



# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:**

## ***Expanded School Mental Health***

**Release Date: December 12, 2018**

**Pre-Proposal Conference: January 4, 2019**

**Proposal Due: February 1, 2019**

**Anticipated Award Notification: March 8, 2019**

**Anticipated Contract Start: July 1, 2019**

### **Issued by:**

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.  
100 South Charles Street, Tower II, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. Overview of the Project</b>	3
A. BHSB'S GOALS & OBJECTIVES	3
B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT	3
C. SCOPE OF SERVICE	4
D. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS	6
E. FUNDING AVAILABILITY	6
F. PROGRAM REPORTING (DELIVERABLES) AND OUTCOMES	6
G. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION	8
<b>II. Overview of RFP</b>	9
A. PURPOSE OF RFP	9
B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY	9
C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS	9
D. AWARD OF CONTRACT	10
E. RFP POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION	11
F. APPLICANT APPEAL RIGHTS	11
<b>III. Format and Content of Proposal</b>	12
A. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS	12
B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA	12

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## *Expanded School Mental Health*

### **I. Overview of the Project**

#### **A. BHSB'S GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit agency established by Baltimore City to manage the City's public behavioral health system. As such, BHSB serves as the local behavioral health authority for Baltimore City. In this role, BHSB envisions a city where people live and thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness.

BHSB is committed to enhancing the behavioral health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities through:

- The promotion of behavioral health and wellness prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery;
- The creation and leadership of an integrated network of providers that promotes universal access to comprehensive, data-driven services; and
- Advocacy and leadership of behavioral health-related efforts to align resources, programs, and policy.

BHSB is committed to promoting behavioral health equity in Baltimore City by ensuring that the behavioral health provider network is culturally and linguistically responsive to the diverse populations served; reducing behavioral health care access barriers for populations known to experience discrimination and marginalization; and supporting communities directly to develop services that are responsive to their unique strengths and needs.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), BHSB is seeking qualified Outpatient Mental Health Centers (OMHCs) to partner with BHSB and Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) to provide a full continuum of mental health services, including prevention, early intervention, and treatment, in selected schools. The services delivered will include collaborative planning with caregivers and BCPS staff to promote optimal well-being and address identified treatment needs.

#### **B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT**

Outpatient Mental Health Centers (OMHCs) will be selected to provide a continuum of mental health services to students enrolled in Baltimore City Public Schools throughout Baltimore City. The continuum of services includes prevention, early identification and intervention, crisis response, and mental health treatment

services. Although the provision of mental health treatment services is included in the scope of service outlined in this RFP, these services must be reimbursed through the fee-for-service Public Behavioral Health System (PBHS). The grant funding made available through this RFP will support the prevention, early identification and intervention, crisis response and other support services outlined in the Scope of Service.

Mental health services provided by selected applicants are meant to promote school readiness, address barriers to learning, enable youth to make better use of educational programs, foster positive interpersonal relationships, and expand upon behavioral health services offered within the structure of Special Education programs. Additionally, active coordination between selected sub-vendor(s) and identified Baltimore City Public Schools is integral to ensuring the success of the program. BHSB works closely with BCPS to ensure a comprehensive array of behavioral health services is available to students in Baltimore City Schools. BHSB will identify sub-vendor organizations to deliver these services, and BCPS will identify the schools to receive these services.

### **C. SCOPE OF SERVICE**

The selected OMHCs will provide a continuum of mental health services with a strong emphasis on behavioral health promotion and prevention services. The selected applicant(s) will be expected to work closely with Baltimore City Public Schools and BHSB staff to ensure the mental health needs of youth enrolled are identified and addressed in a competent manner. They will also actively work to promote positive social competencies and positive learning environments by implementing a comprehensive and integrated model of prevention and direct treatment services.

BHSB will contract with sub-vendors to offer the services outlined on the next page in Baltimore City Public Schools. Sub-vendors are invited to propose which and how many schools they wish to serve. Schools will be limited to those identified by Baltimore City Public Schools, and sub-vendors must be willing to serve at least 10 schools.

Additionally, the coordinated transition of youth from the school setting to summer break is critical in ensuring the health and wellness of youth. The provider organizations selected through this RFP process must ensure that youth make this transition successfully by fostering continuity of necessary treatment services to meet the youth and family's ongoing mental health needs.

## Standards Model for Expanded School Mental Health: Responsibilities of the Licensed Professionals in Baltimore City Public Schools

Each 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is expected to provide or participate in the following services and activities:

<b>Level of Staffing in the Full Time Equivalent (FTE)</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Funding for this staffing level</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>
<b>Total Hours per Week</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>A. School-wide Supportive Activities = 10%</b>	<b>2 hr/wk</b>
A1: Total number of school staff/teacher consultations	50
A2: Total number of school teams/committee meetings	4
A3: Total number of in-service presentations for school staff	2
A4: Attendance at school functions	
A5: School-wide crisis response	
A6: Participation in school-wide behavior management	
<b>B. Treatment Services = 65%</b>	<b>12 hr/wk</b>
Average number of students engaged in treatment services per	10/wk
B1: Screening/assessment/evaluation/treatment planning activities	
B2: Treatment services	
B3: Crisis response steps	
B4: Family contacts	
B5: Teacher consultations	
B6: Clinical documentation activities	
B7: Reimbursement activities (billing fee-for-service)	
<b>C. Group Prevention Activities = 20%</b>	<b>5 hr/wk</b>
Average number of Group Prevention Activities/Groups provided for	25
C1: Small student group prevention activities	
C2: Classroom wide prevention activities	
C3: School-wide prevention activities/assemblies	
C4: Parent/family focused group prevention activities	
C5: Documentation/Record of group prevention activities	
<b>D. Professional Development Activities = 5%</b>	<b>1 hr/wk</b>
• BHS Baltimore and other educational activities	
• Agency meetings and trainings	
• Supervision activities	

All students referred for services should be screened regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. For students accessing treatment services, if students have insurance types that selected applicants cannot access for reimbursement, they should be referred to appropriate treatment services within their insurer's network. For uninsured students accessing treatment, grant funding may be utilized.

## **D. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS**

Employing qualified, highly trained staff is a critical component of the ESMH program. All mental health professionals hired for this program must be licensed in the state of Maryland to practice independently or have the required supervision in place to practice within their scope. Additionally, it is expected licensed mental health professionals will have relevant experience and knowledge of the population of focus to be served. Professionals should have knowledge of treatment strategies in the areas of youth behavior management and family crisis intervention, the ability to effectively work with families in a supportive manner throughout the diagnostic and referral processes, and the ability to provide mental health treatment for youth and their families.

Applicants selected through this RFP will be expected to have robust staff training plans that address the above noted professional competencies as well as plans to provide adequate supervision to staff; particularly for staff who spend most of their time offsite/in the field. Additionally, consistency in staffing has been shown to be an important factor in positive youth outcomes in this program. Therefore, it is important that the selected applicant(s) be mindful of staff retention rates to minimize the disruption that staff turnover can create. BHSB understands that a certain amount of staff turnover is normal. It will be expected that selected OMHC(s) monitor this and ensure adequate coverage plans, in the event of transition, to maintain the availability and quality of school-based services. The preferred turnover threshold for selected ECMH programs is no more than 15% in a Fiscal Year.

Additionally, criminal background checks for all staff members who will provide school-based services must be completed prior to implementation of services, the completion of an annual Maryland Department of Human Services Child Protective Services (CPS) background checks for all staff members who will provide school-based services is also required.

The required staffing level for each school site is 0.5 FTE.

Sub-vendor Organizations will maintain regular contact with providers treating substance use disorder in Baltimore City Schools and the community providers to coordinate care.

## **E. FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

This procurement is facilitated jointly with Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS). Funding for the Expanded School Mental Health Program has, historically, been blended with primary contributions from BCPS and BHSB. This blended funding totals approximately 2.2 million dollars and is intended to serve up to 120

Baltimore City schools with either 0.5 or 1 FTE clinicians (\$16,000 per 0.5 FTE). Proposals to serve more than one school are allowed, with a minimum requirement of ten noted schools per proposal. School assignments will take into consideration the preferred schools noted in selected proposals. However, final assignments will be made based on need as identified by BCPS. It is the intention of BHSB and BCPS to assign schools based on “clusters” of no less than ten schools to maximize sub-vendor integration into local community systems and coordinate responses to community-based crisis events.

The total funding available via BHSB through this procurement is \$720,000 which will may be awarded to multiple provider organizations through this RFP process. Contract funding of \$16,000 per 0.5 FTE is available. This amount includes salary, fringe, supervision, and indirect costs, which cannot exceed 10% of salary and fringe. Line item budgets should detail these expenses separately, and proposed grant award amounts cannot exceed these limits per FTE clinician. Additional costs are expected to be offset by fee-for-service public behavioral health system revenue.

Contract funding made available through this RFP will support the non-clinical components of this program (e.g., prevention). The selected sub-vendors must access third party reimbursement, particularly Medicaid reimbursement, to support the required provision of treatment services. It is anticipated that 65% of services will focus on activities eligible for fee-for-service insurance reimbursement. This array of funding sources provides stability and support for these services.

All revenue sources, including fee for service, should be reflected in both the budget and budget narrative sections of the submitted proposal.

## **F. PROGRAM REPORTING (DELIVERABLES) AND OUTCOMES**

BHSB is dedicated to enhancing outcomes reporting system-wide in order to evaluate the quality of public behavioral health services in Baltimore City. Overall, individuals receiving behavioral health services are expected to improve over time, and programs should be able to demonstrate expected outcomes via program deliverables.

The selected applicant(s) will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and expertise in the areas of prevention and mental health treatment for youth, a willingness to implement innovative approaches to working with youth, families, and school staff, and submit accurate data to involved stakeholders. As such, the selected sub-vendor organization(s) will be required to submit regular program and financial reports to BHSB using an online Contract Management System (CMS) during the entirety of the approved contract term. BHSB requires quarterly program reporting

on key deliverables as well as monthly data entry of person-level data during the entirety of the approved service term via a web-based program.

## **G. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

BHSB will engage in monitoring activities to evaluate the quality of various aspects of services delivery. Some of these activities include: a) Site visits to observe, evaluate, and document various administrative and programmatic requirements, b) Review of data reports to evaluate programmatic outcomes, c) Review of financial reports to evaluate financial outcomes, and d) Review of general administrative compliance documents. The selected applicant will be required to participate in all relevant monitoring and evaluation activities.

In some instances, BHSB sets requirements above and beyond Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) in order to meet the needs of youth in City Schools. These additional requirements will be monitored and evaluated throughout the term of the agreement.

If, during monitoring activities, it is discovered that a sub-vendor is not fulfilling the obligations stated in the contract resulting from this RFP, a Program Improvement Plan may be required, with additional follow-up monitoring to ensure requirements are being met. If the Program Improvement Plan is not adequately resolved, BHSB may terminate the contract as outlined in the contract.



## II. Overview of RFP

### A. PURPOSE OF RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to select qualified Outpatient Mental Health Centers (OMHCs) to provide a full continuum of mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment, crisis response and treatment services in selected schools throughout Baltimore City. The services delivered will include collaborative planning with youth, caregivers, and BCPS staff to promote optimal engagement of youth and address identified needs.

### B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet all of the criteria outlined below to be considered eligible to be selected through this RFP process:

- Licensure as an Outpatient Mental Health Center (OMHC) for a minimum of two years as of December 31, 2018, not including time as a provisional provider, with the ability to access reimbursement through Beacon Health Options. *Please note that significant deficiencies on Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) or Behavioral Health System Baltimore Site Visit Reports may disqualify proposals from consideration.*
- Ability to achieve accreditation in Maryland as an OMHC by July 1, 2019, if not already accredited.

Preference will be given to Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) or Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) per BHSB's Procurement Policy.

### C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

#### 1. Timeline

Release Date:	December 12, 2018
Pre-Proposal Conference:	January 4, 2019
Proposal Due:	February 1, 2019
Anticipated Award Notification:	March 8, 2019
Anticipated Contract Start:	July 1, 2019

#### 2. Pre-Proposal Conference

**Date:** 01/04/19

**Time:** 02:30 pm

**Location:** Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
100 S. Charles St., Tower II, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Attendance by applicants is **strongly recommended**. Applicants who will not be attending the pre-proposal conference may submit questions by email to Keisha Tatum by the close of business on **January 3, 2019**.

Questions posed prior to or during the pre-proposal conference and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at [www.bhsbaltimore.org](http://www.bhsbaltimore.org) by **January 11, 2019**. Additionally, the questions and answers will be emailed to all individuals who either attended the pre-proposal conference or submitted questions. Questions received after the conference will not be considered or responded to.

### **3. Proposal Due Date, Time, and Location**

Proposals must be submitted electronically via email to [Keisha.Tatum@BHSBaltimore.org](mailto:Keisha.Tatum@BHSBaltimore.org) by attaching one or more PDF files. Because some email systems prohibit sending or receiving large files, applicants may need to split files into multiple emails. It is recommended that a separate email be sent with no attachments to request confirmation that the proposal was received.

All proposals must be received no later than **3:00 pm EST on February 1, 2019**. All submitted proposals become the property of BHSB. Proposals submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered.

### **4. Authorized Contact**

Applicants are advised that the authorized contact person for all matters concerning this RFP is Keisha Tatum, whose contact information is listed below.

Keisha Tatum, Director of Contracting Operations  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
100 South Charles Street, Tower II, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Email: [Keisha.Tatum@BHSBaltimore.org](mailto:Keisha.Tatum@BHSBaltimore.org)  
Phone: 410-637-1900 Ext. 8530

**4. Anticipated Service Term:** July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, with options to renew annually for two years pending availability of funding and performance.

### **D. AWARD OF CONTRACT**

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee an award. BHSB is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP. BHSB reserves the right to withdraw an award prior to execution of a contract with a selected applicant in BHSB's sole and absolute discretion.

BHSB will select the most qualified and responsive applicants through this RFP process. BHSB will enter into a contract with selected applicants following the notification of award. All selected applicants must comply with all terms and conditions applicable to contracts executed by BHSB.

#### **E. RFP POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION**

BHSB reserves the right to postpone or cancel this RFP, in whole or in part.

#### **F. APPLICANT APPEAL RIGHTS**

Applicants may file an appeal to the Director of Contracting Operations within five days of notification of non-award. The Director of Contracting Operations will review the appeal, examine any additional information provided by the protesting party, and respond to the protestor within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

### **III. Format and Content of Proposal**

#### **A. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Applicants should submit all required information in the format specified in these instructions by the due date. The proposal narrative should be submitted using the outline provided in the next section, and should not exceed 10 typed, single-spaced pages using Times New Roman 12-point font. The cover letter and appendices do not count toward the page limit.

The final proposal package shall include:

- A proposal cover letter signed and dated by an authorized representative of the applicant organization. The cover letter must include the full legal name of the applicant organization, address, and the designated contact person and their contact information.
- A full proposal with all appendices.

Late proposals will not be considered.

#### **B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA**

The proposal should be a clear, concise narrative that describes the applicant's responses to the prompts outlined below. This narrative outline will also be used as the rating criteria, and the number of points allocated to each section is also noted.

##### **1. Organizational Background and Capacity (15 points)**

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including when it became licensed as an OMHC and when it received or expects to receive accreditation. Attach as an appendix its OMHC license, accreditation certificate, and most recent OHCQ Site Visit Report, including statement of deficiencies.
- b. Describe your organization's history and experience delivering mental health services to youth and their families.
- c. Describe your organization's history forming partnerships with other youth-serving and community-based organizations. Attach two letters of support that demonstrate this type of partnership in the appendix.
- d. Attach as an appendix your organization's State of Maryland certification as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), if applicable.

##### **2. Principles and Values (10 points)**

- a. Describe your understanding of "social determinants of health" and what it means for your organization's work in school settings. How will your organization address the impact of "social determinants of health" in this program?

- b. Describe how your organization's current practices ensure services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically competent manner, responsive to the diverse communities served, including individuals for whom English is a second language.

### **3. Service Delivery (30 points)**

- a. Describe your organization's plan to provide all services as outlined in the Scope of Service section of this RFP. Include a list of the schools in which your organization would like to, or be willing to, provide services. (minimum of 10 schools).
- b. Describe your organization's ability to successfully implement evidence-based practices and how you will use these interventions within the school-based program and maintain fidelity to the model.
- c. Describe your organization's plan to implement person/family-centered services and treatment planning, to include support of behavioral health needs (mental health/substance use disorder treatment), medical needs and other identified areas of needed support to ensure overall youth and family wellbeing.
- d. Describe how your organization will collaborate with BCPS teachers and other school staff to identify and engage individuals in need of services and ensure that all individuals referred will, with consent be linked to and/or receive needed services.
- e. Describe your organization's current policies for handling after-hour crises for individuals enrolled in treatment services and how you would propose handling after-hour crises for this program.
- f. Describe other behavioral health services your organization provides and what structure/process you will use to avoid conflicts of interest and inappropriate self-referral.

### **4. Staffing Plan (15 points)**

- a. Describe your proposed staffing pattern, including supervisor(s), to implement this project. Include an organizational chart that shows how this program will fit into your organization's overall structure.
- b. Describe your plan to ensure adequate support and clinical supervision for staff, particularly those staff who work independently and off site, including the model you intend to use and how it will ensure quality service delivery.
- c. Describe a proposed training plan for staff assigned to this program and indicate any relevant expertise, training, and/or skills staff already possess.

### **5. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (15 points)**

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served, including youth and families, and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, and improvement of program services.

- b. Describe your organization's practices to retain staff and provide the turnover rate of licensed mental health professionals in your organization over the past two years.
- c. Describe any previous experience your organization has implementing projects similar to this one, including any projects for which your organization has received BHSB grant funds. Were you able to meet all of the programmatic and financial deliverables and reporting requirements? If there were any quality concerns, how were they addressed?

**6. Proposed Budget (10 points)**

- a. Attach as an appendix a line item budget that includes anticipated revenue from both grant funding and fee-for-service reimbursement and all expenses.
- b. Provide a budget narrative that explains revenue and expense projections and justifies expenses.

**7. Implementation Timeline (5 points)**

- a. Provide a timeline for hiring, recruiting, and training for all staff responsible for the services outlined in this RFP. Contracts are expected to start on July 1, 2019 with school starting in late August.

**8. Appendices (0 points, scored elsewhere)**

- a. All relevant licenses and/or certifications (required)
- b. Accreditation certificate (required, if applicable)
- c. Most recent OHCQ Site Visit Report, including Statement of Deficiencies (required)
- d. MBE or DBE certificate, if applicable
- e. Two letters of support documenting successful community partnerships
- f. Organizational Chart
- g. List of schools most interested in serving
- h. Line-Item Budget (required)
- i. Most recent Financial Audit and Management Letter (required, if applicable)
- j. Most recent IRS Form 990: Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes (required, if applicable)