Housing Mobility Counseling and Search Assistance Program RFP Q/A 11/24/15

1. How many total voucher holders are in the voucher program?

A. As of July 1, 2015 there were 6917 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers leased up and 4556 RAP certificates leased up.

1. How many vouchers (new and move) are expected to be issued during the contract period?
2. DOH cannot definitively answer this question as new vouchers would be based on federal funding during the contract term, which is not known at this time, and turnover, which is dependent on the current tenants, which is also unpredictable over the contract term.
3. Is this a new program? If not, who is currently providing the proposed services?

A. No, this is an existing program that DOH is re-procuring. The current contractors are Home Inc., Housing Education Resource Center, and New Opportunities, Inc.

 Q. How many clients have moved to opportunity areas, and over what period of time?

 A. At this time, DOH does not have this data.

Q. How many clients are currently receiving pre-move counseling services?

A. At this time, DOH does not have this data.

 Q. How many clients are currently receiving post-move counseling services?

 A. At this time, DOH does not have this data.

 Q. Does DOH have a landlord database tool that will be available to the vendor, or does the vendor need to provide a tool?

 A. Landlord databases that a contractor selected under this RFP may use include [www.cthousingsearch.org](http://www.cthousingsearch.org), [www.apartments.com](http://www.apartments.com), [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com), [www.trulia.com](http://www.trulia.com) and other commonly used apartment search tools.

 Q. Would DOH accept recommendations from the vendor to lower costs and increase efficiencies, so long as the program outcome requirements, described in the Part III, 2, G (page 21 of 25) of the RFP are not negatively affected?

 A. Recommendations can be part of each proposer’s application and would be considered during the selection process.

1. Does vendor need to be registered to do business in the State of Connecticut at the time of proposal submission? Or, at the time of award?

A. Each proposer must be registered to do business in the State of Connecticut at the time of the proposal submission.

 Q. The Connecticut mobility counselors appear to be concerned that they can’t discuss a joint mobility counseling contract for fear of violating the RFP’s anti-collusion clause. Can you confirm for me in writing that it is not a violation of this element of the RFP for the three organizations to explore a joint application recognizing that it is possible they will not come to an agreement and may then apply separately?

 A. Please refer to Section II B.3 of the RFP. The scenario described above in which a party first attempts to develop a joint proposal with other parties and then submits a proposal on its own instead is not inconsistent with the required assurances regarding competitors.

 Q. Can you provide a breakdown of the number of individuals that are served in DOH’s rent subsidy programs, Section 8 Housing Choice Program (Section 8) and Rental Assistance Program (RAP) by town?

 A. Please see attached spreadsheets

 Q. Please confirm that completed Affidavits and Certifications (OPM required documents) do NOT have to be submitted with this RFP response but rather, will have to be competed in the event a contract is awarded.

 A. Correct, OPM required documents will only be required of proposer’s selected under this RFP when the proposer enters into a contract with DOH.

 Q. On page 18 under “Proposed Program Description” B. 1. A. states that the proposer must describe how it will “annually contact 100% of the households that participate in, or that have been selected to participate in either DoH’s Section 8 or RAP program…..” Are we to assume that the State Program Administrator, J. D’Amelia, will provide contact information for those on, or entering, the program?

 A. Yes, the state program administrator will provide the selected proposers with the necessary contact information on individuals entering the program.

 Q. Program Outcome 1 – page 21 – again the goals refer to 100%. In addition to receiving contact information as noted above, are we also to assume that program operators will have sufficient time and opportunity to address these issues during briefings conducted by J. D’Amelia for those receiving vouchers for the first time?

 A. Yes, the state program administrator will provide the selected proposers with sufficient time and opportunity to address these issues during briefings.

 Q. On page 23, after 2.c Budget Narrative states “allowable costs are those associated with the following eligible activities”. However, there are no activities listed. Will you please provide the list?

 A. The sentence referred to in the question is now omitted from the RFP.

 Q. On Page 19, Section 2) a. proposers are to “assist clients obtain rental units in neighborhoods they choose after completing a housing needs assessment and to increase utilization of Section 8 vouchers and RAP certificates”. It seems that the assumption here is that the client’s choice would be to make to make a mobility move. However that is not always the case. Does DoH have a priority regarding mobility vs. utilization?

 A. As indicated in the RFP, mobility counseling and search assistance is to be provided to households that express interest in mobility moves. Ultimately it is the tenant’s choice as to where he/she chooses to live.

 Q.  Re Section 8 vs RAP.  What ratio of Section 8 vs RAP clients does DOH anticipate that

mobility contractors will serve?  Does DOH expect any significant programmatic differences

between the two groups (e.g., available rent levels)?

1. DOH does not anticipate any significant difference between the two programs/participants.

Q.  Given that mobility contractors may work with Section 8 holders, will the contractors be the

recipients of federal funds in amounts that might trigger federal contract compliance?

1. Yes.

Q.  Does DOH anticipate that at any time during the three-year term of the program that

exception rents (or exception payment standards) may be available for mobility clients who move to higher opportunity areas?

1. DOH does not currently anticipate such exceptions.

Q.  Does DOH anticipate that at any time during the three-year term of the program that

state-provided cash security deposit assistance may be available for mobility clients who move to

higher opportunity areas?

1. DOH does not currently anticipate such assistance.

Q.  Does DOH anticipate that at any time during the three-year term of the program that the HAP

administrator might grant search time extensions to households diligently attempting to move to

higher opportunity areas?

1. Such requests for time extensions will be considered.

Q.   Is the Security Deposit Guarantee program still going to be in place as it is now, i.e, only for

those who are going through eviction, foreclosure, abatement or are homeless OR will it be more

all encompassing?

1. No specific modifications to the Security Deposit Guarantee program are currently anticipated. However, DOH expects to issue a new RFP related to the administration of this program within the next two months and modifications may be made.

Q.   Per page 20 of RFP  (d) "….. including assisting in arranging for an inspection of the new

home …..".  The appropriate D'Amelia housing authority office, along with Kelson Associates,

schedules the inspections.  Or is that going to change and the chosen responder(s) will to do this?

1. The inspection process will be maintained as it currently is. The chosen proposers will not be completing inspections for these housing programs.

Q.  Is there a standardized DOH Needs Assessment form that each responder is supposed to use,

or does each responder create their own form?

1. There is not a standardized DOH Needs Assessment form. The proposer should include what tool it will use to assess the needs of the individuals that choose to receive mobility counseling.

Q.  Same question for the Client Satisfaction Survey form -- will there be one uniform form that

each chosen responder(s) will use or is it up to each individual chosen responder to design its

own survey?

1. There is not a standardized DOH client satisfaction survey form. The proposer should include what form it will use to determine client satisfaction.

Q.  For reporting outcomes to DOH, will there be a uniform format for responder(s) to use?

A. The format used for reporting outcomes to DOH will be determined during the contracting process and not through the RFP process.

Q.   The chosen responder(s) will need a forum to explain what "opportunity moves" are - the

only time the responder will get to do this in person will be at the briefings for new subsidy

holders; therefore, will the Administrator of the DOH program be able to ensure that the chosen

responder(s) will get sufficient time at these briefings to explain not only its services but also

what an opportunity move is?

1. Yes, successful proposers will be given sufficient time during briefings for new voucher holders to be able to fully explain the mobility program and what opportunity moves are.

Q.  Will the DOH assure that the chosen responder(s) will receive recertification lists at least 3

months before the tenants' actual recertification date?

1. DOH will ensure that the successful proposers will have adequate notification of new individual entering or recertifying in the housing programs.

Q.  Re FOIA.  C.G.S. 1-210(b)(24) seems to prevent disclosure of materials which respond to

RFPs at least until the resulting contract is awarded.  Then, the same section appears to prevent

disclosure of such materials after award unless the DOH Commissioner certifies that such

materials should be disclosed.  Given the RFP's discussion of section-by-section exemption

requests, do we correctly infer that the Commissioner will so certify and the responsive materials

will be disclosed after contract award?  If the Commissioner will so certify, does the disclosure

of responsive materials extend to those submitted by unsuccessful bidders?

1. Disclosure of materials submitted by successful and unsuccessful respondents after the contract award(s) will be made in compliance with applicable state law.

Q.  References are discussed in connection with the organizational profile section of the

proposal.  Does DOH expect names and addresses of references to be listed in the narrative, or

rather does DOH expect those references to submit written statements which are included with

the proposal?  If the latter, should we include them as an appendix that is in addition to those

listed in the RFP's proposal outline?

1. DOH expects the names and addresses of references to be listed in the narrative.

Q:  The only budget-related form to be submitted (other than the narrative) is the one-page form

linked in the proposal, correct?

1. Correct, besides the budget narrative, the only budget related form to be submitted is the one page form linked in the RFP.

Q. Does the Department have data and demographics on the target population?  How many individuals and families does the Department expect a contractor to serve through various aspects of this program?  Is there information on the anticipated referrals and their geographic distribution?

A. Please see the attached documentation on the geographic distribution of eligible voucher holders. DOH expects the successful proposers to serve individuals that express an interest in the mobility counseling program.

Q. Is there a referral process and/or a process used to prioritize clients being referred, other than prioritizing families with young children?  How does the Department define “families with young children?”

A. Families with young children are defined as a head of household that has a child who is between the ages of 0 and 12.

Q. Are all clients on Section 8 and RAP certificates eligible for the program?

A. All tenants who receive a state issued Section 8 or RAP certificate are eligible for the program.

Q. What is the expected length of service?

A. The contract for successful proposers is for three years. Successful proposers are expected to work with interested individuals until the individual chooses where he/she will ultimately want to live.

Q. Can you describe the expectation in the budget listed as “tenant-based rent subsidies?”  Is there an expectation that some of the $365,000 budget be used to provide basic needs support to clients for rent subsidies?

A. There is not an expectation that any of the $365,000 be used to provide basic needs support or rent subsidies. The funding allocated for this program is for the staffing needs to assist successful proposers provide the needed services to allow eligible individuals move to higher opportunity areas.

Q. What documents are required to be submitted for subcontractors?

A. The proposer is expected to fully explain what each subcontractor will be doing in the proposal. Any formal documents related to subcontractor will be completed upon contract execution with the successful proposers.

Q. Are organizational charts required for subcontractors?

A. No.

Q. Does this grant include any start-up funding (i.e. to purchase laptops and other equipment)?

A. No.

Q. How many current Clients are being served statewide and what outcomes have been achieved?  (i.e. % of housing voucher or certificate holders in the geographic area served by the contractor receive information orally or in writing about the mobility counseling/search assistance program;  % of housing voucher or certificate holders in the geographic area served by the contractor receive information about the fair housing laws with an emphasis on source of income protections; % of housing voucher or certificate holders in the geographic area served by the contractor receive information on the importance of housing choice and the impact housing location has on all aspects of a person’s life; % of households move to an area of higher opportunity;  % of clients participating in the mobility counseling/search assistance program have obtained housing that meets all of their identified housing needs; % of clients participating in the mobility counseling/search assistance program have obtained housing that meets 50% or more of their identified housing needs, including their primary housing need; % of clients participating in the mobility counseling/search assistance program have obtained housing that meets their primary housing need)

A. At this time, DOH does not have this data.

Q. Can funds be used to offer clients additional supportive services such as moving cost, security deposit, etc.?

A. No, the funding allocated for this program is for the staffing needs to assist successful proposers provide the needed services to allow eligible individuals move to higher opportunity areas.

Q. Should we also include written financial management procedures, Audits, job descriptions, resume’s, etc. when preparing proposals that have subcontractors?

A. The proposer is expected to fully explain what each subcontractor will be doing in the proposal. Any formal documents related to subcontractor will be completed upon contract execution with the successful proposers.

Q. Please clarify the proposed outline on page 24 with regards to the questions in the RFP.  They do not currently line up.

A. See attached updated proposal outline.

Q. In the Housing Mobility Counseling and Search Assistance Program 2015\_18632 RFP it states on page 9, #7 that the proposer’s name must be displayed in the header of each page and that all pages, from the cover sheet through the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered in the footer. I assume this numbering is consecutive but this will be a problem in that certain documents, such as our audited financial statements, are in PDF and have their own page numbers. Further, although our name is on several of the pages, it is not in header form. How do we handle this?

A. The main proposal section must have the name of the organization in the header and sequential page numbers in either the header or footer.

Q. Can a nonprofit with decades of mobility counseling experience incorporated in another state but with a Certificate of Authority to operate in CT be the primary contractor on the contract? Can they be a subcontractor?

A. Yes, each proposer/subcontractor must be registered to do business in the State of Connecticut at the time of the proposal submission.