



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

RFP Response Form

Supportive Housing Program for Individuals and Families Experiencing Both Homelessness and Behavioral Health Needs

PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Transitional Services

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Mary Anne Poutous CEO

Address: 806 West Street

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: mpoutous@transitionalservices.org

Website: www.transitionalservices.org

Legal Status: For-Profit Nonprofit Sole Proprietor/Individual Partnership

Women Owned: Yes No

Minority Owned: Yes No

If yes, select the ethnicity:

American Indian or Alaska Native

Black or of African decent

Hispanic or Latino/a

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Western Asian/Middle Eastern

East Asian/Far Eastern

South Asian/Indian (Subcontinent)

Southeast Asian

Other Asian

Multi-racial

Self-Describe: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Faith Based: Yes No

Partners included in this Proposal: [Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* DHS email

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Are you proposing to serve households of individuals, families or both?

Individuals Families Both (Individuals and Families)

How many households per year are you proposing to serve? (*DHS intends to fund program(s) serving 70 households annually through this RFP.*)

70

Total dollar amount requested per year: Year 1: \$1,108,467; Year 2: \$1,115,453; Year 3: \$1,172,930; Year 4: \$1,233,551; Year 5: \$1,298,111 **TOTAL GRANT: \$5,928,512**

REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Mary Anne Poutous	[REDACTED]	mpoutous@transitionalservices.org
Contract Processing Contact	Mary Anne Poutous	[REDACTED]	mpoutous@transitionalservices.org
Chief Information Officer	Click here to enter text.	Enter number.	Click here to enter text.
Chief Financial Officer	Fay Boland	[REDACTED]	fboland@transitionalservices.org
MPER Contact*	Fay Boland	[REDACTED]	fboland@transitionalservices.org

* MPER is DHS’s provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.

BOARD INFORMATION

* For the Board Chairperson, you must list an address, phone and email address different than the organization.

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Michael McHale

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: Partners included in this Proposal: [REDACTED]

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* Email

REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization.

Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.

Jeff Lengel, Residential Resources; jlengel@rri-inc.org, [REDACTED]
Rosemary Dempsey; Community Care Behavioral Health, dempseyr@UPMC.edu, 412.952-9537
Rob Utter, Lilac Investments, utter@lilacinvestments.com, 321 W. 8th Ave. Homestead, PA
15120, [REDACTED]

CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- W-9

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 110 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 13 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

Organizational Experience (25 points total)

1. Describe your organization's experience delivering high-quality, holistic services to households experiencing homelessness and behavioral health needs. (10 points)

For fifty-four years, Transitional Services, Inc. (TSI) has been committed to serving and supporting individuals with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities in Allegheny County through our focus on one of the most vital social determinants of health which is housing. TSI is a private, nonprofit corporation whose primary mission is to assist Allegheny County's most vulnerable individuals gain the skills necessary to achieve self-sufficiency and independence and subsequently a meaningful life in their community. TSI is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and the Office of Developmental Programs. It is also accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Today, TSI continues to hold the unwavering belief that people's lives begin when they have stable housing they can afford to keep. TSI's commitment to developing housing options for individuals in recovery and our ability to expand services to assure long-term tenancy of its individuals has allowed us to successfully impact the quality of life for well over 21,000 Allegheny County individuals. TSI serves over 450 individuals annually through our psychiatric and intellectual disabilities divisions. Our services encompass the following: 1) four licensed Community Residential Rehabilitation programs for individuals with mental illness; 2) community-based mental health Supportive Living program; 3) three 811 HUD Congregate programs; 4) Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program for adults; 5) Permanent Supportive Housing for Transitional Age Youth (PSH-TAY) program; 6) one intellectual disabilities Congregate HUD program; 7) two licensed intellectual disabilities Community Homes (congregate and group home).

TSI is uniquely suited as the best candidate for the Supportive Housing Program for Individuals and Families Experiencing Both Homelessness and Behavioral Health Needs (SHPIF) due to our long history but most importantly due to our expertise administrating two of the above listed programs: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) since 2006 and Permanent Supportive Housing Transitional Age Youth (PSH-TAY) since 2015. PSH serves adults over the age of eighteen and PSH-TAY serves young adults between the ages of 18-26 who have aged out of the Child Welfare system and are referred by their clinical team. Both programs focus on providing support and guidance to individuals experiencing homelessness and behavioral health challenges. We work to navigate the Housing Choice Voucher system; garner partnerships to search the housing market; assist in the technical requirements of the application process; educate and train on successful tenancy and landlord relations; provide resources and engagement assistance into the community; market a broad geography to acquire rental options based on customized preferences of the individuals; administer financial subsidies for rent; and offer other critical contingency needs. TSI's success is measured in our effectiveness in house searches, helping individuals maintain their housing and connecting individuals to supports that enable housing stability. Since 2020, an average of 89% of new admissions have signed up for permanent subsidy within the first 60 days of service. In FY 23, 99.9% of individuals at risk of eviction were successful at maintaining their housing and 100% of individuals received TSI's Community Resource Orientation for assistance with housing stability. All these efforts have allowed TSI for the past seventeen years to assist a vulnerable population of individuals live with stability, autonomy, and dignity.

2. Describe how your organization implements the principles of Housing First, Harm Reduction and Trauma-Informed Care. (5 points)

TSI has been a leader in finding affordable housing for low-income individuals in Allegheny County. In each of our psychiatric services lines, residential, HUD, and permanent supportive housing, our mission is to prepare our individuals to be successful tenants, have the necessary community level supports, and have the financial resources to sustain their housing. Most specifically, TSI has extensive knowledge in navigating affordable housing resources including Housing Choice Vouchers and public housing systems. We follow the best practice of “Housing First” where stability for the individual/family starts with having a safe, decent place to live first then the placement of supports. TSI works closely with individuals/families to identify credible natural supports that are already in their lives such as family, friends, and significant others. The goal is to work in partnership with the individual to utilize those that are close to them and then supplement additional support from community agencies.

TSI uses the resources provided by Pat Deegan PhD and Associates to focus on whole health recovery. This philosophy supports the belief that everyone is a “unified person in which body, mind, spirit and community are woven into the fabric of life” as noted by Dr. Deegan. This whole health philosophy has been infused into multiple TSI operations, and protocols such as admissions, documentation, and service planning. The primary goal is to meet the needs of individuals according to a customized assessment of their unique situation, desires and wishes. Additionally, TSI employs the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Model (Psych Rehab) in its PSH/PSH-TAY programs. Psych Rehab, although developed for those with mental illness, follows essential principles that can equally provide a sound approach to working effectively with all individuals/families as they move through the housing process. The principles of conveying hope and respect; ensuring that services are culturally responsive/relevant; engaging in informed and shared decision-making; building on strengths and capacities; focusing on person-centered interactions; focusing on improving the quality of life; and promoting self-determination and empowerment will allow each family to process through each step successfully.

TSI employs a comprehensive staff development program that requires 30 hours of annual training that includes topics such as motivational interviewing; medication/side effects; suicide prevention; workplace violence; substance abuse/harm reduction; administration of Naloxone; trauma-informed care; customer service; sexual deviance; sex trafficking; organizational ethics/values; and cultural competence. To operationalize trainings such as harm reduction and trauma informed care practices, all staff receive in the PSH/TSH-TAY programs receive weekly individualized supervision, monthly group supervision, group case reviews, and mentorship on effective and sensitive engagement with individuals served.

3. Describe your organization’s organizational and management structure, including evidence of a strategy for internal communication, external coordination, an adequate financial accounting system, and an absence of unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants. (5 points)

TSI has a strong, well-established, centralized management structure with a CEO, and leadership team inclusive of senior/middle management and front-line supervisors. The agency is split into two divisions, Behavioral Health, and Intellectual Disabilities. The SHPIF will be strategically

placed within the Behavioral Health Division lead by the VP of Mental Health Services who has been with TSI for over 35 years and is responsible for oversight of the current Permanent Supportive Housing programs, in addition to the residential, supportive housing community, and HUD programs. The strategic placement of SHPIF in this division would provide benefits not only in the robust expertise that the management and staff bring to supportive housing models but also the knowledge and experience of working with individuals with mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders. We employ key personnel such as a quality coordinator and clinical specialists who work across all divisions/programs to educate managers on effective strategies to be successful in the face of challenges with individuals and employees.

The success of TSI can be directly attributed to the strong relationships that have been established with multiple entities such as service coordination, Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA), Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP), the Community Care Behavioral Health (CCBHO), Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACDHS), the Office of Developmental Disabilities, and Resolve Crisis Services.

Our governmental contracts comprise over \$8 million in services requiring strong collaborative relationships and adherence to regulations. Our services include coordination, contract monitoring, fiscal management, adherence to data and invoicing requirements, and development and monitoring of quality management metrics/key indicators. We engage with agencies on a weekly/monthly and quarterly basis to review referrals, discharges, individual challenges, status reports, and utilization of resources. These partnerships are critical for the overall success in housing stabilization as they not only explore the challenges faced by the individual but also potential system challenges that involve external factors. Our firmly developed partnerships with state hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, Community Supports Coordination, Community Treatment Teams, crisis intervention, and all residential providers in Allegheny County have significantly helped us to graduate individuals into decent, safe housing. TSI has become for many of the above referred agencies the “go-to agency” in the county due to our expertise and successful outcomes. TSI’s relationship with the housing authorities has been the cornerstone of our success. Supervisors/staff will also attend appeals, meet with attorneys, directors, to assist with the facilitation of the process to move towards a successful outcome.

TSI’s fiscal department has established systems to manage the accounts billable and accounts payable for a diverse array of funding sources that include programs from the Department of Human Services and the Office of Intellectual Disabilities. The department is staffed by 2.5 full-time equivalents and Donnelly-Boland Financial Consultants as CFO. TSI utilizes Great Plains software, also known as Microsoft Dynamics GP, an accounting, and Enterprise Resource Planning software package. The highly customizable software has allowed TSI to integrate information contained in individuals’ electronic health record with accounting software to ensure accurate, timely, and efficient billing, as well as to streamline several other processes. Additionally, TSI uses the auditing firm of McGee and Maruca Associates and has experienced

over two decades of “clean auditing opinions.” This can be credited both to the skills and experience of the fiscal department and the accounting software.

4. Describe your organization’s experience and demonstrated success in meeting standards for managing data with HMIS or an equivalent data management system. (5 points)

TSI’s PSH/PSH-TAY programs currently access two (2) systems to track and manage data for its programs, a newly developed Sequel Database and the electronic health record system, Precision Care. The Sequel Database allows for monitoring and management of all leasing functions such as rent calculator, rental payments, subsidy payments, rep payee data, recertifications, and rent statements. Additionally, the database allows for processing of all contingency funds used for application fees, insurance, security deposits, moving costs, and/or essential household furniture. From its inception, this database was designed to be scalable allowing for future expansion of the PSH/PSH-TAY programs. TSI maintains a Housing Contingency Fund Policy and Procedure that outlines the Designated Use of Funds, Fiscal Request Process, Determination of Approval, Payment Process, and Limitations and Conditions. Short-term financial assistance plays a critical role in assessing the ability of the individual to pay the utilities. Utilities can be a housing challenge with utility differences based on neighborhoods and policies in working with tenants. Ensuring that an individual has both utility access and security deposit becomes a vital priority. This data base also allows for tracking and monitoring information on landlords and apartments which allows more rapid success in housing searches. Lists are maintained on landlord calls, approved landlords for Section 8, apartment inspections, which apartments have passed, and apartments that should be taken off the list due to substandard conditions.

TSI can track efficiency of the services by monitoring each open case on metrics such as if the intake occurred within one week of referral; if housing support team opened services within one week of intake and if the housing support team found housing within 60 days. Additionally, this database is used to track discharges/graduations and to ensure that individuals graduated with supports needed or wanted. These metrics are in the protocols and policies established by TSI and updated monthly. They are reported to the funders in the monthly billing cycle. This database also allows for the monitoring of any challenges that are experienced in the housing searches.

Precision Care maintains complete consumer case records from referral through discharge. It allows users to view and update consumer records, generate electronic and hard copy consumer charts, and compile statistical summary reports. Precision Care allows TSI to track data specific to our PSH/PSH-TAY housing programs on over twenty categories such as number of housing plans completed, number of individuals that received housing assistance, contact notes, service plans, assessments, and landlord incident reports. TSI utilizes Paycom as our payroll and HR software management system. We use this system for time and labor management, payroll, applicant tracking, onboarding, training, and talent acquisition.

Supportive Housing Program Strategy (55 points)

5. Describe the project scope of your proposed Program, including the number of households to be served annually and the estimated average length of time households will receive Temporary Rental Assistance. Additionally, identify whether the proposed Program will serve individuals, families, or both. (5 points)

TSI is proposing to provide supportive housing for individuals and/or families with or without behavioral health needs for 70 household units in both scattered apartments throughout the county and five two-bedroom congregate units through a master lease agreement with Residential Resources Inc. specifically for families. These units are currently part of a licensed, behavioral health Community Rehabilitation Residence (CRR) with DHS. This apartment building would be ideally suited for families with children. It is located on Wendover Street in Squirrel Hill. It is close to transportation, schools, and many community resources/activities. The apartment building has a newly renovated community room and a staff office for the housing support team for this project to be stationed. TSI will propose to DHS to transpose these units into supportive housing for families. TSI has a lease agreement with Residential Resources Inc. through June 2025. A new rental agreement would not be required until 2026. Currently, 40% of TSI's PSH/TAY individuals require assistance in obtaining a lease due to barriers such as no income, criminal records, past due rents, etc. These individuals/families will require Master Lease agreements. TSI is therefore proposing a combination of bridge subsidy and master leasing to ensure that all individuals can access housing. We are projecting that 40% of the 70 units or 32 units, would need a temporary master lease agreement while the housing support staff works with the individual/family to address the barriers early in the delivery of service. The remaining units would be considered bridge subsidy, and the tenant would directly lease from the community landlord.

With the infrequent open application periods (3-4 years) from the Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Housing Authorities, TSI immediately begins the application process with all individuals/families for HUD properties within the first 30 days. TSI has established long-standing relationships with landlords and maintains monthly communication regarding their open Section 8 approved units. This network of landlord resources allows TSI to successfully house individuals according to our internal metrics.

An assessment of HUD waitlists and housing preferences is completed. Completion of TSI's Housing Preference Survey is a priority step with individuals/families to identify elements such as their preferred neighborhoods, religious affiliations, school districts, transportation needs, etc. Additionally, service agreements are reviewed/signed, TSI handbook is reviewed, completion of criminal records check, applications completion, and all intake paperwork will become the focus. TSI will monitor monthly waiting lists; with signed releases, obtain status reports; and ensure that applications are completed and submitted for HUD housing. TSI's recognizes that it is most beneficial to have all individuals/families on multiple waiting lists. During the wait period all the services described below are delivered to ensure that the individuals are poised and ready to assume their new housing successfully.

6. Describe your organization's comprehensive plan for meeting households' immediate housing needs, creating pathways to permanent housing and mitigating barriers to housing. The response should clearly describe how the Proposer will deliver each of the housing program components outlined in the Service Description. (20 points)

I. Project Components: Overview: TSI plans to integrate the SHPIF program as an expansion of its' current PSH/TAY program. This would allow this program to be immediately integrated into a set of well-established effective protocols/guidelines and quality metrics that have allowed us to successfully obtain 366 Housing Choice Vouchers and meet 631 out of 670 housing preferences for those that we serve. The PSH-TAY program employs housing support staff who act as the individual's primary contact from assessment to post-move in support. The processes TSI has adopted include: 1) conduct a thorough assessment and determination of housing preferences; 2) assistance with housing searches; 3) housing application assistance and exploration of all housing subsidy options; 4) landlord advocacy; 5) support with housing tours/meetings; 6) assistance with appeals and requests for reasonable accommodations under Fair Housing Law; 7) provide education on landlord/tenant law and lease requirements; 8) assistance with security deposit, securing furniture and other household items; 9) assistance with physical move-in; 10) assistance with utilities and telephone connections; 10) assistance in familiarizing themselves with their home, neighborhood, and community resources; 11) assistance in developing housing/community living skills such as home maintenance, shopping, cooking and budgeting; and assistance with employment and financial stability.

II. Project Components: Assessment/Service Delivery: TSI's initial step in the above process involves a thorough assessment that includes: 1) intake assessment that will gather information regarding housing history and identify any potential housing challenges such as prior evictions or felonies and 2) a Housing Preference Survey to quickly identify the specific wishes of each individual/family such as preferred neighborhoods, preferred school districts and proximity to family and friends. A crucial part of the assessment process is to establish a trusting relationship with the individual/family. TSI approaches each newly referred individual/family as a unique situation. Our focus is to "meet people where they are at." Successfully acquiring a Housing Voucher can be a long and frustrating process. It requires learning about the system, learning new skills, and learning how to be a successful tenant. Through motivational interviewing and using a person-centered approach, TSI can use the assessment period to discern how an individual learns, how they like to engage and what their expectations are entering the program.

The TSI staff will use the Boston University Psych Rehab model that will drive the housing search process and outline the individual's goals and objectives with target dates. The housing support staff will work with the individual/family on their initial service plan and assessments of readiness, need to change, level of commitment to housing process, supports in place, and self-awareness of preferences and willingness to explore alternatives. Section 8 has reported that 40% of the population lost their vouchers because they were not willing to explore alternate neighborhoods. TSI will focus on an environmental awareness of alternatives that can still potentially meet expressed preferences.

Assessment of financial barriers at this stage of service is a vital step to ascertaining the individual/family's ability for sustainable housing. It will determine what support they will need in the way of contingency funds, utilities support, food security, governmental assistance such as

SSI, and SSD. TSI can begin to establish referrals to Low Income Home Energy Assistance and Customer Assistance Programs for utility assistance. TSI will, through this grant, ensure that Housing Contingency Funds (HCF) are made available to assist individuals/families with rental deposits, utility costs, and purchase of basic furniture. TSI data shows that 99% of individuals need HCF funds that range between \$1500 and \$2500. Employment strategies are initiated upon intake. Connections are made with supported employment programs, Howard Levin Clubhouse, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. TSI housing support staff assist all individuals with resumes, job searches and help to prepare for interviews.

Following the assessment period, TSI works to engage the individual/family with information from TSI's 6-week Renter's School. This curriculum provides information on researching environments, how to understand the lease agreements, being neighborly, landlord expectations, house safety and tenant rights/fair tenant law. The housing support staff will work together with the individual/family to fully understand the contents of the lease. Leases can be extensive and may contain hidden parameters that can easily be overlooked. TSI will consult with Neighborhood Legal Services, if necessary, for additional support. TSI will assist individual/family with completing rental applications, gathering income verification, and other required documents. Renter's School stresses the importance of being good citizens and the consequences of an eviction. Everyone will establish the most important skill(s) to work on to "keep" their housing. We currently have a metric "% of people who were at risk for eviction and were successful at maintaining their housing." In PSH, this metric has been at 100% since April 2021.

III. Landlord Relationships/Landlord Management: TSI has developed working relationships and contacts with the staff at the city and county Housing Choice Voucher programs. We have developed relationships with over 86 Real Estate agencies and 72 private landlords. The success that TSI has had in locating housing for our individuals is centered on relationship building with the landlords and a focus on excellent customer service.

We provide support and education to our landlords and assist with landlord negotiations. We also provide education to our landlords on fair housing, and on understanding diverse populations. Several of our landlords have stated that whenever they have apartments for rent, they "contact TSI first." A thorough assessment is completed to look at the housing challenges that individuals have experienced in the past so that we can start working on these immediately. Our agency has been successful in addressing these challenges. Housing challenges that occur are poor credit history, criminal backgrounds, owing substantial money on utilities, not having funds for moving costs, etc. TSI's ability to navigate these issues as soon as possible is one of the keys to our success. The goal is always to negotiate a win-win solution for both the landlord and the tenant. TSI has worked with over 200 landlords that have participated in the Housing Choice Voucher program. We work in partnership with all the landlords to ensure that they have a positive experience. TSI conducts annual landlord satisfaction surveys. Landlord satisfaction survey results have consistently shown extremely high levels of satisfaction with our housing programs. For the past three fiscal years, 100% indicated they 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' that they would

recommend the program. During the same time frame, 100% also indicated that they are 'Extremely Satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with staff's level professionalism, as well as with the program overall. Of the landlords that TSI has worked with, approximately 20-30% have properties that will accommodate families. TSI will use these established relationships, as a starting point to begin networking with other landlords/property owners to obtain referrals.

Creative marketing strategies will be employed such as TSI's practice of allocating funds to permit TSI to assume responsibility for willful damage caused by tenants. Damages are frequently a pressing concern for landlords, second to nonpayment of rent. TSI has found this to be a particular issue with landlords who are familiar with TSI and the population that we serve. Landlords often carry misconceived perceptions of individuals with a psychiatric diagnosis, assuming that they will be violent or unreliable. They can feel uncomfortable relating to these individuals as well as perceive them as having lower intelligence. TSI plays a critical role in the process to educate landlords with the facts and elevate their awareness of mental illness. We also act as an advocate for the individual and conduit between the individual and the landlord to build the relationship and trust. The knowledge that TSI will assume responsibility for these expenses relieves the landlord's concerns. A clear understanding during the leasing process of what constitutes normal wear and tear, and willful damage must be addressed in the agreement.

IV. Property Management: TSI, as administrator of multiple housing programs inclusive of four HUD 811 properties, we have developed expertise in property management and HUD regulations. TSI's program leadership and maintenance team has been trained/certified in HUD guidelines and has established policy/standards for apartment inspections. If an inspection does not meet the HUD guidelines, we will assist the tenant with landlord communications and navigation of the necessary repairs. The SHPIF will utilize our maintenance team to provide 1) pre-lease move-in inspections of all apartments, 2) yearly recertification inspections thereafter to ensure compliance with health and safety, and 3) move-in assistance. TSI's maintenance team will assume building maintenance/repairs as needed for the proposed five congregate apartments in Squirrel Hill.

Apartment inspections involve assessing for compliance of over 30 health and safety elements. These include items such as fire escapes, outlets, smoke detectors, windows and locks, floor conditions, fire extinguishers, appliances, doors and locks, bed bugs and other infestations, and outside safety. These inspections are done as a team to ensure that all elements are inspected thoroughly and outlined for the landlord if the inspection does not pass. Our maintenance team can effectively function as a conduit between the individual and the landlord to communicate deficiencies and discuss plans for repairs and improvements that are necessary. This technical support can serve to increase the likelihood of landlord responsiveness.

V. Linkages: TSI recognizes that associated with acquisition of housing comes the priority need for food, furniture, and utilities. Every individual is connected to their local food bank and assisted with applications for utility assistance. To provide additional support to individuals in our housing programs, TSI has established a program, the New Start Fund, which is solely funded through a yearly appeal and external donations. Through an application process, we have been able to award up to \$800/individual/family for the purchase basic furniture once the Housing Contingency Funds

were exhausted. Vendor relationships have been established with discount furniture stores and used furniture outlets such as the Blessing Board.

Wrapping the individual/family with both external and natural supports will set the foundation for a higher probability of long-term success. This process begins at the time of initial intake/assessment. TSI has a well-established relationship with Community Care Behavioral Health. They have been our primary resource for referrals such as mobile med services, peer support, drug/alcohol treatment/support, healthcare/psychiatric needs, crisis intervention, and case management. TSI works collaboratively with service coordination and Justice Related Services.

7. Describe your organization’s comprehensive plan for providing housing and related supports to households affected by mental illness and/or co-occurring substance use disorder. The response should be inclusive of Participants who are engaged with behavioral health services and supports as well as Participants who are not yet engaged with these services/supports. (20 points)

“Community-based behavioral health providers play a key role in ensuring that every individual they serve has the treatment, support, skills and opportunity for recovery and lives productively with dignity and respect” as noted by SAMHSA, 2019. This is the cornerstone of the approach taken by TSI. TSI has experienced first-hand the abilities of individuals with mental illness who have transitioned from 24/7 facilities such as Long-Term Structured Residences, Community Residential Residences such as TSI’s, and other residential programs. We have frequently witnessed that with the opportunity for an individual, regardless of their mental health diagnosis, to have a place to live that they can take ownership of and with the right supports wrapped around them, their likelihood of success is high. TSI understands that the collaboration with treatment teams, service coordination, justice related services, and natural supports is essential. TSI has collaborated extensively with behavioral providers such as WPIC, Mercy Behavioral Health, Wesley Family Services, and Turtle Creek Valley Community Services. Additionally, TSI has worked with numerous JRS workers, and office of probation.

Boston University’s Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation model’s basic tenant is that persons with psychiatric disabilities have the same goals and dreams as any other person. The model promotes recovery, community integration, and improved quality of life. The approach is collaborative, person directed, and individualized. Our TSI trained team focuses on helping individuals to eliminate barriers and develop the crucial skills for living independently and accessing resources.

We are proposing this model for SHPIF. As noted in Section I, Psych Rehab, although developed for those with mental illness, follow essential principles that can equally provide a sound approach to working effectively with all individuals/families as they move through the housing process. The principles of conveying hope and respect; ensuring that services are culturally relevant; engaging in informed and shared decision-making; building on strengths and capacities; focusing on person-centered interactions; focusing on improving the quality of life; and promoting self-determination and empowerment will allow each family to process through each step successfully with the use of the appropriate tools.

In the initial housing search process TSI will follow the Psych Rehab model employing the following progressive steps of 1) Engagement, 2) Readiness, 3) Choosing, 4) Functional Assessment, and 5) Skills enhancement. With each of these progressive steps, the housing support team will work side-by-side with the individual/family and will pull from a portfolio of tools to use as needed. The phases work to assist the individual/family with their commitment to embarking on the process of housing search, their self-awareness of their criteria for themselves and for their environment, and their abilities to critically assess their priorities. Choosing the housing that meets the individual/family's needs is critical. In prior quality audits by Community Care Behavior Health, TSI received exceptional recognition in the area of choosing. It is important for individuals/families to be open and willing to explore a variety of environments. This process can be done through in-person and virtual tours, visiting neighborhoods in the evenings or after dark, talking to neighbors, determining if the school provides transportation, looking at the distance to the school bus, and evaluating the school district. Part of the support of the housing support team will be to assist the individual/family with discussions regarding the skills that they will need to become successful in their new environment. This may entail discussion regarding past challenges that were faced and how to change behaviors to overcome those challenges. These may include inability to pay utilities, or budgeting barriers. Each family will have a Community Integration Plan developed with goals established throughout the process. All members of the family will be included in the process when possible.

8. Describe how your organization will incorporate Moving On strategies, including what milestones the Proposer will use to determine whether a Participant is ready to exit the Supportive Housing Program (5 points)

Using a person-centered approach and Psych Rehab, the housing support staff work with the individual/family from day one to prepare for graduation from housing services. The primary goal for all individuals/families is the acquisition of the Housing Choice Voucher. TSI's approach is to plan an exit from services that is going to meet the unique needs of the person. This is accomplished in several ways. First, all individuals begin service with TSI on at least a weekly basis for the first three – four months to ensure that they have completed all the necessary steps outlined above and obtain the highest level of intensity. After this, the frequency/regular intervals of meetings will be determined jointly over the course of waiting for the Housing Choice Voucher. Some individual/families will be able to follow a monthly frequency to ensure stability, and to monitor application statuses. This begins to promote independence and sustainability of long-term housing. Second, TSI will refer all individuals to be added to the waitlist for its Supportive Housing program which provides a full range of support services based on the needs of the individual and consistent with an outcome-based Community Housing Quality Plan. The services are provided to support the individual to achieve maximum independence with the expectation of fading paid supports. The services can range from 6 months to 2 years. The intensity of visits in the home starts weekly and through the progression of goals decreases in increments until graduation. The scope of services can include 1) financial management to include support on budgeting/money management; 2) health and wellness to include medication management assistance; 3) daily living skills to include housekeeping, transportation; 4) housing stability to include landlord relations and tenancy maintenance and 5) support for community engagement in unpaid supports. This will be in place

for the individual upon graduation from permanent supportive housing services. Lastly, a particular challenge often can be integration into the community. The focus will be to ensure that families have established a strong support plan. This would be accomplished through our Resource Orientation that would assist families with making valuable connections with family support centers, faith-based groups based on preference, health, and wellness connections such as FQHC's and other medical services, day-care programs, school enrollment assistance, navigation with school-based resources for children as needed and mental health services. This flow between services allows for individuals/families to transition to full housing independence at their own unique pace and does not set a definitive exit date for TSI support.

Program Staffing and Administration (20 points)

9. Describe your organization's staffing plan including Program staff positions, qualifications, recruitment, training and performance management. (10 points)

As a provider of Allegheny County's PSH/PSHTAY programs for over 17 years, TSI has developed an effective staffing model that has not only afforded it the opportunity to successfully achieve a 99.3% non-eviction rate across the programs since FY2017. This experience, complimented by the value-added services of our Human Resource Department, has made TSI a forerunner in housing service delivery in Allegheny County. TSI is proposing to organizationally position SHPIF alongside the PSH/TAY program with shared administrative oversight.

The program will be staffed with two (2) Housing Support Specialists (HSS); one (1) Lead HSS/Lease Specialist; and one 50% HSS Supervisor. HSS are required to have a bachelor's degree in psychology, social work, or other social service field plus 1 year of human services experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Each would assume a case load of 30 individuals/families and provide all necessary community-based services as described in this proposal. Lead HSS/Lease specialist is required to have a bachelor's degree in psychology, social work, or other social service field plus three (3) years of human service experience or combination of education and experience. The lead HSS/Lease specialist would be responsible for managing waitlists, referrals, intakes, navigating barriers, landlord recruitment/landlord relationships, and data/lease management. The HSS Supervisor is required to have a bachelor's degree in a Human Services field with a minimum of two years human Services experience plus one (1) year supervisory experience. The program's administrative oversight would be placed under the current Assistance Director of Community Programs. This individual has been with the agency for 32 years and brings to the oversight and management of housing services a wealth of knowledge of the complexities of successfully running a housing program in Allegheny County. She oversees management of the PSH/TAY program, Supportive Housing, and our three (3) HUD properties. She is an experienced senior level manager and consistently meets performance indicators for all the programs that she administers.

TSI is governed by comprehensive recruitment and selection policies and procedures. Employees are notified when job openings are posted. Priority consideration for internal candidates extends for fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of opening before positions are open to external candidates. If an external candidate is selected, hire will be contingent upon satisfactory

employment references, verification of prior employment, satisfactory criminal background reports, child abuse clearances, motor vehicle record check, and successful completion of pre-employment medical exam. TSI has a Recruitment Specialist as part of our Human Resources Department who is 100% dedicated to finding well suited recruits for all positions via creative approaches such as local colleges/universities, internet job platforms and search engine optimization.

TSI maintains a rigorous onboarding and annual training program that exceeds the state requirements. Our PSH/PSHTAY programs employ an onboarding intensive three-month training package for all new hires. Topics such as finding community resources; understanding the public housing market overview; realtor/landlord communications; affordable housing resources; negotiation/mediation/conflict resolution; apartment search; budgeting; introduction to TIP's; fair housing; and mental health first aid. Annually, all TSI employees are trained on over 30 topics via two learning management systems, Relias, and Elsevier. In addition to formal training, TSI's onboarding procedures include a combination of supervisory observation and feedback, practice and feedback, and a buddy system whereby a new hire will be paired with a supervisor or seasoned staff for 1-2 months delivering services jointly. Competency is then assessed before the decision is made to permit the employee to practice independently. This hands-on guided approach allows for continued learning and reinforcement of skills, and knowledge.

Lastly, the professional development of all employees is an area of continued focus. This is reflected in our annual employee appraisal. A discussion is required in the supervisory session to review both the employee's and supervisor's recommendations/requests for additional training and development and specified as an annual goal on the appraisal.

10. Describe your organization's schedule for implementing the proposed activities, as well as your management plan and method for assuring effective and timely completion of all work. (5 points)

TSI would operationalize this project as an expansion of its current PSH/PSH-TAY program. It would follow the same organizational structure, service delivery components, training packages and utilization of current leadership for senior management oversight thus allowing the project to be implemented with ease. Project activities will be outlined with target dates for the first three months and will include:

- Obtain approval from DHS to transpose the current Wendover CRR in Squirrel Hill into supportive housing and work with OMHSAS to de-license the apartment building.
- Discharge current residents to alternate placements with DHS to ensure a smooth transition.
- Human Resources will work with existing staff of Wendover CRR to explore reassignments/applications for alternate positions within the agency.
- Human Resources will initiate job searches/interviews for all project positions.
- Wendover CRR office will be reconfigured to accommodate workspaces for all project staff inclusive of the supervisor.
- Purchase of all necessary resources such as laptops, cell phones, vehicles.

- Project coordinator will plan for immediate roll out of comprehensive training plan following agency-wide orientation of new hires.
- Cross-over mentorship plan will be initiated with current staff of PSH/TAY to provide specific onboarding detail on county resources, landlord introductions, renter’s school training, policies and procedures, and introduction to internal communications with fiscal processes regarding subsidies, leasing management, and other funds.

Effective and timely completion of project implementation will be the responsibility of the Project Coordinator who has the long-term operational management of the PSH programs and was responsible for the new project implementation of the PSHTAY program in 2016. Further administrative oversight on project roll-out will be completed by the VP of Mental Health Services to ensure that all necessary components are completed prior to initiation of services.

11. Describe your organization’s plan to track and achieve performance standards (5 points)

TSI is committed to providing high quality services, meeting, and exceeding the regulatory requirements of funding agents, protecting the rights of individuals, and affirming the dignity of everyone served. This commitment is reflected in the utilization of a robust Quality Improvement Department and Quality Improvement Coordinator. The deliverables for this department include the development and monitoring of 27 key performance indicators; quality improvement initiatives/plans for all programs/departments; education, guidance, and support to all employees on quality management tools and principles; and monitoring and auditing of program compliance. Metrics are reviewed monthly/quarterly by all TSI leadership and assessed for successes, challenges, and barriers for progress. The PSH/PSH-TAY programs consistently meet or exceed metric goals. The PSH/PSH_TAY programs are monitored on several key performance standards that address stable housing. In FY23, 93.2% of individuals were discharged with stable housing and supports and 100% of individuals who were at risk for eviction successfully maintained their housing. When metrics are identified as challenged or in need of a deeper dive, they will be brought to the TSI Board of Directors. Additionally, these metrics will become areas of internal focus through task or project teams. These groups will conduct root cause/close analyses of the issues and develop strategies to address the identified areas of focus. The outcomes of the implemented changes are monitored quarterly. This department is well suited in experience and tools to track/monitor all outcomes and deliverables outlined by DHS.

TSI regularly solicits feedback from the people we serve. This occurs through various channels including monthly house meetings, a grievance hotline, community meetings and annual surveys. The annual surveys have been in use for several years allowing trend analysis. Through them we document satisfaction with different aspects of care including, but not limited to progress in recovery, cultural sensitivity, and encouragement to take responsibility for personal choices. In FY 23, 93.18% of individuals reported that “staff helped them with problems when needed” and 89% reported “satisfaction with my progress in terms of growth, change, and recovery.” Should results fall short of the anticipated target, the Quality Coordinator in conjunction with the program leadership crafts improvement projects specified to their specified needs.

Budget and Budget (10 points, not included in page count)

12. Attach a detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Program each year for a 5-year period. (5 points)

Attached

13. Attach a budget narrative that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing the Program. (5 points)

Attached

Transitional Services Inc							
5-year Budget Proposal for the SHPIF RFP							
10.27.23							
DESCRIPTION	CLASS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
SALARIES:							
SHIPP SUPERVISOR 50%	SAL	26,000	26,910	27,852	28,827	29,836	
HOUSING SUPPORT SPECIALIST #1-30	SAL	36,400	37,674	38,993	40,357	41,770	
HOUSING SUPPORT SPECIALIST #2-30	SAL	36,400	37,674	38,993	40,357	41,770	
LEAD HOUSING SUPPORT/LEASE SPECIALIST	SAL	43,680	45,209	46,791	48,429	50,124	
MAINTENANCE STAFF 20%	SAL	7,900	8,177	8,463	8,759	9,065	
TOTAL SALARIES		150,380	155,643	161,091	166,729	172,565	
BENEFITS 40%							
WORKERS COMP; HEALTH INSURANCE; RETIREMENT; FICA; UNEMPLOYMENT; LEGAL; LIFE AD&d	BEN	210,532	217,901	225,527	233,421	241,590	
TOTAL PERSONNEL		210,532	217,901	225,527	233,421	241,590	
STAFF TRAINING:	TRN	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
TRAVEL:							
FUEL	TVL	2,500	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	
STAFF TRAVEL	TVL	1,021	1,021	1,021	1,021	1,021	
VEHICLES Year 1 only	TVL	105,000	-	-	-	-	
VEHICLE REPAIRS	TVL	-	500	1,000	1,000	1,000	
TOTAL TRAVEL		108,521	5,521	6,021	6,021	6,021	
TOTAL BRIDGE SUBSIDY		224,200	298,800	319,716	342,096	366,043	
TOTAL MASTER LEASES		250,200	333,600	356,952	381,939	408,674	
TOTAL HOUSING CONTINGENCY		126,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	
TOTAL LANDLORD DAMAGES		90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		1,010,453	1,016,822	1,069,216	1,124,476	1,183,329	
ADMIN 9.7%	ADM	98,014	98,632	103,714	109,074	114,783	
TOTAL PROJECT COST		1,108,467	1,115,453	1,172,930	1,233,551	1,298,111	5,928,512

Supportive Housing Program for Individuals and Families - TSI Budget Narrative Year 1

I. PERSONNEL SERVICES

Salaries: Total \$150,380

Supervisor – 50% day-to-day supervision of Housing Support Specialists, communication with external partners, crisis management. (\$52000@50%).

Housing Support Specialists (1) – Full-time position responsible for direct housing stability interventions with case load of 30. (\$36,400) Recruitment activities initiated in first month of project.

Housing Support Specialist (2) – Full-time position responsible for direct housing stability interventions with case load of 30. (\$36,400) Recruitment activities initiated in first month of project.

Lead Housing Support/Lease Specialist – Full time position is responsible for managing waitlists, referrals, intakes, data and lease management, and housing stability interventions for a case load of 10. (43,680) Recruitment activities initiated in first month of project.

Maintenance Staff – 20% apartment pre-move inspections/moves and annual recertifications, assistance with landlords/communication regarding repairs/damages (\$39,520@20%).

Benefits: \$60,152 – 40% Benefits includes workers comp, health insurance, retirement, FICA, unemployment, legal fees, and life AD&D

NOTATION Years 2-5

Salaries increased by 3.5% annually

II. TRAINING: \$1000

- External training for supervisor and housing support specialists – Estimated at \$250 each

NOTATION Years 2-5

Training budget remains static

III. TRAVEL:

- Year 1 only purchase of (3) vehicles @ \$35,000 each
- Vehicle fuel estimated at \$2,500
- Fuel expense for supervisor est. @ 30 miles/week @ IRS rate of 65.5 cents
- No vehicle repairs

NOTATION Years 2-5

Vehicle Fuel increased to \$4000/year with full utility

Vehicle repairs @ \$500 in Year 2 and \$1000 in Years 3-5

IV. SUBSIDIES: \$ 1,010,453

The subsidy expense is determined as followed:

- **Total Bridge Subsidy Year 1 \$224,200 – Calculated for 9 months in Year 1**
 - Est. 60% of 70 units or 42 units
 - Est. Tenants contribution to rent @ 60%
 - Est. (8) two bed @ \$1150 rent = \$49,680 $(8*1150*9)*0.6$
 - Est. (34) one bed @ \$950 rent = \$174,420 $(34*950*9)*0.6$

NOTATION Years 2-5

Bridge Subsidy increased by 7% in Years 2-5 annually to account for rental increases

- **Total Master Lease Subsidy Year 1 \$250,200 – Calculated for 9 months in Year 1**
 - Est. 40% of 70 units or 28
 - Est. (6) two bed @ 1150 rent \$62,100 (6*1150*9)
 - Est. (22) one bed @ 950 rent \$ 188,100 (22*950*9)

NOTATION Years 2-5

Mater Lease increased by 7% in Years 2-5 annually to account for rental increases

- **Total Housing Contingency Subsidy @ \$2000/tenant – One time subsidy - \$126,000**
 - Est. 90% housing placement of 70 units in Year 1

NOTATION Years 2-5

Est. 50% turnover of tenants each year @ \$70,000 each year

- **Total Landlord Damages - \$90,000/ year for landlord incentive**

V. **ADMINISTRATION – 9.7%:** Includes contract maintenance, supplies, equipment for year one, insurance, communication, fiscal support, HR support, Executive Support