

NYS Department of Health (DOH) and Health Research, Inc. (HRI)
AIDS Institute, Chronic Care Section

Request for Applications (RFA):
Housing and Supportive Housing Services for People Living with HIV/AIDS
RFA #10-0002 / FAU #1007150333

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 # 10-0002/FAU # 1007150333. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

MODIFICATION TO APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Page 6 of the RFA states: ***“Eligible applicants may apply for funding under any component; however a separate application must be submitted for each component.”***

Only one application per organization per component is permitted. Please note that applicants should declare one region, as defined in this RFA, for which they are applying. Applicants should specify on the application cover page (new version of Attachment 5 is on the DOH website <http://www.nyhealth.gov/funding/rfa/1007150333/index.htm>) the one component and the one region for which they are competing for an award. For agencies with sites in multiple regions, select the region where the largest number of clients is served.

If an agency submits more than one application for any given component, all applications submitted by that agency for that particular component will be rejected.

If an agency submits one application for any single component but designates more than one region on the Application Cover Page (Attachment 5), the NYS Department of Health AIDS Institute will determine the competitive region based on the application’s identified primary service site.

GENERAL AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR ALL COMPONENTS

Question 1:

Is this funding available only for one year?

Answer 1:

It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will have an initial 12 – month term. Awards may be renewed for up to four (4) additional annual contract periods, based upon satisfactory performance and the availability of funds.

Question 2:

In a previous request for applications (RFA), if an agency served different regions a separate application had to be submitted for each region. Our agency serves 8 counties in three regions. Would one application be accepted or would three separate applications be needed, 1 for each region?

Answer 2:

Only one application per organization per component is permitted. Applicants may propose to serve multiple regions or multiple boroughs. However, applicants should declare one region, as defined in this RFA, for which they are applying. Applicants should specify on the application cover page (Attachment 5) the one component and the one region for which they are competing for an award. For agencies with sites in multiple regions, select the region where the largest number of clients are served.

Question 3:

We are from Uganda and I wanted to ask if we are eligible to apply for this grant since we are outside of New York City.

Answer 3:

In order to be eligible for funding through this RFA, your agency must serve the residents of the State of New York.

Question 4:

To what extent do we need to be able to show the current levels of homelessness/transitional housing in our population? How about its impact on HIV diagnostic-delay and treatment adherence?

Answer 4:

A need for the type of service proposed should be established and verified. The responses to the questions in the Statement of Need section should demonstrate an understanding of the current levels of homelessness/transitional housing and unmet needs in the specific geographic area an applicant proposes to serve. It should be supported by reliable data and pertinent statistics. The information should clarify the need for services and support the request to provide housing services intended through this solicitation. If an applicant is able identify the impact of HIV diagnostic delay and treatment adherence for a proposed service area, it be may be included.

Question 5:

I am interested in finding out more about this grant program. Can you please tell me how many applications your office received in the last round of funding, and of those, how many were awarded? This will help me gauge the relative competitiveness of the program.

Answer 5:

The total number of applications in the last round of funding was 65. There were 34 awards.

Question 6:

I have downloaded the budget instructions but cannot find the budget forms in a document format. I can only find the PDF version. Are there usable forms for the budget completion?

Can we use the current AIDS Institute forms for the budget because the budget form downloaded with the RFP is in PDF, not Excel?

Answer 6:

The Excel version of the budget forms were recently posted to the website. They are available at: <http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/1007150333/index.htm> for download. Only these solicitation budget forms should be used in the application as they differ from the budget forms used by current contractors.

Question 7:

Do linkage agreements need to be attached or is it enough to reference and describe them?

Answer 7:

Linkage agreements do not need to be attached. All components have a question in the Program Design section that requests applicants to describe the linkage agreements that are in place to facilitate the access to the full continuum of care. Linkages with other providers should be incorporated into the program design.

Question 8:

When you say “applicant's ability to design and implement effective HIV programs...” are you referring to specific types of programs or just housing?

Answer 8:

This phrase you've quoted from the *Expectations of the Program* section is intended to describe the expectation that applicants demonstrate their ability to design and implement effective HIV programs, provide and arrange for the adequate training and support of staff, establish and maintain linkages for services not available onsite, collect and analyze data, and utilize evaluation to modify and enhance the delivery of program services. Eligible applicants are existing not-for-profit HIV/AIDS service providers who have direct experience providing housing and/or supportive housing services to the target population.

Question 9:

Do you have some indication of what you consider an appropriate target # for this level of funding, i.e. about how many people you expect us to reach?

Answer 9:

The type and intensity of services offered, staffing patterns and community the program is located in will determine the number of consumers an agency is capable of reaching. Applicants

should base their projections on the aforementioned variables to determine an appropriate target number.

Question 10:

Does funding through this program mandate suspension of a consumer's rental and/or utility assistance if they choose not to adhere to all or part of a medical regimen, such as taking meds or attending specific appointments?

Answer 10:

There is no mandate for the suspension of a consumer's assistance if they chose not to adhere to all or part of a medical regimen. The goal of this initiative is to assist homeless people or people at risk of homelessness to secure and maintain their housing. A homeless individual's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and other issues that have an impact can and should be addressed once housing is obtained. The program design should incorporate how the agency will assist consumers in overcoming personal or cultural barriers that may prevent them from addressing issues that may compromise housing stability and their health status. The ideal is to have each consumer linked to the medical treatment they need. Studies have supported the idea that once stably housed, clients are more likely to become active participants in their own medical and psychological care, and access supportive services.

Question 11:

In previous requests for applications a certain percentage of the total grant was for direct services and the remaining percentage was allowed for staffing expense. Is this restriction on the current RFA? Or are there any similar restrictions on the current RFA?

Answer 11:

Applicants should include a budget that is appropriate for their proposed program. Budget restrictions are listed in the **Budget and Justification** sections (e.g., administrative costs).

Applicants applying for Component A should note that the majority of funds are expected to be used for direct financial assistance. Limited staff support to administer a Financial Assistance program will be considered.

Question 12:

Would it be possible to get a list of current grantees for this funding?

Answer 12:

A list of current grantees is included in Appendix #1.

Question 13:

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 13:

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 17 of the RFA.

Question 14:

If an application is received after 5:00 PM on January 12, 2011, will it be considered?

Answer 14:

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 15:

What is the address that applications should be mailed to?

Answer 15:

Applications should be mailed or hand-delivered 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 16:

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 16:

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 summary budget and provide a description of those items using the justification page(s).

Question 17:

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

Answer 17:

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

Question 18:

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

Answer 18:

No. Applicants should complete the information requested on the forms provided as Attachment 17, regardless of whether or not they are currently funded by the AIDS Institute.

Question 19:

I cannot do a direct entry on the summary page as it is locked.

Answer 19:

The summary budget forms should be accessed through your internet browser at: <http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/1007150333/> and then saved to the hard drive of your computer. Once saved to your hard drive, open the document without updating the links. Some of the pages are protected. If you are having problems entering information you should unprotect the sheet by clicking on the tools button on your toolbar, click on "protection" and click on "unprotect sheet".

COMPONENT A

Question 20:

Could you provide me with additional information regarding funding opportunities for Component A – Financial Assistance (Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance) for people living with HIV? I would like to know the goal of the grant, amount of funding?

Answer 20:

Component A will enable agencies to provide financial assistance to help consumers obtain and maintain safe, appropriate and affordable housing and to prevent eviction and utility shut off. Financial assistance is intended to provide one-time emergency assistance or temporary assistance to PLWH/A outside New York City who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing.

Financial assistance is intended to:

- Improve consumers' ability to obtain and maintain safe, appropriate, affordable housing.
- Increase the number of consumers who can remain in appropriate housing.
- Improve consumers' ability to access and/or maintain medical care.
- Increase consumer's ability to live independently.

Applicants may apply for an award of up to \$130,000.

Reference pages 12-14 of the RFA for specific information about Component A.

The definitions of services that are eligible for funding under Component A are listed in **Attachment 1, Services Eligible for Funding**.

Question 21:

We are a local County Health Department and receive Part A funds for Emergency Housing to assist PLHWAs with rental, utilities, etc., in the form of financial assistance. Would we qualify to apply for these funds?

Answer 21:

Yes, a county health department with experience providing housing services to persons with HIV/AIDS is eligible to apply.

Question 22:

Are security deposits still an allowable expense under Component A?

Answer 22:

Security deposits are an allowable expense. Reference pages 13 – 14 of the RFA for program guidelines.

Question 23:

Are apartment application fees a covered expense? If apartment application fees are a covered expense, is there a dollar or number limit per client?

Answer 23:

Eligible expenses for Financial Assistance are listed on page 13 of the RFA and Attachment 1 – **Services Eligible for Funding**. Apartment application fees are not included.

COMPONENTS B & C

Question 24:

Is supportive housing coordination as referenced in Attachment 1, page 8, limited to congregate or group residences only? If we place someone in independent housing can they also access these services in our Center?

Answer 24:

Supportive housing coordination assists the consumer by providing access, within a congregate or group residence, on a 24 hour basis, to a range of services. Services offered at your other location would not be considered supportive housing coordination.

Question 25:

Do services have to be provided at congregate and group residences or can they be provided at a center where clients meet?

Answer 25:

Services other than supportive housing coordination may be provided at a center where clients meet. All services should address an identified housing need.

Question 26:

You mention mental health and substance abuse a few times. Are these just examples of vulnerabilities or are you more interested in these areas?

Answer 26:

Persons who are multiply diagnosed (e.g., HIV/AIDS and mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, tuberculosis) present a unique array of housing and supportive housing needs in order to maintain appropriate housing. There are other sub-populations that also have unique housing needs such as older adults living with HIV and AIDS. We are interested in funding programs that serve people living with HIV/AIDS that have the greatest need of housing stability. We will review proposals for distinct sub-populations provided the services relate to housing.

Question 27:

Will the budget support a needs assessment among our target population to inform behavior change interventions as part of this project?

Answer 27:

The primary intent of this funding is to provide supportive housing services. Distinct funding to conduct a needs assessment is not available through this solicitation. However, applicants are required to demonstrate consumer participation in the initial and ongoing planning and development of the proposed service model in the application. Eligible expenses for Components B and C are listed on pages 14 and 15 of the RFA and Attachment 1 – ***Services Eligible for Funding.***

COMPONENT C

Question 28:

If applying for Manhattan, does the organization need to provide services to a majority Manhattan-based population or does it just need to be located in Manhattan?

Answer 28:

If applying for Manhattan, the organization needs to provide services to a majority Manhattan-based population and the primary service location needs to be located in Manhattan. Applicant may provide services in another region.

Question 29:

Are grantees bound by New York State or Ryan White rules?

Answer 29:

Component C will be funded under Ryan White Part B contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants should refer to the list of fundable services on page 15 of the RFA and Attachment 18: *Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act Guidance for Part B Contractors* and Attachment 10: *Appendices Included in Health Research, Inc. Contracts* for specific information.

New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute
Housing Programs Unit
Current Providers

Agency	Financial Assistance	Supportive Services
New York City Providers		
Bailey House, Inc.		✓
Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, Inc.		✓
Doe Fund, Inc. (The)		✓
Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Inc.		✓
Gay Men's Health Crisis, Inc.		✓
Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc.		✓
Housing Works, Inc.		✓
Praxis Housing Initiatives, Inc.		✓
Project Hospitality, Inc.		✓
United Bronx Parents, Inc.		✓
Outside New York City Providers		
AIDS Care Center, Inc.	✓	
AIDS Community Services of Western New York, Inc.	✓	
AIDS Council of Northeastern New York, Inc.	✓	✓
Benedict House of Western New York, Inc.		✓
Catholic Charities Community Services	✓	✓
Central New York Health Systems Agency, Inc.	✓	
FECS Health & Human Services System	✓	
Liberty Resources Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.		✓
Options for Community Living, Inc.	✓	✓
PathStone Corporation	✓	✓
Southern Tier AIDS Program, Inc.	✓	✓
Sharing Community, Inc. (The)		✓