



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): *Wellness and Recovery Centers*

Pre-Proposal Conference Held: December 5, 2019 | 10:00-11:00AM
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
100 South Charles Street, Tower II, Floor 8
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

BHSB Facilitators:

Jennifer Glassman, Procurement Lead
Tamara Anderson, Associate Director, Recovery Supports Services
Tyrone Fleming, Associate Director, Quality
Shanna Borell, Special Projects Manager

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Posted: December 12, 2019

Jennifer Glassman welcomed the group, and attendees introduced themselves by sharing their names and organizations.

She provided an overview of BHSB and its procurement process:

- BHSB is the local behavioral health authority for Baltimore City and oversees the network of behavioral health providers. Open and competitive procurements are an important part of how we build an effective and responsive system of care.
- BHSB attempts to ensure its procurements are fair and confidential. Proposals are reviewed and scored by mostly external reviewers who sign confidentiality and conflict of interest statements prior to participating. The review committee makes a recommendation to BHSB, who makes the final selection.
- Applicants were encouraged to use the Proposal Narrative Outline section of the RFP to structure their proposals and to answer the questions clearly and comprehensively so that proposal reviewers can award as many points as possible. Reviewers rate proposals and make their recommendations based only on what is included in the proposal.

Organizations selected through this procurement process will enter into a contract with BHSB. The below information is provided so potential applicants know what to expect with that process.

- Selected applicants will receive a Letter of Award that outlines the details of the contract, funding award amount, and instructions to complete the contracting process.
- Selected applicants will be directed to submit a new budget on BHSB's budget form, which is available for review on BHSB's website.



- Once the budget is reviewed and approved, BHSB will send the full contract for execution. BHSB uses an electronic signature process. Contracts can only be signed by the organization's official signatory.
- BHSB uses an online Contract Management System (CMS), which the selected applicants will use to submit programmatic and financial reports throughout the contract term. Selected applicants will receive training and technical assistance on how to use this system.

Tyrone Fleming provided an overview of how BHSB verifies service delivery and other contract requirements:

- All organizations with contracts with BHSB are required to participate in service verification activities, including site visits.
- Organizations are also required to submit Critical Incident and Sentinel Event Reports, per BHSB's policy, which is available for review on BHSB's website.

Tamara Anderson provided a brief overview of the project:

- She shared that this is the first time BHSB is competitively procuring this portfolio. A listening session with existing Wellness & Recovery Centers and Recovery Community Centers (RCCs) was held as part of the planning process, and BHSB worked closely with the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) to ensure the procurement was in line with statewide peer support efforts.
- In FY 20 BHSB provided a supplement to RCCs to pilot direct partnership designed to facilitate peer services in criminal justice settings. In FY 21, to support the sustainability of this pilot, the review committee will select at least one WRC applicant that plans to continue these services which include: receiving referrals for peer services from criminal justice partners, providing scheduled on-site peer services at criminal justice locations, and working w/ BHSB and criminal justice stakeholders to expand access to peer services for persons in the criminal justice system.

Questions and Answers

How many hours per week are centers expected to be operating and what days and hours are expected?

Per page 5 of the RFP, selected Wellness & Recovery Centers (WRCs) are expected to be open most business hours with some additional non-traditional hours (i.e., early mornings, evenings, and weekends).

According to the FY 20 data, minimum monthly targets for WRCs include 80 weekday traditional hours, 40 weekday non-traditional hours (i.e. early mornings, evenings, and weekends), and 20 weekend hours. Please keep in mind hours could change for FY 21 based on BHA requirements.



On page 8 of the RFP, the annualized number of operating hours expected is outlined in the table. The required hours of operations are proportional to the funding awarded and numbers of people expected to be served.

Can grant funds be used to purchase vehicle to facilitate consumer engagement?

The Behavioral Health Administration has not historically approved vehicles as an allowable expense for these grant funds.

For this project, does BHSB expect awardees to keep separate budgets? Will grantees be expected to submit separate financial reports?

If applicants are requesting funding for both mental health and substance use disorder services, then two separate budgets must be developed, submitted with the proposal, and reported separately throughout the contract period. If applicants are requesting funding for just one service type (either mental health or substance use disorder services), then one budget must be submitted.

Applicants are encouraged to read the Funding Availability section of the RFP that starts on page 12 very carefully and do their best in developing these budgets. Applicants may use BHSB's budget forms (available on the website here: <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/forms-for-providers/#budget-forms>), but you are not required to use this budget form for your proposal submission. You may use any budget format your organization prefers at this point. Selected applicants will be required to use BHSB's budget forms and will be offered technical assistance to finalize their budgets and submit grant reports.

The MDH Human Services Agreements Manual, which is referenced in the RFP and outlines all allowable costs, can be located here: https://health.maryland.gov/docs/HSAM_093005.pdf

How should we divide staff salaries between the two budgets? Do we need to specify the numbers of hours they are working on each project?

Staff positions can be split between the two budgets and the staffing level and number of hours worked should be specified on each budget. Describe in your budget narrative how you made the decisions about how to split salaries.

If you're applying for both funding sources, do you need two full-time program managers, or could you have one program manager to cover both types of services?



If applying for both funding sources, each contract will need to meet the Required Staffing listed in the RFP: Program Manager (1.0 FTE). For each project the required Program Manager must be shown on each budget submitted as indicated in the RFP.

Will we have to report our numbers of people served separately as well? Many people have co-occurring disorders, so they could be counted on each grant.

Each grant has its own requirements, so separate performance measures and deliverables will be required for each grant and reported separately. However, some measures (e.g. attendance) may be “combined”, “i.e. tracked and reported for the WRC as a whole. For these measures, the same total (same number) would be submitted on two separate reports. For example, if a person with co-occurring disorders comes to the center on one day, that one person can count on each grant for attendance. However, if that same person attends a group that is specific to substance use disorder (SUD) services, then that would only be counted on the SUD grant.

Can grant funds be used to purchase housing and meals on a limited basis?

The Scope of Service section of the RFP that starts on page 5 states that the primary service provided through these funds is meant to be peer support. However, ancillary services, including meals, can be provided with the explicit goal of maximizing participant engagement in peer support services. These grant funds cannot be used for the purchase and assistance of housing or housing related needs.

The Staffing Requirements (starting on page 11 of the RFP) outline four required positions. Are additional positions allowed or are we limited to these?

Yes, additional positions are allowed. You can develop staffing that supports the needs of your program, but it must include at least the four positions. Also note that except for a full-time program manager, multiple part-time staff can fill the positions as long as their working hours are equivalent to a full-time position (e.g., two staff each working 20 hours per week).

Does BHSB anticipate funding more than one award? How many do you expect to make?

Per the RFP on page 12, the current funding awards support five organizations with six centers. BHSB does not have the final funding amounts for next year yet, but we anticipate it being at a similar level. The goal is to either maintain or increase the city’s capacity to provide these peer support services, so the intent is to make multiple awards. The number of awards will



depend on how many qualified proposals are submitted, the amounts of funding they request, and how far the award will go.

If we want to submit a proposal for both funding sources, should we submit two proposals or one proposal with two budgets.

Submit one proposal with two budgets.

We work with peer staff who are unlikely to qualify to become Certified Peer Specialists due to continued drug use. Is that requirement a hard rule for programs who want to work with people who are still actively using drugs?

As a requirement from the funder, staff must meet the requirements in the required staffing pattern outlined in the RFP. At least one staff member must be a certified peer and a registered peer supervisor.

We use an electronic data system to track data; is that something we can use to report to BHSB? What are the specific data collection requirements for each of the funding sources?

Yes, we are willing to work with selected applicants on the data reporting requirements. All selected applicants will still have to submit reports through BHSB's Contract Management System so we have centralized records of deliverables and other key data points, but the broader data reporting can be worked through with individual organizations.

There are separate reporting requirements for each funding source, but there is a lot of overlap between the two. An overview of the types of data collected currently is available starting at the bottom of page 13 of the RFP. Below is a list of potential reporting requirement categories:

- Tracking of required staff on budget/ vacancies
- Operating Hours
- Total Persons Served (unduplicated/duplicated)
- Direct Services provided (items listed from the RFP)
- Referrals Made
- Community Engagements
- Outcomes
- Staff and program Development
- RCC-CJ Peer reporting:
 - CJ persons served
 - CJ outcomes (intakes completed, job placement)
 - CJ Referral Encounter Type
- AS019- Quarterly Reporting due to BHA:
 - # of Certified/Non-Certified Peers



- #of Recovery Support Service Referrals Made i.e. education, employment etc
- MH327 -Quarterly Reporting due to BHA:
 - This reported information closely mirrors performance measures within the WRC Excel-based data tracking tool

On page 7, the Groups and Mutual Support section states that the center is required to maintain peer staff who are trained/certified to lead peer groups and lists several examples. Some of the examples listed such as Intentional Peer Support is very expensive to receive certification as a trainer. Are we required to have certified trainers on staff or just offer those trainings? Is that something that can be added to the budget?

The examples listed on page 7 in section 3.b. are meant to provide some examples of the types of peer groups that BHSB thinks could be beneficial in WRCs, but applicants are not required to have staff certified to provide all of those things. The goal is to provide innovative and creative services, so this is an opportunity to approach things differently and see what happens.

Additionally, applicants are allowed to include training and certification costs in budgets.

BHSB also has a Consumer Inclusion Coordinator on staff whose responsibility is to help coordinate these kinds of trainings, so she can be available to help figure out how to bring some of these services to centers.

Will we be penalized if participants do not complete trainings that are several weeks long?

No, centers will not be penalized for this. BHSB understands that it can be difficult for some participants to commit to lengthy trainings. We hope that centers will provide supportive environments that make it as easy as possible for participants to remain engaged, but centers will not be penalized if they don't.

And from a verification standpoint, BHSB will be more concerned about making sure the groups actually happened than who participated in each one.

Can new start-up centers apply for this funding? Can funding be used for building improvements or construction costs?

Yes, new centers can apply, but funding has not historically been approved for building improvements or construction costs. The majority of funds should directly support the delivery of peer support services.



Are private organizations eligible to apply or is it only for non-profits?

There are no specific eligibility requirements related to the type of organization. Non-profits and private companies are both eligible.

Is this a cost-reimbursement contract?

For this program BHSB will be contracting with providers with an Advanced Basis Cost Reimbursement contract where the sub-vendor receives funds in advance of incurring and reporting costs.

Is there a funding match requirement?

No, there is not a match requirement, but it is helpful to leverage the funding with additional funding sources.

Can we include indirect, administrative oversight, etc. in our budgets?

These two BHA grants allow for Indirect Costs capped at 10% of the total of salaries and fringe. Administrative oversight, if not already part of the indirect costs, would need to be budgeted as direct. All costs need to be clear and justifiable.

Is this funding for Baltimore City only, or can a nonprofit from another county apply?

Only centers physically located in Baltimore City are eligible for this funding. If an organization's headquarters is located outside of Baltimore City, but they have a center located in the city, that would be allowed.

End of Questions and Answers