



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Expanded School Behavioral Health: Early Childhood Mental Health Services

Release Date: January 12, 2022

Pre-Proposal Conference: January 27, 2022 at 10:30 am

Proposal Due: February 18, 2022 by 12 pm

Anticipated Award Notification: April 8, 2022

Anticipated Contract Start: July 1 2022

Issued by:

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

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Expanded School Behavioral Health: Early Childhood Mental Health Services

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 qualified organizations to implement evidence-based practices and collaborative planning with caregivers and Head Start staff to promote optimal development and address behavioral difficulties.

Currently, six Head Start programs at 53 sites host mental health service providers throughout Baltimore City. This RFP will identify an Outpatient Mental Health Center (OMHC) to provide services for these sites. Through this RFP, a qualified OMHC will

be selected to provide a continuum of services, including prevention, early identification and intervention, crisis, and 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 component of services outlined.

Finally, the transition from Head Start to primary school settings is critical to ensuring the academic and developmental success of children. The provider organization selected through this RFP process will ensure that children make this transition successfully by fostering continuity of necessary treatment services and meeting the youth and families' mental health needs.

The selected applicants are expected to demonstrate knowledge and expertise in social-emotional learning for young children, familiarity with the Devereux Early Child Assessment (DECA) and the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment-Clinical (DECA-C), a willingness to implement innovative approaches to working with young children, families, and Early Childhood educators, and a data-driven approach. BHSB will require at least quarterly program reporting on contract deliverables and monthly data entry of client-level data.

BHSB will carry out monitoring activities which may include a) site visits to evaluate and document administrative and programmatic requirements including, but not limited to, evidence in clinical records of a variety of referral sources or evidence of formal relationships with organizations for referral and linkage to care; b) review of data reports to evaluate programmatic outcomes; and c) review of general administrative compliance documents.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE

The selected Outpatient Mental Health Center will provide comprehensive mental health services for children in Head Start Programs as outlined in this Scope of Service. The selected applicant will be expected to work closely with Head Start and BHSB staff to ensure that the mental health needs of children enrolled in Head Start Programs are identified and addressed in a competent and prompt manner. BHSB will contract with a provider organization to offer the following services in Head Start Programs:

- Evidence-based trauma responsive services to young children and families
- Mental health consultations to staff and families
- Classroom observations
- Completion of DECA-C to children receiving clinical Services

- Staff and parent trainings
- Review of community and self-assessments, completion of referrals, information sharing with parents and staff, and home visits
- Treatment services to include screening, assessment, evaluation, and treatment planning
- Crisis response
- Family contacts
- Teacher consultations
- Clinical documentation activities
- Other reimbursable treatment-related services as needed
- Professional Development activities, including clinical meetings, agency meetings, direct training activities, and supervision

Deliverables

- Provide mental health consultations to staff and families per the Maryland SEFEL Pyramid Model for a minimum of 48 children per FTE.
- Adhere to the Head Start Program Performance Standards Subpart D-Health Program Services.
- Attend quarterly Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Meetings.
- Provide a minimum of two classroom observations with coaching (feedback) per classroom.
- Administer and/or review DECA-C twice a year (pre- and post-tests) to children receiving clinical mental health services.
- Provide six staff and six parent/guardian trainings per year per Head Start program. Training topics should include, but are not limited to: typical development, development of the individual child, separation and attachment, developmental changes (social and emotional), establishment of a nurturing classroom environment and behavior management.
- Develop/Update a Community Mental Health Resource Guide and distribute and/or make available to teachers and families.
- Attend Comprehensive Developmental Team (CDT) meetings, staffing meetings, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, and other meetings as requested.
- Facilitate a Clinical Supervisor's review of the Head Start's most current Community Assessment and Self-Assessment of the assigned Head Start programs at the beginning of the school year.
- Participate in home visits as needed.
- Provide information and referrals as needed for parents/guardians and staff.
- Provide evidence-based trauma responsive services as approved by BHSB (including participation in training, technical assistance, and fidelity assessment by EBP evaluators) to young children and families.

- Facilitate enhancement of well-integrated mental health efforts with other health agencies and community-based organizations to promote individual and community resilience through child-specific treatment transition planning.
- The Sub-vendor will implement a BHSB-approved process (survey, focus groups, etc.) to regularly solicit feedback from consumers (including youth and caregivers for sub-vendors working with minors) and to incorporate feedback received into the program.
- The Sub-vendor will report any critical incidents (as defined in the BHSB "Critical Incident Protocol") that occurs at the program, or if the program has reasonable cause to believe an incident has occurred.
<http://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/forms-for-providers/>
- The Sub-vendor will ensure a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan is contained in their Policies and Procedures manual, and ensure staff are trained and participate in regular mock exercises. The Sub-vendor will submit a copy of their plan to BHSB annually and whenever their plan is updated.
- The Sub-vendor will keep their BHSB Program Lead regularly updated on program successes and barriers, particularly those that relate to BHSB's strategic priorities related to trauma-responsiveness and equity.
- Participate in one BHSB site visit per year with other scheduled or unscheduled site visits which may be performed by BHSB.
- Maintain clinical records in accordance with the BHSB contracting agreement, Maryland Health General Article 4-403. Section 4-403(c), COMAR 10.63.01.05, and any other Federal or State regulation which applies under the program's licensure status. These records should include but are not limited to the following: Consent to Services, T-POT or another approved age-appropriate assessment tool, Individualized Service plan, Coordination of Care documentation (referrals and/or collaboration notes), Treatment/Contact notes, and an Individualized Transition plan (if applicable).
- The Sub-vendor will report to their BHSB Program Lead within two weeks any changes in personnel or vacancies among positions mandated by this contract or any other regulatory requirements.
- The Sub-vendor will document the use of approaches to reduce tobacco use and vaping among consumers and staff. The Sub-vendor will have a written plan to establish tobacco/nicotine-free environments in all program-owned or leased building, grounds, parking lots, ramps, plazas, vehicles and adjacent sidewalks. The Sub-vendor will complete and submit the BHSB Tobacco/Nicotine Cessation & Tobacco/Nicotine-Free Environments Questionnaire. The Sub-vendor is encouraged to use materials, training and consultation services available at Maryland Tobacco Resource Center

(www.MDQUIT.org) and other websites (see BHSB website for other recommended resources).

- The Sub-vendor will document the use of approaches to increase knowledge about and reduce the occurrence of infant sleep-related deaths among consumers and staff. The Sub-vendor is encouraged to use materials, training, and consultation services available through B'More for Healthy Babies (<http://www.healthybabiesbaltimore.com/our-initiatives/safe-sleep>).
- The Sub-Vendor will obtain annual Maryland Protective Services background check of employees, agents, and volunteers who shall provide direct services to minors under this Contract or who may come into regular unsupervised contact with minors. Sub-vendor will also ensure a signed current Standards of Conduct Form is on file before services are provided for employees, agents, and volunteers who shall provide direct services to minors under this Contract or who may come into regular unsupervised contact with minors. In any case where a finding is reported, Sub-Vendor and its subcontractors shall be responsible for taking immediate and appropriate action to protect the safety and welfare of any and all people having contact with that individual.

People who have high exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (e.g., racism and other forms of systemic discrimination, abuse, neglect and poverty) are more vulnerable to behavioral health disorders and other chronic diseases across the lifetime. Sub-vendors are expected to ensure that staff participate in ongoing training and supervision that supports the implementation of policies and practices that promote resilience and prevent and mitigate the negative effects of adversity and trauma.

D. FOCUS POPULATION

This program is designed to serve youth, families and Head Start staff.

E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

All clinicians hired for this program must be licensed mental health professionals, which can include: psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, marriage and family therapists, clinical social workers, behavioral and/or developmental pediatricians, and licensed professional mental health counselors.

Specifically, the Head Start Performance Standard 1304.52(d)(4) states that mental health services must be supported by staff or consultants who are licensed mental health professionals with experience and expertise in serving young children and their families.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Contract funding amounts of \$16,000 and \$32,000 for a 0.5 FTE and 1.0 FTE, respectively, are available to support the licensed mental health professional assigned to selected Head Start Programs. These amounts are inclusive of all salary, fringe, supervision, and indirect costs. Indirect costs shall not exceed 10% of the total budget. Additional costs are expected to be offset by fee-for-service revenue.

This contract funding will support the preventative efforts of the ECMH programs. The selected providers must access reimbursement through the Public Behavioral Health System to support the treatment services component of the program. Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement is accessible to Medicaid-certified, community-based provider agencies for treatment services delivered to students who meet the medical necessity criteria for reimbursable services through the Public Mental Health System.

Approximately 45 percent of all services provided will focus on treatment activities that are eligible for fee-for-service reimbursement. Such diverse funding aims to ensure stability for the continuum of ECMH services. All funding sources should be reflected in the budget and budget narrative sections of the submitted proposal.

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.

- Cost Reimbursement – Actual Expenditures
 - Sub-vendor receives payment after costs are incurred and reported. Payment is based on the costs reported for a specific period.

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 an Outpatient Mental Health Center to provide prevention, early identification and intervention, crisis, and treatment services in Head Start programs throughout Baltimore City. A qualified OMHC will be selected to provide a continuum of services, including prevention, early identification and intervention, crisis, and treatment services.

B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

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

- Licensure and accreditation as an Outpatient Mental Health Center (OMHC) for a minimum of two years as of December 31, 2021, not including time as a provisional provider. Please note that significant deficiencies in the Office of Health Care Quality Site Visit Reports may disqualify proposals from consideration.
- Capacity to provide a licensed mental health professional in accordance with the Maryland Practice Act & COMAR (10.21.20.10) governing program staffing with the ability to access reimbursement through Optum. Criminal background check for all staff members who will provide ECMH services must be completed prior to implementation of services.

C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Timeline

Release Date:	January 12, 2022
Pre-Proposal Conference:	January 27, 2022
Proposal Due:	February 18, 2022
Anticipated Award Notification:	April 8, 2022
Anticipated Contract Start:	July 1, 2022

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: January 27, 2022

Time: 10:00 am to 11:30 a.m.

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: 494 008 250#

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

All questions related to this RFP should be submitted in advance to Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org no later than the close of business on **January 25, 2022**. 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 or 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 **February 2, 2022**.

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 February 18, 2022**. 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 Kelsi Loos whose contact information is listed below.

Kelsi Loos, Procurement Lead
Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

5. Anticipated Service Term: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, with options to renew annually 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 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.

G. GOVERNING LAW AND VACCINATION MANDATES

The applicant acknowledges and agrees that BHSB is a federal contractor for purposes of Executive Order 14042, Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors (the "Order"). The applicant and its subcontractors shall comply with the Order and all other applicable mandates, rules, laws, and regulations (collectively, the "Requirements"). Upon request by BHSB, selected applicants shall promptly provide evidence of compliance with the Requirements and shall promptly take such further actions as may be requested by BHSB with respect to the Requirements and/or the resulting Contract. The applicant and all of its subcontractors shall, for the duration of the resulting Contract, comply with all guidance for contractor and subcontractor workplace locations published by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force. These requirements shall be incorporated into all subcontracts of Sub-Vendor.

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 (20 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including how long it has operated early childhood services or became licensed as an outpatient mental health provider and when it received or expects to receive accreditation. Attach all relevant licenses and certifications.
- b. Describe your organization's experience managing programs similar to this project, meeting contractual deliverables and obligations (including any contracts with BHSB), and your capacity to manage the programmatic and financial requirements of this grant.
- c. Describe the organization's history and experience, including length of time, delivering early childhood mental health services to pre-school aged youth, including evidence-based practices used.
- d. 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 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.
- b. 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.
- c. Describe how you will integrate principles of equity and anti-racism into this work.

3. Service Delivery (25 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 ability to successfully implement evidence-based trauma-responsive services, how you will use these interventions within the program, and maintain fidelity to the standards model.
- c. Describe your organizations 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 wellbeing.
- d. Describe how your organization will collaborate with Baltimore City Head Start Coalition/Partners 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 approach to providing a competent, integrated, holistic "whole health" approach to addressing substance use, mental health, and medical health.

4. Staffing Plan (15 points)

- a. Describe your proposed staffing pattern, including supervisors, and how it will fulfill the staffing requirements in this RFP. 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 staff who work independently/off-site.
- c. Describe your proposed training plan for staff assigned to this program and indicate any relevant expertise, training, and/or skills staff already possess.

5. Effectively Serving the Focus Population (5 points)

- a. Describe how your organization is uniquely qualified and designed to address known disparities experienced by Baltimore City youth.

6. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (10 points)

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, operation, and improvement of program services.
- b. Describe any previous experience your organization has implementing projects similar to this one. 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?

7. Proposed Program Budget (10 points)

- a. Attach a line-item budget for the grant period in the RFP that includes anticipated revenue from grant funding and fee-for-service reimbursement and all expenses as an appendix. BHSB has budget forms on its website that can be used but are not required for this submission.
- b. Provide a budget justification/narrative explains the projected revenue and expenses 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 will be completed. Contracts are expected to start on July 1, 2022.

9. Attachments

- Most recent Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) Site Visit Report, Administrative Services Organization (ASO) Audit, and/or Accrediting Organization Site Visit Report/Audit, including any Program Improvement Plans and all Statement of Deficiencies
- Most recent audited financial report, including the consolidated statements, schedule of findings, and management letter
- Most recent IRS Form 990: Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation