



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Courts Assessments

Release Date: February 28, 2024

Pre-Proposal Conference: March 13, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Proposal Due: March 28, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Anticipated Award Notification: June 4, 2024

Anticipated Contract Start: July 1, 2024

Issued by:

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Courts Assessments

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 seeks a qualified organization to assess individuals with a substance use disorder who are involved in the criminal justice system. The selected provider will perform at least 400 assessments annually utilizing the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) assessment tool for all consumers referred by Judges, Attorneys, the Division of Parole and Probation.

The Court Assessors will perform these assessments in Baltimore City at the following courts: Circuit Court Baltimore City, Wabash District Court, Eastside District Court Building and Hargrove/ Patapsco District Court. When an individual is

incarcerated, the assessor should coordinate with the facility where they are detained to perform the assessment.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE

The Court Assessors will be considered an integral part of the Drug Treatment Court (DTC) multidisciplinary team. Court Assessors must attend staffings with the DTC team, which will consist of the Judge, attorneys, Parole/Probation officers, Court Coordinator, Court Case Managers, Treatment Providers, and the BHSB Clinical Coordinator. Assessments will be used to determine the level of care needed for those consumers who plea-in to Drug Treatment Court (DTC). Assessors will work closely with BHSB's Clinical Coordinator in this process.

Substance Use assessments are essential to ensure that individuals involved in the criminal justice system can be referred to the appropriate level of care for treatment and be considered for diversion initiatives such Drug Treatment Court. The Court relies on this information when making crucial decisions in the judicial process. Clinical Coordinators also use these evaluations to refer participants to Substance Use treatment programs that best suit the individuals' needs. In addition, the assessment can help identify other behavioral health needs, which should also be addressed while in the DTC program.

The selected organization will provide ASAM Substance Use Disorder (SUD) assessments to consumers referred by Judges, Attorneys, and the Division of Parole and Probation. Consumers will be referred for an assessment to determine the appropriate ASAM level of care when the consumer pleas-in to DTC or as a condition of release and diversion from incarceration. Once the required level of care has been determined, the Court Assessor will collaborate with the Clinical Coordinator, who will identify an appropriate treatment program for the individual based on the completed assessment and recommendations. A multi-disciplinary staffing will be held, at a time determined by the presiding Court, to discuss the assessment, determine if the defendant is amenable to DTC, and determine an appropriate community treatment program.

The duties and responsibilities of the selected organization are as follows:

1. Court Assessors (4) will assess at least 400 referred individuals annually. All assessments should include the ASAM level of care, diagnostic impression, and treatment recommendation.
2. Court Assessors will complete the Risk and Needs Triage tool (RANT) with ASAM assessments.
3. The Assessor will complete the mental health screening form for all people assessed. The clinician will summarize the information in the Co-Occurring section of the evaluation.
4. At least 80% of individuals who are assessed should be referred to community resources, which needs to be documented.

5. The Clinical Supervisor shall be available to provide assessments and clinical supervision, including in emergency situations. In addition, they shall read, review, and sign each report to ensure it is correct, complete and of high quality before submitting it to the Clinical Coordinator or court personnel. This includes reviewing the evaluation narrative for quality (catching typos, ensuring proper grammar, using correct names, and correcting erroneous information) and ensuring that the Court Assessor has signed each assessment.
6. The Program Director shall provide program oversight and clinical supervision to the Clinical Supervisor.
7. The organization shall ensure that each Court Assessor, the Clinical Supervisor, and the Program Director are authorized by the Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists or other Health Occupations Board to conduct assessments in accordance with the Health Occupations Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.
8. Maintain adequate staff coverage to ensure assessments are completed within three (3) business days.
9. The provider shall engage in marketing outreach to the Offices of the Public Defender and State's Attorney in Baltimore City as a resource for services to people with substance use disorders.
10. The Assessor shall obtain written consent from the defendant, utilizing the selected organization's approved forms, to allow the release of proposed treatment recommendations to the defendant's attorney, arraignment judge, the State's Attorney, and Court Clinical Care Coordinator.
11. Create and maintain records for every consumer who is assessed. The record shall contain a comprehensive assessment of an individual's status, mental health screening results, and relevant history according to COMAR 10.63.05.04 Substance-Related Disorder Assessment and Referral Program.
12. Submit assessments and accurate court-ordered evaluations to referral entities within 72 hours (about 3 days) of completing the assessment.
13. Enter data into a report template or information system as deemed appropriate by BHSB.
14. Participate in all required meetings and training related to court assessments conducted by BHSB and BHA.
15. The provider shall use a standardized template and cover letter for report submissions which should include the following: The presiding Judge's Name and full address and the cover letter should address the Judge directly.
16. In the case where the evaluator has made a recommendation for Level 05, 1, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7 & 3.7WM, the assessor is required to communicate and collaborate with the referral source. The assessor will provide suggested options where they believe the consumer could receive services at the recommended level of care and discuss with/collaborate with the Clinical Coordinator for placement.

17. The Assessor is responsible for checking the Sex Offender Registry prior to completing the assessment.
18. The assessor will look at Maryland Judiciary Case Search for an open case and document in the cover letter.
19. If the Assessor has any questions about the referral, the referring Judge, etc., they will contact the referring party or the clerk's office immediately upon receipt.

It is imperative that the selected provider employ a wholistic approach when working to meet the needs of DTC participants, and it is the multidisciplinary team's responsibility to ensure that they are accessing all eligible services within the Public Behavioral Health System that can support them in their recovery. BSHB is looking for an applicant who can apply a trauma-informed and person-centered approach while working collaboratively with other stakeholders.

Deliverables are as follows and may be subject to change:

- Compliance with the required staffing pattern.
- Maintain current Maryland professional licensure or certification in good standing for all relevant staff.
- Assess 400 consumers annually.
- Report how many RAND assessment tools were completed during the reporting period and during the year.
- Refer consumers to community resources (Annual Target is 80%/320).
- Report the percentage of assessments completed in a 3-day time frame.
- Perform marketing outreach to the Offices of the Public Defender and State's Attorney in Baltimore City as a resource for services to eligible drug-dependent offenders.
- Submit the BHSB approved Project Performance Report.

D. FOCUS POPULATION

The focus population is individuals involved with the Baltimore City criminal justice system who may have been previously assessed to have an extensive history of substance use, a percentage of whom may also have a mental health disorder. The selected provider will be expected to serve at least 400 consumers annually.

E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

The project requires the following staffing:

- 0.125 FTE Program Director, who is a Board Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Approved Supervisor.
- It requires a 1.0 FTE Clinical Supervisor who is also a Board Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Approved Supervisor.

- In addition, it requires a 4.0 FTE (4) Court Assessors with a minimum of CAC-AD but may also include Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Master Social Worker, Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor or a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor.

One assessor must be assigned to each courthouse.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

This funding is being offered through the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) Office of Crisis and Criminal Justice Services to support diversion from incarceration related to low level criminal offenses. The total funding amount for FY25 is \$479,683. These funds may be used for:

- Staffing of clinicians
- Indirect cost
- Transportation
- Training as it relates to the scope of work

Funds shall not be used to support, in whole or part, services that are otherwise reimbursable with state or federal funds through the Fee-for-Service (FFS) Public Behavioral Health System (PBHS) or Maryland Medicaid. Any vendor or sub vendor shall actively seek reimbursement for such services from the PBHS, Maryland Medicaid, or other state and local funding authorities, as applicable, and may not duplicate or supplant existing funded services with grant funds from this award.

Funds **shall not** be used for any of the following purposes:

- Funding staff to conduct §8-505 assessments
- Vehicle purchase
- New Construction
- Capital improvements

G. QUALITY AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

As part of BHSB's procurement process, internal Quality and Financial Reviews are completed to ensure there are no significant concerns with the organization(s) being selected. Applicants should provide the most recent available versions of all requested documentation with their RFP application in order to ensure this is a smooth process.

H. 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 forms, 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 was 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 – Advance Basis
 - Vendor receives payment in advance of incurring and reporting costs based on a pro-rated budget (e.g., 1/4 of budget each 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 BHSB 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 organization to provide assessments for people involved with the criminal justice system who have a substance use disorder. This provider will use the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) assessment tool to evaluate all consumers referred by the court system.

B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

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

- All required Assessors must have a minimum credentialing of Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug (CAC-AD) that is in good standing
- Both the Program Director and the Clinical Supervisor must be a Board-Certified Alcohol and Drug Supervisor
- At least three (3) years' experience completing detailed Substance Use Assessments

Additionally, experience working within/with the criminal justice system is preferred but not required.

C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Timeline

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Release Date: | February 24, 2024 |
| Pre-Proposal Conference: | March 13, 2024, at 10 a.m. |
| Proposal Due: | March 28, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. |
| Anticipated Award Notification: | June 4, 2024 |
| Anticipated Service Start: | July 1, 2024 |

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: March 13, 2024

Time: 10:00 am

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

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only): +1 443-819-0973,,700938860#
Phone Conference ID: 700 938 860#

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 **March 12, 2024**. 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 **March 30, 2024**.

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 continuing 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 March 28, 2024**. 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. Interviews

Applicants whose proposals are ranked highest by a Review Committee may be asked to participate in an interview.

5. 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

6. Anticipated Service Term: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, 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 PROCESS

Applications must be complete and fully responsive to the below Proposal Narrative Outline and must include all required appendices. Applicants may file an appeal within five days of notification of non-selection. BHSB will not review new proposal materials that were not included in the application. BHSB will review the appeal letter and respond to the non-selected applicant 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 (25 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including how long it has provided detailed Substance Use Assessments. Attach as an appendix 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 your organization's access to, experience working with, and continued capacity to work with individuals involved in the criminal-justice system. Be specific about how you have worked with this population and for how long.
- d. Provide an overview of your organization's experience in the last three years providing Substance Use Assessment services.
- e. Describe your organization's history of forming partnerships with criminal Justice organizations.

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 how you will integrate principles of equity and anti-racism into this work.
- c. Describe your organization's commitment to a trauma-informed and responsive approach and any trauma-specific interventions your organization currently offers or would implement if awarded this grant.

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 how your organization will collaborate with Judges, Attorneys, Parole and Probation, Court staff and Clinical Coordinators 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.
- c. Describe how your organization will facilitate effective transitions from one level of care to another.
- d. Describe how this program would function as a "safe space" that is welcoming, non-stigmatizing, and affirming to the population to be served.
- e. Attach three redacted evaluations (one for each of the past years) that include the ASAM level of care, diagnostic impression, and treatment recommendation. Reports will be reviewed and scored based on quality.

4. Staffing Plan (10 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. Attach credentials indicating required staff have a minimum of Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug (CAC-AD) in good standing. For the supervisor and the program director, these credentials should include documentation of being a Certified Alcohol and Drug Approved Supervisor.
- b. Describe your plan to ensure adequate support and clinical supervision for staff, particularly staff who work independently/ off-site. Please describe practices to retain staff and provide the turnover rate of Certified Substance Use Counselors/ other licensed professionals in your organization over the past two years.

5. Effectively Serving the Focus Population (5 points)

- a. Describe your organization's history and expertise in serving people involved with the criminal justice system, the target population of this RFP.

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. Specify how consumers' Protected Health Information will be collected, maintained, used, and disclosed in compliance with (i) The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d et seq. and implementing regulations at 45 CFR parts 160 and 164) as amended, (ii) the Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Records (42 U.S.C. 290dd-2, as implemented by 42 CFR part 2) as amended; and (iii) the Maryland Confidentiality of Medical Records Act (Md. Code Ann. Health-General Section 4-301 et seq.) as amended.

7. Proposed Program Budget (5 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 narrative/justification that explains revenue and expense projections in more detail. The budget narrative should be included in the body of your proposal, not as an appendix.

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 on July 1, 2024.

9. Appendices

- Copies of all relevant licenses/certifications including any licenses issued by Maryland Department of Health (BHA and OHCQ).
- Attach credentials indicating required staff have a minimum of Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug (CAC-AD) in good standing. For the supervisor and the program director, these credentials should include documentation of being a Certified Alcohol and Drug Approved Supervisor.
- Resume or curriculum vitae for individuals/consultants working on this project.

- Most recent site visit report from the ASO, Accrediting Organization, and/or the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), including any statements of deficiencies and program improvement plans
- Organizational Chart
- Line-Item Budget
- Most recent final Financial Audit package including Findings and Management Letter from an independent auditor (preferred) OR a recent unaudited Income Statement AND Balance Sheet, if an audit is not available.
- Most recent IRS Form 990: Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes or, if not a non-profit, submit most recent business or personal income tax return
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (screenshots from the MDAT website will not be accepted)