reference list of hard copy literature and online resources to help families research and compare referral options.

8. How will you incorporate student and family choice into your referral process? After you make your recommendation for treatment or other services, what is your plan for providing students and families with the information they need to make the best choice about how to proceed (e.g., which provider to use, which level of treatment to accept).

HFI recognizes that giving families autonomy of choice is crucial to building rapport and finding the service that will best suit their needs. We know that parents often understand the particulars of their child's situation deeply, and always attempt to engage them as fully as possible in the process. HFI's SAP counselors function not as authorities, but as trusted guides, advisors, and supporters.

The SAP Liaison will always provide at least three referral options for each student, focusing on providers that specialize in the relevant areas and can provide culturally responsive service, no matter the student's individual identity or background. Based on prior discussions, they will also make recommendations that families can access without encountering barriers related to insurance, transportation, or scheduling. By vetting recommendations in this manner ahead of time, our Liaisons give families a genuine choice between options that will meet their needs, rather than low-quality recommendations that artificially restrict their choice.

In addition to providing hard copy literature and online resources, the SAP Liaison will provide guidance and answer specific questions as the family makes their decision. They will also help the family navigate questions about insurance, medication, scheduling, and other concerns. They provide checklists for navigating unfamiliar systems and provide reference materials that the family can read and discuss together. This ensures that the family is equipped to make an informed decision and feels comfortable and confident throughout the process. Once the student and family have selected a service provider, the SAP counselor may facilitate a meeting to formulate a list of questions and discuss what to expect at the first appointment. They may also accompany the student to the first appointment to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible.

9. Describe your plan for supporting families after a referral has been made. How will you facilitate their connection to and support them while they receive treatment or other services.

Across our mental health programs, HFI understands that it can be challenging for students and their families to remain engaged in mental health and substance use treatment. The key to engagement with these services is regular, continuous follow-up with the client and the referral provider. SAP counselors perform a timely follow-up phone call for each case and may also employ in-person meetings if necessary to connect with the student. They take pressure off families by making initial contact with the referral provider and relaying assessments and other paperwork, if necessary, and gathering consent forms.

Our SAP Liaisons also provide guidance to families by describing the referral and intake process at the new provider, helping them make the first appointment, and offering to accompany the

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student to the first session to give emotional support or liaise with the provider's office administration. Through regular follow-ups, at intervals appropriate to the level of care necessary, the SAP counselor stays informed about the student's progress and aware of issues that could arise during and after treatment. If barriers (such as transportation or insurance coverage) arise, the SAP counselor coordinates with the family, school administration, and the referral provider to find a solution so treatment can continue without disruption.

### 10. Scenario 1:

Mia is a 9-year-old female Latina student attending elementary school in a suburban school district in Allegheny County. Mia was referred to the SAP program by the school social worker for poor school attendance, homelessness, rapidly declining grades and withdrawn behavior in the classroom setting. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mia had never been referred to SAP.

School staff have had several meetings with Mia's mom regarding her grades, behaviors and attendance. At the most recent Student Attendance Improvement Plan meeting, the family disclosed that they were homeless and living with a family friend in a neighboring school district.

Mia displays poor social skills and anxiety in the classroom. She has trouble focusing and recently disclosed to the school counselor that she "doesn't know why she was born." In addition, during a warm-up activity in English Language Arts, Mia described feeling extremely sad, scared for her family and not being able to understand the activity.

Please describe in detail, referencing all four phases of the SAP process, how you would proceed with this referral from the SAP team. Please include possible referral recommendations based on concerns described.

The SAP Liaison would guide the school to obtain consent and referral forms for screening. Prior to the screening, the SAP Liaison would contact Mia's parents to obtain additional pertinent information and discuss the family situation. Should the SAP Liaison find a language challenge, arrangements will be made for a translator. During their first meeting with Mia, the SAP Liaison would take the time to explain the service and complete the CANS/screening.

After the screening, the SAP Liaison would provide recommendations to Mia, her family, and the school administration. In this situation, the SAP Liaison would likely recommend Allegheny Link and Allegheny County PA - 211 to begin addressing the family's housing situation. The liaison would also connect them to the local food bank and other housing resources. After taking into account the family's insurance coverage, location, and transportation options, they would also make referrals to several outpatient mental health therapy services including school-based therapy.

The SAP Liaison would follow up with Mia and her family to ensure that they connect with county housing supports and outpatient services that meet their needs. They would also proactively ask about barriers the family encountered and assist with overcoming those barriers and connecting promptly to services. The SAP Liaison would obtain continuous updates on Mia's progress from the assigned Case Manager on the SAP team.

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### 11. Scenario 2:

Michael is a 15-year-old student attending Brown High School. Michael's preferred pronouns are he, his and him. Michael was born female and his parents have not been accepting of his transition. They continue to use his given name, Michelle, and female pronouns, and routinely state that Michael is simply "going through a phase." Michael was referred to SAP by his school counselor due to missing several days of school and being caught on school grounds with a vape, resulting in a suspension.

Michael reports he has only used the vape once experimentally, did not like the experience and would not do it again. Michael's grades have suffered this year and his teachers report his behavior has been more withdrawn than in the past. His school counselor reports that Michael lost a few friends who were not accepting of his transition and has struggled to make new friendships. Michael has mentioned spending time with older individuals outside of school who he reports are more accepting. He becomes closed off when talking about these older friends or where he met them. Michael's parents have been in communication with the school regarding his declining grades and recent suspension. The school was able to obtain signed SAP permission from parents following the suspension.

Please describe in detail, referencing all four phases of the SAP process, how you would proceed with this referral from the SAP team. Please include possible referral recommendations based on concerns described.

As described in Scenario 1, the SAP Liaison would work with school staff to obtain consent to screen paperwork and a referral form. They would communicate with the parents prior to screening to obtain context and gain their perspective. The SAP Liaison would meet with Michael, introduce the program, services and complete the screening. They would also explain the concepts of consent and confidentiality in language he can understand, and would obtain a signed release of information for drug and alcohol information.

After the screening, the SAP liaison would provide a recommendation to the student, parents, and the school. In this situation, they would likely refer Michael to outpatient therapy to address behaviors, strained relationships with parents, loss of friendships and relationships, and poor choices in the school environment. They would then provide three outpatient provider resources, as determined by insurance and location. In order to provide services that are best suited for this student, one of these referral partners would specialize in working with the LGBTQ+ population.

The SAP Liaison would follow up with Michael and/or his family to ensure they successfully connected to services and to address any barriers that they encountered. They would report the results of screening and updates with SAP Core Team and obtain continuous updates on Michael's progress from the assigned case manager.

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12. Describe why the SAP program is important and your vision for an SAP liaison's relationship and work with school staff, students and families.

We believe that SAP is a crucial part of the mental healthcare continuum because of its visibility within the community and responsiveness to the immediate needs of children and families. Meeting with a SAP liaison is sometimes the only mental health resource available to some students and families facing complex challenges.

We understand that school administrators are not familiar with the full range of services available for their students. The mission of SAP is to raise awareness of these options, build trust and rapport with students who may not be initially receptive to mental health treatment, and make connecting students with the services they need as easy and seamless as possible. The SAP Liaison should be seen by students as a trusted advocate, by families as a helpful service navigator, and by school staff as a knowledgeable and competent educator.

While building our team and forming relationships with school districts, HFI has envisioned SAP as an important provider of guidance, advocacy, awareness, and education. Our SAP liaisons familiarize themselves with the needs of their schools and build relationships with key stakeholders like teachers, student support staff, guidance counselors, school counselors, probation officers, and parent groups. They are responsible for communicating the importance of SAP in methods that are appropriate and valuable for each of these audiences. Additionally, their knowledge of the behavioral healthcare system and strong connections with community resources, local resources, and quality referral partners make them a key point of contact within the school environment.

13. Describe your plan for providing postvention services. How would you respond if a school district requested a postvention in the summer months?

When approaching a postvention, HFI SAP staff immediately meet with the school district's key staff, as well as the deceased student's teachers, to discuss background on the student, family, and reported situation. They also listen to staff and faculty needs before developing a strategy that is customized for this school community. The strategy typically serves three purposes:

- Managing the immediate crisis of suicide and reducing the likelihood of others;
- Helping the bereaved cope with the immediate and long-term effects; and
- Returning schools and communities to regular routines.

HFI will provide trained SAP Liaisons in an expedited manner to handle the setup of services to the students, staff, faculty, and community; HFI will stay involved for as long as needed to process, guide, and support. Affected individuals will be monitored and treated in an efficient and timely manner as the situation and community factors warrant.

In the event of a summer- or break-time postvention, HFI responds immediately with the approach described above; SAP Liaisons are expected to maintain availability year-round, including school holiday and summer breaks. When a postvention occurs in the summer, or during another school break, the district typically contacts HFI's SAP Supervisor and

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immediately begins to discuss needed the necessary supports. After determining need, the SAP Supervisor reaches out to Liaisons and coordinates an appropriate type and level of support for the school. If SAP Liaisons are not available for any reason, HFI has additional staff in other departments with SAP training and certification, who are able to provide emergency support. HFI also utilizes therapists and counselors from other programs for support, as needed.

14. How will you maintain a strong relationship with the school you serve and be dynamic, flexible and responsive to their needs?

The Director of Behavioral Health Services visits each school at the beginning of the year to meet with the SAP Core Team, collect feedback from the prior year, and discuss anticipated needs for the upcoming year. Throughout the year, SAP Liaisons serve as the primary connection with the school, functioning as the face of the service to staff, families, and students. As described above, the Liaisons will prioritize open communication, useful education, and prompt resource coordination to earn buy-in from school staff.

HFI has found that this personal connection with the SAP Liaison – as well as regular presence in the school offices – is essential to integrating SAP into the district’s student services continuum. When challenges arise, the Liaison understands the wider context, and staff feel comfortable and confident raising the issue with their SAP Liaison. The Director of Behavioral Health Services also checks in with the school, the SAP Core Team, and the SAP Liaisons throughout the year to ensure that the desired outcomes and impacts are being achieved and that communication between all parties is effective.

### **Staffing (10 points)**

15. Describe your plan for recruiting and retaining qualified and diverse staff, including your plan for filling staff vacancies in a timely way.

Our ideal staffing plan for servicing our existing 10 school districts would be four full-time SAP Liaisons and one SAP Supervisor who would also provide SAP services to assigned schools. We believe the two additional staff positions will help address the dramatic increase of SAP referrals during FY21-22. The expansion of the SAP Coordinator’s role into that of a SAP Supervisor will also provide the SAP Liaisons with additional support and coverage when referral volume is high and timely response is critical. Three of these positions are currently filled, and two are proposed new positions. HFI regularly fills positions through internal promotion, ensuring that employees are committed to our core mission, knowledgeable about local family support resources, and skilled at serving clients from diverse backgrounds. This existing staff pool is diverse and reflective of the demographic we generally serve. (As an example, our current In-Home Family Services staff is 60% African American and 40% white – as well as 20% male and 80% female – while staff in our Visit Coaching program are 70% African American and 30% white, and 100% female.)

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The HFI Human Resources Department also recruits from LinkedIn, Indeed, Non-Profit Talent, and other online employment posting sites. All candidates, regardless of recruitment source, are carefully assessed based on academic/professional qualifications, familiarity with local support structures (including CYF), experience working with a culturally diverse clientele, and demonstrated competency working within a trauma-informed approach. If turnover occurs, the EVP of Social Services and Director of Behavioral Health Services will work with HR to prioritize hiring. As described above, HFI's SAP team will also minimize the impact of staff turnover by holding regular staff meetings to discuss caseloads.

HFI crafts policies to improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover to keep our programs responsive, creative, and demographically aligned with the populations that we serve. We retain knowledgeable staff with living wages, an excellent benefits package, generous continuing education benefits, and a trauma-informed supervision model that emphasizes mentoring and collaboration. Supervisors ask staff for their perspective on challenges, suggest ways they can prioritize self-care, and use regular meetings to encourage honest communication, and help staff respond to challenging cases with compassion and respect. Therapists are also encouraged to create a self-care plan with activities and a personal safety plan to deal with traumatizing events. HFI deliberately fosters a positive culture where staff members feel a sense of mission and mutual support. Should issues arise, staff are reminded and encouraged to make anonymous reports of unethical, illegal, or inappropriate behavior. HFI also has an employee assistance program – available on demand – that addresses emergency issues related to mental health, work environment, finances, and relationships.

### **16. Describe your expectations for SAP staff.**

HFI has high standards for staff ethics, conduct, and knowledge. All SAP Liaisons must have a bachelor's degree (in mental health, drug and alcohol treatment, or education), as well as experience in the behavioral health field. Liaisons must also complete industry-relevant professional development credits every year in order to train, re- train, or improve their skills and knowledge. We expect our SAP Liaisons to be not only be dynamic communicators, but also connected to local resources, skilled in collecting and reporting client data, and confident navigating databases at the State, County, and agency level. All Liaisons are required to maintain comprehensive records and remain highly sensitive to individual privacy. We expect staff to keep clean client files, including consent forms, contact notes, and detailed touchpoint reports for each interaction with school staff, SAP Core Team, parents, and/or students.

Our SAP Liaisons participate in mandatory and supplemental SAP training sessions, as well as regular orientation training with HFI and Allegheny County Department of Human Services. HFI also provides SAP Core Team Training (by a state approved trainer); DHS New Hire Service Coordination Training; CANS Screening Tool Training; State Department Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) Confidentiality training; CIPS (the County Department of Human Services' client information/payment system) training; DDAP Addiction 101; and an additional 12 hours of approved supplemental training each year.

HFI has found that visibility and education are key to keeping the service “top of mind” among school staff, parents, and other community members. To improve efficiency, Liaisons

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are expected to continually build rapport with teachers, nurses, counselors, principals, and others involved in the SAP Core Team, and to communicate with them via text, email, phone, in-person meetings, or other streams of communication as necessary. For example, they may use brochures, information packets, newsletters, emails, presentations in staff/faculty meetings, booths at parent-teacher conferences, and informational sessions at school board meetings to build awareness of the program. SAP Liaisons must also be proactive in directly promoting the service and communicating its benefits to key school personnel.

Additionally, in keeping with our trauma-informed model of engagement, all HFI employees are expected to treat clients and colleagues with dignity and respect. We ask SAP Liaisons to provide a safe environment where students and families can speak honestly about their challenges and struggles. HFI will provide ongoing education, leadership, and resources to equip staff to meet these expectations.

### **Data Collection and Delivery (10 points)**

17. Describe your plan for tracking, entering and reporting data in a timely way.

Recognizing that timely, accurate, and transparent reporting is essential to the evaluation process, HFI has already established a strong client data collection and reporting plan for SAP. HFI utilizes logic models and a comprehensive program monitoring system to evaluate our effectiveness over time. We analyze data to make organizational improvements, strengthen our engagement with clients, and identify problems as early as possible. At HFI, data collection is guided by PQI standards from the Council on Accreditation (COA) governing data infrastructure, performance and outcomes measures, case review, and analysis and reporting of data. Staff also receive comprehensive training on HIPAA standards, including minimum breach and disclosure, access and facilities control, workstation security, and authentication guidelines. In addition, all staff have mobile technology to ensure that program data and documentation can be submitted in a timely manner. Logic models, outcomes, and all data collection, tracking and reporting activities are monitored jointly by program supervisors, department supervisors, and HFI's Director of Risk, Quality and Compliance (RQC). Within SAP, oversight of data is the responsibility of the SAP Liaison Supervisor, Director of Behavioral Healthcare Services, and EVP of Social Services.

The SAP team also meets quarterly to discuss progress toward annual outcomes and brainstorm solutions to challenges, and timely entry of data is always a key element of staff performance review. At the end of each quarter, the Director of Behavioral Healthcare Services and Director of RQC will also compile a comprehensive audit that summarizes overall service delivery, describes notable trends, identifies areas for discussion or improvement, and aligns SAP with overall benchmarks in HFI's Outpatient Mental Health Services Department.



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18. Describe your plan for quality assurance, including which data elements you will look at to monitor quality.

Quality assurance and improvement is a cornerstone of HFI's standard service process and is monitored at three levels: the program level with the Risk, Quality, and Compliance Department; at the agency level with the Holy Family Quality Improvement Committee (who meet quarterly); and at the Board level with the Risk, Quality, and Compliance Board of Directors Committee (who meet quarterly). These evaluations not only allow for strategic quality improvement, but also illuminate areas of emerging concern and document the ongoing value of the program.

As detailed above, HFI's Director of RQC collaborates with program staff to refine evaluation strategies using client-focused data and outcomes. These items are aligned with COA standards, as well as HFI quality controls. Program staff receive timely communication about goals, which they integrate into their daily work. The Director of RQC also identifies trends by tracking and comparing student outcomes across school districts. Where variation occurs, they help the SAP team identify key underlying variables and make changes that benefit staff who encounter challenging situations.

The core outcome in HFI's current SAP Logic Model is for 70% of clients to be successfully connected to at least one service. Additional outcomes include: successful completion of referred programs (demonstrating suitability/effectiveness of referral); increase in improved functioning in school (demonstrating social and academic growth); and percent of follow through with referrals (demonstrating successful service recommendation and utilization, as well as effectiveness of SAP in addressing barriers).

Methods of data collection include client satisfaction surveys and follow-up calls. Surveys are administered to students, families, and school districts through online forms, mail, email, or in-person contact as appropriate. All required data will be entered into the appropriate State, County, and internal HFI databases in a timely manner. At present, SAP Liaisons record the basic demographics of all students who receive screening. They also track the number of referrals, type of referrals, and number of successful service connections. If a client does not follow up on a referral, they record the reason (common challenges include lack of insurance, parent refusal, and student refusal of service). HFI SAP tracks these metrics to determine if there are any common barriers and determine if there are additional steps needed to overcome these barriers to resources.

**Budget (10 points possible) is not included in page count. You may submit the budget as an attachment [e.g., Excel file] or in the space below.**

19. Provide a detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining your organization's SAP at the ideal capacity you listed in the beginning of the Application.

Attached.

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20. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed line-item budget.

### **SAP Budget Narrative**

#### **SALARY**

**Executive Vice President of Social Services** - (\$5,238) The Director will oversee the project at 5% of her full-time equivalent. She supervises the Director of Behavioral Healthcare Services and is ultimately responsible for the delivery of the SAP in selected school districts, with reporting and other oversight by Allegheny County Department of Human Services.

**Director of Behavioral Health Services** – (\$24,822) The Director of Behavioral Health will serve at 33% and oversee the SAP Program Supervisor and five FT SAP liaisons, which will be housed under the Behavioral Health Division.

**SAP Program Supervisor** – (\$50,200) The supervisor will be responsible for overseeing and training of the SAP liaisons, evaluation, Joint Quarterly Reporting System, regular supervision and team meetings.

**Administrative Assistant** – (\$6,634) The Administrative Assistant in the Outpatient Mental Health Services Division is FT and will work on the grant contracts at 20%. This person will manage professional development tracking; forms; and correspondence, while setting up meetings, identifying specific information, and entering Holy Family, County and State client data.

**SAP Liaisons** (\$226,000) – The SAP Liaisons will provide the direct service to the school districts as outlined in the RFP and Holy Family proposal. The cost reflects 5 FTE's with a capacity of 4,025 billable hours. Liaisons also will be available during the summer months and school holiday breaks if needed.

**Overtime** – (\$5,000) Overtime is calculated at 5% for non-exempt employees.

**FRINGE BENEFITS & TAXES** – (\$95,368) Fringe Benefits are calculated at current tax and insurance rates. Holy Family provides employer-paid medical and dental insurance, disability insurance, workers compensation insurance, State unemployment insurance, social security, Medicare, and retirement benefits. This number also includes tuition reimbursement, and the wellness program.

**STAFF TRAINING / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – (\$6,000) This cost reflects SAP required and supplemental training, as well as professional development offered by Allegheny County DHS, approved trainers, and related experts in the mental health/substance abuse industries.

**EMPLOYEE RELATED/RECRUITMENT** – (\$600) This cost represents drug screens and background checks for new employees.

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**PROFESSIONAL FEES** – (\$6,272) This cost represents fees to attend professional conference related to statewide student assistance initiative.

**SUPPLIES** – (\$900) This includes general office supplies, such as folders, copier paper, letterhead, pens, etc.

**COMMUNICATION** – (\$9,652) This is based upon telecommunications and data lines/hot spots.

**POSTAGE** – (\$500) Postage for all correspondence to districts, DHS, and provider. May include mail to families too. Regular postage, certified mail, and overnight mail.

**OCCUPANCY** – (\$8,003) Occupancy includes office space, utilities, and repairs/maintenance.

**EQUIPMENT** – (\$8,300) This cost represents computers, office furniture (chairs, desks, tables). This will be purchased as the staff is hired.

**PRINT/PUBLICATIONS** – (\$1,000) This cost represents business cards, and copy-scan-fax machine lease and machine maintenance.

**TRAVEL** – (\$12,000) Travel costs are based upon historical staff data and Holy Family's mileage reimbursement rate of .57/per mile. This budget line also includes parking costs.

**CLIENT EXPENSE** – (\$400) This includes costs for group exercises, art supplies, and food for students.

**DUES** – (\$200) Dues includes membership in the Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals.

**INDIRECT COSTS** – (\$58,224) Risk-Quality Assurance Manager, Finance personnel, Human Resources, Marketing Manager, Grant Writer, Facilities, and related administrative expenses. Indirect cost rate of 12.37%.