



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Respite Services-Child and Adolescent

Release Date: October 24, 2025

Pre-Proposal Conference: October 29, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.

Proposals Due: November 24, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Anticipated Award Notification: December 29, 2025

Anticipated Contract Start: January 1, 2026

Issued by:

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

Table of Contents

I. Overview of the Project.....	3
A. Overview of BHSB.....	3
B. Overview of Project.....	3
C. Scope of Service (including deliverables).....	4
E. Staffing Requirements.....	6
F. Funding Availability.....	6
G. Risk Assessment.....	6
H. Contracting with BHSB.....	6
II. Overview of RFP.....	9
A. Purpose of RFP.....	9
B. Proposal Timeline and Specifications.....	10
C. Award of Contract.....	11
D. RFP Postponement/Cancellation.....	11
E. Applicant Appeal Process.....	12
III. Format and Content of Proposal.....	13
A. Proposal Instructions.....	13
B. Proposal Narrative Outline and Rating Criteria.....	13

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Respite Services-Child and Adolescent

I. Overview of the Project

A. Overview of BHSB

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit organization that serves as the Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) on behalf of Baltimore City and operates in this role under the authority of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). BHSB is responsible for planning, managing and monitoring resources, programs and policies within the larger Medicaid fee-for-service system, as well as services directly funded by BHSB through private and public grants. We use our knowledge of what services are available, and how to structure system resources, to meet the unique needs of the communities we serve.

BHSB envisions a city where people live and thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness and is committed to building a system of care that serves all community members in need of services. We work to ensure that the most appropriate care is provided, taking into consideration family and community differences.

B. Overview of Project

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), BHSB is seeking one (1) respite care provider to deliver in-home and out-of-home respite care services for children and adolescents under 20. Respite services are designed to provide structured therapeutic breaks for both caregivers and youth while maintaining children in the least restrictive environment possible. This program is designed to strengthen family stability, reduce caregiver stress, and support youth in community-based settings.

It aims to prevent youth from needing more intensive care by supporting family caregivers, strengthening family stability, and helping youth remain in their communities with appropriate therapeutic support. The Respite Care Program provides services to families with a child who has a DSM-5 diagnosis and is enrolled in mental health services.

In-home respite:

- Ranges from 1 to 10 hours a day, up to 72 hours every 3 months
- Trained respite caregivers provide care in the child's own home or take them out into the community
- Child does not spend the night away from home

Out-of-home respite:

- Includes up to 12 nights every 3 months (typically 6 weekends)
- Child stays with licensed respite foster families in their homes
- Usually runs from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon

This procurement reflects BHSB's commitment to expanding high-quality behavioral health services for underserved Baltimore City residents by increasing respite care capacity.

C. Scope of Service (including deliverables)

The Child & Adolescent Respite Care Program supports referral, access, and use of in-home and/or out-of-home respite services for children, adolescents, and families in Baltimore City, following [COMAR regulations](#). Respite care helps family caregivers and keeps youth from 5 years to 20 years of age in the least restrictive environment, aiming to prevent the need for more intensive care. Services are planned around each family's needs and are integrated into the child's treatment plan to ensure continuity of care and support emotional development.

All services must be delivered by the selected applicant who is licensed and approved in accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), specifically:

- [COMAR 10.21.27.03 – Program Eligibility](#)
- [COMAR 10.63.01 – Requirements for All Licensed Programs](#)
- [COMAR 10.63.02 – Accreditation Requirements](#)
- [COMAR 10.63.03.15 – Respite Care Services Program](#)
- [COMAR 10.09.89 – Medicaid Regulations for Behavioral Health Services](#)
- [COMAR 10.21.27 Respite Care Services](#)

The selected applicant will perform the following key activities:

- Provide respite care services for a minimum of 40 children in one of two settings: in-home or out-of-home respite care-with family satisfaction surveys to monitor quality. Children served must reside in Baltimore City.
- Screening: Screen for eligibility per [COMAR 10.21.27.05](#) and assign to a respite home if appropriate.
- Outreach: Develop and implement a plan to generate referrals for respite services. This includes conducting targeted community outreach and establishing partnerships with local organizations to raise awareness and foster demand for respite services in Baltimore City that support youth and families.

Staffing: will be responsible for ensuring the required staffing.

The selected applicant:

- Will be responsible for costs incurred to pay for activities for children during respite visits (e.g. groups or tickets for sporting or recreational events, snacks, etc.).
- Will participate in at least 4 community meetings each quarter.
- Will partner with at least 3 community-based mental health organizations, schools, and other system partners to expand referral sources.
- Will attend 10 community outreach events per quarter.
- Will develop, maintain, and submit annually a written plan to BHSB that details recruitment of respite resources (e.g. individuals/families, etc.),
- Provide quarterly narrative updates to BHSB describing the implementation of the written plan to address recruitment of respite resources (e.g., Individuals/families, etc.), including outreach efforts, community engagement, etc.

If applicable, the selected applicant will:

- Collaborate with BHSB staff, Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) staff on the effectiveness of the respite programming success and barriers.
- Participate in planning meetings sponsored by MDH, along with BHSB staff, provider agency staff, and family members.

Project Deliverables

The selected applicant will submit program reports as required by BHSB that will identify:

- Number of children/adolescents:
 - Referred to the program and screened
 - Receiving services
- Average length of time youth are enrolled in respite service
- Number of consumer satisfaction surveys completed each quarter
- Number and description of outreach activities and online activities each month
- Updated staffing chart quarterly

D. Focus Population

Medicaid eligible children and youth ages 0 to 20 who reside in Baltimore City and reside at home with the family/caregiver requesting respite services, have a documented behavioral health diagnosis, as defined by the DSM-5, and are currently engaged in mental health treatment.

E. Staffing Requirements

The selected applicant must:

- Hire and maintain staff in accordance with [COMAR 10.21.27.08](#)
 - One (1) Program Coordinator
 - One (1) Program Director required by [COMAR 10.21.27.08](#),
 - Will be responsible for staff recruitment, training, and supervision of staff.
 - Two (2) Respite Specialists
 - Must be 18 and over and have a high school diploma or equivalent
 - If the Respite Specialist is 18-21 years old, they are limited to serving children under 13 years old
 - College courses in Human Services-related field preferred
- Complete annual CPS background checks and initial clearances for all staff associated with providing respite services, including Maryland and Federal Criminal Background (CJIS-CR), CPS Clearance Form, Maryland Judiciary Registry Search, and National Sex Offender Registry.
- Staff/individuals working on this project must have relevant experience and knowledge to meet the needs of the people who will be served within the scope of the project.

F. Funding Availability

Funding for the Respite Services Child and Adolescent project is a prorated award of amount \$99,098.19 for the contract period 1/1/26 to 6/30/26: If awarded in FY27, the award amount will be \$182,681. Grant funds must be used to supplement Medicaid-eligible services and may only be applied to services that are not billable to Medicaid. Gift cards as incentives are not permitted.

G. Risk Assessment

BHSB completes a risk assessment as part of the procurement process. Applicants should be sure to provide the most recent available versions of all requested documentation with their RFP application.

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. The selected applicant 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., ¼ of budget each quarter), with payment amounts adjusted based on spending.

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 on track to be 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. Failure by vendors to comply with the terms of any contract with BHSB may result in denial of future contracts with BHSB.

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

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) is seeking one (1) Respite Care provider to deliver in-home or out-of-home respite care services for children and adolescents under 20.

Applicant Eligibility

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

- Must be licensed under Maryland COMAR 10.63 as a Mobile Treatment Service (MTS), Outpatient Mental Health Clinic (OMHC), or Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP)
- If applying as an out-of-home respite care provider:
 - i. Must be licensed **or** in the process of becoming a licensed Maryland Child Placement Agency [COMAR Regulations - Maryland Department of Human Services](#)
 - ii. Must have a signed letter from the Governing Board identifying the Chief Administrator representing your Child Placement Agency. The letter must also include a copy of the Chief Administrator's credentials.
 - iii. If applying as an out-of-home respite Residential Child Care (RCC) must provide the Statement of Need from the Maryland Department of Human Services.
- The license for the RCC home/facility must be in Baltimore City
- If applying as an in-home provider, must be licensed and provide documentation of your submitted license application with your proposal.
- Must have a location in Baltimore City.
- Able to bill and receive reimbursement with Medicaid.
- For applicants who currently receive grant funds from BHSB or have received grant funds in prior years:
 - No outstanding financial audits
 - No money owed to BHSB
 - No current Corrective Action Plans (CAP) for which the applicant has not met identified targets more than two years beyond the date the CAP was issued.

- No more than one (1) Accountability Compliance Audit in the two fiscal years preceding the current fiscal year that reflects unresolved deficiencies.

B. Proposal Timeline and Specifications

1. Timeline

Release Date:	October 24, 2025
Pre-Proposal Conference:	October 29, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
Proposal Due:	November 24, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.
Anticipated Award Notification:	December 29, 2025
Anticipated Contract Start:	January 1, 2026
Anticipated Service Start:	January 1, 2026

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: October 29, 2025

Time: 2:00 pm

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

Click here to join the meeting: [Respite Services-Child and Adolescent Pre-Proposal Conference](#)

Or call in (audio only): +1 443-819-0973,,731969089# United States, Bel Air

Find a local number

Phone Conference ID: 731 969 089#

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

Questions related to this RFP will be answered at the Pre-Proposal Conference. Questions posed during the conference and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/funding-opportunities/> by November 5, 2025.

Individuals who attended the Pre-Proposal Conference will be notified by email when questions and answers are posted on BHSB's website.

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 **5:00 pm EST on November 24, 2025**. 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 Ashley Coston whose contact information is listed below.

Ashley Coston, Procurement Lead

Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

5. Anticipated Service Term: January 1, 2026– June 30, 2026 with options to renew annually pending availability of funding and performance.

C. 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.

D. RFP Postponement/Cancellation

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

E. 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.

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/>. We recommend you start your application early so you know what to expect with the system.

Late proposals will not be considered.

- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are becoming increasingly prevalent. While AI is a helpful administrative tool, it is important to ensure that proposals reflect authentic responses and realistic service delivery plans.
- It is the policy of BHSB to adhere to the rules and regulations in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which require appropriate safeguards to protect the confidentiality, integrity and security of all protected health information. No proposals submitted in response to this RFP should include individually identifiable health information.

For more information, please refer 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. Describe your organization's history and experience providing respite services and/or serving children with intensive mental health needs and their families.

2. Principles and Values (15 points)

- a. What are the core values that drive your organization's work, and how do you operationalize them? How would they drive this proposed project?
- b. 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.
- c. Describe your organization's commitment to addressing stigma related to behavioral health. How do you operationalize this commitment?

3. Service Delivery (20 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 plan to implement person and family-centered services.
- c. Describe how your organization will collaborate with community-based providers, schools, and other system 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.
- d. Describe your organization's strategy for generating and securing client referrals for this project.

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 and/or 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 (10 points)

- a. Describe how your organization is uniquely qualified to address the needs of each person served through this project. How will you take into consideration individual, family, and community differences experienced by the focus population.

6. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (10 points)

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served and other stakeholders. How do you use feedback to develop, implement, operationalize, and/or improve program services?
- b. Describe any previous experience your organization has had implementing similar projects. Were you able to meet all of the programmatic and financial deliverables and reporting requirements? How did you address any quality concerns?

7. Implementation Timeline (15 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 January 1, 2026.

8. Proposed Program Budget- Optional- Not weighed in the scoring

- 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. BHSB has budget forms on its website that can be used but are not required for this submission.

9. Appendices

- Copies of all relevant licenses/certifications including any licenses issued by Maryland Department of Health (BHA and OHCQ). BHSB is aware that BHA is experiencing delays with license applications. Please upload a copy of the letter from BHA acknowledging receipt of the application, along with a copy of the most recent license.
- If applicable, the 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
- A copy of the provider's Medicaid/ASO enrollment or approval letter/certificate.
 - Medicaid Provider Enrollment Letter or Certificate
 - Medicaid Provider Number/ID Confirmation
 - ASO Provider Approval Letter
 - Medicaid Participation Agreement
- Organizational chart
- Resume or curriculum vitae for individuals/consultants working on this project
- Copy of lease or deed (when requesting lease or deed, also request Fire Inspection Permit & Use and Occupancy Certificate)
- Copy of Fire Inspection Certificate *if providing out-of-home Respite*.
- Use and Occupancy Certificate *if providing out-of-home Respite*.
- Must have a signed letter from the Governing Board identifying the Chief Administrator representing your Child Placement Agency. The letter must also include a copy of the Chief Administrator's credentials.

- If applying as an out-of-home respite Residential Child Care (RCC) must provide the Statement of Need from the Maryland Department of Human Services.
- 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, please upload a statement detailing why.
- Most recent IRS 990 – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes **OR** if an IRS 990 form is not required to be filed, the most recent Business Tax Return OR the Schedule C only of the most recent Personal Tax Return. (Please redact any social security numbers on the Schedule C.)
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (screenshots from the MDAT website will not be accepted) - the certificate must be dated within one year of the RFP submission due date.