

STATE OF CONNECTICUT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Request for Proposals (RFP) For HIV/AIDS Housing Support

RFP Name: AIDS Residential and HOPWA Rental
Assistance

Issued By:

Department of Housing

November 30, 2022

The Request For Proposal is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal by filtering by Organization for Department of Housing

<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

or from the Agency's Official Contact:

Name: Steve DiLella
Address: 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-271-8081
E-Mail: Steve.DiLella@ct.gov

The RFP is also available on the Department's website at

<http://www.ct.gov/doh>

RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN

January 28, 2023 At 3:00 pm EST

The Department of Housing is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or cancel this procurement at any time if deemed in the best interest of the State of Connecticut (State).

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name and Number.** AIDS Housing/ Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) 2023_735
2. **RFP Summary.** The State of Connecticut, Department of Housing (DOH), is seeking proposals from eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to provide housing and supportive services for people living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
3. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Agency wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:
 - 2000: Community and Social Services

■ B. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact.** The Agency has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Agency. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Agency employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Agency about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Steve DiLella
Address: 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-270-8081
E-Mail: Steve.DiLella@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

2. **Registering with State Contracting Portal.** Respondents must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration> if not already registered. Respondents shall submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal (on their supplier profile), which will be checked by the Agency contact.
 - Secretary of State recognition – Click on appropriate response
 - Non-profit status, if applicable
 - Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V
 - Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1):
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>

3. RFP Information. The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Agency's RFP Web Page
<https://portal.ct.gov/doh>
- State Contracting Portal (go to CTsource bid board, filter by "Department of Housing"
<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement check the Bid Board for any solicitation changes. Interested proposers may receive additional e-mails from CTsource announcing addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

4. Procurement Schedule. See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are non-binding target dates only (*). The Agency may amend the schedule as needed. Any change to non-target dates will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, the Agency's RFP Web Page.

- RFP Released: November 30, 2022
- RFP Conference: Not Applicable
- Letter of Intent Due: Not Applicable
- Deadline for Questions: December 14, 2022
- Answers Released: December 21, 2022
- Proposals Due: January 27, 2023

5. Contract Awards. The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Agency. The Agency anticipates the following:

- Total Funding Available: State AIDS: \$3,905,266
HOPWA: \$283,088
- Number of Awards: To be determined
- Contract Cost: Confidential
- Contract Term: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026

6. Eligibility. Private organizations (defined as non-state entities that are 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporations or partnerships) with principal place of business in Connecticut are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Individuals who are not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement.

7. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers. To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

To be considered for the right to negotiate a contract, a respondent must have demonstrated experience and focus on serving persons living with HIV/AIDS. Demonstration of abilities will occur in the proposal and must include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. Successfully providing supportive and/or scattered site housing or facility based services for persons living with HIV/AIDS for a minimum of two (2) years, or equivalent, for

example, supportive housing for other individuals with special needs such as persons with mental illness, substance use disorders, homelessness, or other disabilities; and

b. Experience with case management services in conjunction with supportive and/or scattered site housing or facility based services.

HOPWA:

To be considered for the right to negotiate a contract for HOPWA funding, a respondent must have demonstrated experience and focus on serving persons living with HIV/AIDS in the Balance of State Eligible Metropolitan Service Area (EMSA). The geographic areas that comprise the Balance of State EMSA are Litchfield County, Middlesex County, New London County, and Tolland County. Demonstration of abilities will occur in the proposal and must include, but not be limited to the following:

i. Successfully provided supportive housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS for a minimum of two (2) years, or equivalent, for example, supportive housing for other individuals with special needs such as persons with mental illness, substance use disorders, homelessness, or other disabilities;

ii. Currently provide case management services in conjunction with supportive housing;

iii. Currently provide services within the eligible EMSA(s) for which the respondent is seeking funding from the Department (the respondent's principal office need not be located within the EMSA).

iv. Provide services in accordance with the Housing First model

v. Are active participants in the Coordinated Access Network (CAN) in which the respondent is seeking funding from DOH. The CAN is a collaboration of service providers working together to streamline and standardize the process for homeless individuals and families to access assistance to help communities focus on rapidly ending each person's homelessness by connecting them with appropriate housing and resources as quickly as possible.

DOH reserves the right to reject the submission of any respondent that is in default of any current or prior contract with the State.

8. Letter of Intent. A Letter of Intent (LOI) is not required by this RFP.

9. Inquiry Procedures. All questions regarding this RFP or the Agency's procurement process must be directed, in writing, electronically, (e-mail) to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline(s) will be answered. However, the Agency will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Agency may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. If this RFP requires a LOI, the Agency reserves the right to answer questions only from those who have submitted such a letter. The Agency may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such.

The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Agency will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Agency's RFP Web Page

10. RFP Conference. An RFP conference will not be held to answer questions from prospective proposers.

11. Proposal Due Date and Time. The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time:

Proposals received after the due date and time will be ineligible and will not be evaluated. The Agency will send an official letter alerting late respondents of ineligibility.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- One (1) conforming electronic copy of the original proposal.

The proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

The electronic copy of the proposal must be emailed to official agency contact for this procurement. The subject line of the email must read: AIDS Residential and HOPWA Rental Assistance. Required forms and Attachments may be scanned and submitted as PDFs at the end of the main proposal document. Please ensure the entire email submission is less than 25MB as this reflects The Agency's server limitations. Respondents should work to ensure there are not additional IT limitations from the provider side.

Proposers should keep original signatures on file for future reference.

12. Multiple Proposals. The submission of multiple proposals is not an option for this procurement. Respondents should indicate if they are applying for only State funds, only HOPWA funds, or a combination of both. One proposal may include services to be provided within more than one Coordinated Access Network (CAN). [The CT CAN Map is embedded here.](#)

II. PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

■ A. AGENCY OVERVIEW

DOH strengthens and revitalizes communities by promoting affordable housing opportunities. DOH seeks to eliminate homelessness and to catalyze the creation and preservation of quality, affordable housing to meet the needs of all individuals and families statewide to ensure that Connecticut continues to be a great place to live and work.

DOH works in concert with municipal leaders, public agencies, community groups, local housing authorities, and other housing developers in the planning and development of affordable homeownership and rental housing units, the preservation of existing multi-family housing developments, community revitalization and financial and other support for our most vulnerable residents through our funding and technical support programs. As the State's lead agency for all matters relating to housing, DOH provides leadership for all aspects of policy and planning relating to the development, redevelopment, preservation, maintenance and improvement of housing serving very low, low, and moderate income individuals and families. DOH is also responsible for overseeing compliance with applicable

statutes, regulations and financial assistance agreements for funded activities through long-term program compliance monitoring.

Department Mission

DOH's mission is to ensure everyone has access to quality housing opportunities and options throughout the State of Connecticut.

■ **B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

AIDS Residential (AID) Program

The AID Program is funded by DOH to provide CAN's with resources to devise and implement long-term, comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of low-income persons with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and related diseases, and their families.

Respondents may request AID program funds for at least one and at most all of the following eligible activities:

- **Scattered Site Housing with Support Services:** A housing subsidy provided for use on the open rental market. The tenant holds a lease with a private landlord for a unit that is rented at or under Fair Market Rent as defined by HUD and that meets Housing Quality/Habitability Standards as defined by HUD. Housing costs include rent, utility costs, and security deposits. Support services may not exceed \$9,000 per household/unit
- **Congregate Living Program with Support Services:** Expenditures to support housing facilities including community residences, single-room occupancy dwellings, skilled nursing facilities and master-leased units. Housing costs include facility operating costs. Support services may not exceed \$9,000 per household/unit.
- **Supportive Services only:** Expenditures for services that improve the health and well-being of eligible persons and their households. Services may be provided in conjunction with housing assistance or separately. Examples include case management, meals and nutritional services, adult day care, education, employment assistance, alcohol and drug abuse services, mental health services, and transportation assistance. Support Services may not exceed \$9,000 per household/unit.

NOTE: Proposals exceeding \$9,000 per household/unit based on annual capacity will not be funded. For example, 2 households served for six months each is counted as one annual unit.

- **Rapid Rehousing with Support Services for literally homeless clients:** a combination of housing relocation and stabilization services combined with financial assistance, if necessary, to help homeless households (individuals and families) to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve housing stability. Proposals including rapid rehousing as an eligible activity must itemize separately stabilization case management activities and financial assistance activities. Key Principles of Rapid Rehousing:
 - a. **Housing focus.** Homelessness is first and foremost a housing problem and should be treated as such. A housing focus understands the individual's or family's immediate barriers to obtaining and keeping housing and then finds ways to eliminate or compensate for those barriers. Non-housing related barriers are addressed if and when the program participant chooses.
 - b. **Housing comes first.** The program participant is assisted to obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible and is connected to resources necessary to sustain that housing. Permanent housing is the immediate goal. If there are skills that the participant needs to sustain housing, those skills are addressed and learned while the participant is residing in the participant's own housing.
 - c. **Choice and respect.** Families and individuals are empowered to make their own choices about housing and services and to respond to the consequences of those choices.

d. Just enough assistance. The minimum assistance (financial and/or housing supports) necessary is provided for the shortest period of time possible. Barriers are identified at the outset of services and supports are provided to eliminate those barriers and improve the household's ability to sustain housing.

An eligible client is a person with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or tested to be seropositive for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) who is also an individual with a low income (not earning in excess of 80 percent of the median income for the area, as defined in Title 24 Code of Federal Regulations Section 574.3). The household of an eligible client is also eligible for assistance. No minimum income requirement for eligible clients is permitted and programs may not establish their own.

Balance of State Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)

The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HOPWA program was authorized by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 and revised under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, to provide states and localities with the resources and incentives to devise and implement long-term, comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of low-income persons with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and related diseases, and their families.

Eligible respondents are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with experience and focus on serving persons living with HIV/AIDS in the Balance of State Eligible Metropolitan Service Area (EMSA). **The geographic areas that comprise the Balance of State EMSA are Litchfield County, New London County, Middlesex County, and Tolland County.** Contractors shall administer HOPWA assistance to eligible persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, supporting HUD's HOPWA program goals and the State's Consolidated and Annual Action Plan goals and objectives, primarily:

- HOPWA-assisted households will establish or better maintain a stable living environment;
- HOPWA-assisted households will have improved access to care and support; and
- HOPWA-assisted households will have a reduced risk of homelessness.

Respondents may request HOPWA funds for the following eligible activities, per HUD regulations 24 CFR 574:

- **Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA):** A housing subsidy provided for use on the open rental market. The tenant holds a lease with a private landlord for a unit that is rented at or under Fair Market Rent and that meets Housing Quality/Habitability Standards. Costs include rent, utility costs, and security deposits.
- **Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities (STRMU):** A housing subsidy provided to prevent homelessness of mortgagors or renters in their current place of residence. Contractors may provide assistance for rent, mortgage, and/or utilities for a period of up to 21 weeks in any 52-week period. Ongoing assessment of need is required and individual service plans must address housing stability.
- **Facility-Based Housing Assistance:** Expenditures to support housing facilities including community residences, single-room occupancy dwellings, project-based units, and master-leased units.
- **Supportive Services:** Expenditures for services that improve the health and well-being of eligible persons and their households. Services may be provided in conjunction with housing assistance or separately. Examples include case management, meals and nutritional services, adult day care, education, employment assistance, alcohol and drug abuse services, mental health services, and transportation assistance.

- **Administrative/Indirect Costs:** For general management, oversight, coordination, evaluation, and reporting on eligible activities. Cannot exceed 7 percent of the total funding request.

An eligible client is a person with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or tested to be seropositive for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) who is also an individual with low income (not earning in excess of 80 percent of the median income for the area, as defined in Title 24 Code of Federal Regulations Section 574.3). The household of an eligible client is also eligible for assistance. Residence within the Balance of State EMSA is also required. No minimum income requirement for HOPWA-eligible clients is permitted and programs may not establish their own.

For more information on the HOPWA program, see the Administering HOPWA Housing Assistance Fact Sheet, which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

[AdministeringHOPWAHousingAssistance.pdf](#)

■ C. SCOPE OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION

1. Organizational Expectations

Private provider organizations (defined as nonstate entities that are 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations or partnerships) with principal place of business in Connecticut are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Individuals who are not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement. To be considered for the right to negotiate a contract, a respondent must the following minimum qualifications:

- a. Successfully provided supportive housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS for a minimum of two (2) years, or equivalent, for example, supportive housing for other individuals with special needs such as persons with mental illness, substance use disorders, homelessness, or other disabilities;
- b. Currently provide case management services in conjunction with supportive housing;
- c. Principal place of business in Connecticut (need not be located within the EMSA).
 - For HOPWA, currently providing services in the Balance of State EMSA eligible areas
- d. Provide services in accordance with the Housing First model, and
- e. Are active participants of the CAN in which the respondent is seeking funding from the Department

2. Service Expectations

Applicants may apply for one or both of the below services (State AIDS or HOPWA Balance of State). Please refer to the [AIDS CT Housing Standards of Care](#) for full details of programmatic expectations.

State AIDS Funding Eligible Activities:

- **Scattered Site Housing with Support Services:** A housing subsidy provided for use on the open rental market. The tenant holds a lease with a private landlord for a unit that is rented at or under Fair Market Rent and that meets Housing Quality/Habitability Standards. Costs include rent, utility costs, and security deposits.
- **Congregate Living Program with Support Services:** Expenditures to support housing facilities including community residences, single-room occupancy dwellings, skilled nursing facilities, and master-leased units.
- **Supportive Services only:** Expenditures for services that improve the health and well-being of eligible persons and their households. Services may be provided in conjunction with housing assistance or separately. Examples include case

management, meals and nutritional services, adult day care, education, employment assistance, alcohol and drug abuse services, mental health services, and transportation assistance.

- Rapid Rehousing with Support Services for literally homeless clients: a combination of housing relocation and stabilization services combined with financial assistance, if necessary, to help homeless households (individuals and families) to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve housing stability. Proposals including rapid rehousing as an eligible activity must break out stabilization case management activities and financial assistance activities.

HOPWA Funding Eligible Activities:

- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance
- Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities Assistance
- Facility-Based Housing Assistance
- Supportive Services (not to exceed \$3,500.00 per unit in TBRA or per client in Facility-Based Housing Assistance programs)
- Administrative/Indirect Costs (not to exceed 7 percent of the total funding request).

Programs are expected to abide by the Housing First Model:

Housing First is a programmatic and systems approach that center on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed using a (1) low barrier approach that emphasizes (2) community integration, (3) recovery and harm reduction, (4) stable tenancy, recovery and (5) individual tenant choice.

1. Low barrier approach to entry:

Housing First is a permanent supportive housing model for individuals and families experiencing homelessness that does not stipulate any prerequisites before entering housing. For example:

- Admission/tenant screening and selection practices do not require abstinence from substances, completion of or compliance with treatment, or participation in services.
- Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor or lack of credit or income, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal convictions, or other factors that might indicate a lack of "housing readiness."
- Blanket exclusionary criteria based on more serious criminal convictions are not applied, though programs may consider such convictions on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of other residents and staff.
- Generally, only those admission criteria that are required by funders are applied, though programs may also consider additional criteria on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of tenants and staff. Application of such additional criteria should be rare, and may include, for example, denial of an applicant who is a high risk registered sex offender by a project serving children, or denial of an applicant who has a history of domestic violence involving a current participant.

2. Community integration and recovery:

Housing is integrated into the community and tenants are supported to form connections outside of the project.

- Housing is located in neighborhoods that are accessible to community resources and services such as schools, libraries, houses of worship, grocery stores, laundromats, doctors, dentists, parks, and other recreation facilities.
- Efforts are made to make the housing look and feel similar to other types of housing in the community and to avoid distinguishing the housing as a program that serves people with special needs.
- Services are designed to help tenants build supportive relationships, engage in personally meaningful activities, and regain or develop new roles in their families and communities.

3. Recovery and Harm Reduction

Services are recovery-based and designed to help tenants gain control of their own lives, define their personal values, preferences, and visions for the future, establish meaningful individual short and long-term goals, and build hope that the things they want out of life are attainable. Services are focused on helping tenants achieve the things that are important to them and goals are not driven by staff priorities or selected from a pre-determined menu of options.

Harm Reduction: Describe how the respondent will incorporate harm reduction in program policies and practices. Harm reduction can be described as a strategy directed toward individuals that aims to reduce the harms associated with certain behaviors. When applied to substance abuse, harm reduction accepts that a continuing level of drug use (both licit and illicit) in society is inevitable and defines objectives as reducing adverse consequences. It emphasizes the measurement of health, social and economic outcomes, as opposed to the measurement of drug consumption.

4. Stable Tenancy Lease compliance and housing retention

Tenants are expected to comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with services and supports to help maintain housing and prevent eviction.

- Leases do not include stipulations beyond those that are customary, legal, and enforceable under Connecticut law.
- No program rules beyond those that are customary, legal, and enforceable through a lease are applied (e.g., visitor policies should be equivalent to those in other types of permanent, lease-based housing in the community).
- Services are designed to identify and reduce risks to stable tenancy and to overall health and well-being.

Retention in housing is contingent only on lease compliance and is not contingent on abstinence from substances or compliance with services, treatment or other clinical requirements. For example:

- Tenants are not terminated involuntarily from housing for refusal to participate in services or for violating program rules that are not stipulated in the lease.
- Transitional housing programs offer participants due process to resolve issues that may result in involuntary discharge (unless immediate risk to health and safety)
- Permanent housing providers only terminate occupancy of housing in cases of noncompliance with the lease or failure of a tenant to carry out obligations under Connecticut's Landlord and Tenant Act (Chapter 830 of the Connecticut General Statute http://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_830.htm).
- In order to terminate housing, PH providers are required to use the legal court eviction process.

Separation of housing and services

Projects are designed in such a manner that the roles of property management (e.g., housing application, rent collection, repairs, and eviction) and supportive services staff are clearly defined and distinct.

- Property management and support service functions are provided either by separate legal entities or by staff members whose roles do not overlap.
- There are defined processes for communication and coordination across the two functions to support stable tenancy.
- Those processes are designed to protect client confidentiality and share confidential information on a need to know basis only.

5. Individual Tenant Choice

Efforts are made to maximize tenant choice, including type, frequency, timing, location and intensity of services and whenever possible choice of neighborhoods, apartments, furniture, and décor.

- Staff accepts tenant choices as a matter of fact without judgment and provides services that are non-coercive to help people achieve their personal goals.
- Staff accepts that risk is part of the human experience and helps tenants to understand risks and reduce harm caused to themselves and others by risky behavior.
- Staff understands the clinical and legal limits to choice and intervenes as necessary when someone presents a danger to self or others.
- Staff helps tenants to understand the legal obligations of tenancy and to reduce risk of eviction.
- Projects provide meaningful opportunities for tenant input and involvement when designing programs, planning activities and determining policies.

3. Staffing Expectations

- Staff meets the current caseload requirements.
- Case managers attended 10 hours or more of case management training during the year, 3 hours of which must be HIV medical trainings.
- Coverage hours clearly defined and include 24 hour on-call supervision.
- Case manager and program supervisor job descriptions and qualifications are standardized and contain clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- There is a clear and ongoing evaluation of employee performance.

4. Data and Technology Expectations

- Both State AIDS and HOPWA must document all client data in the Connecticut Homeless Management Information System (CTHMIS) and run Annual Progress Reports (APR) for submission to DOH.
- Details on HMIS requirements can be found [Program Info & Tools < CTHMIS.com](#)

5. Financial Expectations

- *Financial Control Procedures*- Respondents should provide information about their financial control procedures.
- *Audited Financial Statement*- Respondents should provide its latest completed audited financial statement.

6. Budget Expectations

- Respondents should provide separate budgets for State AIDS and/or HOPWA funding.

■ D. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance metrics highlight key priorities that will be analyzed with providers collaboratively during the life of the contract. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an indication of significant performance metrics of interest to The Agency. The Agency looks forward to working with providers to define additional important performance metrics.

HUD has three primary objectives that it seeks to achieve through the HOPWA program:

- Increased stability for participants in housing that is safe, decent, and sanitary
- Reduced risk of homelessness
- Increased access to care and support

Please see <https://www.aids-ct.org/pdf/gata/standards-2020-fillable.pdf> for the comprehensive monitoring guide through AIDS CT that all DOH grantees will be evaluated on.

■ E. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/DATA REPORTING

As part of the State's commitment to becoming more outcomes-oriented, DOH, seeks to actively and regularly collaborate with providers to enhance contract management, improve results, and adjust service delivery and policy based on learning what works. Reliable and relevant data is necessary to ensure compliance, inform trends to be monitored, evaluate results and performance, and drive service improvements. As such, DOH reserves the right to request/collect other key data and metrics from providers.

- Grantees will be responsible for submitting annual CTHMIS APR reports on all DOH AIDS and HOPWA funded programs.
- Grantees will be responsible for submitting all client files and data required to participate in the Advancing Connecticut Together (ACT) annual program monitoring. ACT is the organization contracted by DOH to annually review and monitor contractors selected from this RFP process.

III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OVERVIEW

■ A. SUBMISSION FORMAT INFORMATION

1. **Required Outline.** All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.
2. **Cover Sheet.** The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. Proposers must complete and use the [Cover Sheet](#) form provided by the Agency in the Appendix.
3. **Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms with the required proposal outline.
4. **Executive Summary.** Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding 2 pages, of the main proposal and cost proposal. The summary must also include the organization's eligibility and qualifications to respond to this RFP.
5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Attachments or Forms identified in the RFP are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Attachments or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.

6. Style Requirements. *THIS IS AN ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION*

Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:

- Paper Size: 8.5"x11" format
- Page Limit: 15 pages
- Font Size: 11 point minimum
- Font Type: Arial or Tahoma
- Margins: 1"
- Line Spacing: Single Spaced

- 7. Pagination.** The proposer's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, including the required Attachments and Forms, must be numbered in the footer.

8. Packaging and Labeling Requirements. n/a

- 9. Declaration of Confidential Information.** Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. In subsection F of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b)

the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

10. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Agency will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ B. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- 1. Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Agency to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Agency will conform to its written procedures for POS and PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85). Final funding allocation decisions will be determined during contract negotiation.
- 2. Evaluation Review Committee.** The Agency will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Review Committee will be composed of individuals, Agency staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Review Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. The Review Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The Commissioner will make the final selection. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Review Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.
- 3. Minimum Submission Requirements.** To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) be received on or before the due date and time; (2) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (3) meet the Eligibility and Qualification requirements to respond to the procurement, (4) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (5) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Agency will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.
- 4. Evaluation Criteria (and Weights).** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are

the objective standards that the Review Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The weights are disclosed below.

- Organizational Profile 20%
- Scope of Services 30%
- Staffing Plan 10%
- Data and Technology 10%
- Subcontractors 5%
- Financial Profile 10%
- Budget and Budget Narrative 15%

Note:

As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Review Committee will review the proposer's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

- 5. Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Review Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Commissioner or Agency Head. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the Commissioner or Agency Head. Any proposer selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Agency. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Agency's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The Agency reserves the right to decline to award contracts for activities in which the Commissioner or Agency Head considers there are not adequate respondents.
- 6. Debriefing.** Within ten (10) days of receiving notification from the Agency, unsuccessful proposers may contact the Official Contact and request information about the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the ten (10) days. If unsuccessful proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Agency to discuss the evaluation process and their proposals. If held, the debriefing meeting will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals. The Agency may schedule and hold the debriefing meeting within fifteen (15) days of the request. The Agency will not change, alter, or modify the outcome of the evaluation or selection process as a result of any debriefing meeting.
- 7. Appeal Process.** Proposers may appeal any aspect the Agency's competitive procurement, including the evaluation and proposer selection process. Any such appeal must be submitted to the Agency head. A proposer may file an appeal at any time after the proposal due date, but not later than thirty (30) days after an agency notifies unsuccessful proposers about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. The filing of an appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Agency to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.

- 8. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Agency's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the Agency website.

IV. REQUIRED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Cover Sheet

B. Table of Contents

C. Executive Summary

D. Main Proposal

E. Attachments (clearly referenced to summary and main proposal where applicable)

F. Declaration of Confidential Information

G. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement

H. Statement of Assurances

A: Cover Sheet

The Respondent must include the Cover Sheet linked in this proposal.

Legal Name is defined as the name of private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality submitting the proposal. *Contact Person* is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal. *Authorized Official* is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

B: Table of Contents

Respondents must include a Table of Contents that lists sections and subsections with page numbers that follow the organization outline and sequence for this proposal.

C: Proposer Executive Summary

The page limitation for this section is 2 pages briefly describing how the Respondent meets the eligibility and qualification criteria outlined in the Proposal Overview and a brief overview of why the Respondent should be selected for the activities highlighted in the scope of services.

D: Main Proposal Submission Requirements To Submit a Responsive Proposal

*****Please note the maximum total page length for this section is 15 pages** (all Attachments and other attachments should be referred to in section D and then placed in section E. The Agency Review Committee will not read answers longer than 15 pages in this section.

4.1 Application Submission Details

4.1 (a) *Application Service Geography*: Applications should clearly identify in which region they are proposing services, including the specific towns.

4.1 (b) *Application Target Population*: Applicants must identify the community and population needs they plan to address through their proposed services. Applications should indicate which of the Agency identified target population(s) they are going to serve, based on supporting evidence of need and agency experience.

4.1 (c) *Application Funding Request*: Specify what funding type (State AIDS and/or HOPWA) you are requesting. If HOPWA, specify the geography that falls under the HOPWA Balance of State that is eligible.

4.2 Strengths and Qualifications of Agency & Staff

Organization Description and History: Provide a general overview of your organization including its history and prior experiences engaging with relevant key stakeholders such as HIV/AIDS population, the community, and local government officials.

A responsive proposal shall include a summary of the respondent's overall qualifications to conduct an AIDS or HOPWA program. If the respondent is proposing the use of any subcontractors or partners to provide any funded activity of the services required by this RFP, provide this information about each subcontractor and partner. At a minimum, the respondent must include the following specific details regarding the respondent's organization:

- a. *Purpose/Mission*: Describe how the proposed AID program fits within the organization's mission and current programs configuration. Summarize the services the organization currently provides within the CAN (s) for which the respondent is seeking funding. Submit Agency Organizational chart in Section E. Attachments.
- b. *Entity Type/Years of Operation*: Give a brief overview of the organization. Demonstrate a minimum of two years of experience providing supportive housing and/or support services for persons living with HIV/AIDS or equivalent, for example, supportive housing for other individuals with special needs such as persons with mental illness or substance use disorders, homelessness, or other disabilities, and providing case management services in conjunction with housing. Detail the current number of clients being served, client-to-staff ratio, funding source(s), and successes.
- c. *Qualifications and Relevant Experience*: Summarize the respondent's ability to administer city, state and/or federal grants. Describe any potential risks to DOH and risks that could be encountered by acting as a DOH contractor; propose solutions or approaches for managing those risks that show the respondent's familiarity and sensitivity with performing the work proposed in the respondent's response to this RFP.
- d. *References*: Provide three (3) specific programmatic references (not letters of reference). References must be persons able to comment on the organization's capability to perform the services specified in this RFP. References must include the company name, and the name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address of a specific contact person. The contact person must be an individual familiar with the organization and its day-to-day performance. References cannot be the organization's current employees. If the organization has been a State of Connecticut contractor within the past five years, the organization must include a State of Connecticut reference. The organization may include a DOH reference in the proposal; however, the individual may have to refuse if s/he will be involved in the evaluation of proposals

received in response to this RFP. Organizations are strongly encouraged to contact their planned references in advance to ensure the accuracy of their contact information and their willingness and ability to provide references. DOH expects to contact these references as part of the evaluation process.

e. Unique Entity Identifier: List the organization's UEI identification number.

f. Collaboration: Describe the current and/or previous collaboration with other housing and supportive service providers within the CAN(s) and its impact on improving service delivery and reducing barriers to effectively keep clients in stable housing. Provide a specific list of the providers and describe the benefit of the collaboration. Describe agency participation in regular CAN meetings, Continuum of Care meetings, Community Care Teams and CT Opening Doors committee meetings, if any.

g. Quality Assurance:

1. Describe the organization's internal quality assurance process and its impact upon program operations, how it has enabled the organization to comply with the requirements of the ACT Quality Assurance Review Process (QARP).

2. External Quality Assurance Process: Indicate the score and any recommendations from the organization's 2021 ACT Quality Assurance Review Process (QARP, also known as the ACT audit). If no ACT audit was conducted in 2021, please indicate the score and recommendations from the 2020 ACT audit. If the organization has not participated in the ACT audit, indicate in what type of external quality assurance process the organization has participated and the results of that process. If the organization has not participated in an external quality assurance process, state such.

3. Client Satisfaction Process: Describe the respondent's client satisfaction process (surveys, etc.). Summarize feedback (number and percent of returned surveys, summary of concerns expressed by clients, etc.). Give a brief narrative of the respondent's follow-up actions or plans regarding concerns raised by clients. Include a copy of the respondent's client satisfaction survey, if applicable, in Section E. Attachments.

4. Program Audit Compliance: State the respondent's experience being in compliance with past contracts and/or directives. State any deficiencies identified in recent annual program audits, monitoring or corrective action plans, and if applicable, steps taken to complete any recommendations.

4.3 Scope of Services

A responsive proposal shall thoroughly address each of the following including specifying where appropriate, the use of any subcontractors or partners:

A. Eligible Activities: identify which of the following eligible activity(ies) will be addressed. Eligible activities shall include one or more of the following:

State AIDS

- Scattered Site Housing with Support Services: A housing subsidy provided for use on the open rental market. The tenant holds a lease with a private landlord for a unit that is rented at or under Fair Market Rent and that meets Housing Quality/Habitability Standards. Costs include rent, utility costs, and security deposits.
- Congregate Living Program with Support Services: Expenditures to support housing facilities including community residences, single-room occupancy dwellings, skilled nursing facilities, and master-leased units.
- Supportive Services only: Expenditures for services that improve the health and well-being of eligible persons and their households. Services may be provided in conjunction with housing assistance or separately. Examples include case

management, meals and nutritional services, adult day care, education, employment assistance, alcohol and drug abuse services, mental health services, and transportation assistance.

- Rapid Rehousing with Support Services for literally homeless clients: a combination of housing relocation and stabilization services combined with financial assistance, if necessary, to help homeless households (individuals and families) to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve housing stability. Proposals including rapid rehousing as an eligible activity must break out stabilization case management activities and financial assistance activities.

HOPWA

- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (project the number of clients to be assisted);
- Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities Assistance (project the number of clients to be assisted);
- Facility-Based Housing Assistance (indicate the total number of units in the housing facility and the number of units to be assisted by these funds);
- Supportive Services (not to exceed \$3,500.00 per unit in TBRA or per client in Facility-Based Housing Assistance programs);
- Administrative/Indirect Costs (not to exceed 7 percent of the total funding request).

B. Service/Catchment Area(s): Identify the proposed CAN(s) for this proposal, and the specific cities and towns where the potential clients will reside.

C. Service Populations: Identify who will receive such services, and include specific populations, if any (for example, women with children, single men, single women, etc.)

D. Service Capacity/Delivery Plan/Systems/Processes/Protocols: Describe the proposed supportive housing program(s) for persons living with HIV/AIDS including:

- the criteria and process that will be used to determine that clients served are low- and moderate-income;
- how the proposed program will work with local CAN (s) to identify individuals that may be eligible for your proposed program model
- a description of the proposed supportive services and how they will be made available to households receiving AID program housing assistance (households shall be defined as a unit of one (1) or more individuals living together in one dwelling);
- for scattered site and rapid rehousing programs, how the program will assist clients with locating apartments that meet housing quality standards as defined by HUD;
- how client services and resources will be coordinated with other service providers to improve service delivery and reduce barriers to effectively keep clients in stable housing;
- if applicable, the proposed protocol for providing a housing subsidy directly to a landlord;
- how a supportive housing care plan will be created and implemented with each individual/household that meets AIDS CT "Standards of Care"; which are embedded in this section as a hyperlink; <https://www.aids-ct.org/pdf/qata/standards-2020-fillable.pdf>
- other sources of funding the program receives (for example, DSS, DMHAS) and how these funds will be used to complement AID program services; and
- hours of operation.

E. Client Eligibility: Describe the process for determining client eligibility for housing and supportive services including enrollment in Medicaid and other entitlement programs.

F. Goals: Since permanent housing and/or a stable living environment is the ultimate goal and expected outcome, describe the procedures that will be in place to monitor the progress of clients from entrance into the program to permanent placement and beyond.

G. Housing First Model: Describe how the proposed program will be consistent with the following Housing First standards.

H. Harm Reduction: Describe how the respondent will incorporate harm reduction in program policies and practices. Harm reduction can be described as a strategy directed toward individuals that aims to reduce the harms associated with certain behaviors. When applied to substance abuse, harm reduction accepts that a continuing level of drug use (both licit and illicit) in society is inevitable and defines objectives as reducing adverse consequences. It emphasizes the measurement of health, social and economic outcomes, as opposed to the measurement of drug consumption.

I. Funding Contingency Plan: Describe how the respondent will be prepared to transition clients from this program to other stable housing should funding no longer be provided by DOH after the contract period.

4.4 Staffing Plan

A responsive proposal shall include the following information about the number and qualifications of staff that the respondent intends to employ to deliver the services required by this RFP. If the respondent is proposing the use of any subcontractors or partners to provide any of the services required by this RFP, provide this information about each subcontractor and partner.

a. Key Personnel: Provide the names and/or titles of proposed personnel, the number of hours per week and percentage of time to be dedicated to the program, and how this staffing pattern will successfully meet this RFP's requirements in light of any other similar obligations for any other entity. Indicate vacant or new positions. Summarize the organization's procedures to secure and retain professional staff, and the method of evaluating personnel performance. Identify who will be responsible for program management responsibilities that shall include, but not be limited to: a) day-to-day oversight of the program; b) attending all program meetings at the request of DOH; and c.) responding to DOH's requests for program status updates, and ad hoc and interim reports.

Job Descriptions/Resumes: Attach current job descriptions in Section E. Attachments for all proposed funded positions and resumes for all key personnel that are currently employed by the organization.

b. Staff-to-Client Ratio: Describe the support staff (case manager) to client ratio proposed for the program and the rationale used to arrive at that ratio.

NOTE: There is no pre-set ratio determined by DOH.

4.5 Data and Technology

A responsive proposal shall provide the following information about the respondent's information management and performance measurement systems. If the respondent is proposing the use of any subcontractors or partners to provide any of the services required by this RFP, provide this information about each subcontractor and partner.

a. Describe the respondent's capacity to collect client level data using HMIS or the respondent's ability to implement such data collection no later than three months after the resulting contract start date.

b. Please describe how you use data (HMIS or other system) to determine program effectiveness, analyzing the attached HMIS report submitted, if applicable. Current providers of AIDS residential services to DOH shall submit a copy of the HMIS report labeled HOPWA APR report from January 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022, in Section E. Attachments to demonstrate the ability to utilize HMIS and analyze reports.

4.6 Subcontractors

The use of subcontractors and partnerships is allowed. If the respondent is proposing the use of any subcontractors or partners to provide any of the services required by this RFP, each subcontractor and partner must be identified in the proposal. Landlords are not considered subcontractors/partners. All subcontractors and partners are subject to DOH's prior approval. Information that is requested about the respondent must also be provided about each subcontractor and partner where indicated throughout the RFP.

In addition, a responsive proposal must include the following information about each proposed subcontractor and partner.

- a. Legal Name, Mailing Address, Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), and UEI number
- b. Contact Person Name, Title, Telephone Number, E-mail Address
- c. Services to be provided
- d. Subcontract or Partnership Agreement Cost and Term
- e. A Selected respondents shall be required to submit a copy of a written agreement with each subcontractor and partner prior to contract execution with DOH.
- f. A letter of support from each subcontractor and partner, indicating willingness to perform all the services to be provided throughout the entire contract period, shall be included in Section E. Attachments. Each letter must specify the services that will be provided and be signed by an authorized official of the subcontractor or partner.

4.7 Financial Profile

A responsive proposal shall include the following information about the proposer's fiscal stability, accounting and financial reporting systems, and relevant business practices.

- a. Financial Capacity: Describe the respondent's financial capacity to properly isolate State AIDS and/or HOPWA-related income and expenditures. Discuss the internal controls used to ensure that i) a thorough record of expenditures can be provided for purposes of an audit and ii) administrative/indirect costs on AID program funds that were previously administered by the respondent did not exceed 18 percent (State AIDS) or 7% for HOPWA funds.

Submit one (1) copy of the respondent's most recent annual financial statements prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant and reviewed or audited in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) (USA) and one copy of Form 990. The copies shall include all applicable financial statements, auditor's reports, management letters, and any corresponding reissued components. These copies do not count toward the total page limit of the proposal. One copy only of each shall be included with the original proposal in Section E Attachments.

b. Leveraged Funds: Describe the respondent's long-term strategy to sustain funding for the program and explain how DOH AID program funds may be used to leverage other funding.

c. Mixed Funding: If the respondent proposes to assign staff to this program that are paid from various funding sources, describe how staff time utilized for this program will be tracked for AID Residential-eligible expenditures only. In addition, demonstrate how AID Residential-eligible clients will be distinguished from the respondent's other housing programs, which might have different eligibility requirements.

4.8 Cost Competitiveness and Budget Narrative

a. Budget: A responsive proposal shall include a line item budget that depicts the allowable costs associated with the program, utilizing the budget form that is embedded in this section as a hyperlink. [Blank DOH AID budget - DOH.xls](#) All pages should be submitted and, as they are forms, are not included in the page limit. Start-up costs should be minimal and prudent; proposals will be competitively scored on financial feasibility. Provide separate and clearly identified budgets for State AIDS and HOPWA if applying for both.

b. Budget Narrative: A responsive proposal shall detail how costs included in the line item budget were calculated. Either Microsoft Office Word or Excel format is acceptable. Allowable costs are those associated with the following eligible activities.

Note 1: DOH reserves the right to fund portions of a proposed budget and/or require adjustments.

Note 2: DOH reserves the right to consider all factors including cost in the final selection of a successful respondent. The opportunity to negotiate a contract with DOH will not be awarded based on cost alone.

Note 3. Proposals exceeding \$9,000 per household/unit based on annual capacity will not be funded for State AIDS. For example, 2 households served for six months each is counted as one annual unit.

E: Attachments

Attachments other than the required attachments identified are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required attachments must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions may result in disqualification.

- a. Agency Organizational Chart
- b. Job Descriptions
- c. Resumes of Key Personnel
- d. Client Satisfaction Surveys
- e. HMIS Report
- f. Letter of Support from Subcontractor (if applicable)
- g. Audited Financial Statements
- h. Form 990

F: Declaration of Confidential Information

If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. The proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information

from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

G: Conflict of Interest – Disclosure Statement

Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

H: Statement of Assurances

The Statement of Assurances appears as the last page of this RFP. Place after Conflict of Interest-Disclosure Statement. Sign and return.

V. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. POS STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract" for POS:

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, reports, terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting POS contract. A sample of Part I is available from the Department's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the POS contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-POS/Standards/POS-Standard-Contract-Part-II>

Note:

Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations. If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department and the resulting contract has an anticipated value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts has an anticipated value of \$100,000 or more, the proposer must inform the proposer's principals of the contents of the SEEC notice.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected proposer (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's Office.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Agency may terminate a resulting

contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.

- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.
- 4. Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Agency may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.
- 5. Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Agency for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

- 1. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
- 2. Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Agency shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3. Exclusion of Taxes.** The Agency is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
- 4. Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
- 5. Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Agency may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Agency, and at the proposer's expense.

- 6. Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Agency. The Agency may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Agency. At its sole discretion, the Agency may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.
- 7. Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Agency, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Agency may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Agency may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
- 8. RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Agency or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Agency and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Agency and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Agency.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Agency reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Agency deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Agency may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Agency reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Agency may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Agency reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.

- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The Agency reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Agency further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Agency may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Agency may set parameters on any BFOs received.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The Agency reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.
- 8. Key Personnel.** When the Agency is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Agency reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Agency.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.

- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.
- 3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81. Consulting Agreements Representation, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 4a-81 the successful contracting party shall certify that it has not entered into any consulting agreements in connection with this Contract, except for the agreements listed below. "Consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information, or (C) any other similar activity related to such contracts. "Consulting agreement" does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of chapter 10 of the Connecticut General Statutes as of the date such contract is executed in accordance with the provisions of section 4a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Such representation shall be sworn as true to the best knowledge and belief of the person signing the resulting contract and shall be subject to the penalties of false statement.
- 4. Campaign Contribution Restriction, C.G.S. § 9-612.** For all State contracts, defined in section 9-612 of the Connecticut General Statutes as having a value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of \$100,000 or more, the authorized signatory to the resulting contract must represent that they have received the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice advising state contractors of state campaign contribution and solicitation prohibitions, and will inform its principals of the contents of the notice, as set forth in "Notice to Executive Branch State Contractors and Prospective State Contractors of Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Limitations." Such notice is available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/SEEC>
- 5. Gifts, C.G.S. § 4-252.** Pursuant to section 4-252 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Acting Governor Susan Bysiewicz's Executive Order No. 21-2, the Contractor, for itself and on behalf of all of its principals or key personnel who submitted a bid or proposal, represents:
- (1) That no gifts were made by (A) the Contractor, (B) any principals and key personnel of the Contractor, who participate substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, or (C) any agent of the Contractor or principals and key personnel, who participates substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, to (i) any public official or State employee of the State agency or quasi- public agency soliciting bids or proposals for State contracts, who participates substantially in the preparation of bid solicitations or requests for proposals for State contracts or the negotiation or award of State contracts, or (ii) any public official or State employee of any other State agency, who has supervisory or appointing authority over such State agency or quasi-public agency;
 - (2) That no such principals and key personnel of the Contractor, or agent of the Contractor or of such principals and key personnel, knows of any action by the Contractor to circumvent such prohibition on gifts by providing for any other

principals and key personnel, official, employee or agent of the Contractor to provide a gift to any such public official or State employee; and

(3) That the Contractor is submitting bids or proposals without fraud or collusion with any person.

Any bidder or proposer that does not agree to the representations required under this section shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked proposer or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

6. Iran Energy Investment Certification C.G.S. § 4-252(a). Pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-252(a), the successful contracting party shall certify the following: (a) that it has not made a direct investment of twenty million dollars or more in the energy sector of Iran on or after October 1, 2013, as described in Section 202 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010, and has not increased or renewed such investment on or after said date. (b) If the Contractor makes a good faith effort to determine whether it has made an investment described in subsection (a) of this section it shall not be subject to the penalties of false statement pursuant to section 4-252a of the Connecticut General Statutes. A "good faith effort" for purposes of this subsection includes a determination that the Contractor is not on the list of persons who engage in certain investment activities in Iran created by the Department of General Services of the State of California pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 2.7 of the California Public Contract Code. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impair the ability of the State agency or quasi-public agency to pursue a breach of contract action for any violation of the provisions of the resulting contract.

7. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and 4a-60a. If a bidder is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the State agency with *written representation* in the resulting contract that certifies the bidder complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. This nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The authorized signatory of the contract shall demonstrate his or her understanding of this obligation by either (A) initialing the nondiscrimination affirmation provision in the body of the resulting contract, or (B) providing an affirmative response in the required online bid or response to a proposal question, if applicable, which asks if the contractor understands its obligations. If a bidder or vendor refuses to agree to this representation, such bidder or vendor shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked vendor or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

8. Access to Data for State Auditors. The Contractor shall provide to OPM access to any data, as defined in C.G.S. § 4e-1, concerning the resulting contract that are in the possession or control of the Contractor upon demand and shall provide the data to OPM in a format prescribed by OPM [or the Client Agency] and the State Auditors of Public Accounts at no additional cost.

VI. APPENDIX

A. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BFO	Best and Final Offer
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity (CT)
CT	Connecticut
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
POS	Purchase of Service
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
RFP	Request For Proposal
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
U.S.	United States

- *contractor*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a POS contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP
- *proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP. This term may be used interchangeably with respondent throughout the RFP.
- *prospective proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by a contractor to provide a specific health or human service as part of a POS contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP

B. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Department of Housing

The undersigned Respondent affirms and declares that:

1) General

- a. This proposal is executed and signed with full knowledge and acceptance of the RFP CONDITIONS stated in the RFP.
- b. The Respondent will deliver services to the Agency the cost proposed in the RFP and within the timeframes therein.
- c. The Respondent will seek prior approval from the Agency before making any changes to the location of services.
- d. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor or the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with the State of CT or the Federal Government.
- e. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor or the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor's organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with other states within the United States.

Legal Name of Organization:

Authorized Signatory

Date