

Housing Mobility Counseling and Search Assistance Program RFP Q/A 1/24/2020

Q. Are there specific geographic areas that you are targeting (more specific than areas of low opportunity)?

A. No, DOH is not targeting any specific geographic area.

Q. Is there information on the number of people to be served in different areas.

A. Attached to this document are the numbers of tenant based Section 8 and RAP households in communities throughout the state. Participation among these households is voluntary. As such DOH does not have a baseline number of households to be served by this program.

Q. Are there incumbents for this grant?

A. There are no current incumbents for this program/grant.

Q. Should proposers provide a budget in accordance with the current available funding of \$400,000 or for the projected contract value of \$900,000.

A. The proposer should complete an annual budget, therefore the budget submitted should be completed at maximum level of \$400,000 per year.

Q. Is there something missing at the end of the paragraph in Part II, Section 1.2.c Budget Narrative? It states: "Allowable costs are those associated with the following eligible activities. There is no list of activities following the sentence.

A. Below is listed the allowable costs.

1. Supportive Services may include both personnel and program costs. Personnel narratives must include the number and/or percent of case manager positions (use FTE) funded by DOH. Administrative salaries cannot be funded under the supportive services line item but may be included in the Administration line item. Program costs that support the operation of the proposed program are allowed and must be itemized and justified in the narrative.

2. Administrative/Indirect costs cannot exceed 15.0% of total request. This amount may not be re-negotiated upward during contract negotiations.

3. DOH reserves the right to fund portions of a proposed budget and/or require adjustments.

Q. In the Blank DOH Mobility Counseling Budget, which staff should be listed in administrative vs direct program staff?

A. Direct program staff are staff that will be providing mobility counseling services to DOH housing program tenants. Administrative staff does not have direct contact and/or does not provide services to DOH housing program tenants. Administrative staff supports the

mobility counseling program, but does not meet with or provide direct services to DOH housing program tenants.

Q. Where would a remote program manager be listed?

A. If a remote program manager has contact with and provides direct mobility counseling services to DOH housing program tenants, the program manager should be listed in direct program staff. If the remote program manager is supporting the work of another staff member providing mobility counseling services directly to DOH housing program tenants and does not provide mobility counseling services directly to the DOH housing program tenant, then the remote program manager should be listed in administrative staff.

Q. Is it required that the proposer already be doing work in the proposed area for mobility services.

A. No, it is not required that the proposer already be doing work in the proposed area for mobility counseling.

Q. If it is not required, is there a benefit to a proposer who is already doing work in the mobility service area.

A. There is not a benefit to a proposer who is already doing work in the mobility service area.

Q. What metropolitan area has DOH defined for the purposes of a service area within Connecticut, if any?

A. DOH has not defined any metropolitan area for the purpose of service delivery for the mobility counseling RFP.

Q. If not yet defined, is the responding agency able to define a proposed metropolitan area.

A. Yes, a responding agency can define a proposed metropolitan area for the delivery of mobility counseling services within the borders of Connecticut.

Q. Who is defining an opportunity area?

A. DOH has defined opportunity areas throughout the state. The attached link outlines the opportunity areas in Connecticut. <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Policy-and-Research/Opportunity-Map>

Q. If DOH has already defined what is considered an opportunity area for the State, would DOH share with proposers the criteria used to define these areas.

A. Please refer to this link for more information related to the DOH opportunity map. <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Policy-and-Research/Opportunity-Map>

Q. Is a proposer required to have/use an office in Connecticut?

A. The proposer is not required to have or use an office in Connecticut. If a proposer does not, however, use an office in Connecticut, the proposer must describe how mobility services will be provided to DOH housing program tenants. The proposer, at a minimum, must

indicate how it will meet with tenants, conduct landlord outreach, and assist tenants with locating apartments in high opportunity areas without a base office to work out of.

Q. Will the State provide the office space?

A. The State will not provide office space.

Q. If office space is provided by the State, will there be monthly rent charges?

A. N/A, the State will not provide office space.

Q. If there will be monthly rental charges, what will be included in the monthly rent charges, e.g cost of utilities, repairs and maintenance, etc?

A. N/A, the State will not provide office space.

Q. Please itemize the charges included in the monthly rent.

A. N/A, the State will not provide office space.

Q. For Section 6 “Program Income,” please define Program Income Fees.

A. DOH uses the budget attached to the mobility counseling program RFP for a variety of DOH funded housing programs, some of which may include program income. The mobility counseling program, however, does not have a program income component, therefore no program income fees should be collected and this section of the annual budget should be left blank.

Q. Data Availability: Will contractor have access to particularized data sets, e.g., families with younger children, including how many and ages, families in the > 30% poverty areas; total income; employment status and telephone numbers?

A. DOH will work with our Section 8 and Rental Assistance Program Contractor to make such information available to the selected mobility counseling contractor(s).

Q. Will DOH allow for exception payment standards for high/very high areas? Alternatively, will DOH adopt SAFMR’s for RAPs for the mobility areas?

A. DOH has adopted the Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMR) for the greater Hartford metro region in compliance with HUD guidelines. DOH, however, cannot exceed the payment standard guidelines according to federal regulations for any Section 8 subsidy, including subsidies subject to the SAFMR. The Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR) for the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) is evaluated every year and takes into account higher rents in higher opportunity areas, and therefore has a higher MAR for these areas. Often times the RAP payment standard is in alignment or exceeds the federal SAFMR’s for high opportunity areas in the Greater Hartford Region.

Q. Can the contractor ask the HAP Administrator to survey its line staff to recommend participants based on their knowledge/experience with them (as recertification/new subsidy clients)?

A. DOH will work with the selected mobility counseling contractor and DOH's Section 8 and RAP administrator to identify potential DOH housing program tenants that may be a candidate for mobility counseling.

Q. Once participants have been identified, will the HAP Administrator appoint a single point of contact for the contractor so as to avoid the contractor working with numerous line workers at numerous agencies?

A. DOH will work with the selected mobility counseling contractor and DOH's Section 8 and RAP administrator to identify the most efficient manner to share information and implement the mobility counseling program.

Q. Will the HAP Administrator set aside time for a through training for their staff by the contractor regarding what opportunity moves mean, as well as the counseling program overall?

A. DOH will work with the selected mobility counseling contractor and DOH's Section 8 and RAP administrator to identify the most efficient manner to share information and implement the mobility counseling program.

Q. Definition of Success: as used in the RFP, do the terms "low" and "high" mean "low/very low" and "high/very high opportunity areas respectively? What happens to moves from/to "moderate" opportunity areas?

A. Yes, the terms "low" and "high" mean "low/very low" and "high/very high" opportunity areas respectively. Moves to "moderate" opportunity areas will not count toward the outcome requirement of 50% of households participating in the mobility counseling program will move to an area of high opportunity.

Q. "Administer distribution of security deposit funds, through the Security Deposit Guarantee (SDG) Program, for housing in high opportunity areas." Does this mean that the contractor will be responsible for operating the SDG program in these areas including underwriting claims, etc.? Or does it mean the contractor will assist program participants with SDG program operated by a different entity?

A. The SDG will be made available as an option to any DOH housing program tenant that makes a move to a high opportunity area. The mobility counseling contractor will assist the program participants with the SDG program operated by a different entity. The mobility counseling program contractor will not administer the SDG program.

Q. Is DOH anticipating any set-aside SDG funds for this program?

A. Currently there is sufficient funding in the SDG program to assist households in making moves to high opportunity areas.

Q. Is DOH anticipating the availability of any other source of funding for security deposits for opportunity moves?

A. At this time, DOH is not anticipating any additional funding for security deposits outside of the SDG program.

Q. In the period of April 2020-June 2022, what portion of clients do you anticipate coming from newly issued subsidies, rather than re-certifications?

A. The vast majority of participants enrolling in the mobility counseling program will be re-certifications. The Section 8 program currently has approximately 7300 tenant based subsidies in the program, while RAP has approximately 5500. New entries into each program on an annual basis average around 250 new participants, leaving over 12,000 program participants that are recertifying.

Q. Can the contractor choose not to work with “special” RAP holders, i.e. FUSE, D-RAP, FUP etc.? If the contractor must work with these clients, would it be possible because of their special circumstances and needs to change the definition of success to low and/or moderate opportunity moves?

A. The mobility counseling program is a voluntary program open to all DOH housing program participants. Therefore if any Section 8 or RAP participant, including “special” RAP holders, the mobility counseling contractor must work with that household. DOH will not change any of the outcome measures based on this populations “special circumstances”.

Q. Can the search time be extended to 6 months for those families/individuals with special RAPs who are new to the program?

A. The mobility counseling contractor can request a waiver from DOH to extend the search time for any household engaged in the mobility counseling program.

Q. Can this group of new “special” RAP holders have guaranteed security deposit money made available to them?

A. All mobility counseling participants that make a move to a high/very high opportunity area will be granted access to the SDG program.

Q. Will the HAP Administrator keep the contractor apprised in a timely manner as to the progress of the Request for Lease Approval, along with critical lease-up information such as move-in date, new address, contract rent, as well as client’s rent portion?

A. DOH will work with the selected mobility counseling contractor and DOH’s Section 8 and RAP administrator to identify the most efficient manner to share information and implement the mobility counseling program.

Q. Who are the current contractors/service providers of Housing Mobility services and what geographic areas are covered by these contractors?

A. There are currently no organizations under contract for Mobility Counseling with DOH.

Q. Re RPF page 8, D. Proposal Format: 1. Required Outline, which reads: All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. Submissions

that fail to follow the required outline may be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated. However, Section IV – Proposal Outline (RFP pp 25-26) does not reflect information included within the RFP itself - see pp 18-21, C. Main Proposal Components, 2. Proposal Program Description. Could you clarify which to follow?

A. The Contractor should follow the proposal components outlined in the RFP itself from pages 17-22.

Q. Re RFP p 20, item f. which says to attach any housing assessment tools; could you confirm these should this be added to H. Appendices? If so, can we assume it would follow "h. Written financial and management procedures" and labeled "i. Housing assessment"?

A. Yes, any housing assessment tools should be added to H. Appendices and it can be follow h. Written financial and management procedures” and be labeled “i. Housing Assessment”.

Q. The Proposal Outline (pages 25-26) of the RFP has items such as 1.c “Qualifications, Relevant Experience and References” that are not mentioned in C. Main Proposal Components. As such, how should we respond to these items—i.e. how many references should we provide?

A. The proposal should contain at least two references.

Q. Would the Department be able to provide guidance about allowable overhead rates for this program? We understand proposers will not be allowed to negotiate for a higher amount of funds or a higher administrative/overhead percentage than that submitted in the proposed budget.

A. Administrative/Indirect costs cannot exceed 15.0% of total request. This amount may not be re-negotiated upward during contract negotiations.

Q. The second sentence in Section C.4 states: "All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract."

Section I.2 (OMB Circular A-133 is for cost reimbursement contracts) and the Budget worksheet indicate that this will be a cost-type contract.

a) What type of contract is anticipated? Fixed Price/unit, Firm-Fixed Price, Labor Hour, or Cost Plus Fixed Fee?

b) If Fixed Price/unit or FFP, why are the Cost Standards required?

c) If cost reimbursable, what does the sentence in Section C.4 mean?

d) Is profit allowable for the contractor?

A. DOH will provide a flat fee for the services and the contractor will submit a budget workbook detailing their direct and administrative expenses. Profit is not allowable under this contract.

