

**Allegheny County  
Department of Human Services  
Request for Proposals Q&A**

RFP for Winter Shelter 2024

<b>Office Hours</b>
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**July 22, 2024**

- 1. What are the facility infrastructure requirements, including but not limited to things like showers?**

The general requirements we have for the space are outlined in *Section 2.B Shelter Design* and *Section 2.C Shelter Services*. DHS is willing to consider proposed amenities not listed in these sections, however, any amenities not listed are not required at this time.

- 2. So the main priority is providing individuals experiencing homelessness a place to sleep, correct?**

Correct. In the past, Winter Shelter has taken place in large open rooms, like a gym space, that allow for congregate sleeping for individuals. However, we're also open to proposed facilities with multiple rooms for separating individuals by gender, and/or smaller facilities.

- 3. When people come into shelters, they bring a lot of baggage with them, therefore, what kind of like limits could we set in regard to security for our employees and other clients?**

It is the responsibility of the Successful Proposer(s) to manage the day-to-day operations of the Winter Shelter including security and maintaining safety protocols. Typically, in the past, shelter providers have contracted with a security agency to provide security services and ensure the place is safe. However, it is important the shelter remains low-barrier and is a place individuals can come to as needed. In the winter specifically, this is a life-saving measure, and individuals should be able to bring their belongings, if applicable.

- 4. With there being potential wage barriers for the employees, would the Successful Proposer or DHS set to pay scale for the employees?**

We're looking for Proposers to provide a proposed budget including staff wages. The final budget and staff wages will be determined during negotiation between DHS and the Successful Proposer(s).

- 5. Is this a first come first serve shelter each night or do clients check in one night, then can reserve spots for the following?**

Generally, yes, it would be first come, first serve. Ideally, there will be a centralized downtown location where people who need access to the Winter Shelter will come. Anyone in need of shelter would come to the centralized location downtown. If they're unable to get into a bed at another shelter, they'll be transported to the Winter Shelter. Thus, an individual may stay in the Winter Shelter one night, and then get into an existing year-round shelter in the County the next day.

**6. This would be a primary shelter with the end goal of moving them into more permanent areas, correct?**

Correct.

**7. Is the idea that the Successful Proposer will be awarded in November and then the Winter Shelter is fully functional up and running by November 15th, correct?**

This is in reference to the estimated award decision date listed in the RFP. When listing the estimated award decision date, we tend to give ourselves some leeway as we don't want to provide a date we won't have a decision by. However, it is anticipated the Successful Proposer(s) will receive notification prior to November and will have more than just 15 days of planning time before services begin.

**8. Has a location for this shelter been identified?**

No, not currently.

**9. Must any potential location be ADA-compliant?**

Yes, that would be our preference, but if a Proposer has a strong location identified that may need adjustments or renovations to become ADA-compliant, we would still like to review those proposed locations in their Proposal.

**10. If there are any required upgrades/fixes required to the site, would that be paid for by DHS?**

It's possible, but we cannot guarantee this. If your identified location would require any fixes or upgrades, please include them in your proposed budget. All proposed costs will be considered for reasonableness and the final budget will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer(s).

**11. If 2nd Ave were to come back online during the winter, would the contract be modified to end? If yes, what amount of notice would be given to the provider of the winter shelter?**

We do not expect the availability of 2nd Avenue Commons to affect this contract. Winter Shelter will be necessary regardless of when 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Commons is reopened.

**12. Is a desired downtown transportation location already selected or is that to be proposed by bidders as well?**

No, a downtown transportation location has not yet been identified, and no, we do not expect Proposers to propose this location. The location will be determined by DHS during the planning phase and shared with the Successful Proposer(s).

**13. Is there any public information on budgetary guidelines for any pieces of this project?**

No, not for this project. We are specifically interested in reviewing how much Proposers think it will cost to successfully operate Winter Shelter. All proposed costs will be considered for reasonableness and the final budget will be negotiated between DHS and the Successful Proposer(s).

**14. Is the facility responsible for picking up and dropping off participants?**

Yes, the Successful Proposer will be responsible for managing and coordinating transportation to the Winter Shelter from the central downtown pickup location. We prefer a Successful Proposer who can provide transportation service directly or via subcontract, however, Proposers currently unable to provide transportation are still encouraged to apply but should be open to collaborating to meet this requirement. DHS would be willing to help develop transportation services with a Successful Proposer who has an otherwise strong Proposal.

**15. In the RFP, it shows an initial term of one year for the agreement, with this going from November through March, could you provide any insight on what that Spring and Summer looks like to follow through with the full year?**

We anticipate that this will be a Winter Shelter contract, but we typically structure contracts for at least a year. Depending on where things are at the end of the winter season, we could negotiate to see if there is a need or opportunity to extend anything past the winter, but at this point, we anticipate this service to be for the winter months, as outlined in the RFP.

**16. Does the transportation need to be ADA accessible?**

Yes, we would prefer ADA-accessible transportation options.

**17. Would providing bus tickets be considered as transportation?**

No, bus transportation is not a reliable way to provide shelter transportation.

August 8, 2024
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**18. We have a Board Member who is a Veteran, but neither an owner nor part owner of the organization. In what way may he be an asset to the program or how may we use him and to what capacity?**

It's up to Proposers to propose how they will use respective members of their organization to operate Winter Shelter according to the requirements outlined in the RFP.