



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# RFP Response Form

## RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports

### PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Casa San Jose

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Karen Stoila, Development and Finance Director

Address: 2116 Broadway Ave Pittsburgh PA 15216

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: srkaren@casasanjose.org

Website: casasanjose.org

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

Date Incorporated: 2014

Partners included in this Proposal: NA

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* DHS RFP ListServe

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	Monica Ruiz	[REDACTED]	monica@casasanjose.org
Contract Processing Contact	Karen Stoila	[REDACTED]	srkaren@casasanjose.org
Chief Information Officer	Sebastian Garetto	[REDACTED]	sebastian@casasanjose.org
Chief Financial Officer	Karen Stoila	[REDACTED]	srkaren@casasanjose.org
MPER Contact*	Karen Stoila	[REDACTED]	srkaren@casasanjose.org

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

## RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports

### BOARD INFORMATION

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

Attached

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Patricia Documet, MD, DrPH, Associate Professor, Behavioral and Community Health Sciences Associate Professor, Clinical and Translational Science, Scientific Director, Center for Health Equity, Associate Director, Evaluation Institute, Associate Professor, Center for Latin American Studies

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.*

Dr Maya Ragavan, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, University of Pittsburgh and UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, [REDACTED] / [REDACTED], [ragavanm@chp.edu](mailto:ragavanm@chp.edu)

Dr. Diego Chaves-Gnecco MD, MPH, FAAP , University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Associate Professor, SALUD PARA NIÑOS Program Director & Founder, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.  
Address: UPMC Children's Hospital Oakland Medical Building, 3420 Fifth Avenue / Euler way Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
Phone number: Office (412) 692-6000, Fax (412) 692-6660  
Email: [diego.chavesgnecco@chp.edu](mailto:diego.chavesgnecco@chp.edu)

M. Patty Nuhfer, PhD, BCBA-D, NCSP. Licensed Psychologist (PA, KS, PsyPact)  
Emails: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
Phone: [REDACTED]

# **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

## **PROPOSAL INFORMATION**

Date Submitted 8/8/2022

Amount Requested: \$340,652

## **CERTIFICATION**

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, 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 Proposal, 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 RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal 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 Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal 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>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9
- At least one letter of support from a community-based organization or community member

## **REQUIREMENTS**

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 125 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 12 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

### **Experience and Leadership (25 points possible)**

1. Describe your organization's experience providing services to/in communities that have been marginalized by mainstream systems.

Casa San Jose is one of the longest Latino-serving organizations in Allegheny County and we have been working with the Latino community since 2014. Casa works with clients who are mostly low-income Latino individuals and families, non-English speakers, recent immigrant arrivals, and Latinos of mixed-immigration status. We also work with DACA recipients and immigrants who have been in the country for many years. Casa serves about 4,000 individuals annually.

Individuals who come to Casa are met by Casa's qualified staff of caring professionals who have the language skills and cultural knowledge to help people going through the extremely difficult process of establishing a new life in a new country while not understanding the language or the legal, social and health systems. The people we serve are marginalized by mainstream systems due to lack of language accessible services (most of our community members do not speak English), lack of understanding public resources and systems (many Latinos are from countries with limited public resources and services), and cultural barriers. As an organization we understand the unique needs of the Latino community and have built an organization that listens to the community, a place where Latinos feel welcomed and where they can access a wide range of services, resources, and better understand public systems.

2. Describe your organization's experience building trust with the communities within which you work and provide at least one specific example to illustrate that experience. Attach at least one letter of support from a community-based organization or community member.

Casa San Jose is a trusted organization within the Latino community in Pittsburgh and southwestern PA. We understand the needs of Latinos and our staff has worked to build trust with the community and provide services that meet the specific needs of Latinos in southwestern Pennsylvania. Our experience lies in working hand in hand with the community and listening to the needs of individuals and the collective needs of the Latino community to understand how to best serve them. Our staff is committed to ensuring that each individual that walks through our doors or reaches out to the organization is welcomed to the community and receives appropriate services. Casa works to make certain that people's basic needs are met and that they are connected to a community of Latinos that will help them build social bonds and where they can build a joyful life.

### **Building Trust with the Latino Community (Covid Experience)**

In 2020 and 2021, the Latino community was severely impacted by the covid pandemic. Many Latinos lost their income and were not eligible for any public assistance. Casa San Jose launched the Latinx Covid Emergency Fund in spring 2020 to provide financial assistance to Latinos. From March to December 2020 Casa provided over 750 Latino households with cash assistance

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

(\$700 grants). The households receiving assistance did not receive any US federal subsidies or State unemployment benefits due to their immigration status. During cash distribution days, families and individuals also received food and necessities (PPE, cleaning supplies), vital information from other service organizations, a chance to fill out the 2020 census forms, and the knowledge that someone cares. In 2021, Casa launched the Latinx Covid Engagement Program, to ensure equitable access to the covid vaccine and covid tests, and to break through language and cultural barriers leading to vaccine hesitancy in the Latino community. Casa launched a robust engagement campaign which included: door knocking campaigns, social media campaigns, one-on-one conversations, and virtual and in-person events to create trust within the Latino community regarding the covid vaccine and the medical community. Thanks to these efforts, Casa San Jose has vaccinated 4,432 people since the covid vaccine became available and has worked with Latino clients to educate them on the importance of vaccination and help stop the spread of misinformation within the community. These are two examples of recent projects that Casa San Jose launched to respond to an arising need within the community and how Casa leveraged our position as trusted agency to ensure Latinos have access to services despite language and cultural barriers, and that Latino people have an organization they can turn to when they are in need.

3. Provide a concise statement of your organizational philosophy.

Casa San Jose is a community organization that connects, supports, and advocates with and for the Latino community. Casa's vision is a Pittsburgh region that celebrates Latino culture, welcomes immigrants, and embraces inclusion, dignity, and respect.

4. List demographic information about your organization's leadership and staff, as well as the population they serve.

### **Leadership and Staff**

Casa San Jose has a staff of 22 individuals. All our client-facing staff is fluent in Spanish, and they have the skills and knowledge necessary to work with Latino immigrants in Pittsburgh. Many of our staff are Latinos themselves who have immigrated to the US and have firsthand understanding of the struggles and difficulties of adapting to a new country and culture.

### **Population Served**

Casa works with clients who are mostly low-income Latino individuals and families, non-English speakers, recent immigrant arrivals, and Latinos of mixed-immigration status. We also work with DACA recipients and immigrants who have been in the country for many years.

## **Project Details (50 points possible)**

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

5. Describe what Informal Mental Health Support services your proposed Project will provide, and the intended outcomes you hope to achieve. Include how the Project will meet one or more of the goals listed in RFP Section 2.1.

In 2020 as a response to the growing need of mental health support within the Latino community, Casa San Jose launched a pilot mental health program to support Latinos in need of mental health services. This project helped identify Latinos in need of support, provided screenings and referrals, and coordinated access to mental health providers with the cultural understanding and language ability to serve our clients. The response was overwhelming and in the first six months Casa served 65 cases. In Spring 2021, Casa established the project as a permanent program with a full-time Mental Health Coordinator. In 2022, Casa expanded the program and has two Mental Health Coordinators to manage the caseload.

Casa's Mental Health Support Program assists Latinos struggling with mental health issues and/or behavioral issues (for children) through individual case management and small support groups.

### **Individual Case Management**

Casa San Jose's Mental Health Coordinators work with Latino families and individuals who need mental health support and access to qualified licensed therapists. Clients go through an intake interview process, including an assessment and screening, provided by Casa's coordinators. This helps identify most pressing needs and triage cases based on severity. The intake also allows the coordinators to develop a path forward for each family and develop goals for each case. The coordinators identify a licensed therapist who can provide services for each case. Each case is unique and the coordinators work to ensure that the family or individual is connected with a therapist that has the language, cultural sensitivity, and relevant professional experience to work with them.

Casa's coordinators facilitate access to medical appointments (helping arrange transportation or childcare services) and follow-up with clients attending appointments. Casa's coordinators follow-up on clients until they have attended at least three therapy sessions. Follow-ups help clients understand the importance of attending appointments and ensures their needs are being met. The coordinators also connect clients with other resources available through Casa (access to legal clinics, intensive case management, nutrition support, housing accommodation, and, if required, they will connect clients with transitional services such as shelters and/or hospitalizations).

Casa San Jose facilitates access to free or low-cost mental health providers for our clients. Many clients do not have the economic means to pay for fees for therapist appointments. Casa pays for the fees for mental health therapy appointments.

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

This component of our program (Individual Case Management) aligns with Allegheny County DHS RFP goals (2) to increase availability of culturally competent support and (3) to support and respond to individuals/families going through a mental health crisis.

### **Small Group Support**

Casa's coordinators facilitate a series of structured support groups focused on specific topics. Currently, Casa facilitates small support groups for Latino mothers of young children, a domestic violence/sexual abuse survivors support group, a parents of children with Autism group, and a youth mental health support group. These groups provide safe spaces for Latinos to come together, make connections, learn coping mechanisms and valuable life skills, and create stronger united communities.

Each group is structured to address the specific needs of the participants, including selecting meeting times and frequencies that best suit the needs of the group. Groups are facilitated by Casa's Mental Health Coordinators and feature workshops on life skills, stress management skills, interpersonal relationships, self-development skills, and bring in outside speakers to discuss certain topics (addressing trauma, dating violence, women's resources in Pittsburgh, etc.). Casa's Mental Health Coordinators know all the participants and ensure that topics covered during the support groups help all individuals overcome any obstacles. Many participants that attend groups initially are hesitant to seek individual therapy support or to seek further support for more formal services. However, after participating in the group setting and learning from others' experiences, participants are more inclined to seek individualized help from a therapist and/or to discuss their concerns with family and friends regarding their mental health.

### **Current Support Groups and their activities:**

- **Latino Mothers Support Groups:** meet for 10 session series over a three-month period, with an anticipated capacity of 10 participants. Support group has a balance of open discussion time and education sessions on issues such as: life skills, baby and young child development, stress management and self-care, etc.
- **Domestic Abuse Support Group:** two on-going groups with attendance of about 5 individuals. Due to the sensitive nature of this group we keep the groups to a small size and have a morning and an afternoon session. Group meets twice a month and has a balance of open discussion, and workshops or directed discussions on interpersonal relationship skills, coping with trauma, and invited speakers to discuss resources and other appropriate topics.
- **Parents of Autism Support Group:** these consists of an intensive eight session workshop on Understanding Autism in young children and a monthly support group for parents that have finished the workshop. The monthly support will be a safe space for parents to come together, share experiences, find peer support, and identify any needs. The Understanding



## RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports

Autism Workshop focuses on understanding autism in children, identifying how to care for children with autism, identifying resources available through the City and County, developing family goals to help all members of the family thrive, and healthy family communication.

- Youth Mental Health Support Group: a monthly group with a focus on mental health issues affecting Latino youth. Group meetings provide an opportunity for youth to learn about mental health, identify strategies to cope with challenging or stressful situations, create spaces for youth to have conversations about mental health, develop their emotional intelligence, and identify their full potential. In Fall 2022, the Youth Mental Health Support group will be focusing on Suicide Awareness and Prevention, host qualified outside speakers, and provide suicide prevention resources for Latino teens.

Our small support groups align with the DHS RFP goal to increase the availability of community-led informal health support services and helps to reduce stigma and smooth the way for formal health support. Individuals who attend small groups may identify the need to access other services (such as individual therapy or more formal support) and the groups help destigmatize mental health.

### Outcomes

- Casa San Jose’s Mental Health Coordinators will service 250 cases in 12 months. Cases consist of families or individuals going through an intake and assessment process, families receiving referral for therapy appointments, and coordinator following-up on each case to determine whether they need more services, or the case can be closed. Clients are always welcome to reach out for more services and reopen a case.
- Complete 250 assessments and make 150 referrals to local therapists per year
- Develop relationships with local therapists and mental health providers that can provide services to Latinos and serve as guest speakers to our small support groups. Currently we have identified 11 licensed therapists that are in the region and can provide language accessible and culturally appropriate services. We are working to identify PA-based therapists that can provide telehealth appointments to clients.
- Continue facilitating small support groups:
  - Latino Mother Support Groups: 10 participants undergo a new session of the workshops
  - Domestic Abuse Support Group: 10 participants participate in bi-monthly meetings of the group
  - Parents of Autism: 10-15 new parents participate in a new session of the Understanding Autism Workshop, and 16 participants participate in the monthly group meetings

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

- Youth Mental Health Group: focus the group on Suicide Awareness and Prevention and have a regular attendance of 10-15 participants during monthly meetings
- Casa San Jose develops provides materials (printed or online) to share with community members regarding access to mental health care, safe mental health practices, etc.

6. Describe where and to whom you will provide your Project, and why that community needs the proposed Project.

This project will work with the Latino community in Allegheny County, most of whom face language, cultural, and structural barriers to accessing mental health services. The Latino community in Allegheny County has grown exponentially in the past decade. However, there is a lack of language and culturally accessible mental health resources and licensed therapists in the County. Disparities in access to mental health care and treatment have been well documented among the Latino community. Barriers to seeking and/or accessing mental health care for the Latino community include language barriers, lack of healthcare insurance, lack of culturally sensitive therapists, cultural misconceptions and stigma about mental health, and fear of deportation (National Alliance on Mental Illness 2021). These barriers lead many community members to suffer alone and in silence, struggling with feelings of isolation, depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

The growing need for mental health care access was exacerbated by the Pandemic, as many people dealt with increased feelings of isolation and depression, and cases of domestic aggression increased among our community. In summer of 2020, Casa San Jose's staff noted an increase in clients struggling with their mental health and asking for support from Casa's service coordinators. To meet this growing need, Casa launched the Mental Health Program with qualified staff dedicated to helping those struggling with mental health to access appropriate resources. The Mental Health Program currently receives about 10-15 cases per month referred to the coordinators. Most referrals are internal referrals of families or individuals receiving services through other programs at Casa (ISAC, Intensive Case Management, Youth Programs, etc.), and some are from Latino individuals seeking mental health support. Clients seeking support are struggling with anxiety, depression, isolation for those living in rural areas with little cultural support, families dealing with behavioral and developmental issues with children, women suffering from domestic violence, sexual abuse survivors dealing with trauma/PTSD, mothers with newborns suffering from anxiety and post-partum depression, and families and individuals struggling with trauma of being held in immigration detention.

Casa's Mental Health Program is the only program in Allegheny County staffed by a bilingual and bicultural staff that has the capacity to work with Latinos who are experiencing a mental health situation, but who also are hesitant to trust mental health professionals and may not know where or who to turn to for support. The Latino community in Allegheny County has limited

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

language accessible resources that they can turn to during a mental health situation (or a crisis), and Casa San Jose has filled that gap in care in the County by working to help Latinos access culturally and language accessible therapists, providing financial support to access services, increasing access to telehealth appointments, launching small support groups, and helping to disrupt stigmas surrounding mental health.

Source:

National Alliance on Mental Illness. 2021. Identity and Cultural Dimensions: Hispanic/Latinx. (<https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Identity-and-Cultural-Dimensions/Hispanic-Latinx>)

7. Describe any formal or informal partnerships your Project will require and your plan to develop those. Include a description of how you envision DHS supporting you. (Consider describing how you prefer to communicate with DHS about any system or other barriers your Project encounters, and about any opportunities for system improvements you may identify.)

The lack of Spanish speaking and culturally knowledgeable therapists in the region presents a challenge to providing appropriate mental health services to the Latino community. Casa San Jose has established partnerships with at least eleven licensed therapists that are culturally competent and have the language skills to provide services to the Latino community. Casa San Jose has also worked to identify therapists who can provide telehealth appointments to Latino community members.

Casa would like to form a partnership with DHS which would enable Casa's Mental Health Program staff to communicate with DHS regarding what strategies are helping the Latino community, barriers to accessing care for the Latino community, and working together to engage the Latino community and build trust among public service providers and the Latino community. Casa's staff is open to meeting with DHS at regular intervals to communicate any findings from our Program, present issues our clients face when trying to access services and provide and receive feedback to/from DHS. Casa San Jose envisions developing a successful partnership with DHS where Casa can continue serving Latino residents in Allegheny County and helping them live fulfilling and joyful lives by providing appropriate access to mental health services.

8. Provide a concise project timeline listing when certain activities (e.g., planning, hiring, implementation) and milestones will begin and end.

Casa San Jose launched our pilot Mental Health Program in October 2020, after seeing the success of the program Casa expanded the program and we have since hired two full time Mental Health Coordinators to manage the program. Casa's Mental Health Program is currently ongoing, and we are at the implementation phase.

Implementation/Ongoing:

- Provide assessments to 20 - 25 new cases per month
- Coordinate individual therapy appointments for 22 clients per month

## RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports

- Host monthly meetings for small groups;
  - Launch a new cohort of the Latino Mothers Support Group (Fall 2022)
  - Continue meetings of the Domestic Abuse Support Group
  - Launch a new cohort of the Understanding Autism Parents Group (fall 2022)
  - Continue Monthly meetings of the Parenting Children with Autism Support Group (Summer 2022)
  -

### Planning/Implementation:

- Youth Mental Health Group will continue monthly meetings. Mental Health Coordinator and FLY (Future of Latino Youth) Coordinator are working to refocus the group on suicide awareness and prevention for the Fall of 2022. Starting in September 2022, we will bring qualified medical professionals that can work with Latino youth on identifying suicidal tendencies, working to create healthy coping strategies, identify resource to contact during a crisis, etc. The Youth Mental Health is a subgroup of our Mental Health Program with a focus on helping, reaching, and engaging with Latino teens and disrupting stigma against mental health within this age group.

9. Describe your proposed staffing plan, role descriptions and any training requirements. Include whether or not staff will have or obtain certification as peer specialists, and why.

### Program Staff:

Executive Director (Monica Ruiz, MSW): oversees the entire organization, develop partnerships with new agencies, and supervise Deputy Director and Health Promotion Specialist. Monica has a master's degree in Social Work and experience working in the mental health field with the Latino community. Monica is knowledgeable regarding mental health services in the region and enthusiastic about increasing access to services to the Latino community.

Deputy Director of Programs and Community Engagement (Veronica Lozada): oversee the Mental Health Program and meet monthly with Health Promotion Specialist.

Health Promotion Specialist (Jenny Diaz): directly supervise the Mental Health Program, review data collected by Mental Health Program Coordinators, ensure that clients are receiving appropriate care, coordinate with other Casa's Programs to ensure that clients are receiving appropriate care, and assist with challenging cases. Jenny also oversees all of Casa's healthcare related programs.

Mental Health Program Coordinators (Sandra Fuentes and Antonia Rivera): conduct client assessments, develop individualized plans for each case/client, facilitate access to telehealth appointments, coordinate any client needs to attend appointments (transportation, childcare, etc.), follow-up with clients to ensure they are attending appointments, and plan and facilitate small support groups.

All of our Healthcare Program staff, including the Mental Health Program, have acquired or will be finalizing following trainings:

- Domestic Violence
- Trauma & Suicide Training post reunification process, unaccompanied child (UC)
- Suicide in youth population.
- Alzheimer's and Dementia Training.

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

- Epilepsy Training.
- HIPA training.
- Human Trafficking.
- Sexual Abuse Training.

Staff do not have certifications as peer specialist, as these trainings are for the general public and staff receive more specialized training (listed above).

### **Community Involvement and Trust (30 points possible)**

10. Describe how you included community members in planning and designing your Project.

Casa San Jose launched the Mental Health Program as a response to the community need for access to mental health, which was exacerbated by the covid pandemic. Casa's staff was routinely getting calls from clients struggling with depression, anxiety, PTSD, and domestic abuse, and they did not know where to turn. It became clear that Casa needed dedicated and qualified staff to handle clients seeking mental health services. Casa's Deputy Director of Programs, who routinely interacts with clients on an individual basis and has gained the trust of community members, has received positive feedback regarding the program and the service it provides the community.

The small support groups were a response to seeing a need to help build community among Latinos struggling with similar issues. These groups serve to build community and create trust between Latinos and the coordinators. The coordinators work with group participants to identify their needs and provide them with resources and workshops that help them improve their wellbeing and realize their full potential. The groups have are designed in a way that meets the needs of community members (meeting times and frequency), and for groups of a sensitive nature (domestic abuse victims and survivors) Casa provides appropriate and private meeting spaces.

Additionally, Casa's youth has also been involved in designing and implementing a youth-specific mental health support group. Youth participating in Casa's program Future of Latino Youth (FLY) spent a year researching and identifying needs of the Latino community in Pittsburgh, and they highlighted the importance of improved access to mental health for the Latino community and decreasing stigma around mental health. In early 2022, Latino youth met with the Mental Health Coordinators to help design a Youth Mental Health Group that meets monthly to discuss mental health issues. The group launched Spring 2022 with monthly meetings focusing on: general mental health discussions, suicide awareness, healthy dating habits, and mindfulness and health coping strategies for anxiety and stress. Youth identified the need for a more focused effort on suicide awareness and prevention and we will start these efforts in Fall 2022.

11. Describe how you will include community members in the implementation/staffing/assessment of your Project.

Clients of the Mental Health Program provide feedback to the Coordinators and the Deputy Director of Programs through informal conversations. Casa can also provide surveys to clients to receive feedback regarding the program.

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

Additionally, in fall 2022 and spring 2023 Casa will be working with a business consultant to assess our Mental Health Program. As part of this we will also incorporate input from community members.

12. Explain why you are the appropriate provider of this Project, specifically addressing why your community will trust you to provide this Project. (Consider describing the length of time in the community and years in operation, prior successful programs, the community's involvement in current programs, other examples of leadership in your community or other information you think would be helpful.)

Casa is one of the oldest Latino-serving organizations in Allegheny County and we have been working with the Latino community since 2014. Casa has a long history of developing programs that serve, engage, and help meet the needs of the Latino community. Casa is a trusted agency within the Latino community and clients reach out to Casa's staff for help daily, trusting staff to help them access services. Casa's programs are culturally appropriate and sensitive and consider the needs and vulnerability of our clients. We also engage the community through a variety of efforts to ensure that they have a voice and input into the development of our programs. Two Latino community members serve on Casa's Board and provide direct community input to the Board of Directors.

Currently, there are no other cultural and language specific organizations facilitating access to mental health for the Latino population in the region. We will work to increase knowledge about the unique needs of the Latino community in the region. There is a limited number of resources to serve our clients in the region, and we will build networks across the state to better serve Latinos and increase the number of resources in the region that can serve the growing Latino community.

Casa's Mental Health Program launched in October 2020 as a pilot project and in the first 6 months the Mental Health Coordinator worked with 65 cases which included families with children, women, and individual adults. Casa expanded the program in Spring 2021, and currently two Mental Health Coordinators receive about 10-15 cases per month to undergo assessments and receive services.

### **Data Collection and Reporting (10 points possible)**

13. Describe what data you currently collect on your programs.

Casa San Jose keeps the following data for each client: where they reside, country of origin, language spoken at home, how long they have been in the US, how they heard about Casa San Jose, services they receive, and number of people in the household. Mental Health Program staff also collects information on which types of issues each client/case is dealing with (i.e.: depression, anxiety, domestic abuse, etc.). Casa uses Salesforce as our client tracking software.

Many of Casa's clients are undocumented immigrants and are hesitant to provide some personal information. Casa understands the fears and doubts of our clients and we still work with clients who need services but may not feel comfortable providing information about their place of residency and other demographic information. In these cases, Casa's staff collects minimal

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

information such as zip code or county of residency and number of people served. Casa can work with DHS to collect appropriate data, while respecting our client's wishes to withhold certain private information.

14. Describe how you will know if your Project is effective in achieving its goals and what data you will collect to track its effectiveness.

Casa will be working with a consultant to develop a business plan for the Mental Health Program. Throughout this process we will evaluate the program to determine what is working and what can be improved, types of data that can be collected to improve and evaluate the program and develop program evaluation tools.

Casa's other programs provide participant surveys and other tools to assess program success. In the past we have done paper surveys, online surveys, tracking participation in programs, follow-up conversations with clients, and doing needs assessments.

Casa is also partnering with students at CMU who will be helping Casa develop evaluation criteria and tools for the Mental Health Program. We will also apply lessons learned to all our programs for evaluation criteria.

### **Budget (10 points possible)**

15. Provide a detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with planning, implementing, and sustaining the Project. Please remember that Project staff must earn no less than \$15/hour and you may include language assistance services costs in the budget.

#### Yearly Program Costs

##### Personnel:

Mental Health Coordinator Salary and Benefits: 52,439

Mental Health Coordinator Salary and Benefits: 50,487

Health Promotion Specialist Salary and Benefits (partial): \$10,000

##### Program Costs:

Medical Fees and Copayments for Therapy Appointments: \$47,000

Food and Supply for Groups: \$4,000

Transportation (Staff and Clients): \$4,000

Rent (10% of total) and Meeting Space: \$4,000

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

Utilities, Phone, and Internet (10% of total): \$3,400

Childcare: \$1,500

Total Yearly Expenses: \$170,326

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

**Mental Health Coordinators Salary and Benefits:** Coordinators facilitate and manage the day-to-day operations of the program, they conduct client assessments, develop plans, facilitate access to appointments, and facilitate small groups.

**Health Promotion Specialist:** Specialists spend part of their time directly supervising programs, coordinating between Casa's programs, coordinating with outside programs, and assisting in challenging cases.

**Program Costs:**

**Medical Fees and Copayments for Therapy Appointments:** Casa will cover the medical fees associated with receiving mental health therapy. Most clients are low-income and do not have access to health insurance, Casa pays for fees associated with appointments.

**Food:** for workshops and group meetings.

**Transportation:** cost of Ubers, Lyft, gas, and mileage (Casa's van) to transport clients to group meetings and/or in medical appointments. Reimbursement for staff travel.

**Rent:** cover partial cost of Casa's rent. Group meetings and client intakes are done at Casa's offices. For some group meetings, Casa has to rent outside space to host larger groups.

**Utilities, Phone, and Internet:** Cover the cost of Casa's utilities fees, including use of phone and internet needed to communicate with clients and providers/.

**Childcare:** provide free childcare for parents during group meetings and assist parents with childcare needs when attending therapy appointments.



# Casa San Jose

Letters of Support from Community Partners



*Better You*  
*Counseling Services, LLC*

August 5, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Sandra Pattinato. I am a licensed therapist and the owner of the private practice Better You Counseling Services, LLC.

I started collaborating with Casa San Jose in 2019, in order to help the clients who were mainly Portuguese speaking, as I am a Portuguese speaking provider.

My experience working and collaborating with Casa San Jose has been excellent. Casa San Jose's staff is quick to respond when I have questions or concerns. Communication is fluent and direct. The clients I work with often speak highly of Casa San Jose and the services they provide.

Casa San Jose has bridged the gap in our community that was in great need of help, by providing services to a growing population.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 412-320-0024, or via email at [betteryoucs@mail.com](mailto:betteryoucs@mail.com)

Sincerely,

Sandra Pattinato, M. Ed., LPC.

Sara Fernandez-Marcote, LPC

1614 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Phila Pa 19122

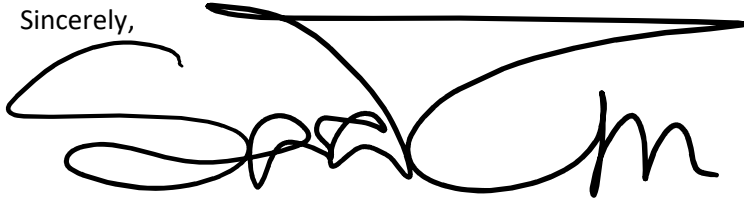
[Sara.fernandez.marcote@gmail.com](mailto:Sara.fernandez.marcote@gmail.com)

To whom it may concern,

I am a Professional Counselor licensed in the state of Pennsylvania since 2013. My license number is PC007197. I have worked as a behavioral health therapist and consultant for Casa San Jose for almost a year. I want to provide this letter of support for Casa San Jose. Their dedication to the immigrant and Latinx communities in Pittsburg is admirable. Casa San Jose dedicates their efforts to support some of the most underserved and vulnerable residents in Pittsburg. Their service delivery reflects their values which are inclusion, dignity, and respect.

Their staff is resourceful, creative, empowering and empathetic in the way they support their clients and in how they design programming and strategies. It has been a pleasure to work with them and I look forward to seeing them grow their capacity to support the growing Latinx and immigrant communities in the Greater Pittsburg region. I look forward to contributing to the mission for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara M', with a long horizontal line extending from the top of the signature.

Sara Fernandez-Marcote, LPC

## Casa San Jose

Letters of Support from Community Members (translations provided)

Hola

Mi nombre es Sandy molinero tengo 37 años tengo 5 años de estar con mi pareja durante ese tiempo hemos tenido los dos muchos problemas de inseguridad, celos desacuerdos y no teníamos mucha comunicación en nuestro desacuerdo por el cual los dos decidimos tomar terapia de pareja ya tenemos un mes de estar en terapia y me a ayudado bastante a mi y también a mi pareja tenemos poco en estar en la terapia pero pienso si continuamos para mas tiempo con la terapia nos ayudaria más en fortalecer nuestra relación es un proceso que se va ir viendo con el tiempo por eso le doy gracias a Sandra y a la Casa San Jose por brindarnos la ayuda con la terapia de Salud mental bendiciones a todos Atte: Sandy

Sandy Molinera is a client of the Mental Health Program. She provided a hand-written letter to Casa San Jose's staff regarding her experience and support of the program. Sandy does not speak English and we have translated her note below.

Sandy receives services through Casa San Jose's Mental Health Program. After receiving therapy services, she identified the need to attend the Understanding Autism workshop and participating in the Parents with Autism support group. This is a sensitive topic for Sandra, but her involvement in therapy led her to seek further resources to help with her child.

"Hello,

My name is Sandy Molinero, I am 37 years old. I have been with my partner for 5 years. During this time we have both had many problems dealing with insecurity, jealousy, disagreements, and we did not communicate when have disagreements [arguments]. Because of this we both decided to seek therapy services. We have been having therapy for one month and it has helped me a lot and also my partner. We have been in therapy for a short time, but I believe that if we continue longer with therapy it will helps us in strengthening our relationship. This is a process that will take time. I am thankful to Sandra [Casa San Jose Mental Health Coordinator] and to Casa San Jose for providing us the help with therapy for mental health. Blessings to all. Sandy"

Aug 04, 2022.

Mi nombre es Angelica Guzmán Chavez, he vivido en Pqh por 4 años. Soy madre soltera de un niño de 6 años. Durante todo este tiempo, he pedido ayuda de servicios a Casa San José. Casa San Jose ha ayudado mi familia, de distintas formas; siempre me han ayudado a entender distintos(as) situaciones. Cuando tuve que pedir una orden de protección, me acompañaron, me explicaron y se quedaron dando soporte hasta el final de la decisión.

Cuando necesite ayuda con las terapias de mi niño, hermano y mis terapias Casa San José, me ofreció el servicio de coordinación de los servicios.

Las terapias me han ayudado a entender más algunos procesos y me han ayudado en la toma de decisiones. He podido entender más la conducta de mi niño, y a como ayudarlo; como mamá.

X Angelica

Angelica Guzman is a client of Casa San Jose. She first came seeking services as she get settled into the region. She was struggling with a relationships and needed help understanding how to use the legal system to help protect her and her son. She now receives therapies for her and for her son, which has helped her improve her family situations and dynamics. Angelica does not speak English and we have translated her letter below.

“Aug 04, 2022

My name is Angelica Guzman Chavez, I have lived in Pgh for 4 years. I am a single mother of a 6 year-old child. During this entire time, I have asked for help [services] from Casa San Jose. Casa San Jose has helped my family in different ways, they have always helped me understand different situations. When I had to request an Order of Protection, they went with me, they explained to me [the situation/options], and they gave me support until a decision was made. When I needed help with [behavioral] therapy for my son, brother, and my own therapies, Casa San Jose offered to coordinate services for me.

The therapies have helped me understand some processes better, they have helped me to make better decisions. I am now able to understand my son’s behavior and how to help him as his mom.

[signed] Angelica Guzman”



My name is Gabriela, i have 28 years old im from Brazil and and its been 7 that i move to pittsburgh recently my son Noah has been diagnosed as in ASD and since them Casa San Jose has been helping my family a lot! Sandra has been an Angel sent by God in my life! The workshop with DR Nuffer was a game changer for start to understand my son and get the services that he needs my family felt i felt welcome and loved in Casa San Jose! They do a beautiful work in support to all Latino community that lives in Pittsburg

Thank you so Much

GABRIELA | NOAH  
RAFAEL | SOPHIA