

**Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A**

RFP for a Tenancy Sustaining Support Services Program

Office Hours

May 22, 2024

1. Is this RFP specifically for the mental health side, supportive services, or both?

This RFP is for supportive services for individuals who have recently moved into housing after staying in shelter. It is not intended for the Successful Proper to provide any direct mental health case management, however, we do expect the Successful Proper to be able to make appropriate program linkages/referrals for individuals with unmet mental health and/or behavioral health needs.

2. Regarding the program(s), are you expecting for them to work in partnership, or will the program(s) be the option(s) the tenant will have provided to them for support?

This RFP is seeking one or more Successful Proposers. If multiple Successful Proposers are selected, it's likely there would be some shared coordination and collaboration between them and DHS, but each Successful Proper would run their own Program.

3. The RFP doesn't include information about how the households will find housing? How would that work, where do you think people might be located in the County, and/or what will that possibly look like?

Households offered this Program will have recently moved into housing after being in one of our emergency shelters located throughout the County, so referrals would originate from there, and individuals could be housed anywhere in the County.

4. Based on the following question, would the Successful Proposer(s) be brought in during that process or after?

The referral would be made after an individual or family exits a shelter and has moved into housing.

5. I understand DHS is seeking to locate more sustainable funding source at the end of this. Could you talk a little bit more about what that might look like?

Yes, Pennsylvania has applied to the Center for Medicaid Services for a 1115 Waiver, which if granted, would make some of the anticipated services in this Program Medicaid billable to

individuals enrolled in Medicaid. A final decision on the waiver is still pending, but if successful, we anticipate it may supplement some of the funding to sustain this Program.

6. Does DHS already have the households who will be participating, identified or would that be part of our responsibility?

No, it will not be the responsibility of the Successful Proposer to identify participants. DHS will provide the Successful Proposer(s) with participant referrals for this Program.

7. Will there be any opportunities to collaborate with other teams/ departments within the County on services?

Yes. We're interested in a Successful Proposer(s) with strong experience connecting individuals to other services, programs and housing supports, but DHS is open to supporting peer learning environments between agencies and will collaborate with the Successful Proposer(s) to provide the necessary recourses and support to ensure the successful implementation of the Program.

8. Are the participants required to use the services that are provided to them and/or set up a meeting with the agency that received the bid?

No, services offered to households will be voluntary, so we're interested in hearing how Proposers plan to engage with tenants and landlords to offer supports, and what systems and/or best practices they plan to utilize to do so. We anticipate the level of engagement per participant will vary based on that individual's specific needs.

9. Will participants already be placed in housing at the time of referral?

Yes.

10. Will landlord information be provided with the referral(s)?

When landlord information is known, it will be shared with the referral. However, it is anticipated that for many referrals the Successful Proposer(s) will gain necessary information during their contacts with participants.

11. Can I get more information on how the monthly cost reimbursement process works?

The opportunity to propose for/receive an advance, if selected, has specifically been outlined for organizations who may need funding to begin services prior to first to the first invoice they would receive from DHS. Repayment of advances is facilitated by deducting the advance amount from future payments within the first year of the contract, with 100% repayment to occur prior to DHS's fiscal year end of June 30th. This is not a requirement and will not affect the evaluation of your Proposal. If a Proposer thinks an advance may be necessary, but is unsure how to outline it in their budget, DHS will work collaboratively with them (if awarded), to understand and finalize the appropriate budget details.

12. How many referrals are you estimating on a monthly, yearly basis?

DHS intends to serve up to 480 individual households in a year, including up to 80 family households (i.e., households consisting of at least one adult and one minor). On the RFP Response Form, please indicate the number and type of households you're proposing to serve in the appropriate place.

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13. In past RFPs, it has been indicated that if an applicant already has a contract with ACDHS and has record of MWDBE information that it is not necessary to attach for the submission. Does that apply to this submission of the Tenancy Sustaining Support Services proposal? Or must it continue to be an attachment?

You do not need to attach additional MWDBE/VOSB information to your submission if you are already contracted with DHS.

14. When individuals are referred to the program is there an engagement expectation? For example, are services or referrals optional? What would occur if individuals do not engage?

Please review our response to question #8.

15. The proposal gives the impression that only “low-intensity support services” are anticipated for all those referred to the program. Our experience is that it is not possible to predict the broad range of services needed to preserve housing for a varied group of people, each with their own needs, concerns, and experiences. The service is expected to respond quickly, which is often crucial to preserve housing. Our expectation is that once engaged with a client, we need to follow it through to success for them regardless of the program expectations. With those items in mind, has the county determined an expected staffing range to serve the estimated 480 individuals for up to one year following placement? Does the county have a funding estimate for what adequate staffing for this program will cost?

We agree that additional needs may be identified and expect the Successful Proposer to be able to make linkages/referrals to other resources in the community in response to such needs. As such, it is not expected that the Successful Proposer be the entity that addresses all things that could impact housing sustainability and rather will focus on the supports listed on page 5 of the RFP. With that scope in mind, we are looking for Proposers to leverage their experience to identify a proposed staffing size with rationale supporting it.

16. What is considered to be a successful completion of the program?

Tenancy Sustaining Support Services will be available to each Participant for one year. Each Participant may choose to engage or not throughout their year, and there are not any other milestones for completion for Participants.

17. Are the residents housed in any concentrated area or is it scattered throughout the county?

Please review our response to question #3.

18. What other budget line items will be supported for team members?

DHS expects that Proposers will spend the majority of the Program's budget on personnel expenses (wages, salaries, and benefits) for staff members so they may provide necessary and appropriate services as outlined in Section 2, Part B of the RFP ("Service Description")

Considering the budget in total, Allowable Expenditures

- Operating: office rent, communications, insurance, legal services, audits, office supplies, staff travel, overhead, and systems consultants and client tracking.
- Fixed Assets: equipment.
- Personnel: wages and salaries, benefits, and training/conferences.

Non-Allowable Expenditures

- Food purchases for business meetings, client classes, training, and client recognition events.
- Payments made on behalf of clients for shelter or support services other than the Program's Support Services.
- Payments for already existing Case Management services.

19. Are we able to limit to a targeted population?

A Proposer may propose serving a specific subpopulation. However, during evaluation, the evaluation committee will take into account our anticipated level of need for the proposed population, as we want to ensure we're supporting programming where it's most needed.

20. Are there any overhead limitations?

Please review our response to question #18.

21. Where will the Support person/persons be housed for the program?

A designated location for the Program's key staff has not been predetermined by DHS. Program Participants will be located throughout the entirety of the County and we expect the Successful Proposer to be accessible to Participants, inclusive of meeting Participants in the community. Operating expenses, including office rental, are eligible budget expenses. All budget explanations and justifications should be clearly described in the Budget Narrative.

22. Will it be mandatory for the residents to utilize our services if their sustainability for housing is in danger? And if so, how would that be enforced?

Services offered to households will be voluntary. We are interested in hearing how Proposers plan to engage with tenants and landlords to offer supports, and what systems and/or best

practices they plan to utilize to do so. We anticipate the level of engagement per participant will vary based on that individual's specific needs.

23. Will there be any space provided for groups to meet, such as workshops, trainings, discussion groups...etc?

DHS does have meeting rooms that can be reserved and used if determined to be a helpful location. Proposers may also use their own locations and/or coordinate with community partners for accessible locations throughout the County when group spaces would be beneficial.

24. Upon the program being successful will it be extended for additional/ongoing years?

DHS intends to enter into an Agreement with one or more Successful Proposers to provide Contract Services for an initial term of one year with a County option to renew thereafter.

25. Do you have a formula for creating a staffing model based on caseload, such as 1 FTE for every so many clients?

DHS does not have a predetermined staffing model for this Program. Proposers should put forth their staffing approach with rationale in their proposal. We are interested in reviewing a project and staffing approach the Proposer feels necessary for the successful operation of the Final Program.

26. Is there any budget range that is in mind for this first-year contract?

We are interested in reviewing a proposed budget and budget narrative for all costs the Proposer feels necessary for successful operation of the Shelter. Proposers should provide a realistic estimate of costs and strong justification. All proposed costs will be considered for reasonableness, and the final budget and contract terms will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer.