



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Good Samaritan Law Communications Campaign

Release Date: October 13, 2021

Pre-Proposal Conference: November 4, 2021 at 11 am

Proposal Due: November 17, 2021 by 12 pm

Anticipated Award Notification: January 10, 2022

Issued by:

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.
100 South Charles Street, Tower II, 8th Floor
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Good Samaritan Law Communications Campaign

I. Overview of the Project

A. OVERVIEW OF BHSB

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit organization tasked 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.

B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), BHSB is seeking a qualified communications firm to support the development and implementation of a communications campaign to raise awareness about Maryland's Good Samaritan Law¹. In 2020, 2,799 individuals lost their lives to overdose in Maryland, and more than half of them lived in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, or Anne Arundel County. Additionally, many people do not call 911 for help in the event of an overdose for fear of being arrested. Maryland's Good Samaritan Law protects people from arrest.

¹ <https://health.maryland.gov/qahealth/substance-abuse/Pages/Good-Samaritan-Law.aspx>

Part of BHSB’s strategy to reduce the impact of overdose fatalities in our communities is implementing a harm reduction approach² to engaging people who use drugs. The purpose of this campaign is to raise awareness about Maryland’s Good Samaritan Law among people who use drugs and their friends, family, and loved ones. The campaign should empower people who use drugs and those around them to better understand their rights under this law, so they can call 911 for help in the event of an overdose. The goal is to increase trust in emergency services leading to an increase in the number of calls to 911 for overdoses.

BHSB prefers to select one vendor for this project; however, applicants may partner with other firms to develop their proposals if they are unable to meet all the requirements in this RFP on their own. In this case, one firm should be identified as the lead that will sub-contract with other firms. Be as clear in possible which firm will be completing which parts of the Scope of Service. If none of the proposals meet all the requirements for this project, BHSB may select more than one firm.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE

The selected communications firm will complete the following:

Market research

- Use qualitative and/or quantitative methods to research awareness and perception of the Good Samaritan Law and what barriers exist for calling 911 in the event of an overdose.
- Use qualitative and/or quantitative methods to determine the most powerful and effective messages to:
 - Increase awareness and understanding the Good Samaritan Law among people who use drugs.
 - Support behavior change to encourage people to call 911 in the event of an overdose.
- Conduct at least one focus group with the target population.
- Determine which media sources (e.g., television, radio, direct mail, streaming, digital, social media and/or influencers, etc.) are most effective for communicating these messages to the target audience.
- Compile all market research into a report with recommendations for implementation.

Campaign development and implementation

- Develop a campaign theme, brand, and simple, concise messaging.

² <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

- Develop a campaign strategy to reach the target population (people who use drugs) based on the findings from the market research.
- Develop a process for collaborating with and getting input from people with lived experience with drug use.
- Design all campaign materials for the identified media sources.
- Manage purchasing of all paid advertising including media buys and transit ads.
- Work with BHSB and our partners to develop a strategy for dissemination of campaign materials.

Deliverables include:

- Facilitate at least one focus group with the target population to inform market research
- Submit final market research / message testing report by March 15, 2022
- Develop an End of Campaign report within 30 days of the campaign end date with information about campaign reach and other impact metrics
- Manage all advertising purchasing including, but not limited to, printed materials, transit ads and digital ads. All purchases must be made by June 30, 2022.

D. FOCUS POPULATION

The target audience for this campaign will be people who use drugs in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County.

E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

There are no staffing requirements for this project.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

There is a total of \$121,800 for the research, development, and implementation of this media campaign. All funds must be expended by June 30, 2022, the end of BHSB's fiscal year.

There may be opportunities for additional funding to further the campaign into fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), pending the availability of additional funding and vendor performance.

G. CONTRACTING WITH BHSB

Applicants selected through this process will enter into a contractual agreement with BHSB. Following a notification of selection, BHSB will issue a Letter of Award that provides details about the contract and the process for executing it. Selected

organizations will be required to submit a new budget on BHSB's budget form, which will be reviewed for allowable costs under the grant.

Please note that applicants may be asked to change their budgets and/or details of their proposals even if the proposal were selected for funding. Applicants new to BHSB's contract process are encouraged to review relevant forms available on our website here: <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/forms-for-providers>.

Contract Type and Payment

The contract and payment type that will result from this procurement is described below. Applicants are encouraged to consider whether their organization will be able to operate with this payment mechanism before applying for these funds.

- Consultant
 - Issued to a person or entity engaged in independent work as outlined in the contract. The total cost of the contract is based on a calculation that includes an hourly consultant rate and the estimated number of hours it will take to complete the scope of work.
 - Consultants can include other expenses in their budget, such as stipends for focus group participation. All other expenses must be documented by submitting receipts with the invoice.
 - Payment is based on the costs reported for a specific period (e.g., hourly rate x # of hours worked that month).

BHSB issues payments once per month. Applicants should note that submitting required documents and reports late can result in delayed payment.

Contract Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Selected applicants will be required to submit regular Program and Financial reports to BHSB using an electronic contract management system. BHSB will review these reports to monitor progress and contract compliance throughout the contract term.

Program Reports include an update on progress toward deliverables (e.g., number of people served, number of services delivered, etc.). Some program reports may also require organizations to attach a data report with additional information (e.g., consumer demographic information, process and/or outcomes data, etc.). BHSB monitors progress on these reports throughout the contract term and may offer technical assistance and support if deliverables are not being met.

Financial Reports are required to generate payment and involve submitting actual expenditures or invoices (depending on the contract type) and to monitor spending compared to the budget or award amount. If organizations are spending more or less than expected awarded throughout the contract term, BHSB may offer

technical assistance and support to ensure the funding covers the contract term fully and may reduce funding if all funds are not likely to be expended by the end of the contract term.

Please note that submitting Program or Financial Reports late can result in delayed payment.

Verification of Services

BHSB audits all contracts to review whether the requirements set forth in the contract were completed as reported and that relevant federal, state, and local regulations were followed. This generally occurs after the conclusion of the contract period. Audits may be conducted remotely through a review of documents submitted to BHSB or on-site at the organization's location.

Applicants should be aware of best practices in documenting both programmatic and financial activities to aid in an efficient audit.

II. Overview of RFP

A. PURPOSE OF RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to select a qualified communications firm to support the development and implementation of a communications campaign to raise awareness about Maryland’s Good Samaritan Law among drug users and their friends, family, and loved ones.

B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

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

- Experience with at least three behavioral health awareness and/or public health behavior change campaigns

C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Timeline

Release Date:	October 13, 2021
Pre-Proposal Conference:	November 4, 2021 at 11 am
Proposal Due:	November 17, 2021 by 12 pm
Anticipated Award Notification:	January 10, 2022

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: November 4, 2021

Time: 11:00 am

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting - Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only): 443-819-0973

Phone Conference ID: 860 592 454#

Please join five minutes early to leave time to troubleshoot. If you have any problems accessing the meeting, please contact Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend this meeting and submit questions in advance to Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org no later than the close of business on **Tuesday, November 2, 2021**. There may be time at the end of the meeting to ask additional questions, depending on the number of questions submitted.

Questions posed prior to and during the Pre-Proposal Conference and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/funding-opportunities/> by **Wednesday, November 10, 2021.**

The questions and answers will also be emailed to all individuals who submitted questions. If you would like to be emailed this document but do not have a question, please let the Procurement Lead know by emailing Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Questions received after this conference cannot be answered.

3. Proposal Due Date, Time, and Location

BHSB uses Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) to manage applications. All proposals must be submitted through this system. Applicants must register with the system ahead of time and submit narrative and supporting documents directly through the system. You are able to save your application and continue working on it before submitting it. BHSB encourages all applicants to test this system well in advance of submitting proposals.

Applicants can access SM Apply here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>

All proposals must be received no later than **12:00 pm (noon) EST on November 17, 2021.** All submitted proposals become the property of BHSB. If you are having technical troubles related to submitting your proposal, contact BHSB before the due date/time at Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

Proposals submitted after the due date/time cannot be considered.

4. Authorized Contact

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

Shanna Borell, Procurement Lead
Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

5. Anticipated Service Term: January 2021 – June 30, 2022, with an opportunity to renew the contract pending availability of funding and vendor 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 within five days of notification of non-selection. BHSB 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 must submit all required information using Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) accessible here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>.

Late proposals will not be considered.

It is the policy of BHSB to adhere to the rules and regulations in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). We do not anticipate that any proposal submitted in response to this RFP would include individually identifiable health information. However, if it does, please remember that protected health information (PHI) needs to be secured via encryption and should adhere to the Guide to IT Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information:

<https://www.healthit.gov/topic/privacy-security-and-hipaa/health-it-privacy-and-security-resources-providers>.

B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA

The outline below shows the information being requested for applications and how points will be awarded during the review. Use SM Apply to submit your responses. See the instructions for more information about how to submit proposals.

1. Organizational Background and Capacity (15 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including its history, mission, and overall purpose.
- b. Describe your organization's experience implementing campaigns similar to this project, meeting contractual deliverables and obligations (including any contracts with BHSB), and your capacity to manage the project and financial requirements of this grant.
- c. Describe whether your organization is owned and/or led by members of historically marginalized or oppressed groups, including racial and ethnic groups (i.e., African American/Black, Latinx), LGBTQIA communities, people with disabilities including behavioral health disorders, etc. BHSB awards additional points to help address systemic barriers that have led to inequity in access to funding.

2. Principles and Values (15 points)

- a. Describe your organization's commitment to racial and social justice and health equity. Include specific examples of what your organization does to illustrate this commitment.
- b. Describe how you will integrate principles of equity and antiracism into this work, and specifically describe how you apply these principles with market research.

- c. This project seeks to empower people with lived experience with drug use to advocate for their rights and change their behavior to increase calls to 911 in the event of an overdose. Describe how your organization will involve people with lived experience with drug use in the planning and implementation of your proposed activities.

3. Service Delivery (15 points)

- a. Describe your organization's plan to provide all services as outlined in the Scope of Service section of this RFP.
- b. Describe your organization's past experience implementing behavioral health awareness and/or health behavior change campaigns. Attach three examples of these campaigns.
- c. Describe an example of a public health or other related campaign you implemented that did not initially achieve the behavioral change you were hoping, what you learned, and how you adjusted the campaign accordingly.

4. Staffing Plan (5 points)

- a. Describe your plan to ensure adequate staff support to perform the Scope of Service and Deliverables for this project. If you plan to use sub-contractors, clearly delineate roles and responsibilities.

5. Effectively Serving the Focus Population (5 points)

- a. Describe your organization's history and expertise in developing behavioral health campaigns for target population of this RFP.

6. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (5 points)

- a. Describe what data you propose using to inform the planning process and how you will collect, analyze, and present data.

7. Proposed Program Budget (10 points)

- a. Attach a line-item budget for the activities identified in the scope of work.
- b. Provide a budget narrative/justification that explains the line items in more detail.

8. Implementation Timeline (5 points)

- a. Provide a detailed timeline for implementation that includes all of the activities that you have committed to perform in your proposal. Show an outline of all the steps necessary to fully operationalize this project and by when each step would be completed. Contracts are expected to start in January 2022.

9. Appendices

- o Resume or curriculum vitae for the lead individuals/consultants working on this project

- Line-Item Budget
- Most recent Financial Audit and Management Letter, if applicable or other documentation about your organization's financial strength
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation