

City of Hartford
Hartford – Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program
Answers to Questions Regarding the Request for Proposal
July 30, 2009

When are proposals due?

Proposals are due no later than 3:00PM Friday, August 14, 2009

CT Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) has revised their cost estimate for “HMIS Related licenses”. The cost is now estimated to be \$44,919, substitute this number for \$31,454 in the Budget Form on page 41

Is the proposed number of 440 clients to be served over the three-year period?

Yes

Is the target population only those persons currently in the shelter system?

No. Please refer to Section D. Participant Eligibility on Page 7 of the RFP for participant eligibility criteria.

Does the revenue section of the budget involve in-kind or payments from clients?

The revenue section of the budget should reflect all in-kind or leveraged cash amounts and sources that the agency proposes to use as part of the Program (RFP, page 41). The Program cannot charge fees to clients. We encourage and support the applicant securing additional funding from alternate sources to support the H-HPRP.

What does “will not lose homeless status” mean?

HUD has confirmed that persons who receive H-HPRP assistance will not lose their homeless status – meaning they will remain eligible for other Continuum of Care programs (RFP, page 3).

Are shelters the only (single) point of entry?

No. The single point of entry will be provided through agency Program staff (RFP, page 7). Referrals will likely come to the Program via shelters and many other referring entities as well as by client self-referral. A statewide referral system utilizing 211 is also under development in conjunction with CCEH. The H-HPRP would be aligned with this resource as appropriate.

What is the significance of the program goal “Child Wellness Centered” (instead of parent)? How can this be achieved?

(This question was in response to a slide from PowerPoint presentation at the Bidder’s Conference.) Within the context of this Program’s micro and macro system change goals, a focus on child wellness is one important strategy. A focus on improving children’s lives is not instead of, but IN ADDITION TO, improving the lives of parents. This focus has been articulated to ensure clear understanding by the applicant about expectations regarding needed services and collaborations.

Journey Home, on behalf of the City, and in order to support the success of this approach has already established a working partnership with the Hartford Public Schools. This partnership will be further formalized once a Lead Agency is chosen. (RFP, page 2, 6, 12, 18).

Will only one contract be awarded?

The City prefers to contract with one Lead Agency who will then sub-contract with one or more Sub-Contractors (RFP, page 4).

How many collaborators and/or subcontracts should the lead agency have?

The Lead Agency shall make that determination. The City prefers to contract with one Lead Agency who will then sub-contract with one or more Sub-Contractors (RFP, page 4).

The screening process seems pretty intense; what guidance or resources are there?

It is assumed that early, high quality assessment is crucial to the success of the Program. The resources available are targeted to a narrow eligibility standard and must be carefully implemented. The proposed screening tools are based on national best practices and will be finalized once a Lead Agency is chosen. It is expected that the Inquiry Team continuous improvement process will assist in developing the screening process once underway.

What kind of service provision should a subcontractor be responsible for?

The Lead Agency shall make that determination. It is expected that a Lead Agency may have one sort of expertise and subcontract with experts in other targeted services. The City does not have a preference regarding the type of expertise held by the Lead Agency—for example, though this funding is coming through housing and homelessness streams, a Lead Agency might be an employment or income related or child-focused organization.

The itemized budget mentions “employment case management services”; aren’t employment services ineligible under HPRP?

H-HPRP funds may not be used to pay for employment training (RFP, page 12). However, case management services may include developing, securing and coordinating services, including employment, educational and child development services (RFP, page 10).

Is an MSW required for all case management positions?

At least one masters level social worker or a licensed clinical social worker (or equivalent) is preferred, who will be assigned to the H-HPRP full time. This is meant to ensure that quick, accurate and comprehensive assessments are completed and that appropriate services are subsequently provided (RFP, page 6).

Is it preferable to have clinicians or case managers?

It would be preferable to have excellent clinicians with excellent supportive skills, i.e. clinical case manager.

Is it a requirement that the Social Worker have a caseload of 25 clients like it says in the job description?

The job description is a sample, as are the responsibilities. “Typically, the SW will have a case load of approximately 25 households at varying degrees of service intensity and which includes a mix of individuals, couples and families.” (RFP, page 38). The Lead Agency shall determine and propose the position responsibilities and caseload in its project design.

What is the expected number of clients each case manager should have? Is each client expected to have his/her own case manager? What level of service should be provided?

The Lead Agency should make these determinations. (See RFP, pages 7-12).

How can we assist clients who lose their jobs?

Increasing the incomes of and the future economic opportunities available for those served by the Program is a central goal of the H-HPRP (see RFP page 2). To enhance the potential of this Program, The City has begun by developing a relationship with Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) in order to coordinate access to ARRA and other employment services. (RFP, page 12). This is just one option. It is expected applicants will have many more ideas.

What is the role of the Advisory Council; how is it formed?

Given the goal of sustainable system improvements, the H-HPRP aims to engage a diverse group of key stakeholders and decision makers through an Advisory Council. The purpose of the Advisory Council will be to support Program implementation, provide community-based leadership on behalf of the Program and act as change agents to create the sustainable system change needed in the Greater Hartford region. The specific role and responsibilities will be defined in coming months.

The Lead Agency will be accountable to the City only. The Lead Agency will however be expected to provide regular updates to the Advisory Council in conjunction with the City.

The City will choose members of the Advisory Council. Nominations are welcome. It is expected that the Council will consist of 10 members representing different sectors and interests (e.g. schools, housing and homelessness, employment and income, civic, philanthropy).

Is the Lead Agency responsible for sustaining this program once the funding runs out?

The Lead Agency should have long-term strategy to sustain gains made by participating individuals and families and the changes made to the community system of care, not necessarily in a financial or management role, but to share experiences and pass on learning.

The Target Client Level Outcomes are high. Won't these results be difficult to obtain given the eligibility criteria and the need for clients to have some kind of income? What happens when a client loses their job and is not re-employed quickly?

The targets are meant as a guide in order to measure the impact of the program. They are offered in draft form in the RFP and may be finalized in conjunction with the chosen Lead Agency.

The stated approach to helping includes a "do whatever it takes" mind set to help people make gains, and this is informed by an understanding that people may not immediately sustain these gains in the short-term but will with practice and support. This is reflective of a Recovery mindset (See RFP, page 3 "Support" and page 39). If a participant loses their job and is not re-employed quickly, it is the responsibility of the Lead Agency and sub-contractors to assist participants in the process of gaining self sufficiency and not to terminate participants based on one or more perceived failures.

What kind of financial assistance is available in terms of housing?

See Section F – Financial Assistance (pages 8-10).

Can a client enter, leave, and re-enter the program?

Yes; as described in "Addressing Disruptions in H-HPRP Participation" (RFP, page 11).

Does the Lead Agency have to set H-HPRP funds aside to ensure there is a full 18 months rental assistance for each household?

Not every client is expected to need 18 months of rental assistance or support services. The type and amount of financial assistance for which each household is eligible will correspond to their service level and will be evaluated regularly with a "transition in place" approach. The Lead Agency may find it prudent to assign funds for future expenditure based on commitments made to clients. .

The proposed number of clients is 440. How did the City arrive at that number? Is there an average cost per client, or a funding model that can be followed?

The applicant may propose an alternate total target number of participants.

The participant target number in the RFP reflects the following thinking:

- At 440 clients there is an average of \$3,574 available per household. Though funds will not be dispensed according to this ratio, this amount is an efficient use of resources. A cost-benefit ratio is an important approach to use.
- Assumptions about numbers of households who would need Level 1 services versus Levels 2,3,4 services, along with length of services.
- Assumptions about the breakdown between those who would need preventative versus rapid rehousing assistance.
- Data available through Point in Time Count, Phase One HPRP and other demographic research.
- It is critical to the funders that H-HPRP provides effective support to as many people as possible.

As part of the applicant's proposal, applicants should use similar assumptions to determine the number of clients to be served, the cost per client and the proposed service model and funding levels (including any maximums) for financial assistance. Applicants should describe the assumptions they used in order to determine these levels of services and funding

Is there a termination policy?

A termination or discharge policy that is consistent with the spirit of the H-HPRP is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to determine (RFP, pages 11, 18)