



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Request for Proposals

**New Continuum of Care (CoC) Program for
Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness:
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-
Housing (RRH) and Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid
Re-Housing (TH/RRH)**

RFP Posting:

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Information Session:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Questions Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, May 10, 2024

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, May 23, 2024

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

July 2024

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

Contents

Acronyms and Definitions

The RFP at a Glance

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing This RFP

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

Acronyms and Definitions

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

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. Bonfire: The County's online procurement software. Proposers must have a Bonfire account to submit a Response to this RFP.
4. Continuum of Care (CoC): A geographically based group of representatives that carries out the planning responsibilities of the HUD Continuum of Care Program
5. CoC Regulations: HUD's rules and regulations under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act). The rules and regulations are titled, "Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program; Interim Final Rule," and can be found at 24 CFR Part 578.
6. Contract Services: The specific services that the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
7. Coordinated Entry: A standardized method for connecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a geographic area. The Allegheny Link and its Field Unit are the Coordinated Entry entities in Allegheny County.
8. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
9. DHS Bonfire Portal: A Bonfire webpage specific to Allegheny County Department of Human Services where Proposers can view open, past and awarded solicitations released through Bonfire
10. HAB: [Allegheny County] Homeless Advisory Board, the working board that acts on behalf of the CoC. The HAB sets the local strategy to end homelessness and reviews public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts to prevent and end homelessness and improve the well-being of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
11. Harm Reduction: An evidence-based approach to engaging with people who use drugs; includes equipping them with life-saving tools and information to help create positive change in their lives.
12. HEARTH Act: Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009
13. HMIS: Homeless Management Information System, an information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and people at risk of homelessness
14. Housing First: An approach to ending homelessness that focuses on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing and then providing additional support for physical and mental health, education, employment, substance abuse and community connections.
15. HUD: [United States Department of] Housing and Urban Development

16. HUD CoC Program: The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program (24 CFR part 578) is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is designed to: 1) promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; 2) provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, states, Indian Tribes or tribally designated housing entities, and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals, families, youth and persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.
17. Joint TH/RRH Program: A type of project that combines the activities of a transitional housing project with those of a rapid rehousing project. This project type provides a new way to meet some of the pressing challenges that communities are facing. These projects provide a safe place for people to stay – transitional housing – with financial assistance and wraparound supportive services selected by program participants to help them move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Joint TH/RRH Programs are one of the allowable program types in the HUD CoC Program.
18. Motivational Interviewing (MI): A person-centered and goal-oriented method that prepares people for change by helping them resolve ambivalence, enhance intrinsic motivation and build confidence to change. Evidence clearly demonstrates that MI improves treatment engagement and outcomes among many different individuals, including those experiencing homelessness.
19. Moving On: A HUD-recognized strategy for connecting Participants in supportive housing, who no longer need or want the intensive services offered in supportive housing, to other mainstream permanent housing options (e.g., Housing Choice Vouchers, subsidized housing)
20. NOFO: Notice of Funding Opportunity
21. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
22. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
23. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program: A program that provides participants permanent housing, in which housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services are provided to assist households, with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability, in achieving housing stability. PSH Programs are one of the allowable program types in the HUD CoC Program.
24. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
25. RFP: Request for Proposals
26. RFP Opportunity Page: The Bonfire webpage where the RFP and all supporting documents are listed and where the RFP submission documents must be uploaded for a Proposal to be considered for review
27. Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Program: A program in which participants receive permanent housing, short-term (up to three months) and medium-term (4-24 months) tenant-based rental assistance, and supportive services. RRH Programs are one of the allowable program types in the HUD CoC Program.

28. Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR): A program that works to increase access to Social Security disability benefits for eligible adults and children who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness
29. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services
30. Supportive Services: Services designed to prepare a Participant to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence
31. Transitional Housing (TH) Program: A program that provides temporary housing with supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness, with the goal of interim stability and support, to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH programs alone are not one of the allowable program types in the HUD CoC Program. For this RFP, any proposed TH program must be in conjunction with an RRH Program.

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

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, through its Department of Human Services (DHS) and on behalf of the Homelessness Advisory Board (HAB) of the Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC),¹ is soliciting Proposals from one or more Proposers to provide housing, housing assistance and supportive services to individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness, through Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH) Programs (hereinafter referred to separately as PSH Programs, RRH Programs and TH/RRH Programs and collectively as the Program). Proposers may propose to provide any or multiple Programs. Individuals receiving the Programs' services will hereinafter be referred to as Participants.

Programs will serve individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness who are at elevated risk, if they remain unhoused, of experiencing a mental health inpatient stay, a jail booking and/or frequent use (4 or more visits) of hospital emergency rooms. All participants will be referred to Programs through the CoC's Coordinated Entry.

This RFP for new PSH, RRH and TH/RRH Programs is made in preparation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) annual Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for their [CoC Program](#). The intent of this RFP is to solicit proposals for new PSH, RRH and/or TH/RRH Programs for potential inclusion in the annual application to HUD for CoC Program funding. PSH and RRH Programs currently funded by the HUD CoC Program in Allegheny County do not need to, and should not, submit Proposals in response to this RFP.²

Award Details

Any Successful Proposal(s) will be included in DHS's response to HUD's NOFO. However, HUD must approve and award funding for the proposed Program(s) for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).

If a Successful Proposer(s) is selected and HUD approves the application, DHS will enter into one or more Agreements in 2025 with the Successful Proposer(s) to provide the Program(s) for a term of one year. Annual renewals can be sought thereafter.

DHS cannot anticipate the number of projects that may be funded at this time and there is no

¹ The Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board has designated the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as the entity authorized to apply for and carry out activities on behalf of the CoC (the Collaborative Applicant).

² Programs already receiving HUD CoC Program funding through DHS will go through the CoC's annual review and ranking process for renewal. If an agency that has a CoC-funded Program is interested in adding a new Program type, they may submit a proposal for that new Program type (e.g., if an agency currently has a RRH Program through the HUD CoC Program but would like to add a TH/RRH or PSH Program, they may submit a proposal through this Solicitation).

guarantee that HUD will award any new projects to DHS.

At this time, the level of funds available cannot be specified as it is contingent on future decisions regarding potential reallocation and the availability of bonus funds from HUD. Currently, housing programs funded through the HUD CoC Program in Allegheny County range between \$140,000 and \$2,300,000, with an average cost of \$14,000 per household. Proposed budgets should reflect the size and cost of the Program proposed. All proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness, and any final budget and contract terms will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer.

If DHS is successful in the NOFO process, the Program(s) would begin on July 1, 2025.

The issuance of this RFP does not obligate DHS and the HAB to select any Proposal to include in the CoC application for the HUD NOFO. DHS and the HAB reserve the right to reject any and all Proposals.

Who can submit a Proposal

All non-profit entities are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Entities do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County to submit a Proposal, but they must meet all of Allegheny County's contractual requirements (see Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers) and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capability to provide the Contract Services.

Existing CoC programs currently funded by DHS do not need to respond to this RFP for renewal or expansion. This RFP is specifically for a new CoC program not currently funded by DHS.

What's important to us

To effectively serve the target population and meet the goals outlined in this RFP, DHS expects the Successful Proposer(s) to:

- Employ a deep understanding of homelessness, gained through a strong track record of helping people become and remain stably housed.
- Eliminate barriers to housing through creative and flexible approaches.
- Create rapid and streamlined entry into permanent housing.
- Effectively implement a service delivery model that incorporates few programmatic prerequisites, utilizes proactive outreach and engagement efforts, implements low-barrier admission policies, offers voluntary and engaging supportive services, and focuses on housing stability.
- Offer trauma-informed, culturally responsive services.
- Tailor services based on each household's strengths, needs and milestones.
- Successfully implement strategies that support Participants' graduation from the Program while maintaining their long-term housing stability.

In pursuit of our goal to expand capacity to quickly and effectively house individuals and families experiencing homelessness, DHS may prioritize Proposals that utilize housing models responsive to common challenges experienced. The housing market in Allegheny County has continued to tighten, and finding quality, affordable units in locations in which participants want to live is increasingly cited as a challenge within our existing housing programs. Additionally, the acuity of need among Participants entering Programs has indicated that some would benefit from housing environments that provide higher levels of community and service engagement than is available in current scattered-site housing models. We encourage Proposers to consider the effective implementation of facility-based options, master leasing options and/or housing models targeted towards particularly vulnerable individuals (e.g., individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness).

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

Timeline

RFP Posting	Tuesday, April 9, 2024
Information Session (see section 4.1 for details)	Wednesday, April 24 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Questions Deadline	Friday, May 10 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Last Website and Q&A Update	Thursday, Thursday, May 16 at 6 p.m. Eastern
Submission Deadline	Thursday, May 23 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Estimated Award Decision/Notification	July 2024

Who we are

DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, developmental supports, homelessness and community services. More information about DHS is available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing This RFP

Over the past decade, Allegheny County has experienced increases in its poverty rate³ and concurrent declines in the availability of affordable housing.⁴ Both the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation have exacerbated these challenges. These factors have contributed to Allegheny County experiencing a simultaneous increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness and a

³ <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PPAAPA42003A156NCEN>

⁴ <https://housingalliancepa.org/resources/2023-county-fact-sheets/>

slowdown in the rate of people exiting the homeless system.⁵ The CoC is spearheading multiple efforts to address these challenges, many of which are already underway. Increasing the availability of effective PSH, RRH and TH/RRH Programs is a cornerstone of the efforts to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in Allegheny County. These programs, which operate with low barriers, prioritize quickly moving people into permanent housing, and offer individually responsive support services, are an evidenced approach to ending homelessness for an individual or family.

HUD's CoC Program is the largest single source of funding for homeless services in Allegheny County, totaling nearly \$23.9M for the current fiscal year (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024). DHS administers this grant and must annually reapply for funding. Within the annual application there is commonly an opportunity to request funds for new Programs, through the reallocation of funds away from low-performing and/or underutilized projects and/or through the availability of bonus funds. This RFP is being issued to identify potential new PSH, RRH and TH/RRH Programs to be included in the annual application to HUD for CoC Program funds.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

DHS is requesting Proposals for PSH, RRH and TH/RRH Programs that will expand our capacity to quickly and effectively house individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Consistent with requirements of the funding source, Programs must adhere to Housing First⁶ principles as well as all rules and regulations of: 1) the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act),⁷ HUD's Homeless Emergency Assistance, Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program (CoC) Rules and Regulations ("CoC Regulations"). These resources may be found at 24 CFR 578⁸ and in the Fair Housing Act.⁹

PSH Programs provide housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and support services to assist households, with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability, in achieving housing stability.

RRH Programs provide short-term (up to three months) and medium-term (4-24 months) tenant-based rental assistance and supportive services to households experiencing homelessness.

⁵ https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/23-ACDHS-04-PIT-Brief_v7.pdf

⁶ More on Housing First can be found in the USICH's Housing First Checklist document: https://www.usich.gov/sites/default/files/document/Housing_First_Checklist_FINAL.pdf

⁷ <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1715/mckinney-vento-homeless-assistance-act-amended-by-hearth-act-of-2009/>

⁸ <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1715/mckinney-vento-homeless-assistance-act-amended-by-hearth-act-of-2009/>

⁹ https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp

TH/RRH Programs¹⁰ are a newer type of project that combines the activities of a transitional housing project with those of a rapid re-housing project. These projects provide a safe place for people to stay – transitional housing – with financial assistance and wrap around supportive services determined by program participants to help them move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Stays in the transitional housing portion of these projects should be brief and without preconditions, and participants should quickly move to permanent housing. TH/RRH Programs must be able to provide both components, including the units supported by the TH component and the tenant-based rental assistance and services provided through the RRH component, to all Participants. A program Participant may choose to receive only the assistance provided through the TH portion of the project or the assistance provided through the RRH component, but the Program must make both types of assistance available.

A. Target Population

Programs may serve single or family households--with or without children—who are experiencing homelessness. Households comprised of individual(s) at elevated risk for a mental health inpatient stay, a jail booking and/or frequent use (four or more visits) of hospital emergency rooms will be prioritized for services. Prioritization will be determined by Allegheny Link (DHS’s Coordinated Entry unit) using the Allegheny Housing Assessment (AHA), a validated risk assessment and decision-support tool that uses administrative data from Allegheny County’s data warehouse.¹¹

B. Service Description

Programs will be expected to provide housing assistance and support services. Programs must align with Housing First, an approach to ending homelessness that focuses on quickly moving people into independent and permanent housing and making additional supports and services available. In alignment with Housing First, Successful Proposer(s) will be expected to engage Participants through the effective use of motivational interviewing and assertive outreach and employ harm reduction and trauma-informed approaches. Further, Successful Proposer(s) must be committed to providing high quality, culturally responsive services to all Participants regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), intellectual or physical ability, English language proficiency or life experiences.

Housing

For a PSH Program, Successful Proposer(s) will be expected to offer facility-based and/or scattered site housing units in Allegheny County.

For an RRH Program, Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for offering short-term rental assistance (up to three months) or medium-term rental assistance (4-24 months) for Participants. All rental assistance will be for tenant-based scattered site units, meaning that

¹⁰ More on Joint TH/RRH Programs can be found on the HUD Exchange: <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/snaps-in-focus-the-new-joint-transitional-housing-and-rapid-re-housing-component/>

¹¹ Information about AHA can be found at <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Services/Human-Services-DHS/News-and-Events/Accomplishments-and-Innovations/Allegheny-Housing-Assessment>

Participants may locate the housing of their choice in the private rental market, with assistance from the Successful Proposer as needed. If a Participant later moves to another suitable unit, rental assistance may be applied to the new unit.

For a TH/RRH Program, Successful Propose(s) will be expected to provide both components, including the units supported by the transitional housing component (via facility-based and/or scattered site housing units) and the tenant-based rental assistance and services provided through the RRH component, to all program participants up to 24 months as needed by the program participants.

All housing units must: 1) pass a housing quality inspection; 2) meet all requirements identified in the HEARTH Act, CoC regulations and the Fair Housing Act, and 3) meet reasonable rent standards. The Successful Proposer(s) also will be responsible for working with landlords and other service providers to ensure that Participants remain successfully housed and to facilitate their transition out of the Program. Further, when applicable, the Successful Proposer(s) must ensure timely and accurate payment to the landlord on behalf of the Participant. Per HUD requirements, to remain in an RRH Program, Participants must demonstrate that they continue to lack sufficient resources and support networks necessary to retain housing without assistance. If Participants no longer require assistance through an RRH Program, they must be permitted to remain in the housing unit (if they choose) and assume full responsibility for payment of rent and utilities.

Supportive Services

In addition to appropriate housing for the Programs described above, the Successful Proposer(s) must provide supportive services designed to prepare Participants to make a successful transition from homelessness to independence. Supportive Services are aimed at long-term recovery and may focus on social, vocational, educational, behavioral or cognitive skills. Supportive services are not one-size-fits-all, and Successful Proposer(s) must tailor them based on a Participant's needs, culture, circumstances, learning styles and abilities. Services may be provided by the Successful Proposer(s) directly or by another agency under contract with the Successful Proposer(s). Supportive services include the following:

- Needs assessment to guide the tailoring of services and supports
- Assistance with obtaining and maintaining mainstream benefits, e.g., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), health insurance through Medicaid and food assistance through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Linkages to/coordination with community-based services, including:
 - Mental health services
 - Substance use treatment services
 - Healthcare
 - Food
 - Childcare
 - Transportation
 - Employment/education assistance and job training
 - Life skills coaching
 - Legal services

- Tenancy education and support to ensure housing stability/retention
- Support to help Participants prevent and resolve landlord/tenant disputes
- Connections to community-based and natural supports that support housing stability
- Utilizes the Allegheny County CoC Moving On Assessment to engage and assess program participants for interest and readiness to move on; ensuring that those moving on do so through preparation and collaborative planning

Participants in Programs will have scored high on the AHA and will have needs that often complicate engagement with services and retention in housing. As evidence of this challenge, 27% of unhoused individuals engaged by Allegheny County’s Street Outreach teams in October 2022 (n=156) were enrolled in a housing program (PSH or Rapid Re-housing) in the prior 12 months. Of these, about half had exited a program during the prior 12 months and about half were enrollees at the time of engagement (combination of people still looking for housing and those already receiving rental assistance). Given this, Successful Proposer(s) must clearly demonstrate their ability to use assertive outreach, motivational interviewing and other evidence-based practices to effectively house and support the ongoing housing stability of households at elevated risk for adverse events and with complex needs.

C. Healthcare and Housing Resource Leveraging

HUD’s Homeless Policy Priorities include partnering with housing, health and service agencies. In an effort to improve and maximize the use of resources to end homelessness, HUD has integrated housing resource leveraging and healthcare resource leveraging into its expectations for new Programs. DHS is committed to putting forward a strong application to HUD and may prioritize Proposals that are able to meet one or both healthcare and housing leveraging thresholds. Proposers currently unable to leverage housing or healthcare resources are still encouraged to apply but should be open to collaborating to meet this requirement. DHS would be willing to help develop leverage with a partner who has an otherwise strong proposal.

Leverage Housing Resources. A Program will meet the housing resource leveraging threshold if it utilizes housing subsidies or subsidized housing units not funded through HUD’s CoC or ESG programs for 25 percent of the Program’s Participants. Housing subsidies or subsidized housing units may be funded through any of the following sources: Private organizations; State or local government, including through the use of HOME funding provided through the American Rescue Plan; Public Housing Agencies, including through the use of a general or limited preference; Faith-based organizations; or Federal programs other than the CoC or ESG programs. This leverage can be demonstrated by providing a letter of commitment, contract or other formal written document that demonstrates the number of subsidies or units being provided to support the project.

Leveraging Healthcare Resources. A Program will meet the healthcare leveraging threshold if it can demonstrate utilization of healthcare resources to help individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness. Healthcare resource leveraging can be in the form of direct contributions from a public or private health insurance provider to the project (e.g., Medicaid) and/or the provision of health care services by a private or public organization tailored to the program participants of the project. This leveraging can be demonstrated by providing a

written commitment from a health care organization that 1) in the case of a substance use disorder treatment or recovery provider, will provide access to treatment or recovery services for all program participants who qualify and choose those services or 2) the value of assistance being provided is at least an amount that is equivalent to 25 percent of the funding being requested for the project, which will be covered by the healthcare organization.

D. Referral Process

DHS expects that all referrals to the Program(s) managed by the Successful Proposer(s) will be made through DHS's Coordinated Entry Unit (Allegheny Link). The Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for accepting a referral and quickly securing the Participant's appropriate housing placement. Additional parameters for outreach and intake will be developed in collaboration with DHS upon award.

E. Staffing

The Successful Proposer(s) will establish a staffing complement with sufficient full-time equivalents and qualifications to address the target population's housing, behavioral health and Supportive Service needs. The Successful Proposer(s) will also be expected to leverage services offered in-house or by partner organizations.

Successful Proposer(s) will be expected to train all staff in best practices for service delivery, including Housing First, Motivational Interviewing, Moving On, Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR), Harm Reduction, Mental Health First Aid and DHS SOGIE/LGBTQIA+ Standards of Practice. Training staff is the responsibility of the Successful Proposer, however, DHS's Office of Community Services may offer resources that support training.

F. Performance Outcomes

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for collaborating with DHS and CoCAP (Continuum of Care Analysis and Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the HAB) in tracking outcomes and meeting performance standards for the Program(s) within one year. Key performance measures include, but are not limited to:

- Program utilization rate.
- Average length of time from Program enrollment to move-in date.
- Percent of Participants that maintain or increase their income.
- Percent of Participants that obtain or maintain employment.
- Percent of Participants that maintain or increase their non-case benefits (e.g., Food Stamps).
- Percent of Participants that maintain or secure Medicaid or private health insurance.
- Percent of Participants that maintain permanent housing and/or exit to permanent housing.
- Percent of Participants that exit from the Program to permanent housing who return to the homeless system within 6 months.

Beyond HUD's performance outcomes, DHS expects that the Successful Proposer(s) will establish additional goals for the Program(s), in support of facilitating Participant stability and success (e.g., Participants will secure health care through public or private sources, Participants will be linked to mental health outpatient services, Participants will enroll in substance use recovery groups). For more information, please see the [CoCAPC performance management webpage](#).

G. Homeless Management Information System

Successful Proposer(s) will be responsible for participating in the Allegheny Link process and for entering all data into HMIS within the parameters established by the HUD regulations. Victim services providers are not required to participate in HMIS, per HMIS regulations. However, victim services providers must have a comparable database to produce the required reports to HUD on an annual basis as well as run periodic data quality reports to ensure all data is correct in their system, per the most recent HUD data specifications.

H. Budget

Proposers should provide a budget for a one-year Program term using the budget template provided, and a budget narrative clearly describing all assumptions and how costs were calculated. Rental costs must be based on the Pittsburgh Metro Area Fair Market Rent (FMR).¹² Eligible costs for Support Services are outlined [here](#).

At this time, the level of funds available cannot be specified as it is contingent on future decisions regarding potential reallocation and the availability of bonus funds from HUD. Currently, housing programs funded through the HUD CoC Program in Allegheny County range between \$140,000 and \$2,300,000, with an average cost of \$14,000 per household. Proposed budgets should reflect the size and cost of the Program proposed. All proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness, and any final budget and contract terms will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer.

A 25% match from the Successful Proposer(s) is required to be documented for all line items except Real Property Leasing¹³. The match may be cash, through additionally raised funds, or in-kind services. Match may not include CoC funding that a Proposer currently receives. If in-kind services are secured from another organization for this match, the organization must have a memorandum of understanding in place prior to the executed contract. Proposers must include a brief narrative identifying planned sources of match. Upon selection, Successful Proposer(s) will be required to provide letters verifying all sources of matching funds.

No more than 3.5% of HUD funds may be used for a Successful Proposer's administrative expenses (e.g., staffing, computers, office supplies). Matching funds, cash and in-kind resources may be used for additional administrative costs.

¹² More information on HUD's FMR can be found at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/landlord/fmr

¹³ More information on Leasing costs can be found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-eligible-activities/leasing/>

All Proposers must use the eSnaps Budget Template, available on the Solicitations Webpage and the RFP Opportunity Page, to provide their budget.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

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

Organizational Experience (25 points total)

- Organizational experience delivering high-quality, holistic services to households experiencing homelessness (10 points)
- Clear description of how the organization implements principles of Housing First, Harm Reduction and Trauma-Informed Care (5 points)
- Strong organizational and management structure including evidence of effective internal communication, external coordination, an adequate financial accounting system, and an absence of unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants (5 points)
- Experience and demonstrated success in meeting standards for managing data with HMIS or an equivalent data management system (5 points)

Housing Strategy (30 points)

- Description of the project scope, including the number of households to be served annually and the estimated average length of time households will be enrolled. Additionally, identify whether the proposed Program will serve individuals, families, or both, and if any specific population will be served. (5 points).
- Description of the type of housing to be used, and how you will successfully utilize the units within a comprehensive plan for meeting households' immediate housing needs, creating pathways to permanent housing and mitigating barriers to housing (20 points)
 - For facility-based sites, a description of how the facility will be used within the Program, including a description of the facility and location, and how the Proposer will work with Participants to develop their housing plans to successfully stabilize housing.
 - For master-lease scattered-site units, a description of how the facility will be used within the Program, including a description of the facility and location and how the Proposer will work with Participants to develop their housing plans to successfully stabilize housing.
 - For tenant-based scattered-site units, a description of your experience and

ability to successfully identify and access units for Participants, including a description of how the tenant-based units will be used within the Program and how the Proposer will work with Participants to develop their housing plans to successfully stabilize housing.

- Description of how the proposed Program leverages housing resources and/or the Proposers plan to work collaborative with DHS to leverage these resources for the Program in the future (5 points)

Service Strategy (35 points)

- Comprehensive plan for engaging and serving Participants, demonstrating Proposer's ability to successfully meet the needs of the target population (10 points)
- Comprehensive plan for coordinating with outside partners to provide a variety of supportive services, with appropriate frequency, for Participants, including specific names of partners and examples of collaboration (10 points)
- Description of how the Proposer will incorporate strategies to support Participants in successful Program exit, including what milestones the Proposer will use to determine whether a Participant is ready to exit the Program (10 points)
- Description of how the proposed Program leverages healthcare resources and/or the Proposers plans to leverage these resources for the Program in the future (5 points)

Program Staffing and Administration (20 points)

- Strong staffing plan including Program staff positions, qualifications, recruitment, training and performance management (10 points)
- Appropriate schedule for the proposed activities, a management plan, and a method for assuring effective and timely completion of all work (5 points)
- Plan to track and achieve performance standards (5 points)

Budget and Budget Narrative (15 points)

- Detailed line-item budget that reflects the costs associated with implementing the Program for a one-year period, including any costs associated for leveraging housing and/or healthcare resources (10 points)
- A budget narrative that clearly explains all assumptions and justifies all line items in the proposed budget (5 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Prepare

- a. Information Session

- DHS will conduct an information session about this RFP at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, via Microsoft Teams. It will include a presentation about the RFP and DHS staff will answer questions from attendees.
- Attendance at the information session is not required in order to submit a Proposal. Everything (video recording, slide deck, transcribed Q&A) shared during the information session will be posted afterwards on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and the DHS Solicitations webpage.
- Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the conference. Final definitive answers will be posted in writing on Bonfire on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and on the DHS Solicitations webpage.
- Prospective Proposers can join the information session by:
 - Calling (267) 368-7515 and using Conference ID 532 440 776#
 - Or following this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Or copying and pasting this link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NDk1MGQ0MjktNTU5MC00Y2E2LWFIZTctYzFkZTk0ZTY4MTE5%40thread.v2/0?context=%07b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2214304098-3e8b-4bb4-b68e-65e6055b37bf%22%7d

4.2 Submit a Proposal

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For)
 - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal)
- b. Proposers must use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) on our DHS Bonfire Portal and on our Active Solicitations webpage with the RFP announcement at <https://solicitations.alleghenycounty.us/>.
- c. Collaborative Proposals
 - Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner to apply together, are permitted. Collaborative Proposals can include:
 - i. **Lead Agency:** The County can enter a contract with only one partner of a Collaborative Proposal. Therefore, a Collaborative Proposal must identify one entity as the Lead Agency that will be the contracting party with the County. The Lead Agency should be the Proposer.
 - ii. **Partners:** Partners must be committed to a role in carrying out the Contract Services and will be compensated for that role. Collaborative Proposals must attach a signed letter of commitment from each Partner that details and agrees to their role in the Contract Services.
 - Entities may participate in more than one Collaborative Proposal.
- d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
 - Documentation of partnership(s) to leverage housing resources, if applicable
 - New CoC Program RFP eSnaps Budget (template provided)
 - Documentation of partnership(s) to leverage healthcare resources, if applicable
 - W-9
 - Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 6.1 and 6.2)
- e. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed either above or in the Response Form.
 - f. Proposers must make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts or page limits specified in the Response Form.
 - g. **Proposals must be submitted electronically by logging into or creating an account on Bonfire at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> and uploading the required submission documents to the appropriate [RFP Opportunity Page](#) no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, May 23, 2024, to be considered for review. If you are having trouble making an account or uploading your documents, please contact Bonfire Support. You can also reach out to the DHS Procurement Team at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us or (412) 350-6352.**
 - h. All Proposals must be submitted before the deadline! Once the deadline has passed, the RFP Opportunity Page will no longer accept Proposals. If a Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee (as described in Section 5 below) for review and scoring.
 - i. Proposers will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their Proposal. If a Proposer does not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting their Proposal, please contact: DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

4.3 How to Contact DHS about this RFP and RFP Communications

- a. If you have any questions about this RFP, please use the Vendor Discussion feature through the DHS Bonfire Portal at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#), or email us at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.
 - a. All content-related questions must be submitted by the Questions Deadline at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, May 10, 2024.
 - b. You may submit technical or logistical questions at any time, even after the Questions Deadline.
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to all content-related questions and any changes or amendments, will be posted on the [Bonfire RFP Opportunity Page](#) and on our Active Solicitations website at <https://solicitations.alleghenycounty.us/>. Once you have created an account and indicated you are interested in this RFP, you will receive automatic email updates through Bonfire when any questions, changes or amendments are available.
 - a. Please check our DHS Bonfire Portal and the website regularly for answers to questions, additional information and changes to the RFP or the RFP process.
 - b. The webpage will be updated only on Thursdays, with any new information visible after 6 p.m.

- c. The last Q&A and website update for this RFP will be on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6 p.m. We will make every effort not to post any new information after this time; however, we reserve the right to post new information in emergency circumstances.

4.4 New Provider Requirements

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

- a. The DHS New Provider Application is available at our Active Solicitations website under the “Required documents” bar at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. The DHS New Provider Application asks for audited financial reports for the last three years. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of the organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.

4.5 Other Information

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

4.6 Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know Law

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

If the Proposer includes any information within its Proposal that the Proposer asserts is either a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information,” as those terms are defined under the

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

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

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

5.1 Evaluation of Proposals

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. DHS will form an Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee, which will be comprised of evaluators with expertise in the subject matter of this RFP, may include community members with lived experience, external subject matter experts, provider representative(s), representative(s) from key partners or funders, and DHS staff.
- b. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points for each response on a Proposer’s Response Form, utilizing their personal expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in Section 3 using the following scale:
 - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Below expectations
 - 3 – Meets expectations
 - 4 – Exceeds expectations
 - 5 – Outstanding
- c. Each 0-5 score will be multiplied by the appropriate weight for the number of possible points noted after each evaluation criterion in Section 3. For example, for a criterion worth 15 points, the 0-5 score would be multiplied by three. An “Outstanding” response would receive 15 points, while one that “Meets Expectations” would receive nine points.
- d. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the average scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposer(s) can best

provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP. The Committee will have discretion to either: (1) recommend to the DHS Director that a reduced number of Proposals be shortlisted for more extensive review through a formal oral presentation to the Committee, interview or a site visit or (2) recommend to the DHS Director that DHS request authorization for the County to enter into an Agreement(s) with the Successful Proposer(s).

- e. As described in d above, DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have the exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make a formal oral presentation to the Evaluation Committee. Each Committee member will individually score the oral presentation of the shortlisted Proposers using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that a shortlisted Proposer's oral presentation can receive is 15 points:
 - Presentation demonstrates Proposer's ability to implement the Contract Services effectively (5 points)
 - Proposer's answers to Evaluation Committee's questions demonstrate Proposer's ability to implement the Contract Services (5 points)
 - Proposer's presentation is thoughtful and well prepared (5 points)
- f. DHS will tally the scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the scores and arrive at a consensus as to which Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP.
- g. The Committee will submit its recommendation for award of an Agreement or Agreements to the DHS Director for approval. The Director will, in turn, submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).
- h. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- i. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer's references.
- j. As part of determining a Proposer's eligibility to enter a contract with Allegheny County, all Proposers' financial audits or other documentation will be reviewed by DHS fiscal analysts to ensure a Proposer's financial stability.
- k. The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement with a Proposer as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- l. All Proposers will be notified of the County's final decision of which Proposer(s) will be awarded an Agreement.
- m. Proposers that are not awarded an Agreement but who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

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

- a. Received by the due date/time.

- b. Properly formatted and include responses to all requested information.
- c. Complete with all required forms and attachments.

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

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Successful Proposers must comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices. In addition, Successful Proposers must be able to meet the insurance requirements necessary to provide the Contract Services. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County and the insurance requirements are available in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#) and the [Insurance Requirements Overview](#) at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations under the “Required documents.”

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

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

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

6.2 Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB) Requirement

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

- a. A veteran-owned small business is defined by the County as a business having 100 or fewer full-time employees and not less than 51% of which is owned by one or more veterans, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans, and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans. The VOSB vendor **MUST** provide proof of veteran ownership including percentage and name and address of business.
 - For contracts under \$100,000, VOSB vendors are from all bonding requirements.
- b. All Proposals must include either of the following:
 - If the Proposer can meet the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement is required. You must also attach a copy of the VOSB vendor(s) DD 214 discharge form(s) cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer requests a waiver from participating in the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement and VOSB Waiver Request are required.
- c. VOSB forms can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
 - [VOSB Participation Statement](#)
 - [VOSB Waiver Request](#)
- d. A listing of Small Businesses, Small Diverse Businesses, and Veteran Business Enterprises (SB, SDB, and VBE) can be found at <http://www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch>.

6.3 HIPAA Compliance

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

6.4 Cyber Security

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

6.5 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

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

6.6 Language Diversity Requirements

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