Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A
RFP for the Development of an Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System

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May 9, 2024

1. **It's mentioned that county-contracted providers usually receive payment through a monthly reimbursement model for incurred costs. If there's a need for an upfront fund to initiate the contracted work before any costs are incurred, could you please elaborate on how this works? Specifically, if an advance is required, what would be the procedure for repayment? Would it be deducted from future payments?**

No, proposing to receive an advance is not a requirement. The opportunity to propose for/receive an advance, if selected, has specifically been outlined for organizations who may need funding to begin services prior to first to the first invoice they would receive from DHS. Repayment advances is facilitated by deducting the advance amount from future payments within the first year of the contract, with 100% repayment to occur prior to DHS's fiscal year end of June 30th. This is not a requirement and will not affect the evaluation of your Proposal. If a Proposer thinks an advance may be necessary but is unsure how to outline it in their budget, DHS will work collaboratively with them (if awarded), to understand and finalize the appropriate budget details.

2. **I'm seeking clarity on whether this implies that the contractor doesn't receive upfront payment for the requested work from DHS. If repayment to DHS is necessary, would the contractor use the initial payment they should have received to cover this?**

In the event a Proposer received in advance, the advance would help to cover the costs of beginning services prior to the first invoice. DHS Providers typically submit invoices on a cost-reimbursement model. Thus, providers must have the capital to execute the services prior to receiving payment for their first invoice. Ideally, an advance would help an organization without the upfront capital to begin the contract services as quickly as possible. Repayment of the advance would be deducted from monthly payments to the provider within the first year of the contract. This is not a requirement and will not affect the evaluation of your Proposal. If a Proposer thinks an advance may be necessary but is unsure how to outline it in their budget, DHS will work collaboratively with them (if awarded), to understand and finalize the appropriate budget details.

Information Session

May 14, 2024

3. **Can individuals be dually eligible for programming? In other words, can they be enrolled in existing programming listed in this slide as well as new programming upcoming that will be developed as a result of this RFP?**

Yes, individuals in the current reentry programming will also be eligible for this programming.

4. **If an organization is applying for more than one area, should they do multiple budgets are just one for all?**

Please feel free to submit either one budget for the multiple programs you are applying for or an individual budget per program. If you are planning to submit one budget, please just make sure the expenses/line-item costs for each program proposed are clearly outlined and identified.

5. **If we are currently using curriculum-based services in other counties, is CT-R to be used to enhance what we are already doing, or to replace it?**

If you are applying to provide curriculum-based programming, CT-R would be used to enhance your curriculum, not replace it.

6. **For the CT-R services in the community, would the provider be responsible for recruitment, enrollment, and attendance numbers?**

This will be a collaborative effort between DHS, ACJC and the Successful Proposer(s), especially around determining eligibility or priority criteria and referral pathways, but we do expect the Successful Proposer(s) to be able to implement a structure for recruitment and to facilitate programming in creative and engaging ways that encourage continued participation from individuals who attend.

7. **Do we include the CT-R training costs in our budgets?**

No. Beck Institute will support the Successful Proposer(s) by providing CT-R training(s) at no cost.

8. **What will be the average number of cohorts per year?**

At this time, we have not set expectations regarding the number of groups that will be held annually. However, we do expect that programming be offered year-round. The number of groups held annually (in addition to the size of the groups) will be determined in partnership with the ACJ and dependent on classroom availability and security considerations and based on the Proposals received. We're expecting to engage 500 individuals annually in the CT-R Course in the Jail in cohorts of 15-20 individuals. Curriculum-based Programming should be designed to serve closed groups of 15-20 individuals in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.

9. **What is the link for Bonfire?**

Please find the link to Bonfire here.

10. **What requirements or clearances are necessary for a provider or individual to be granted access to the ACJ in order to provide these services and activities?**

The following requirements include but are not limited to providing a copy of a form of identification (i.e. driver's license or state ID), completing a form indicating personal information, including criminal history, and completing a one-day security training. The Successful Proposer(s) will collaborate with DHS and ACJ to ensure all personnel meet ACJ's requirements to access the facility.

11. For curriculum-based programming, do separate proposals/budgets need to be submitted for each service area or can they be combined into one? (i.e. mental health and physical health with Substance use treatment)

Please see our response to question #4.

12. If your program was under a different for profit but transferred to a non-profit, which is new, what type of financial document should be provided?

At the time of submission, no financial documentation is necessary. If you are selected as a Successful Proposer and are a provider new to DHS, you would complete the New Provider Application which requests 2 years of audited financial statements, management letters and 990s (if any). If no audited financial statements are available, you can provide copies of your year-end balance sheet and statement of operations or profit and loss for the past two years, along with your 990s.

13. For curriculum-based programming in the category mental/physical health, can the focus be more on mental than physical health?

Yes

14. Is the curriculum-based delivery limited to 6-week programs?

We've found that 6-week programming provides individuals the best opportunity to complete the program(s). For individuals booked in the past three years, the median length of stay at the jail is 15 days and the average length of stay is 59 days. Incarcerated women generally have a shorter length of stay. We may work with Successful Proposers to adapt curricula to run 4-5 weeks for that population. If a proposed curriculum normally requires more than six weeks to complete, Proposers should provide detail as to whether that curriculum can be adapted to meet the six-week cycle without compromising effectiveness or fidelity by, for example, facilitating sessions multiple times per week. Ultimately, DHS and ACJ will collaborate with the Successful Proposers to determine the proper curricula length according to the programming proposed.

15. I assume limitations in the proposal staffing and space in the jail would control the number of cohorts running?

Correct, this will depend on the proposals received and the comprehensive system that is ultimately developed with all Successful Proposers.

16. What is the page count in response to the Proposal?

Please refer to the Response Form. The page-limit for each section is clearly identified at the top of the section.

17. Should the budget be slated for one or two years?

Two

May 16, 2024

18. Where do I retrieve login information for the virtual office hours conducted on 5/22?

Please review Section 4: "How to Submit a Proposal," subsection 4.1b. "Office Hours" in the RFP for more details on the office hours.

Office Hours

May 22, 2024

19. Is the recording from the info session available and if so, on which platform?

Please find the recording for the info session here. It is also available on the Active Solicitations Webpage on the page for this RFP under "Additional Downloads."

20. Is there any program or organization that helps new businesses navigate through the bid process?

DHS does not have any organization or program that helps with navigating the bid process.

21. Where it says partners included in this proposal, should we include the funded partner(s) on this project or partners who provide wrap around support and services as part of the proposal?

In the Proposer information section, which asks for partners included in your Proposal, please include any partner(s) you would directly fund/contract with to provide any element(s) of the service. In your response, you should clearly explain the role they'll play in implementing the service.

Regarding less formal partnerships, one-time purchases, or agencies you would make referrals to for wrap around services, please include and explain those collaborations in your response to the questions provided where appropriate.

22. In the required contacts section, could you explain what you're looking for, specifically who we should list for the contract processing and Chief Information Officer contacts?

For the Chief Information Officer, if that's a position that you have in your organization, please include that individual. If it's not, please list whoever you're comfortable with there. Individuals can be listed multiple times.

For the contract processing contact, please list someone knowledgeable enough about your proposed program who can discuss contract details and knowledgeable enough about your organization to provide any necessary documentation for the contract process. DHS will collaborate with the Successful Proposer(s) to obtain the appropriate contacts for any further information necessary.

23. **My organization is a workforce development agency that tracks and would list our job placement rates in our proposed outcomes. Considering we'll be working with individuals at the Allegheny County Jail, and in not knowing their release date, is job placement something that you want to see? If so, could you provide guidance on how you're thinking about that in this context?**

Job placement is something we'd be interested in tracking. DHS will collaborate with the Successful Proposers to support any outcome tracking we can. We're most interested in understanding the general outcomes you intend to achieve through the specific program proposed.

24. **We will be applying under the curriculum-based programming for the six-week cohorts and offer job training. Typically, we would say, for example, that individuals within six months of completing our programs, 85% have secured or improved employment. Should we extend that timeline considering it might be 3 months before someone is released and can begin searching for and finding a job? Or how should we think about that in not knowing where individuals are in their timeline for being released and begin searching for employment?**

Please review our response to question #23. DHS will collaborate with the Successful Proposer(s) to develop and track programmatic outcomes (especially those depending on an individuals' release) to establish appropriate tracking cut offs.

25. **We have an aftercare jail and prison ministries support group here that we minister to those who have been released from the state correctional. Is this RFP for those coming out of county facilities or does this apply to the state as well?**

This RFP primarily focuses on establishing programming within the Allegheny County Jail. Depending on the programming you're proposing to provide, there is opportunity to provide programming in the community for individuals who have spent time in the Jail, but it must meet the requirements outlined in each of the respective programming options available to propose for in Section 2 of the RFP.

26. **I'm curious about the staffing requirements. For the sample activity schedule, would the schedule you're asking for be Monday through Friday throughout each day?**

Yes, we envision a Monday through Friday schedule.

27. **This question is really for all 3 proposal options available, but for Activities Coordination, based on the RFP, it sounds like we're trying to reach more than one**

pod at a time and have multiple programs occurring too. Are we thinking an activity on a pod per day?

Additionally, for each program being procured, could you provide further details on the staffing requirements, specifically how large of a staff are you envisioning for the program(s)?

Staffing will depend on the program you're proposing to provide and your organization's approach. For the Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination piece, we're looking for a Successful Proposer to create a schedule of activities across the ACJ housing units who can build the capacity to offer at least one activity in each housing unit per day. For CT-R Course facilitation in the community, we're interested in Successful Proposer who can build capacity to offer some night and weekend opportunities. It is not necessarily anticipated the Successful Proposers will have this capacity at onset.

For all Proposal options available, we're interested in understanding the Proposer's approach to staffing to successfully facilitate the programming. Please review the requirements outlined in each of the respective programming options available to propose for in Section 2 of the RFP and outline your staffing plan/approach accordingly. DHS will collaborate with the Successful Proposers to ultimately determine the staffing plan that works best for all stakeholders.

28. **Would college graduate students from the University of Pittsburgh or Duquesne University be adequate staff for this RFP?**

They may be, yes.

29. **With what's being requested in the RFP, would a shared option be sufficient? For example, one Proposer does half of the pods, and the other Proposer does the other half of the pods, therefore one Proposer isn't required to staff and full all of the pods.**

It's possible. We envision selecting one Successful Proper for Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination, but this is subject to change.

30. **Based on the following question if there's 100 different sessions, then a Proposer can propose fifty of those. Is that correct?**

We envision identifying one Successful Proposer for the CT-R Course, more than one Successful Proposer(s) for Curriculum-Based Programming, and one Successful Proposer for Activities Based Programming and Resource Coordination. However, this is subject to change.

31. **It sounds like a ton of different programming and sessions are occurring in this RFP. Regarding the activities coordination section, can some session be conducted virtually?**

We are specifically interested in in-person programming.

32. The facilitators, are they limited to being those of someone not having a criminal background history?

Please review our response to question #10.

33. As an organization, we have a curriculum addressing the areas suggested in the RFP and that it will be in coordination with the Beck Institute. We've facilitated this curriculum across a Department of Corrections, including their facilities, and are curious how the Beck Institute's training will fit into our established curriculum. Could DHS provide examples or information on how DHS will use the Beck Institute to facilitate established programming?

Examples of how we envision Successful Proposers with established programming partnering with Beck Institute can be found in Section 2.1 Collaboration with Beck Institute. Training will be provided. We are not seeking to make significant changes to proposed curricula. We are simply looking to incorporate principles of CT-R throughout all the programming to strengthen and unify the Reentry System as a whole.

34. Would the duration of each activity depend on the jail staffing availability? Or would 30 minutes or an hour for each activity the expectation?

An hour is a fair estimate, but ultimately, it will depend on the activities proposed.

35. Regarding the curriculum-based program, there are six different avenues, and we can propose for more than one. On the RFP Response Form, should we put N/A under the other options?

There is no need to put "n/a." The Organizational Experience, Organizational Capacity and Budget and Budget Narrative sections must be filled out by all Proposers. Besides these sections, please only fill out the section(s) required for the programming you're proposing. The appropriate sections are clearly indicated on the Response Form.

36. I work for an organization funded by DHS but would like to submit a proposal on behalf of my organization. Would that hinder me from submitting a proposal for this RFP?

No

37. How will individuals be oriented and assigned to these programs?

As we are still in the midst of developing the system, we have not yet formalized a process for orienting individuals to all the programming to be available. Part of this will depend on the programming procured through this process. We do anticipate, especially for the Activities-Based Programming piece, to work collaboratively with the Successful Propose to market and increase awareness for programming. We anticipate the Successful Proposers to also be able to engage individuals to interest them in programming as well.

In terms of how individuals will be referred or assigned, this will be a layered process where individuals can identify themselves as interested in some of the programming, while there will be

some prioritization for individuals with certain levels of need and risk, including individuals who are fully enrolled in our more intensive Reentry Program. The broader range of Curriculum-based Programming will be available to individuals who are in jail long enough to participate in an approximately 6 weeklong program, which is not the entire jail population. So ultimately, it'll be nuanced process that will depend on the programming procured in combination with the existing programming.

May 23, 2024

38. Is an outpatient license required for any of the services?

If a Successful Proposer proposes a service that the state would require to hold an outpatient license, DHS would expect compliance with licensing. However, there is no expectation that any or all providers in our reentry system will have an outpatient license. We are looking for evidence-informed curriculums to be offered in group settings; these do not need to be facilitated by licensed clinicians unless the curriculum or evidence-base calls for that.

Currently, medical assistance does not pay for services while individuals are incarcerated. It should be noted, however, that Pennsylvania has applied for a Medicaid 1115 Waiver. Should that waiver be granted and made applicable to Allegheny County Jail in the coming years, it is possible that in-jail programing would need to adapt to become Medicaid-compensable. Should that occur at any point during the contract term with Successful Proposers, DHS will work with providers to identify and implement any needed changes to programmatic, licensing and payment structures.

39. How will the county identify individuals for services?

DHS and AJC are working to develop and implement a data-driven approach to match individuals to programs/services based on their desire, needs, length of stay, scheduling constraints and jail security protocol. In addition, incarcerated individuals interested in participating in programs/services can express their interest through a tablet request or other communication with reentry programming staff; and Successful Proposers, in collaboration with ACJ, may also "market" their services to incarcerated individuals through outreach on the housing units. Finally, individuals enrolled in the Reentry Program (pre-release service coordination paired with a Reentry Probation Officer) will be prioritized for services. Individuals not in the Reentry Program will be able to participate to the extent service capacity, desire, need, security protocol, and length of stay allow.

40. Is a MH Diagnosis required for services?

Not at this time. As Pennsylvania negotiates a Medicaid 1115 Waiver, there may be state-wide requirements for screening/diagnoses to participate in Medicaid-compensable services.

41. How did the county determine the need and volume for participation?

Using available data on the jail population including bookings, service need, recidivism risk, and average lengths of stay, as well as historical information about AJC program participation, we are

estimating the likely volume for participation. Because these things can be fluid, and because of the County's overarching efforts to reduce the jail population and keep people safely in the community, we know that volume for participation may change. It is the ACJC's intent to support individuals while they are incarcerated while also supporting measures to enable them to be released as quickly as possible given their circumstances.

The volume of participants for each unique service will also depend some on what services are selected through the procurement process. The ACJ and DHS will work closely with Successful Proposers to determine a programming schedule and class capacity based on classroom space and security protocol.

42. Are services court ordered?

While the aim is for reentry programming to be largely voluntary, some judges may order participation in reentry programming. This is more common for the small percentage of sentenced individuals at the jail.

43. What is the investment of time to participate in the Beck Institute training?

It is anticipated that an upfront training would be up to three days. Additional trainings and TA would be determined in partnership with Beck and DHS and could range from infrequent hour-long virtual calls to longer, in-person engagements. Trainings may be conducted in groups with other Successful Proposers and reentry staff.

44. DHS noted that this training is 'in-kind', but we would still need to pay our staff for this time. Is it appropriate to include this?

It is appropriate to propose a reasonable budget associated with personnel effort to participate in training. If program personnel are salaried employees dedicated to the contracted program, paying staff extra for training time on top of their salaried work-day may not be considered reasonable.

Amendments

May 24, 2024

The Proposal deadline, questions deadline, and the estimated award decision/notification were all extended to allow for more time for proposal development. The following chart outlines the changes:

	Original Deadline	Extended Deadline
Deadline for Questions	Friday, May 24 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time	Friday, June 7 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time
Last Website & Q&A Update	Thursday, May 30 at 6 p.m. Eastern Time	Thursday, June 13 at 6 p.m. Eastern Time
Deadline for Proposals	Thursday, June 6 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time	Thursday, June 20 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time

Estimated Award Decision/Notification	August 2024	August 2024

All dates in the RFP have been adjusted to reflect the extended deadline dates outlined in the chart above.

June 13, 2024

45. Regarding the budget, is there a limit on the administrative overhead percentage?

We will consider any reasonable and justified percentage of the proposed budget be allocated to overhead expenses. However, we typically do not cover administrative expenses above 10-15% of the proposed budget.

46. Are there some convictions in which the 5-year rule does not apply, and the individual is permanently barred from being cleared?

The current security clearance policy is that clearances will not be provided for individuals with criminal activity in the previous two years, including arrest, pending charges, probation and parole. There is also a list of charges that automatically disqualify someone from being granted security clearance (include list???). As noted in the RFP, the County is interested in proposals that employ and meaningfully leverage the expertise of people with lived experience. While ensuring a safe and secure facility is tantamount, the County is committed to working with Successful Proposers to ensure that program staffing and fidelity are not unduly burdened by security clearance policy.

47. The RFP gives the approximate size of the groups, and the maximum length of time they will operate. Is there an expectation regarding the number of groups that will be held?

At this time, we have not set expectations regarding the number of groups that will be held annually. However, we do expect that programming be offered year-round. The number of groups held annually (in addition to the size of the groups) will be determined in partnership with the ACJ and dependent on classroom availability and security considerations. We're expecting to engage 500 individuals annually in the CT-R Course in the Jail in cohorts of 15-20 individuals. Curriculum-based Programming should be designed to serve closed groups of 15-20 individuals in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.

48. I was thinking about the 31 pods needing an activity each day and was thinking I could teach some elementary concepts about aperture, depth of field and lenses. Is this a reasonable idea? Additionally, could I bring my nature photos in the jail with books if our proposal is chosen?

The Activities and Resource Coordination function should employ staff to coordinate a range of activities that staff will administer directly and engage external facilitators to administer. The proposal need not identify all of the specific activities to be facilitated but should identify an

approach to activities coordination and the types of activities the proposer would envision, including an approach to getting feedback from incarcerated individuals about the kinds of activities they would appreciate. It is anticipated that all activities will be offered as "one-off" offerings such that even if an activity occurs weekly, new people could participate each time. We would welcome a proposal that suggested education and exposure to photography techniques among the activities to be administered. The jail will work with the Successful Proposer to determine criteria and a process for vetting and approving specific activities and related supplies.

49. **What are the limitations to defining "partnerships" under the proposal? What differentiates a "partner" vs a "subcontractor?"**

Beyond collaborating with DHS, ACJC and Beck Institute, partnership is not required to submit a proposal. DHS welcomes collaborative proposals, where two or more organizations partner to submit a proposal. In this case, proposers should work together to determine which partner will be responsible for each component of the proposal. For more details, please review Section 4: "How to Submit a Proposal," subsection 4.2 "Submit a Proposal" for more details on collaborative proposals.

Subcontracting takes place when a Successful Proposer budgets to fund work provided by an organization other than their which may or may not have contributed directly to submitting the Proposal but will contribute to the scope of work proposed. For example, a Successful Proposer may propose to develop and coordinate the implementation of a curriculum-based program and subcontract facilitators from another organization. Successful Proposers are responsible for submitting invoices that reflect actual expenses incurred by any subcontracted partners.

50. **Under the curriculum-based programming, if we wanted to subcontract an individual outside of our organization to deliver services around an element of the curriculum design, such as financial literacy, would they be considered a partner, or a subcontractor under our direction/supervision? Furthermore, how would we label someone we wanted to subcontract to facilitate concurrent programming in the community (such as a group designed for family members of those in ACJ) while we conducted programming inside of ACJ? How would you differentiate these two scenarios?**

Both scenarios would be considered subcontracted services because they are describing services delivered by someone who is not employed directly by the Proposer.

Subcontracting takes place when a Successful Proposer budgets to fund work provided by an organization other than their which may or may not have contributed directly to submitting the Proposal but will contribute to the scope of work proposed. For example, a Successful Proposer may propose to develop and coordinate the implementation of a curriculum-based program and subcontract facilitators from another organization. Successful Proposers are responsible for submitting invoices that reflect actual expenses incurred by any subcontracted partners.

51. To ensure compliance with the specified page numbers when entering responses in the response form, should the pages be single-spaced or double-spaced?

Please use single-space.

52. Can a connection within ACJ supply a letter of support?

No. This can be construed as a conflict of interest, if awarded. Please include your relevant experience(s) collaborating with organizations, including the Jail, if applicable.

53. Should the three references be different from the writer of the LOS?

Yes.

54. Will you please break down the available funding (or anticipated funding) per program?

We have not allocated any funds to specific service areas at this time. We will consider all Proposals received and determine funding per service area that best represents our vision of comprehensive Reentry System. We anticipate that annual budgets will range from $150,000-400,000 per service provided; however, we will consider reasonable and justified budget proposals and negotiate with Successful Proposers to determine a final budget.

55. Will the cohort participating in the CT-R program be the same every day for the entire program period or will we be working with different cohorts each day?

The in-jail CT-R program will operate in a closed group structure meaning that same 15-20 participants who start the program will be expected to participate for the full duration of that program. The community-based CT-R program will operate in an open-group structure meaning that participants may differ session to session.

56. As the Lead Agency and Proposer, how much information needs to be included in the RFP answers about partner agencies? In question 2 of the curriculum-based programming section, is this a question we exclusively answer from the lens of the Proposer, or do we also need to explain the same for our Partners?

Please include enough information so the evaluation committee can clearly understand how the partner agency would support the programming you're proposing. You do not need to answer questions separately for partners. If the Proposal is collaborative, your Proposal should clearly demonstrate how all organizations included will collaborate to provide the services.

57. What does "low-barrier structure" look like?

The ACJC and DHS intend to partner with the Successful Proposer to establish a low-barrier structure for vetting facilitators and preparing them to work within the facility. This structure is not yet determined and will be determined in collaboration with the Successful Proposers.

58. Does the RFP provide for funding outside of the ACJ for curriculum-based programming? We use an inside out model and would like to start programming on the inside and continue the programming on the outside as men and women who are incarcerated are released.

This RFP primarily focuses on establishing programming within the Allegheny County Jail. Depending on the programming you're proposing to provide, there is opportunity to provide programming in the community for individuals who have spent time in the Jail, but it must meet the requirements outlined in each of the respective programming options available to propose for in Section 2 of the RFP.

59. How often will students be able to access the computer lab for curriculum-based programming?

There is no mention of access to a computer lab for students in the RFP.

The Jail will work with Successful Proposers to provide access to cubicle space and computers at the ACJ, though these resources will likely be shared between Successful Proposers and other Reentry System support staff.