

**CITY OF AUSTIN HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**RENTAL ASSISTANCE RFA**

**SOLICITATION NUMBER: RA2015RK**

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

1. **Question:** I writing to clarify that the new money available for rental assistance is limited to people at risk of homelessness. Would you agree then that funding is not for the following 2 groups of people:

- People already experiencing homelessness
- People who are just short cash this month but not really at risk of homelessness.

**Answer:** As stated in Section 0500, Section 4 – Target Population & Program Strategies, the Target Population for this RFA has the following characteristics:

- Income status of 200% FPIL or below
- At risk of homelessness
- Renting a home in Austin/Travis County
- In need of financial assistance, case management, and/or other wrap around services to achieve and maintain housing stability

Funding from this RFA is not intended to serve people already experiencing homelessness. People who are just short cash this month but not assessed by the successful Applicant as being “at risk of homelessness” would not be eligible for this funding.

2. **Question:** Would you please let us know if the proposal meeting is on Monday, December 21 or Tuesday, December 22? The website states it is on Monday, December 22nd.

**Answer:** The Pre-Bid meeting in on Tuesday, December 22, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. CST.

3. **Question:** Is the program and / or the services described by the RFA for Rental Assistance (RA2016RK) an existing program / service of the City or is this a new program? If it is / was and existing program, what organization provides or provided the services most recently?

**Answer:** The program and/or the serviced described by the RFA for Rental Assistance is a new program.

4. **Question:** Is there a specified timeframe for “program exit” such as six months or the end of the grant, or is it up to the applicant to define?

**Answer:** The Applicant must define “program exit” as part of the required outcome.

5. **Question:** Does the City have a target number or range of households they want to serve with this contract on an annual basis?

**Answer:** No

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6. **Question:** What was the required/expected minimum of direct financial assistance for the budget?

**Answer:** As outlined in Section 0500 – Scope of Work, Section 7 – Funding Information, \$200,000 in direct financial assistance will be dedicated to clients receiving case management services through HHSD Neighborhood Centers. The remaining amount will be available to the Applicant to provide case management and financial assistance directly to clients referred from the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department Neighborhood Centers.

7. **Question:** If we serve clients who are homebound (not homeless), but they are very low-income, are we still eligible? (We offer case management and food services) (Example: Serving clients on our current waitlist, so they can begin receiving services).

**Answer:** As outlined in Section 0500 – Scope of Work, Section 4 – Target Population & Program Strategies, the Target Population for this RFA has the following characteristics:

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8. **Question:** Is there an “expected” cost per client?

**Answer:** No

9. **Question:** What is the RFA evaluation metric?

**Answer:** No

10. **Question:** Can we add lines to the budget?

**Answer:** No

11. **Question:** What is allowed indirect cost rate?

**Answer:** There is no allowance in the budget for indirect cost rate. All expenses must be a direct expense and included in Section 0650 – Program Budget and Narrative, in the available line items under: Personnel, Operating Expenses, Direct Assistance for Program Clients, and/or Capital Outlay.

12. **Question:** Is there demographic information available for population served by the Neighborhood centers, for examples, % of families? If so where can that information be

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accessed?

**Answer:** No, there is no demographic information available for the population served by the Neighborhood Centers. As stated in Section 0600 – Proposal Instructions & Evaluation Factors, Section B – Program Strategy to Accomplish the Goals, Information on HHSD Neighborhood Centers can be found here:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/neighborhood-centers>.

13. **Question:** Is there a preferred contact for applicant organizations to use to contact the Neighborhood centers to establish relationships for referrals? If so, who is it? (Ex. How will we get these referrals?)

**Answer:** As stated in Section 0500 – Scope of Work, Section 4 – Target Population & Program Strategies, the successful Applicant will develop a process by which the Neighborhood Centers will refer clients as well as a process for acting as a fiduciary agent for Neighborhood Center case-managed clients once an award is made. Do not contact HHSD Neighborhood Centers regarding this RFA.

14. **Question:** Can we get a copy of the Intake process or eligibility criteria the Neighborhood Centers will use to create referrals to participating organizations?

**Answer:** Once an award is made for this solicitation, the successful Applicant and the HHSD Neighborhood Center Management Team will develop an intake and referral process. As outlined in Section 0500 – Scope of Work, Section 4 – Target Population & Program Strategies, the Target Population for this RFA has the following characteristics:

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15. **Question:** How do the Neighborhood Centers prefer that applicant organizations handle the referral process (digital or physical/paper copies), and can we (the organizations) help the clients complete the referral process or does the client have to call or visit in person?

**Answer:** Once an award is made for this solicitation, the successful Applicant and the HHSD Neighborhood Center Management Team will develop an intake and referral process. This solicitation does not limit the methods that a client can get referred from the HHSD Neighborhood Centers.

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16. **Question:** Are all Neighborhood Center staff aware of this grant and are they prepared to prioritize these referrals?

**Answer:** HHSD Neighborhood Center staff will be trained on the referral process for this program once the successful Applicant and the HHSD Neighborhood Center Management Team develop an intake and referral process after an award is made for this solicitation.

17. **Question:** Are the Neighborhood Centers Location-based (i.e. does a client have to go to the center nearest to their zip code)? If so, can we get a list of the zip-codes and corresponding centers?

**Answer:** No, the HHSD Neighborhood Centers are location-based as defined in this question.

18. **Question:** Do the neighborhood centers have any age-group specialists (ex. Geriatric or pediatric) and if so, which centers have these specialty providers?

**Answer:** No

19. **Question:** Regarding section 0630 of the RFA, the Homeless Management Information System, will this be a requirement in addition to other reports for all organizations receiving funding through this grant? Though our organization's mission is not homelessness intervention, I understood from the Pre-bid meeting that the purpose of the grant was homelessness prevention, so would all awardees be required to complete tracking info in the HMIS system?

**Answer:** As stated in Section 0600 – Proposal Instructions & Evaluation Factors, Section G – Data Management and Program Evaluation, an Applicant will be required to utilize the Local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track and report client information for individuals who are at risk of homelessness. An Applicant must explain how they will comply with the requirements outlined in Section 0630 – Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Reporting Requirements.

20. **Question:** The forms that we are to include in the application package (Sections 0640, 0645, and 0650) are pdf forms. We are not able to open these forms to input into them. Are we expected to recreate these forms in Excel or Word, OR are we just supposed to fill out these forms by hand (the old fashion way)?

**Answer:** Applicants may fill out the required forms in a manner that aligns with their business operations. Applicants may recreate the forms in another format, fill out the

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forms by hand or utilize a pdf editing program to input the required information into each document.