

**Questions and Answers
Traumatic Brain Injury Housing Payment Agent
RFP#0912291016**

April 30, 2010

1. Question:

Is there currently an incumbent contractor and if so, who is it?

Department of Health Response:

The current contractor is NYSARC, Inc. NYC Chapter (AHRC).

2. Question:

In reference to the required \$1.5 million dollar line of credit: how many times has the Department of Health been late in distributing payment to the contractor?

Department of Health Response:

This question is not relevant to the RFP. The requirement of the line of credit is not for purposes of ensuring rental payments, but to demonstrate the fiscal viability of the potential contractor. On page 9 the RFP states: "the selected contractor should have an established line of credit no less than \$1.5 million, or alternative financial resource sufficient to support timely payment to creditors in the event of a need to bridge *potential* delays in Department of Health (DOH) voucher processing and reimbursement."

3. Question:

Please provide the timeline for one complete payment cycle.

Department of Health Response:

On page 21 the RFP states: "The contractor shall submit two invoices each month (preliminary/actual expenditures) and required expenditure reports. The first voucher of the month projects the expenditures and the second voucher reconciles the expenses to the reimbursement. A monthly report and fiscal report is provided with the reimbursement request." Currently, all payment checks are prepared and disbursed to landlords for receipt no later than the first of each month.

4. Question:

Reimbursements to the payment contractor from the state's designated payment office will only be sent after the state receives both invoices from the contractor detailing the month's payment activity. Is that correct?

Department of Health Response:

As stated on page 21 of the RFP: "the payment of such invoices by the State (NYSDOH) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law." The current practice is that the contractor is reimbursed upon receipt of the voucher and all required supporting documentation. Page 21 also states: "The contractor shall submit two invoices each month (preliminary/actual

expenditures) and required expenditure reports. The first voucher of the month projects the expenditures and the second voucher reconciles the expenses to the reimbursement. A monthly report and fiscal report is provided with the reimbursement request.”

5. Question:

What information, other than payment data, will the payment contractor receive when an approved application is forwarded by the DOH/RRDC?

Department of Health Response:

The current practice of the Regional Resource Development Center (RRDC) is to submit a demographics form, payment request and/or utility application. This information is conveyed via electronic transmittal by the RRDC. In addition, status change forms and housing support addenda may be required.

6. Question:

Please indicate the type of information DOH wishes to receive in its required reports and what are audit requirements?

Department of Health Response:

The format and information for reports will be determined upon selection of the contractor. Current practice includes and is not limited to such information as: expenditure reports, summary of housing subsidy activities, expenditure reports by month, projected and actual expenditures, number of payments, details of monthly rent, utility subsidy, security, and housing support amounts by participant by region. The contractor shall establish and maintain complete and accurate books, records, documents, accounts and other evidence directly pertinent to performance under the contract. The State Comptroller, the Attorney General and any other person or entity are authorized to conduct an examination, as well as the agency or agencies involved in the contract.

7. Question:

What is the size of the target population the bidder should use in developing a cost proposal? How many TBI waiver participants receive housing money? How many additional participants are anticipated to enroll in the housing payment services?

Department of Health Response:

The RFP on page 6 states: “The payment agent will be responsible for:...

- Receiving approximately 200 new applications each month;
- Mailing approximately 2,300 individual rental/ utility payments each month; and
- Processing approximately 1,700 one time payments...”

Included in the RFP is a chart demonstrating the number of participants by region as of September 2009.

8. Question:

Is the Payment Agent responsible for issuing 1099's?

Department of Health Response:

All rental income must be reported on the Landlord's tax return. This generally includes gross income amounts received as rent as well as advance rent. The current contractor does not issue 1099's. DOH will address this matter at the time of contract.

9. Question:

What is the average monthly call volume? What percentage of this volume are TBI waiver participants vs. RRDC staff?

Department of Health Response:

TBI waiver participants do not contact the Payment Agent directly. Communication from the RRDC is generally completed via email.

10. Question:

What criteria are used when defining payments as Urgent and of the projected 2,300 monthly payments, how many are *Urgent* payments?

Department of Health Response:

The RRDC determines that a request is urgent; the request is confirmed by DOH. In such cases, a check must be issued and sent within 24 hours, when necessary, to meet health and welfare needs of a certain TBI waiver participant.

The number of urgent payments varies; current trends suggest that the number of urgent payments does not exceed 1 percent of the required monthly payments.

11. Question:

What format should the bidder use in the cost proposal? (e.g. PMPM, % of funds under management, total price per year, total price over 5 years, etc.)

Department of Health Response:

The Bid Form (Attachment 1.1) represents the Bidder's commitment to a contract price. Page 12 of the RFP states: "The cost component contains the price proposal for the contract. DOH will use a best value method of contracting for the Payment Agent services. In a best value procurement, the basis for awarding the contract is the Bidder that optimizes quality, cost and efficiency among responsive and responsible Bidders. Under a best value procurement, while price is an important consideration in the selection of a contractor; the award will not necessarily be made to the Bidder with the lowest price." The purpose of this RFP is to identify a contractor (Payment Agent) to manage the housing subsidy payment process for TBI Housing for a five year period. Total Price would meet this requirement. Page 21 of the RFP states: "contract pricing will be based on the first year of the contract." The Bidder must describe the procedure and preferred methodology for establishing the contract price.

12. Question: Under submission of proposals (pg19) the Department asks for 1 original bound proposal, 1 unbound and 5 bound copies. Will the Department consider proposals submitted in 3 ring binders, bound?

Department of Health Response:

Yes.

13. Question:
Is this contract subject to prompt payment law?

Department of Health Response:

Payment will be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law.

14. Question:
Is it possible to know approximately how many RRDS meetings the Payment Agent may be asked to attend?

Department of Health Response:

Page 12 of the RFP states "the Payment Agent may be requested to attend quarterly RRDC meetings in Albany."

15. Question:
What is the mechanism in place to ensure accuracy of housing paperwork and timely submission of the housing transmittals from the RRDS to the payment agent? How to avoid/reduce the issue of inaccurate information on housing forms? How to avoid/reduce the lateness of housing transmittals/housing forms which generate late fees and put the individuals' housing and/or utility status in jeopardy?

Department of Health Response:

This question assumes facts not in evidence in the RFP, and is not relevant to the proposal. The accuracy of the housing transmittals/housing forms is not the responsibility of the Payment Agent.

16. Question:
If there are no appropriate applicants for this request for state-wide payment agent will the Department of Health re-issue for individual regional payment agents or some other configuration?

Department of Health Response:

This question is not relevant to the facts of the Request for Proposal and a decision regarding this issue is not required for the RFP to go forward at this time. Should there be no appropriate responses to the RFP, DOH may re-bid the proposal.

17. Question:
Will there be any opportunity to identify a payment agent who would like to collaborate with an agency with expertise in TBI housing needs?

Department of Health Response:

There is nothing presented in the RFP to preclude a joint venture as long as all of the qualifications of the RFP are met. Subcontracting by the contractor shall not be permitted except by prior written approval and knowledge of DOH.

18. Question:

Will the Payment Agent be required to conduct site reviews/site audits?

Department of Health Response:

The contractor is expected to provide training. Page 6 of the RFP states: "DOH will review transmittals, regional housing budgets and complete internal audits to ensure oversight of expenditures."

19. Question:

What provider roles and responsibilities are associated with Housing Payment Services?

Department of Health Response:

Page 6 of the RFP delineates the responsibilities of the Payment Agent.

20. Question:

What is the annual total amount of funds dispersed in housing payments?

Department of Health Response:

Page 5 of the RFP states: "Currently there are approximately 1,700 TBI waiver participants enrolled in the TBI Housing Program, requiring over 2,300 payments - totaling over \$700,000 each month for rental and utility subsidies."

21. Question:

What agency is responsible for approving new applications or changes to existing plans? Are there strict budgets to adhere to or are there exceptions to budgets? How are increases funded to the administrative agency?

Department of Health Response:

Page 6 of the RFP states that the contractor shall: "convey funds based upon authorization received electronically and/or paper from an RRDC. No verbal payment authorizations will be allowed. DOH will review transmittals, regional housing budgets and complete internal audits to ensure oversight of expenditures." Page 21 of the RFP states: "Contract pricing will be based on the first year of the contract. At the sole discretion of DOH a price increase for subsequent year of the contract may be awarded. Such increase will be calculated based upon the percentage increase in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) U.S. City Average. All Items not seasonally adjusted, Base Period 1982-84= 100. The CPI reference period for any increase in the contract price will be the 12 month period ending four months prior to the month in which the contract is subject to renewal. In addition, increases in the contract base are not obligatory and are subject to available enacted New York State appropriated funds."

NOTE:

One respondent provided a statement regarding variations in Status Change forms without posing a question; therefore it was determined not relevant to the context of the RFP question and answer process.