

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Evidence Based Practices

Request for Proposal

DMHAS-EBP-SUES-2025

ADDENDUM

The State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is issuing Addendum 4 to the **Evidence Based Practices, Substance Use Employment Program Request for Proposals**.

Addendum 4 contains:

A. Questions and Answers – The following are DMHAS responses to the questions received during and after the Bidder's Conference.

1. **Question: On page 45 the checklist includes Organizational Chart, Resumes of Key Staff and Proof of DPH Clinical Licensure but none of these are referenced in the questions. Should we include these all as attachments?**

Answer: Yes.

2. **Question: Page 3 and 4, I.B.2 lists 5 items that need to be uploaded to our profile on CTSource and 3 of those (Campaign Contribution, Valid UEI, and IRS Determination Letter) are repeated in the checklist on page 44. Should they be included in both places?**

Answer: Yes, we need these in both places.

3. **Question: In the checklist on page 44, you list Equal Employment Opportunity. Are you just looking for our most recently filed EEO report?**

Answer: Yes, provide your most recent report.

4. **Question: How recent do the items uploaded to our CTSource Profile need to be?**

Answer: Annually. So, it should not be older than 1 year.

5. **Question: Could the contract be split between Manchester and Enfield sites (each site serving half of the 112).**

Answer: Yes, as long as the **entire region** is served (not just the Manchester and Enfield areas).

6. **Question: Pg 15 and page 24 ask for staff bios. Page 45 asks for resumes of Key Staff. Do resumes need to be included?**

Answer: If you already have the staff hired, you can include the resumes of those individuals. If you will need to hire new individuals to fill these positions, resumes do not need to be included.

7. **Question: There are discrepancies in the outlines throughout the RFP. (examples: the outline on page 25 includes 5. Subcontractor (if applicable) but page 15 does not list this (it goes from 4. Data and Technology Expectations to 5. Work Plan). We will not be using a sub-contractor. Should we list this in Section 5? Or skip to the workplan, and label that 5? (The numbers do not align between what is listed on page 10-17 and the outline on pages 24-25) Similarly, Financial expectations are labeled section 6 (on page 16) and as section 7 in the outline (page 25). Page 15**

lists the Work Plan as section 5. Page 25 lists the Work Plan as section 6. Again, on page 16, Cultural Competency is labeled section 7, but it is section 9 on page 25

Answer: Subcontractors are not allowed so this is not applicable. Order is not important in your submission as long as the information is in the correct section of the proposal and clearly marked.

- 8. Question: The chart on page 19 shows a 15-page limit, but the checklist on page 45 says a 25-page limit. Which is correct?**

Answer: 15 pages.

- 9. Question: Is there a specific form for the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement? If so, where do I find it?**

Answer: There is no form. Please refer to page 25 of the legal notice for what your statement should include. If there is no conflict, please state that and sign and date it.

- 10. Question: What is the organizational chart? What is it referring to? Is it a form, if so, where can I find it?**

Answer: it is your organization's diagram of all positions and roles from administration/leadership (CEO, CFO, COO, etc.) down to direct care staff. It also shows the supervisory relationships and who reports to whom in your organization.

- 11. Question: If we do not have a Declaration of Confidential Information, do we state that fact or leave it blank?**

Answer: There is no form. Please refer to page 25 of the legal notice for what your statement should include. If there is Declaration of Confidential Information, please state that and sign and date it.

- 12. Question: Per the Proposal Checklist, where can I state our statement ensuring Equal Employment Opportunity?**

Answer: Please see the answer to question 3.

- 13. Question: We started in 2024, are we allowed to submit our bank financial statements since we have limited access to internal audits and CPAs?**

Answer: If the accountant attest to your returns, and you supply a copy of your returns, that may that satisfy paragraph six on financial expectations". Detail must be provided as to why the applicant has no audits. In addition, your accountant should also provide a financial statement demonstrating the financial efficacy of the applicant.

- 14. Question: Should the documents that are not a part of the main proposal submission/questions be numbered in the footnote as well?**

Answer: Yes

- 15. Question: In the email submission of the full proposal, should the file attachment be one whole file including statements and signature pages, or can they be separated in order of attachments (per our table of contents) within the email?**

Answer: One whole attachment containing all pages. Do not separate into single attachments.

- 16. Question: The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) replaced the DUNS number as the primary identifier for entities doing business with the U.S. federal government on April 4, 2022. The cover sheet asks for organization's DUNS number, should we provide our UEI?**

Answer: Yes, please provide your UEI

- 17. Question: Can the Department clarify the expected staffing model for the IPS team for each region? Page 14 says the Department is looking for 5 FTE Employment Specialists & 1 Employment Supervisor to serve the entire 112 slots per region, but page 15 also asks respondents to “Demonstrate the ability to appropriately transition individuals from the Supported Employment Specialist caseload to another team member when the individual needs intermittent support”**

Answer: The expected staffing model is a ratio of 1 FTE employment specialist to serve 20 individuals. It is also expected that there will be .10 FTE employment supervisor per employment specialist. For example, if you are proposing to serve 60 individuals, your staffing pattern would be 3 FTE employment specialists (each serving 20 individuals) and a .30 FTE employment supervisor.

To answer the question regarding transitioning individuals, when the individual no longer needs direct support from an employment specialist, they can be transitioned to another staff member on their treatment team who might be able to provide intermittent support. For example: a clinician, case manager, etc.

- 18. Question: Page 8 of the RFP states “5. BENEFITS PLANNING: Employment Specialists help people obtain personalized, understandable, and accurate information about their Social Security, Medicaid, and other government entitlements, from a certified Benefits Counselor – Work Incentives Counselor” Are the Employment Specialists employed by this program expected to be certified Benefits Counselor – Work Incentives Counselor, if so how many (i.e. at least 1, all Employment Specialists) and which certification?**

Answer: No, the Employment Specialist is not expected to be a Certified Benefits Counselor. Individuals need to be referred to a “Certified Benefits Counselor” (e.g., Aging and Disability Services-Benefits Unit).

- 19. Question: Page 8 of the RFP also says “Target population for this program are individuals ages eighteen (18) and over who have a substance use disorder (SUD) or a co-occurring substance use and mental health condition and may also have a history of criminal justice involvement.” Are individuals in recovery considered part of the target population?**

Answer: Yes

- 20. Question: In the bidders’ conference, it was stated that “referral sources are not restricted”. Also, the bidders’ conference slides state, “potential referral sources can include but are not limited to: ASAM level 3.1 Substance Use Residential Treatment Programs, shelters, substance use intensive outpatient programs (IOPs), Recovery Houses and Sober Houses...” Based on this information, there appear to be several conflicts with scoring highly on the IPS Fidelity Scale. For example: Under the “Integration of rehabilitation of mental health treatment through team assignment”, it appears that the lower the percentage of clients coming from “up to two mental health treatment teams” or the more mental health teams to which program staff are assigned, the lower an IPS team would rate on the fidelity scale. Under the “Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment through frequent team member contact”, the ability to document into an integrated mental health treatment record may be eliminated, ability to participate in treatment team meetings may be hindered, etc. Do you think that IPS programs accepting referrals from any referral source will be able to achieve a score of at least 100 on the fidelity scale? Can you please highlight any other modifications to the IPS model that would be required through this grant?**

Answer: The IPS Fidelity tool will be adapted for these items.

21. Question: Will this new funding impact our current ROES census?

Answer: This question is specific to one of the current contractors. This RFP will be replacing any/all existing SU Supported Employment programs.

22. Question: If we only apply for a certain number of slots in a region, are we able to select which specific towns in the region we want to apply for? Or would we be assigned the towns?

Answer: Proposers are able to apply to serve a partial region and need to identify the towns they wish to cover. Based on other qualified applications for that region, there will be a negotiation process with the applicants to ensure that all regions have full coverage.

23. Question: Would you please release answers to questions submitted early, so that progress on our proposal is not impeded?

Answer: No, we can only release answers in one addendum.

24. Question: What educational credentials and work experience are required for the Employment Specialist positions? How about for the Supervisor position?

Answer: There are no specific requirements for the Employment Specialists and/or Supervisor. That decision is based on the organization's requirements.

25. Question: Do staff need to report client data in DDaP?

Answer: Yes

26. Question: Does IPS have a digital platform for data reporting that must be used?

Answer: Yes, through the IPS Employment Center there is platform for entering data.

27. Question: What are the supervision requirements for employment specialists and the supervisor? How often should individual supervision and team supervision be provided to maintain an IPS program with full model fidelity?

Answer: Individual supervision for Employment Specialists is expected to be weekly until the Employment Specialist is trained, then supervision can be every two weeks. Group supervision and/or the "unit team" meeting is expected to be weekly. The IPS Supervisor's supervision can be determined by the agency but would recommend at least every other week.

28. Question: IPS should provide continuous and more concentrated employment retention supports for at least 30 days that provide and titrate service and support levels as needed (time unlimited supports). Does this mean clients can stay in the program for as long as they want? How does that affect the 1 staff to 20 client ratio?

Answer: Yes, the IPS model describes "Time Unlimited supports". Not all participants require long-term support therefore caseloads are fluid depending on individual needs. Part of the IPS model also describes the IPS Supervisor carrying a small caseload when s/he/they are supervising fewer than ten Employment Specialists. This provides the opportunity for the IPS Supervisor to work with individuals who may need different types of support.

29. Question: Should the benefits counselor be an internal position supported, or is it acceptable to refer IPS clients to an outside agency for benefits counseling?

Answer: It is acceptable to refer individuals to external Certified Benefits Counselors.

- 30. Question: Could you please provide the Cover Page as either a Word document or fillable PDF document? The cover sheet that starts on page 35 of the RFP spills over onto page 36, which also includes the budget and budget narrative form.**

Answer: Please find attached to this addendum.

- 31. Question: Starting on page 15 of the RFP: Which numbers are the correct ones to use for each section in our proposal?**
- a. Work Plan is listed as #5,**
 - b. Financial Expectations as #6,**
 - c. Cultural Competence as #7,**
 - d. Budget and Budget Narrative as #8,**
 - e. Letters of Support as #9.**

Starting on page 25, these sections may be numbered differently:

- f. Subcontractors is listed as #5,**
- g. Work Plan as #6,**
- h. Financial Expectations as #7,**
- i. Budget and Budget Narrative as #8,**
- j. Cultural Competence as #9.**
- k. Letters of Support are not mentioned or included in the numbering**

Answer: Order is not important in your submission as long as the information is in the correct section of the proposal and clearly marked.

- 32. Question: On pages 14-15 of the RFP, under the Staffing Expectations section, there are the following subsections: Should we include a subsection c in Staffing Expectations section of our proposal? If so, what should the section be labeled as?**
- a. Team Overview**
 - b. General Capacity**
 - c. To submit a responsive proposal, the proposer shall...**

However, on page 24, under the Staffing Expectations section, there are only subsections a. Team Overview and b. General Capacity with the same labels as those listed on page 14.

Answer: Please respond to all of the questions/criteria outlined under “Staffing Expectations” on pages 14-15.

- 33. Question: Some of the items listed on pages 14-15 (#s 1-8) seem to fit under subsection a. Team Overview. Should we include a subsection c in Staffing Expectations section of our proposal? If so, what should the section be labeled as?**

Answer: Yes, please include subsection c in Staffing Expectations and please label it as “Staffing Expectations”.

- 34. Question: On pages 16 of the RFP, under the Cultural Competence section (#7), there is a single paragraph that contains the following questions:**

- Provide a detailed description of [how] you will ensure cultural competence and equity in the provision of services to individuals as well as in staffing patterns (diverse, multi-lingual staff, etc.).**
- Individuals will come from various social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and experiences...Therefore, the proposer should speak to experience working with such populations, examples of assisting/connecting individuals with mental illness from various**

socio-cultural backgrounds to the larger community, and ways you plan to deliver a culturally responsive substance use employment program.

However, on page 25, under the Cultural Competence section (#9), there are three subsections (a-c), with the following questions:

- What experience do you have interacting effectively and communicating with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds?
- Please provide an example of your work with underserved/under-represented groups of people or communities.
- Describe your proposed method of project management for this project or service.

Can you please clarify which set of questions we should respond to for the Cultural Competence section and what number this section should be (#7 or #9)?

Answer: Please respond to all questions in both sections.

- 35. Question: Will ISP [IPS] training will be provided by DMHAS or if we will be paying to obtain our own training in this evidence-based practice through our budget request?**

Answer: The International IPS Employment Center provides extensive training. Some of the training is free (IPS 101), There is a charge for other IPS training. The DMHAS Employment Systems Manager provides intermittent training when time permits in the areas of Job Development, Ethics and Boundaries, Professional conduct, DMHAS/BRS Protocol Training and secures other professionals including DMHAS employment providers to deliver training.

- 36. Question: On the proposal checklist on page 44 of the RFP, it says that the work plan may be included as an attachment. Is this accurate?**

Answer: Yes, the workplan should be included as an attachment and not considered part of the 15 pages.

- 37. Question: We are thinking clients might need interview clothes, work boots (if hired for certain jobs), etc. Are discretionary funds for clients allowable as part of our budget request?**

Answer: No, as there are several community-based resources that may provide these resources.

- 38. Question: Who are the current providers of this program?**

Answer: This information can be found on the DMHAS website: [Supported Employment Services](#)

- 39. Question: What are the minimum qualifications for an individual to seek a referral to this program?**

Answer: Please refer to target population described on page 14 of the RFP.

- 40. Question: Can you provide general formatted attachments? In the RFP, starting with attachment D. Cover Letter, the formatting pushes the information onto additional pages.**

Answer: Yes, it is provided in this addendum.

- 41. Question: For the 112 slots in each region is there a breakdown of the slots per each catchment area?**

Answer: No.

- 42. Question: On page 4 under 5. Contract Awards, the RFP states that the funding source is both State and Federal. Can the State provide a breakdown percentage for each? Does the State intend to solicit renewals, will this program be ongoing past the initial three years?**

Answer: Yes, these services will be on-going. The funding is approximately 18% federal and 72% state funding.

- 43. Question: On page 15 under 3. Staffing Expectations, subsection c.3. Regarding the .1 FTE Supervisor, what are the minimum qualifications with regard to that position's degree and/or work experience?**

Answer: See – response to question #24

- 44. Question: The June 13th deadline for questions has passed. What is the new deadline for questions?**

Answer: The new deadline for questions to be submitted is June 24th. Responses will be released by July 3rd.

- 45. Question: Does how much funding we get depend on the number of slots we request?**

Answer: Yes. It will be \$5,250 per slot.

- 46. Question: Should the number of slots we request be roughly proportionate to the population of the service area?**

Answer: This is up to the agency's discretion and should be based on what the agency feels they have the ability to serve.

- 47. Question: Are you looking for only one agency to be awarded in each region or are multiple agencies going to be awarded for the same region:**

Answer: Awardees are not limited to one per region. It is possible that multiple agencies may be awarded in each region. This will be determined by the quality and completeness of applications.

- 48. Question: Will IPS training be provided by DMHAS or will we be paying to obtain our own training in this evidence-based practice through our own budget request?**

Answer: Please see the answer to question #35

- 49. Question: Do staff need to report data in DDAP?**

Answer: Yes.

- 50. Question: What educational credentials and work experience are required for the employment specialist positions? And how about for the supervisor position?**

Answer: Duplicate question, please refer to answer to #24.

- 51. Question: Can you explain the number of slots available? Is that full-time employment specialist?**

Answer: The number of slots available in each region is 112, which means that 112 individuals will be served at any given time in each region. The IPS model indicates a ratio of one (1) FTE employment specialist per 20 individuals. Therefore, if an agency is proposing to serve 60 individuals in the region, they would need three (3) FTE employment specialists. To serve the total 112 individuals, they would need at least 5 FTE employment specialists and the Supervisor who carries a small caseload.

- 52. Question: If an individual is already getting employment services from an IPS provider, can they also be referred to this program since it also follows the IPS model?**

Answer: Individuals can only be served by one employment provider at a time so as not to duplicate services.

- 53. Question: Are we required to submit job descriptions?**

Answer: No.

- 54. Question: The chart on page 19 shows a 15 page limit but the checklist says a 25 page limit, which is correct?**

Answer: The correct page limit is 15.

- 55. Question: Are contracts or agreements from employment partners required? Are the required letters of support to be from employers? [Question in bidder's conference clarified to] If you are looking for letters of support, what expectations do you have in mind for that?**

Answer: Letters of support should be from whomever you feel would be able to speak to your organization's ability to carry out the services required and outlined in this RFP.

- 56. Question: Is the program intended to be embedded within a treatment environment or can it be separate so long as fully collaborating with treatment teams overseeing the SUD treatment of participants?**

Answer: As long as there is full collaboration with the individual's clinical service providers, the employment specialist does not need to be embedded on a clinical treatment team.

- 57. Question: How many contracts will be awarded per catchment area:**

Answer: That will be determined based on the number of qualified applications received.

- 58. Question: Is the cultural competence section #7 as listed on page 15 or #9 as listed on page 25?**

Answer: Duplicate question, please see response to question #34.

- 59. Question: Are letters of support included in the page limits?**

Answer: No.

- 60. Question: Page 15 and 24 ask for staff bios, page 45 asks for staff resumes of key staff. Do resumes need to be included?**

Answer: If you plan to hire new staff, resumes and bios may not be available. Resumes and bios can be included if you have them.

- 61. Question: What is the required capacity at any given time?**

Answer: The required capacity will be the total number of slots that the agency is awarded.

- 62. Question: Can you clarify bidding on a full region versus partial region and how to determine slots if bidding for a partial region?**

Answer: The total number of slots in each region is 112, but you may propose to serve less than 112 (this would be considered serving a "partial" region). Please clearly indicate the number of slots you are applying for in your proposal.

- 63. Question: On the proposal checklist on page 44 of the RFP it says that the work plan may be included as an attachment. Is that correct?**

Answer: Yes, the work plan should be included as an attachment and is not part of the 15-page application.

- 64. Question: Can multiple agencies from region 1 receive funding?**

Answer: Yes, multiple agencies may be awarded funding in each region.

- 65. Question: Are we limited to apply for only the geographic regions in our LOI?**

Answer: No.

- 66. Question: If a client is engaged in YACTT [a young adult services program] would they still qualify for this program?**

Answer: No.

- 67. Question: When you say, “zero exclusion”, what about undocumented individuals?**

Answer: DMHAS funded supported employment programs are the one program in which individuals who are undocumented are not served.

- 68. Question: Does IPS have a digital platform for data reporting that must be used?**

Answer: Yes, data will need to be reported in both DDAP and through the IPS Employment Center.

- 69. Question: Can we use interns for some of the work?**

Answer: The IPS model works best when staff are consistent. It would not be recommended to use interns.

- 70. Question: Are discretionary funds for clients allowable as part of our budget request?**

Answer: Please refer to question #37.

- 71. Question: In the traditional IPS [IPS] model, each ES would be assigned to a multidisciplinary team within the local mental health authority they are assigned to. This grant would be different and that we could potentially have many more referral service sources. How would this requirement be navigated? Same question would apply to charting.**

Answer: If awarded, this would need to be determined by your agency along with the referral sources. You should describe in your application how you would propose to collaborate with the clinical providers in your area.

- 72. Question: The RFP is written from the point of view of a new applicant. Can an agency providing these services for many years cite, for example, recent CARF accreditations, DMHAS Fidelity performance reviews, and network contract reviews as evidence of successful IPS service adherence and delivery?**

Answer: Yes, and we would strongly encourage proposers to include any and all information in your applications that speaks to your ability to provide the services outlined in the RFP, as evaluators can ONLY score proposers based upon the content of their applications and not based on current knowledge.

- 73. Question: Will today’s slide show be available?**

Answer: Yes, it was emailed to everyone that attended the conference. Please reach out to DMHAS.FiscalContracts@ct.gov if you did not receive it.

- 74. Question: IPS should provide continuous and more concentrated employment retention support for at least 30 days that titrates service and support levels as needed including time unlimited supports. Does this mean clients can stay in the program as long as they want? How does this affect the 1:20 client to staff ratio?**

Answer: Please refer to question #28.

- 75. Question: Confirm if separate proposals must be submitted for each region you plan to serve?**

Answer: Yes

- 76. Can you repeat whether job descriptions are required as part of the proposals?**

Answer: No, they are not.

77. Will this recording be available?

Answer: No.

78. Question: For the Cultural Competence section, do we answer the prompts on page 16 or page 25?

Answer: Duplicate question, please refer to question #34.

79. Question: Page 14 of the RFP states capacity/waitlist protocol, and there should not be a waitlist. There should be 5 employment specialists who serve up to 20 individuals each, along with one employment supervisor who also carries a small caseload of up to 12 people. If there are multiple awardees per region, what does this look like? Let's say one contractor is "full" and the other one isn't, would we look to the other contractor to take referrals so no one is put on a waitlist?

Answer: If a region has more than one provider, each provider would be assigned a certain geographic area. We want to ensure that programs engage as many of the individuals that are referred to their program as possible, which might include a brief engagement period before the individual is assigned to an employment specialist.

80. Question: Are electronic signatures acceptable?

Answer: Yes, they are.

81. Question: Is this [the provided] Budget Form appropriate for the submission?

Answer: There is a newer budget form that you can request. It is being attached in this addendum.

82. Question: How many budgets am I submitting? Is it just 1 annual budget that I pro-rate to 9 months?

Answer: You can add a column to the right on the budget form and make column 1 "year 1" with the prorated amount, then the next column can be annual. You may also submit two budgets if you find that easier.