

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services (ESS) Program

The State of Connecticut, Department of Housing (the Department), is seeking proposals to provide shelter operations and housing case management services in Connecticut for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Funding under this Request for Proposals (RFP) will be provided by the Department under the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program and the Emergency Shelter Services (ESS) Program.

The ESG program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide states and localities with resources and incentives to devise and implement long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the emergency shelter and housing needs of the homeless and those at risk of homelessness.

The ESS Program is funded by the State of Connecticut Department of Housing to provide emergency shelter operations and/or case management with housing find to move individuals and families out of emergency shelter and into permanent housing.

The RFP is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal at <http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=12> or from the Department's Official

Contact:

Name: Steve DiLella, Acting Director, Individual and Family Support Programs, Department of Housing
Address: 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-418-6845
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The RFP is also available on the Department's website at <http://www.ct.gov/doh/site/default.asp>. A printed copy of the RFP can be obtained from the Official Contact upon request. Deadline for submission of proposals is Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 3:00 PM.

This document is configured for 2-sided printing.

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*Below is an outline of this Request For Proposal. The outline presents the standard structure of all RFPs for POS: meaning, the same sections and subsections appear in all RFPs for POS; in other words, they are identically organized. The subsections of **Section II** are standard and their contents are the same for all RFPs for POS; they do not vary. The subsections of **Sections I, III and IV** are standard, but their contents vary by RFP, depending on the Department's procurement requirements.*

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name or Number.** Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services (ESS) Program 2015_18111
2. **Summary.** The Department of Housing, requests proposals from eligible nonprofit providers to provide shelter, housing and supportive services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Connecticut.
3. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Department wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:
 - 2000: Community and Social Services/Emergency Shelter Services

■ B. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BFO	Best and Final Offer
CAN	Coordinated Access Network
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CCEH	CT Coalition to End Homelessness
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CT)
CT	Connecticut
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
DOH	Department of Housing
DMHAS	Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
DSS	Department of Social Services
ESG	Emergency Solutions Grant
EMSA	Eligible Metropolitan Service Area
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development (US)
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
OAG	Office of the Attorney General (CT)
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
POS	Purchase of Service
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
RFP	Request For Proposals
RRP	Rapid Rehousing Program
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
STRMU	Short-term Rent, Mortgage and Utilities
U.S.	United States

- *contractor*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a POS contract with the Department as a result of this RFP
- *private provider organization*: a non-state entity that is a nonprofit organization

- *proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP
- *prospective proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by a contractor to provide a specific health or human service as part of a POS contract with the Department as a result of this RFP

■ C. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact.** The individual below is the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Department. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Department about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Steve DiLella, Acting Director, Individual and Family Support Programs, Department of Housing
 Address: 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 Phone: 860-418-6845
 E-Mail: Steve.DiLella@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

2. **RFP Information.** The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Department's Web Page
<http://www.ct.gov/doh/site/default.asp>
- State Contracting Portal
<http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=12>

It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement subscribe to receive e-mail alerts from the State Contracting Portal. Subscribers will receive a daily e-mail announcing procurements and addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

Printed copies of all documents are also available from the Official Contact upon request.

3. Contract Awards. The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Department. The Department anticipates the following:

- Total Funding Available: \$12,136,760.00 annually
- Number of Awards: Up to 50 awards Statewide
- Contract Cost: Confidential
- Contract Term: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2018 with the option of one one-year extension, July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019, exercised at the discretion of the Department.

The funding source (Federal ESG and/or State ESS) will be determined by the Department, based in part, on the location of the proposed activity. ESG funds will only be used to fund programs in the Balance of State Eligible Metropolitan Service Area (EMSA) for the ESG program. The geographic areas that DO NOT comprise the Balance of State EMSA are Bridgeport proper, New Haven proper, Hartford proper and Waterbury proper. These cities will not receive ESG funds from this RFP.

The Department reserves the right to determine how funds will be distributed if one or more of the identified catchment areas has excess funds available.

4. Eligibility. Private provider organizations with principal place of business in Connecticut are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Individuals and any entity that is not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement. Proposers must provide proof of nonprofit status such as a copy of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) determination letter.

5. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers. To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

- a. Proposer must demonstrate experience and focus on serving the homeless and/or those at risk of becoming homeless. Demonstration of abilities will occur in the proposal and workplan, which should include but not be limited to the following:
 - i. Successfully provided emergency shelter or housing services for persons that are homeless or at risk of homelessness for a minimum of two (2) years, or equivalent (e.g. supportive housing for other special needs populations, such as persons with mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, or other disabilities);
 - ii. Currently provides case management services in conjunction with emergency shelter and/or permanent housing;
 - iii. Demonstrated participation in local and statewide coordinated access and rapid rehousing initiatives. This should be demonstrated by attaching local Coordinate Access Network (CAN) and/or Rapid Rehousing meeting minutes/summaries reflecting attendance; and
 - iv. Have the capacity to collect client level data using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) used in CT (CASEWORTHY), or ability to implement such data collection no later than three months after contract start date.
- b. Demonstrated managerial and administrative support to implement an ESS and/or ESG program, including the ability to meet the data and technology requirements set forth in Section III.c.4 of this RFP.
- c. Evidence of financial stability.

6. Procurement Schedule. See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are target dates only (*). The Department may amend the schedule, as needed. Any change will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and the Department's Web Page.

- RFP Planning Start Date: April 2, 2014
- RFP Released: October 9, 2014
- Letter of Intent Due: Not Applicable
- Deadline for Questions: November 17, 2014
- Answers Released (Round 1): November 25, 2014
- RFP Conference: October 27, 2014 at 10:00AM at the Lyceum, 227 Lawrence Street, Hartford, CT 06106
- Answers Released (Round 2): Not Applicable
- Proposals Due: December 4, 2014
- (*) Start of Contract: July 1, 2015

7. Letter of Intent. A Letter of Intent (LOI) is not required by this RFP.

8. Inquiry Procedures. All questions regarding this RFP or the Department's procurement process must be directed, in writing, to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions determined by the Department to be material to this procurement and received before the deadline will be answered. At its discretion, the Department may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. The Department may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If in the Department's determination any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such. The Department will release the answers to the questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and on the Department's Web Page.

9. Submission Date and Time. The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time:

- Due Date: December 4, 2014
- Time: 3:00 PM Eastern Time

Faxed or e-mailed proposals will not be evaluated. The Department will not accept a postmark date as the basis for meeting the submission due date and time. Proposers should not interpret or otherwise construe receipt of a proposal after the due date and time as acceptance of the proposal, since the actual receipt of the proposal is a clerical function. When hand-delivering proposals, proposers should allow extra time due to building security procedures. Proposals received after the due date and time may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function, but late proposals will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Department, late proposals may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- one (1) original proposal;
- Five (5) conforming electronic copies. Compact Disks and/or flash drives clearly labeled with the Legal name of the respondent and the RFQ Name or Number: **Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services (ESS) 2015_18111.**

The original proposal must carry original signatures and be clearly marked on the cover as "Original." Unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The original proposal and each conforming copy of the proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee. **The electronic copies of the proposal must be compatible with Microsoft Office Word 2007 except for the Budget, which may be compatible with Microsoft Office Excel 2007.** For the electronic copies, required Appendices and Forms identified in Section IV may be scanned and submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar file format.

10. Multiple Proposals. Providers within a community are encouraged to consider joint applications to address multiple community needs and strengthen collaboration across CANs. The same provider may submit no more than one single- agency proposal and participate in no more than one collaborative application with other providers within a CAN.

11. Declaration of Confidential Information. Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL. In Section C of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Acceptance of a proposal by the Department where such proposal contains such confidentiality requests is not an agreement that such material is confidential or exempt from disclosure. The Department reserves the right to make such determination.

12. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Department will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no*

current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85.”

■ D. PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. **Required Outline.** 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.
2. **Cover Sheet.** The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. Proposers must complete and use the **Cover Sheet** form, which is can be found on the DOH website at <http://www.ct.gov/doh/cwp/view.asp?a=4513&Q=530464&PM=1>.
3. **Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms to the required proposal outline. (See Section IV.)
4. **Executive Summary.** Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding two (2) pages, of the main proposal and cost proposal. The Executive Summary shall include: a) the respondent’s minimum of two (2) years of experience providing shelter and/or housing services for persons that are homeless or at risk of homelessness; (b) methodology of provision of case management services in conjunction with rapid exit from homelessness to housing; (c) participation in coordinated access and rapid rehousing models; and (d) ability to utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for capturing unduplicated client level data.
5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in Section IV are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions may result in disqualification.
6. **Style Requirements.** Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:

Binding Type: Loose leaf binders with the Legal Name of the proposer and the RFP Name appearing on the outside front cover of the binder: **Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grant and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services) 2015_18111 RFP**

Dividers: A tab sheet keyed to the table of contents must separate each subsection of the proposal; the title of each subsection must appear on the tab sheet

Paper Size: 8 ½” x 11” “portrait” orientation

Page Limit: 10 double-sided, consecutively numbered pages (20 pages total) **excluding** all required Appendices and Forms

Print Style: 2-sided

Font Size: Minimum 11 point

Font Type: Arial or Tahoma

Margins: The binding edge margin of all pages shall be a minimum of one and one half inches (1½”); all other margins shall be one inch (1”)

Line Spacing: Single-spaced

7. **Pagination.** The proposer’s name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, from the Cover Sheet through the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered in the footer.

Packaging and Labeling Requirements. All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to the Official Contact. The Legal Name and Address of the proposer must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package. The RFP Name or Number must be clearly displayed on the envelope or package: **Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grant and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services 2015_18111 RFP**

Any received proposal that does not conform to these packaging or labeling instructions may be accepted or excluded from evaluation, at the discretion of the Department. At the discretion of the Department, any proposal excluded from evaluation may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

■ E. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- 1. Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Department to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Department will conform to the Department's written procedures for POS procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85).
- 2. Screening Committee.** The Department will designate a Screening Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Screening Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Screening Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.
- 3. Minimum Submission Requirements.** All proposals must comply with the requirements specified in this RFP. To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (a) be received on or before the due date and time; (b) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (c) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (d) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements may not be reviewed further at the discretion of the Department. DOH will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.
- 4. Evaluation Criteria (and Weights).** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Screening Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The criteria are weighted according to their relative importance. The weights are confidential.
 - Organizational Profile
 - Proposed Program Description
 - Staffing Plan
 - Program Outcome Requirements
 - Quality Assurance Requirements
 - Financial Profile

- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Appendices

Note:

As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Screening Committee will consider the respondent's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

- 5. Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Screening Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Department head. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the Department head. Any proposer selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department. 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. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Pursuant to Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Order No. 3, any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. The Screening Committee may select as few or as many proposals needed to ensure the homeless population is being served in all areas of the state. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Department's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process.
- 6. Debriefing.** After receiving notification from the Department, any proposer may contact the Official Contact and request a Debriefing of the procurement process and its proposal. If proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Department to discuss the procurement process. The Department shall schedule and conduct Debriefing meetings that have been properly requested, promptly following the Department's receipt of a request. The Debriefing meeting will not include comparisons of any proposals with other proposals, nor will the identity of the evaluators be released. The Debriefing process may not be used to change, alter or modify the outcome of a competitive procurement. More detailed information about requesting a Debriefing may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 7. Appeal Process.** Any time after the submission due date, but **not later than thirty (30) days** after the Department notifies proposers about the outcome of a competitive procurement, proposers may submit an Appeal to the Department. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. Proposers may appeal any aspect of the Department's competitive procurement; however, such Appeal must be in writing and must set forth facts or evidence in sufficient and convincing detail for the Department to determine whether during any aspect of the competitive procurement there was a failure to comply with the State's statutes, regulations or standards concerning competitive procurement or the provisions of the RFP. Any such Appeal must be submitted to the Agency Head with a copy to the official contact. The proposer must include the basis for the Appeal and the remedy requested. The filing of an Appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Department to delay, suspend, cancel or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an Appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 8. Contest of Solicitation or Award.** Pursuant to Section 4e-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Any bidder or proposer on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting

Standards Board...” More detailed information is available on the State Contracting Standards Board web site at <http://www.ct.gov/scsb/site/default.asp>.

- 9. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Department’s contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General.

II. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. POS STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract" for POS:

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, reports, terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting POS contract.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the POS contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: <http://www.ct.gov/opm/site/default.asp>

Note:

Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g) (2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected proposer (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of OPM and the Attorney General's Office.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Department may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not

submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.

4. **Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Department may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.
5. **Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Department for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
2. **Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Department shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
3. **Exclusion of Taxes.** The Department is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
4. **Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
5. **Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Department may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Department, and at the proposer's expense.
6. **Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Department. The Department may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, oral presentation or other supplemental information will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the

Department. At its sole discretion, the Department may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.

- 7. Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Department, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Department may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Department may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
- 8. RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Department or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Department and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Department and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Department.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Department reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Department deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Department may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Department reserves the right to award in part and/or to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for any reason or for no reason. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Department may waive or modify any requirement, condition or other term set forth in the RFP if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Department reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time or otherwise not in conformity with the submission requirements set forth in this RFP.
- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.

- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The Department reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Department further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Department may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Department may set parameters on any BFOs received.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The Department reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.
- 8. Key Personnel.** When the Department is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Department reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Department.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to insure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.

3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81. Proposals for State contracts with a value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, excluding leases and licensing agreements of any value, shall require a consulting agreement affidavit attesting to whether any consulting agreement has been entered into in connection with the proposal. As used herein "consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information or (C) any other similar activity related to such contract. Consulting agreement does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of C.G.S. Chapter 10 as of the date such affidavit is submitted in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. § 4a-81. The proposer may upload the Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division, and the Department of Housing will review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this RFP as a hyperlink.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A proposer must complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 5 by the due date and time for proposals in response to this RFP.

4. Gift and Campaign Contributions, C.G.S. §§ 4-250 and 4-252(c); Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Orders No. 1, Para. 8 and No. 7C, Para. 10; C.G.S. § 9-612(g) (2). If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with an anticipated value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, the proposer must fully disclose any gifts or lawful contributions made to campaigns of candidates for statewide public office or the General Assembly. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The successful proposer may upload the Gift and Campaign Contributions Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division, and the Department of Housing will review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this RFP as a hyperlink.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 1 prior to contract execution.

5. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. §§ 4a-60(a) (1) and 4a-60a (a) (1). If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the Department with *written representation* or *documentation* that certifies the proposer complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. A nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The successful proposer may upload the Nondiscrimination Certification through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division, and the Department of Housing will review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this RFP as a hyperlink.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit the appropriate nondiscrimination certification form prior to contract execution.

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

■ A. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Housing (DOH) strengthens and revitalizes communities by promoting affordable housing opportunities. The Department seeks to eliminate homelessness and to catalyze the creation and preservation of quality, affordable housing to meet the needs of all individuals and families statewide to ensure that Connecticut continues to be a great place to live and work.

DOH works in concert with municipal leaders, public agencies, community groups, local housing authorities, and other housing developers in the planning and development of affordable homeownership and rental housing units, the preservation of existing multi-family housing developments, community revitalization and financial and other support for our most vulnerable residents through our funding and technical support programs. As the State's lead agency for all matters relating to housing, DOH provides leadership for all aspects of policy and planning relating to the development, redevelopment, preservation, maintenance and improvement of housing serving very low, low, and moderate income individuals and families. DOH is also responsible for overseeing compliance with applicable statutes, regulations and financial assistance agreements for funded activities through long-term program compliance monitoring.

Department Mission

A Connecticut where affordable housing, in strong, vibrant and inclusive communities, is accessible to individuals and families across the state and homelessness is a thing of the past.

- **B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:** Program Title: Balance of State – Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Statewide Emergency Shelter Services (ESS) will provide shelter, housing and supportive services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Connecticut.

■ C. MAIN PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

1. Organizational Requirements

A responsive proposal must include a summary of the proposer's overall qualifications to manage an ESS/ESG contract. At a minimum, the proposer must include the following specific details regarding the proposer's organization:

- (a) Purpose/Mission: Describe how your proposed program fits within your organization's mission and current programs configuration. Summarize the services you currently provide within the geographical area in which you are seeking funding. Organizational chart shall be included in Section IV.H, Appendices.

(b) Entity Type/Years of Operation: Give a brief overview of your organization. Demonstrate current experience providing shelter, housing and case management services for at least two years, or equivalent and the provision of case management services in conjunction with your shelter or housing. Detail current number of clients being served, client-to-staff ratio and funding source(s).

(c) Qualifications, Relevant Experience and References: Summarize your ability to administer state and/or federal grants. Describe any potential risks to the Department and risks that could be encountered by acting as a Department contractor and if any, propose solutions or approaches for managing those risks. Describe the proposer's familiarity and sensitivity with managing the proposed program and provide data regarding past performance in administering programs consistent with the required areas in this RFP. Provide three specific programmatic references (contact information only, not letters of reference). References must be persons able to comment on the proposer's capability to perform the services specified in this RFP. The contact person must be an individual familiar with the organization and its day-to-day performance. If the proposer has been a State contractor within the last five years, the proposer must include a State of Connecticut reference.

2. Proposed Program Description

A responsive proposal shall thoroughly describe the proposed program:

(a) Eligible Activities: proposed programs shall include one or more of the following services:

- ❖ Shelter beds/units – number of beds
- ❖ Diversion to help clients resolve potential shelter need through assistance other than emergency shelter
- ❖ Rapid Rehousing services, including housing location and placement services, stabilization case management and financial assistance
- ❖ Housing inspections
- ❖ Case management in the shelter and/or in housing, with emphasis on housing stabilization and providing linkage to mainstream services

(b) Service / Catchment Area: Identify the proposed service area for this program, that is, cities and towns where the participants reside.

(c) Population: Identify who will receive the services, specify include special populations, if any (for example, women with children, single men, single women...etc.) Proposal must include the plan to ensure those populations not listed in your proposal will be served by another agency within the CAN.

(d) Service Capacity/ Delivery Plan/ Systems/ Processes / Protocols: Describe the elements of your proposed program:

- ❖ The mechanisms you will use to determine that clients served are low- and moderate-income;
- ❖ Your eligibility screening process and how applicants will be accepted;
- ❖ How you will work with clients seeking shelter to address their housing crisis through other means (mediation, targeted financial assistance, other) to minimize need to enter emergency shelter;
- ❖ How you will provide supportive services aimed at helping clients access the mainstream services that they need, exit homelessness as quickly as possible

and stabilize in appropriate permanent housing. Households are defined as a unit of 1 or more individuals living together in one dwelling;

- ❖ How you will assist clients in locating appropriate permanent housing;
 - ❖ How you will assist clients to rapidly exit homelessness using a rapid rehousing approach and how you will access available funding for this purpose from a municipality or the State, including, if applicable, your proposed mechanisms for providing housing subsidies directly to a landlord for rapid rehousing;
 - ❖ How your program will work with your local CAN in order to deliver the services needed in your community and fill gaps in services identified in the CAN;
 - ❖ How your program will meet federal requirements, including rent calculations, housing quality standard inspections, lead-based paint inspections, conflict of interest, confidentiality and all other regulations under Title 24 Part 574 http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_05/24cfr574_05.html ;
 - ❖ How you will create and implement a housing plan with each individual/family client;
 - ❖ How your program will work with partners in your CAN regarding waitlist and prioritization of clients when there is more demand for shelter than your community can accommodate at a given time with existing shelter stock;
 - ❖ How your program will incorporate other sources of funding the program receives (for example, from DSS, DHMAS, DOH, municipal and charitable funding) and how these funds will be used to complement ESG/ESS services; and
 - ❖ Hours of operation.
- (e) Culturally Competent Services: Ability to ensure a culturally responsive delivery of services that recognizes and affirms diversity.
- (f) Client eligibility: Describe the process for determining client eligibility for housing and supportive services including enrollment into Medicaid and other entitlements.
- (g) Goals: Since permanent housing and a stable living environment is the ultimate goal and expected outcome, describe the procedures that are in place to monitor progress of clients from entrance into the program to permanent placement and beyond.
- (h) Dun & Bradstreet (D-U-N-S) number. Submit a Dun & Bradstreet (D-U-N-S) number for proposer and subcontractor(s). The DUNS number is a nine digit identification number.
- (i) Subcontractors: List agencies that will be subcontractors to assist in carrying out the proposed program description if any. Describe their role and your quality assurance plan.
- (j) Coordinated assessment tool: How you will use of the Vulnerability Index & Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) *Assessment tool*

3. Staffing Requirements

- (a) Key Personnel: Provide the names and titles of proposed personnel key to the success of the proposed program and the hours and percentages of time dedicated to this project. Describe how your staffing will successfully meet this RFP's requirements in light of any other obligations this staff have to any other entity. Summarize your procedures to secure and retain professional staff and your method to evaluate personnel performance.
- (b) Job Descriptions: Attach job descriptions for proposed funded positions and resumes if position hours are to be filled by % of FTE of existing staff members in Section IV.H, Appendices.
- (c) Staff-to-Client Ratio: Describe the support staff to client ratio proposed for your program and the rationale used for arriving at that ratio. (Note: there is no pre-set ratio determined by the Department.)

4. Data and Technology Requirements

(a) Data Reporting and Technology Capacity

Describe your capacity to collect client level data and your ability to adhere to Data Quality and Performance Management Standards set by the CT Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Steering Committee using the HMIS used in CT (CASEWORTHY), or your willingness to implement such data collection standards within three months of award.

Current ESS-funded providers must submit their Shelter Utilization report from April 1, 2014 – September 30, 2014 to demonstrate their ability to utilize system.

(b) Program Outcome Requirements

Describe your organization's role in your CAN plan, or your plan, to meet the following HEARTH ACT required outcomes:

- ❖ Work within a coordinated access system; ensure outreach efforts reach all members of a community
- ❖ Length of time individuals and families remain homeless will be no more than 30 days
- ❖ Reduce new episodes of homelessness
- ❖ Reduce return entries into homelessness

(c) Quality Assurance Requirements

- i. Internal Quality Assurance Process: Describe your organization's internal quality assurance process and its impact upon program operation. Describe current and planned activities to assure service quality and how these services enable consumers to access and maintain stable housing.
- ii. Client Satisfaction Process: Describe your client satisfaction process (surveys, etc.). Summarize feedback (number and percent of returned surveys, summary of concerns expressed by clients, etc.). Give a brief narrative of your follow-up actions or plans regarding concerns raised by client. Include a copy of proposer's client satisfaction document, if applicable in Section IV.H, Appendices.

- iii. Program Audit Compliance: State your experience being in compliance with past contracts and/or directives. State any deficiencies identified in recent annual program audits, monitoring or corrective action plans and, if applicable, detail what steps you have taken on completing any recommendations. Indicate your willingness to participate in development and implementation of frontline homeless services/shelter standards and a peer review process to engage providers to review compliance with such standards. Standards will include shelters accepting or coordinating the acceptance within the CAN, of all homeless people needing shelter services without stipulations.

D. COST PROPOSAL COMPONENT

1. Financial Requirements

- (a) Audited Financial Statements: The proposer shall submit 1 copy of the proposer's two most recent annual financial statements prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant, and reviewed or audited in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) (USA). Each copy shall include all applicable financial statements, auditor's reports, management letters, and any corresponding reissued components. Audited Financial Statements do not count toward the total page limit of the proposal. Each copy shall be included with the proposal in Section IV.H. Appendices.
- (b) Financial Management Procedures. The proposer shall submit the proposer's written financial management procedures that include policies/procedures for: (i) managing and tracking cash receipts/disbursements; (ii) budgeting; (iii) procurement; (iv) reconciling expenditures; (v) separation of duties/functions and (vi) payroll. Include with the proposal in Section IV.H. Appendices.
- (c) Financial Capacity: Describe the organization's financial capacity to properly isolate ESS/ESG-related income and expenditures. Discuss the internal controls used to ensure the safeguarding of funds to ensure that a thorough record of expenditures can be provided for purposes of an audit.
- (d) Leveraged Funds: Describe the proposer's long term strategy to sustain funding for the program and explain how ESS/ESG funds may be used to leverage other funding.
- (e) Mixed Funding: If proposer is utilizing staff from various funding sources, proposer will document how staff time for this program will be tracked.

2. Budget Requirements

- (a) Budget: Prepare an annual line item budget that depicts the allowable costs associated with the program.
- (b) Budget Narrative: Detail how expenses listed in the annual budget were calculated. Either Microsoft Word or Excel format is acceptable.
- ❖ 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.

- ❖ Administrative/Indirect costs cannot exceed 18.0% of total request. This amount may not be re-negotiated upward during contract negotiations.
- ❖ DOH reserves the right to fund portions of a proposed budget and/or require adjustments.

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