

**NYS Department of Health (DOH)  
AIDS Institute, Division of HIV Health Care  
Bureau of HIV Ambulatory Care Services, Family and Youth Services Section (FAYS)**

**Request for Applications (RFA):  
Legal and Supportive Services for Individuals and Families Living with HIV**

**RFA #09-0003/FAU #0911131259**

## **Updates to the RFA**

**Please note an error on page 26, Part V. A. 7(b) of this RFA. It currently reads:**

Grant awards for successful applicants will range from \$120,000 to \$180,000 for Component A (legal services) and \$110,000 to \$140,000 for Component B (supportive services). Do not exceed the maximum amount for the specific component for which you are applying.

**It should read:**

Grant awards for successful applicants will be up to \$158,000 for Component A (legal services) and up to \$125,000 for Component B (supportive services). Do not exceed the maximum amount for the specific component for which you are applying.

## **Questions and Answers**

*All questions are stated as received by the deadline announced in the RFA.  
The NYSDOH is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any  
questions received.*

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the RFA 0911131259. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

**Question 1:**

What is meant by "community-based health and human service organization"? (page 10, II.A. Component B) The not-for-profit 501( c)(3) part I understand, but based on the required services (p.13, III.B.3) and description of eligible applicants, it appears that the current funding for legal providers under the FIT program has been subsumed under the general legal services (Component A) and that permanency planning in Component B is now limited to supportive (non-legal) services. Is this a correct reading?

**Answer 1:**

A community-based health and human service organization is an organization that provides health-related and/or psychosocial services. As the RFA states, the community-based health and human service organization must be a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit.

As stated on page 7 of this RFA, part C under the section titled “Available Funding, Regional Distribution of Anticipated Awards”, services to be funded in Component A, “Legal Services for Individuals and Families Living with HIV,” will include legal services for both individuals and families that were previously funded under the General Legal Services Initiative and the Families in Transition Legal Services Initiative. Both of these legal services initiatives and their respective populations to be served are being combined now into one new initiative. Programs funded under Component A must directly provide legal services for both individuals and families.

Any health and human services provider who meets the eligibility qualifications outlined for Component B in section II, page 10 of this RFA is eligible to apply under Component B. Applicants should consider the overview of program services and the program staffing and structure when designing their proposed program model for Supportive Services for HIV-Affected Families with Dependent Children. Component B does not fund the provision of legal services.

**Question 2:**

What is the current funding statewide for general legal services and family legal services, respectively?

**Answer 2:**

The statewide annualized funding is currently \$481,792 for General Legal Services funding and approximately \$1.2 million for Families in Transition Legal Services funding. Per page 7 of the RFA, \$1,422,075 is available to support Legal Services and Families Living with HIV under Component A of this RFA. The availability of funding for legal services has changed due to the Deficit Reduction Plans implemented in 2008 and 2009.

**Question 3:**

Page 7 of this RFA states: “Up to \$1,422,075 in NYS funding is available to support successful applicants for Component A... Applicants under this component can apply for an award of up to **\$158,000**” and then on page 26, the RFA states: “Grant awards for successful applicants will range from \$120,000 to **\$180,000** for Component A (legal services).” Is the maximum request amount for Component A \$158,000 or \$180,000?

**Answer 3:**

**Please note there was an error on page 26, Part V. A. 7(b) of this RFA. See first page of this Q&A for corrected language.**

**Question 4:**

Page 9 the RFA states: “Up to \$1,125,000 in NYS funding is available to support successful applicants for Component B... Applicants under this component can apply for an award of up to **\$125,000**” and then on page 26, the RFA states: “Grant awards for successful applicants will range from...\$110,000 to **\$140,000** for Component B (supportive services). Is the maximum request amount for Component B \$125,000 or \$140,000?”

**Answer 4:**

**Please note an error on page 26, Part V. A. 7(b) of this RFA. See first page of this Q&A for corrected language.**

**Question 5:**

On page 12 of this RFA, a reference is made to training and education for clients and providers. Will this funding cover these activities?

**Answer 5:**

Yes, agencies funded under both components of this RFA are expected to provide education to clients and service providers on services related to their contract. We will not fund a training program that is exclusive to training related only to legal services.

**Question 6:**

Is there a list of currently funded agencies for Components A and B?

**Answer 6:**

***Current General Legal Services Providers:***

Empire Justice Center  
Erie County Bar Association  
Legal Action Center  
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley  
Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York  
Nassau Suffolk Law Services

**Family Legal Services**

Albany Law School  
Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A  
Erie County Bar Association  
HIV Law Project  
Legal Aid Society  
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley  
Legal Services of Central New York  
Nassau-Suffolk Law Services  
Queens Legal Services  
South Brooklyn Legal Services  
Volunteer Legal Services

***Current Supportive Services Providers for Family in Transition Providers***

**Family Support Services**

The Family Center  
Family Services of Westchester  
Catholic Charities Community Services of Rochester  
Community Maternity Services  
Child and Family Services

St. Vincent's Services  
Nassau Suffolk Law Services  
New York Presbyterian Hospitals

**Question 7:**

Will preference be given to applicants that serve a large portion of the specific region? Or is it expected that applicants provide services throughout their entire region?

**Answer 7:**

Preference factors are defined on pages 10 and 11 of this RFA. Preference factors for both components emphasize that provision of services should be accessible and located in a convenient setting for consumers. Preference will be given to applicants proposing to serve the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS within a region. It will be incumbent upon the applicant to determine if they are able to serve an entire region, or a portion of a larger region.

As stated on page 11 of the RFA, if applying for the New York City region for both Components A and B, preference will be given to applicants who:

- apply to provide services in multiple boroughs in New York City and have locations for service capacity in two or more boroughs, or
- apply to provide services in a single borough in New York City and propose to serve the entire borough.

**Question 8:**

Can staff be stationed at various sites (i.e., weekly placement at sites) throughout the applied for area rather than being “co-located”?

**Answer 8:**

Yes, as long as there is a regular schedule at the various legal/supportive service location(s). Page 11 of this RFA states: Preference will also be given to applicants who propose the provision of services that are accessible and located in a convenient setting for consumers; specifically, both legal and supportive services are co-located at the legal agency and/or supportive services agency.

**Question 9:**

Page 11, first paragraph, the RFA states that preference will be given to applicants which propose to co-locate both legal and supportive services. Can this preference be met by a legal services agency establishing regular appointment days at the supportive services site or vice versa, or must the supportive services staff and the legal services staff be permanently housed at the same physical location?

**Answer 9:**

Yes, the preference can be met by either the legal or supportive services co-locating at a service site of the other agency, as long as there is a regular schedule at the identified location. Legal Services staff and Supportive Services staff do not need to be permanently housed in the same physical location.

As stated on Page 25, 5(b), “Program Outreach and Collaboration”, of this RFA applicants should include in their response a description as to how service collaboration and coordination, including case conferencing, will occur between legal and supportive services programs. Specifically, cite if both legal and supportive services will be co-located at the legal agency and/or at the supportive services agency.

Preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate the provision of services that are accessible and located in a convenient setting for consumers.

**Question 10:**

Page 31, under paragraph headed “Supportive Services,” it states that supportive services include: “short term (six to 12 months) individual and family interventions to help the client or family begin the process through the emotional components associated with addressing HIV-related legal issues and decisions.” Do the “legal issues and decisions” referred to include such matters as housing and benefits in addition to issues of permanency planning?

**Answer 10:**

As stated on page 13 of this RFA, supportive services are intended to help families make care and custody decisions and enable the completion of necessary legal documents for the dependent children, address transition issues faced by new caregivers and children, and stabilize the newly blended family following the death or incapacitation of an HIV-positive parent. The list of program services is provided on page 13 and 14 in the RFA.

**Question 11:**

For the purposes of this RFA, may an agency enter into a letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding with more than one agency as required under 5(b) on page 25?

**Answer 11:**

Yes.

**Question 12:**

On page 25 there is a requirement for a “memorandum of understanding or letter of agreement” “between the applicant legal agency and a community based supportive services agency”. Can you please describe how you envision this document being similar and different than a bi-directional linkage agreement?

**Answer 12:**

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of agreement is more formal and may be a legally binding document with concrete specific services provided by one or both entities which are clearly outlined in the MOU or letter of agreement. Applicants are expected to describe service collaboration and coordination as well as case conferencing.

Bi-directional linkage agreements are less formal agreements and outline the available services that may be accessed at both agencies by their respective clients.

**Question 13:**

Page 13, Section “B”, #1 OVERVIEW...could you clarify what it means by the statement, *supportive services are not mental health services as defined by a clinical practitioner guidelines*...does this mean not diagnosing or actually providing mental health counseling, but rather identifying a possible mental health problem and making an appropriate linkage for the individual?

**Answer 13:**

Yes. This RFA does not support the assessment and/or treatment of a client’s mental health needs. Individuals with mental health issues should be referred to a formal, licensed, mental health provider. Funded providers are expected to have a formal linkage agreement for clinical mental health services. These linkages do not have to be in place at the time of submission of an application, but a commitment to form these linkages must be stated in the application.

**Question 14:**

Page 6, Section “B” of the RFA, Expectations of the Programs: Could you clarify what is meant by *short-term supportive services to assist families in planning for the future care and custody of dependent children*. This is also discussed on page 31, explanation of *Supportive Service*. Could short term supportive services include such things as helping the family find solutions to other issues that may be impacting their ability to receive needed care, such as school problems the children may be having, or anxiety/depression that has gone untreated, or a domestic violence situation in the home, and other such things that could be making it difficult for the family to receive needed services?

**Answer 14:**

As stated on page 13 of this RFA, supportive services are intended to help families make care and custody decisions and enable the completion of necessary legal documents for the dependent children, address transition issues faced by new caregivers and children, and stabilize the newly blended family following the death or incapacitation of an HIV-positive parent. Supportive services may address issues that impede the development of a care and custody plan for dependent children. The list of program services is provided on pages 13-14 in the RFA.

**Question 15:**

Would it be appropriate under the guidelines of this RFA to offer such things as time-limited support group services, and/or to provide escort, direct-agency transport services, for family members to court, school, etc., as ways of stabilizing and removing barriers for families?

**Answer 15:**

Activities funded under Component B of this RFA should support families in making care and custody decisions, completing necessary legal documents and stabilizing newly blended families. Time limited support groups focused on these objectives are allowable, as are other related activities as ways of stabilizing and removing barriers for families. Funded programs are not expected to provide direct transportation services.

**Question 16:**

When is the start date of the grant?

**Answer 16:**

As stated on page 18 in the RFA, "It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will be for 12-month terms. The anticipated start date of contracts is October 1, 2010."

**Question 17:**

My agency is currently funded under the General Legal Services Initiative; must we apply for this funding?

**Answer 17:**

Yes. All currently funded programs under the General Legal Services Initiative and the Families in Transition Initiative **MUST** apply and successfully compete for continuation of their program funding.

**Section II - Technical Questions and Answers**

**Question 1:**

What is the address that applications should be mailed to?

**Answer 1:**

Applications should be mailed to:

Valerie J. White  
Deputy Director, Administration and Data Systems  
New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute  
ESP, Corning Tower Room 478  
Albany, New York 12237

**Question 2:**

If an application is received after 5PM on May 13, 2010, will it be considered?

**Answer 2:**

It is the applicant's responsibility to see that applications are delivered to the address stated in the RFA prior to the date and time specified. Late applications due to a documentable delay by the carrier may be considered at the Department of Health's discretion but there are no guarantees. Applicants should make every effort to ensure that all applications are received before the deadline.

**Question 3:**

How should applications be delivered? Must they be hand-delivered or can they be mailed. Should Federal Express be used? Is fax or email definitely unacceptable?

**Answer 3:**

Applications can be mailed or hand-delivered. If mailing, applicants are encouraged, but not required, to use an express service. Applications will not be accepted via fax or email. Please see page 16 of the RFA.

**Question 4:**

The budget forms provided for the RFA process do not include the "Other than Personal Services" (OTPS) detail pages.

**Answer 4:**

Please list dollar values for all OTPS on the Summary Budget Form and provide a description of those items using the justification page(s). As stated in Attachment 17, page 2, the justification should describe the requested item, the rationale for requesting the item, and how the item will benefit the proposed program/project.

**Question 5:**

In looking over the budget forms, I am not finding a place to delineate our rent, utilities, phone, supplies, travel, postage, printing, etc. costs. I saw in the instructions to enter the total of such costs to the Summary Budget page on lines C, D, E, and F. I wonder, though, where to enter the breakdown of the total costs for each line?

**Answer 5:**

The budget forms provided for the RFA process do not include the "Other than Personal Services" (OTPS) detail pages. Please list dollar values for all OTPS items on the cover page and provide a description of those items using the justification page(s).

**Question 6:**

If we are already an AIDS Institute funded program, should we use the budget forms we already have? They include the information requested in Attachment 17.

**Answer 6:**

No. The budget forms for solicitations are different from the contract budget forms. Applicants should complete the information requested on the solicitation budget forms provided as Attachment 17 of this RFA, regardless of whether or not they are currently funded by the AIDS Institute.

**Question 7:**

Are the budget pages provided on the website in an Excel format?

**Answer 7:**

Yes, the budget pages are included on the website in an Excel format.

**Question 8:**

I am interested in applying for the Legal and Supportive Service for Families, but my corporation is new. How much funding experience should the corporation have?

**Answer 8:**

Organizations with no funding history can apply. On pages 10 and 11, Section II, of this RFA. “WHO MAY APPLY”, the eligibility requirements and preference factors are described.

Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements as described. In addition, for both components, **preference** will be given to applicants that demonstrate:

- effective strategies for reaching communities of color
- innovative models of service delivery that address the needs of HIV-positive individuals and HIV-affected families with dependent children
- organizational capacity to serve a large number of the target population(s)
- two years of agency experience in the effective administrative, fiscal and programmatic oversight of government contracts, including timely and accurate submission of fiscal and program reports.