



ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

## Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

MICHAEL P. HEIN  
Acting Commissioner

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

Dear STEHP Applicant:

Enclosed is the compilation of questions submitted in response to the Solutions To End Homelessness Program (STEHP) Request for Proposals (RFP). We encourage you to thoroughly read the questions and responses as they provide clarity on topics raised by potential applicants. Please consult the Emergency Solutions Grant Regulations attached at the end of the RFP (Attachment A) if you have additional questions as a result of these answers.

As the application deadline approaches, we want to take this final opportunity to remind you of some significant factors related to proposals submitted under STEHP.

1. The application deadline is 3:00pm on Friday June 14, 2019. The Grants Gateway helpdesk is operational between the hours of 8am and 4pm M–F at [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) or (518) 474-5595. After hours support is available 4pm – 8pm M-F at (800) 820-1890 or [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com).
2. All responses and requested uploads must be submitted in Grants Gateway. An applicant will receive a Global Error message if submitting an incomplete application. **Allow plenty of time before the deadline for the submission process and to resolve any errors.**
3. In order to submit the finished application, the applicant must be logged in as a Grantee Signatory or Grantee System Administrator role. (Note: A single person may have more than one role in the Grants Gateway.) Please review the instructions about how to submit the application in the Vendor User Manual. The link to the manual is provided in the **Submitting the Application in Grants Gateway** section of the Question and Answer document.
4. OTDA encourages potential applicants to finish the application and start submitting it well before the deadline to allow for time to correct Global Errors. Typical errors include not answering required questions, not uploading required documents or not entering information where required. The system **will not** accept an incomplete application and it will not accept applications after 3:00pm on June 14th.

OTDA looks forward to receiving applications that meet local needs and propose innovative solutions to addressing homelessness.

Sincerely,

Laura French and Alison Wilkinson  
STEHP Program Managers

## **SOLUTIONS TO END HOMELESSNESS RFP 2019-2024**

### **QUESTION AND ANSWER DOCUMENT**

#### **RFP Corrections**

- 1) Page 15: In the chart, footnote 3 is amended to state “Excludes victim service providers which must maintain a comparable database. Legal Services providers may use a comparable database”. See related questions under the STEHP Requirements section of this document for more information.
- 2) Page 27: The link in the HMIS definition should be replaced with this link:  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/>

#### **Submitting the Application in Grants Gateway**

QUESTION: How do I submit the application?

**ANSWER:** Applications should be submitted electronically in Grants Gateway at [www.grantsgateway.ny.gov](http://www.grantsgateway.ny.gov). The Grants Gateway Vendor User Manual can be found at: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2019/03/grantsgatewayvendorusermanual03-13-2019.pdf>. It provides the necessary information on how to submit applications. Section 5, (pages 46-74), explains how to start, work on, save, retrieve, cancel, check for Global Errors, submit and check the status of an application. If you are having difficulty with Grants Gateway, you may access the helpline M-F 8am-4pm at 518-474-5595 or [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) and M-F afterhours 4pm-8pm 800-820-1890 or [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com)

QUESTION: If a drop-in center is located in the same building where street outreach offices are located, do the pre-qualification documents need to be submitted for both programs?

**ANSWER:** Nonprofit organizations must Prequalify to do business with New York State agencies before they can compete for State grants. To become prequalified, a nonprofit must register with Grants Gateway and complete an online Prequalification application. This includes completing a series of forms by answering basic questions regarding the nonprofit organization and uploading key organizational documents. See Section 4 (pages 29-43) of the Vendor User Manual for more information about non-profit pre-qualification.

QUESTION: In Grants Gateway, we're having difficulty finding the Performance Measure location. Could you point us in the right direction?

QUESTION: Are the project details compiled by Work Plan Properties? There does not seem to be measures. Project Details - Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures

**ANSWER:** To locate the Performance Measure Section, click “Work Plan Properties” from the forms menu and follow the instructions on the next page.

There are no State defined objectives, tasks or performance measures. In this section, list and describe a total of 3 (three) additional objectives that the STEHP program will work to accomplish besides numbers served as stated in the “Summary of Funds and Number Served” document uploaded in Program Specific Question section. See example below. Each objective will require one task and one performance measure. All of the required information will not show on the initial screen, but it will appear after attempting to save. Follow the red messages at the top of the screen. Keep saving until the screen shows this message: “Your data has been saved”.

**Example Objective, Task and Performance Measure:** Objective Name: Increase self-sufficiency. Objective Description: All participants will be offered on-site self-sufficiency classes such as educational and employment supports, financial literacy, entitlement benefits, health resources, and landlord/tenant rights. Task Name: Self-sufficiency classes. Task Description: Classes are offered twice weekly in the dining room. Performance Measure Name: Quiz. Performance Measure Data Capture Type: Choose appropriate type, in this case “text”. Performance Measure Narrative: Each participant will be given a short quiz testing knowledge on the subject at the beginning of class. Each participant will be given the same quiz at the end of class, demonstrating an increase in knowledge about the subject.

### **Application Process**

QUESTION: There are five categories under this grant. Can we apply for all of them?

QUESTION: To confirm, we can apply for outreach and prevention components in a single application?

**ANSWER: An applicant may apply for one or any combination of categories in one STEHP application. If an applicant is only serving one CoC area, it should only submit one application. Please be aware of the maximum annual dollar limit described on page 18 of the RFP. This applies to a single category or any combination of categories proposed in an application.**

QUESTION: What is the accepted process regarding the RFP for pursuing a collaborative project? Do both organizations have to submit separate STEHP RFP applications, or is one organization able to take lead on an application and then subcontract services with the other organization?

**ANSWER: One organization may take the lead and would be considered the “applicant” and “contractor” for any resulting award. Other collaborators would be represented under the “contractual” line in the budget and would be considered “subcontractors”. Please be aware of the maximum annual dollar limit described on page 18 of the RFP.**

QUESTION: Can an agency apply for STEHP funding and be awarded in two COC's if they belong to each of them?

**ANSWER: Yes. Applicants should include a support letter from each CoC.**

QUESTION: According to the instructions, an organization should only submit one application – is this correct even for organizations that are applying for services in multiple CoCs? Is it allowed/possible for an organization to submit separate applications for services in different CoC areas?

QUESTION: Can an organization submit one application to serve multiple CoCs, or areas within those CoCs? Or is it better for one organization to submit two different applications specific to the CoC they wish to serve with services? Example; One agency, who sub-contracts with another agency, to provide Emergency Shelter, Prevention, and Rapid Re-housing services to Counties within one CoC, but then provide Street Outreach on its own to other Counties in a different CoC?

QUESTION: The (agency) operates with one tax ID number for the entire organization. As there are many separate, specific locations, is the (agency) eligible to submit multiple applications in Grants Gateway with one tax ID number? Services are provided in different areas and with different budgets/staff/facilities/etc.

QUESTION: My organization is wondering if it is possible to submit our own application, as well as be a partner/sub-grantee of our local social service districts County-Wide application? If so, can we be awarded funds both as the lead applicant and as a partner in local social service district proposal?

QUESTION: Can we submit more than one application in a single category?

QUESTION: Are applicant organizations allowed to submit more than one proposal for a single geographic region?

QUESTION: (Agency) is planning to respond to the STEHP RFP. Question: can we submit 2 applications; for example, 1 for prevention and 1 for shelter operations?

QUESTION: Can we submit an application in two or more categories?

**ANSWER: Applicants should submit one application if serving one CoC area regardless of how many services the applicant proposes to provide (i.e. prevention and shelter operations). Applicants can request funding for more than one eligible activity in one application. OTDA recognizes that if an applicant is proposing to serve more than one CoC area, it may be difficult to present information requested under one application. If the applicant proposes to serve more than one CoC, it may choose to submit separate applications or it may choose to submit all proposed activities under one application. An applicant may also submit its own application and be a subcontractor on another application. Please be aware that the maximum annual dollar limit (page 18 of the RFP), is \$300,000 per agency per CoC served, whether services are proposed under one application or multiple applications.**

QUESTION: If organizations can only submit one application for multiple areas, can you please clarify how we should answer Question 35 – “What is your Positive Housing Outcome Rate”?

QUESTION: For organizations applying for multiple CoCs, can we submit separate living destination charts for each area? Or do we have to combine the data for the separate CoC regions?

**ANSWER: The positive housing outcome rate should be calculated for the application as a whole and one living destination chart should be submitted per application. Data should be combined including each CoC region.**

QUESTION: If an agency is receiving NYSSHP funding for a transitional housing program that it currently operates but that is not enough to cover the operational expenses, can the organization apply for and receive STEHP funding for the program?

**ANSWER: Transitional Housing programs are eligible under STEHP, including those supported with NYSSHP funds. STEHP funds may not be used to supplant existing resources. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that funds requested will not supplant other resources (such as NYSSHP funds).**

QUESTION: (Agency) has both a ES and a TLP for RHY. My question(s) is/are if we submitted two applications (one for each shelter) would we be competing against each other? My other question is, can we write for a continuum of care and have possible funds be shared between the two - as youth go back and forth between the two programs?

**ANSWER: Agencies should submit one STEHP application if serving within the same CoC area. A single application may contain multiple categories. OTDA considers an RHY ES to be in the Shelter category and an RHY TLP to be in the Transitional Housing category. You may consider your ES and TLP as one STEHP Program that contains Shelter and Transitional Housing components. Please note the total budget request must be within the grant limit as outlined on page 18.**

QUESTION: The RFP states is the response should be 0 of 4000. I'm assuming that means WORDS not CHARACTERS. Correct?

**ANSWER: When a narrative answer is requested in the Program Specific Questions, there is a 4,000 character limit which is the maximum allowed by Grants Gateway. Grants Gateway should indicate how many characters are being used as you are typing. If your method is to write an answer in a word document and paste it into Grants Gateway, OTDA suggests using the 'Print Application' feature on the forms menu. This will allow you to see if your entire answer has been accepted into the field.**

QUESTION: Is this grant available for Ulster County also as we are a multi-county Community Action Agency?

**ANSWER: The STEHP grant opportunity is available state-wide.**

QUESTION: If we apply for funding for areas that don't receive ESG funding, does that mean we can't provide services for individuals who live in Buffalo as Buffalo has ESG funding?

**ANSWER: If awarded funds, OTDA expects that applicants will serve the areas proposed in the application. An applicant can serve more than one area, including an area that receives ESG funding directly.**

QUESTION: Part A Page 18. What does the following mean? "Projects may not be awarded if categories of funds/regional percentages of funds are exhausted, in which case the next highest score correlating to available funds would be awarded". Please explain.

**ANSWER: All things being equal, projects will be funded based upon the application's score, starting with the highest score, and moving in descending order until funds are exhausted. If funds are exhausted in a category or region, OTDA will move to the next highest score correlating with which category of funds remain.**

QUESTION: On page 4 of the RFP OTDA states that the agency intends to support "comprehensive programs". Does that mean that applications should reflect CoC priorities as a whole, or should agencies that are providing services from eligible categories all apply separately?

**ANSWER: Applications should be responsive to CoC needs and priorities, but a STEHP applicant does not need to respond to all of those identified needs. Applicants can apply for one or more eligible categories. Applicants should indicate how their program, whether it consists of one category of funding or more than one category, is part of a comprehensive strategy within the Continuum of Care to address homelessness.**

QUESTION: Is there a limit in the number of individual projects that a CoC can endorse if multiple agencies are applying for STEHP funds?

**ANSWER: There is no limit. A CoC may endorse multiple projects.**

### **Priorities**

QUESTION: How does any agency earn Additional Priority Points? Is this only for HHAP projects?

**ANSWER: Proposals that will be prioritized are listed on pages 17 and 18 of the RFP and are not exclusive to HHAP projects.**

QUESTION: Please clarify the STEHP priority chart on page 18 of the RFP "areas which do not receive any ESG funds from HUD" i.e. As the City of Buffalo receives approximately 1.2 million dollars in ESG funding, does that mean that no projects in Buffalo will be funded?

**ANSWER: Although projects in high entitlement areas are of lower priority, those projects are eligible to apply to STEHP and it is possible for those projects to be awarded funds.**

QUESTION: If projects span geographic areas that both have ESG funding and do not have ESG funding, how does that impact the prioritization?

**ANSWER: If it is clearly identified that a project is proposing to serve an area which received no ESG funds in 2018, it would receive higher priority.**

QUESTION: The chart and narrative at the top of Page 13, Section VII. Projected Distribution of STEHP Funds, appears to indicate that 50% of the total Statewide STEHP appropriation of \$15 million is expected to be used for prevention activities. A bullet point on page 17 (toward the bottom) indicates that proposals will be prioritized based on criteria including, “In NYC, those applicants proposing a Prevention component.” Will the prevention component be prioritized for the Rest of State as well?

**ANSWER: The prevention component is not prioritized for the Rest of State.**

QUESTION: On page 17, it is stated that among the items the proposal will be judged on is the “The programmatic and fiscal feasibility related to . . . the applicant's plan to use program funds for the provision of new or additional support services, if applicable.” Is there a preference for using STEHP to support new or additional support services? Or would it be viewed just as favorably to request funding for a service that is currently being funded under STEHP and is still needed and deemed effective?

**ANSWER: There is no preference for new or continuing activities.**

QUESTION: On page 18 of the RFP in the upper section of the page, the second bullet reads, “Projects demonstrating a connection to SOAR case management” will be given priority based on the selection criteria outlined. Please provide clarification on the extent to which OTDA will expect clients under the STEHP program to be connected to SOAR-trained Case Managers. Is there a target percentage of clients (i.e., who have a serious mental illness, medical impairment and/or co-occurring substance use disorder, and who present a need for SSI/SSDI) that OTDA expects will be connected to a SOAR case manager? Are there expectations under STEHP for reporting on the number of SSI/SSDI applications submitted by SOAR case managers, and referrals for other services such as health care and employment? Is it expected that the local social services district and CoC will play a role in the tracking of SSI/SSDI applications submitted under STEHP?

**ANSWER: There is no expectation that all STEHP participants be connected to SOAR-trained case managers, but if an applicant states in the application that it will connect participants, OTDA will expect the applicant to do so if awarded funds.**

### **Budget**

QUESTION: What is the maximum overall yearly amount that can be requested?

QUESTION: What is the maximum yearly allowed for this grant?

QUESTION: Is there a cap on how much funding an individual organization can apply for?

QUESTION: Up to what dollar amount in grant funds per year may an organization request?

QUESTION: Is there a cap on funding at \$300,000, or is that contingent on the number of qualified proposals being greater than a certain amount?

QUESTION: Is the maximum award of approximately \$300,000 a maximum yearly award, or a maximum amount that can be awarded over the five year period in total?

QUESTION: Is there a maximum or minimum amount of funding?

QUESTION: Does OTDA have an expected minimum or maximum award amount for STEHP contracts?

QUESTION: Part A page 18: Is \$300,000 the maximum allowable annual budget we can apply for? What is the maximum we can apply for?

QUESTION: If an organization is proposing a single activity, such as Prevention, what would be the maximum budget that could be requested annually for one activity?

QUESTION: How much funding can be applied for – it appears that an organization can request up to \$300,000 per CoC served – is that correct? So an organization serving two CoCs could apply for up to \$600,000 per year?

QUESTION: If an agency applies to provide services to multiple CoCs, would that agency be eligible for funding above the \$300,000 per agency limit addressed on page 18 of the RFP.

QUESTION: On page 18 of the RFP it states that “If there are additional proposals which qualify for funding, no one agency will be awarded more than approximately \$300,000 with the exception of those agencies serving more than one CoC.” Please confirm that there is not a \$300,000 funding cap for an agency serving only one CoC.

QUESTION: Toward the bottom of page 18, the second bullet states, “If there are additional proposals which qualify for funding, no one agency will be awarded more than approximately \$300,000 with the exception of those agencies serving more than one Continuum of Care (as evidenced by the uploaded CoC letters of support in Program Specific Question 16 in the application). Agencies serving more than one Continuum of Care may be awarded up to approximately \$300,000 for each CoC served.” If we intend to serve only our own CoC and we won’t know if there are other qualifying applications proposing to serve our CoC, are we permitted to request more than \$300,000? If so, is there a cap on the maximum amount an agency may request when proposing to serve only one CoC?

QUESTION: Are proposals for one (1) Continuum of Care capped at \$300,000? Is there a capped amount of funding available for Prevention or other categories? Additionally, please clarify what is meant by “additional proposals that may qualify for funding” in the citation above.

**ANSWER: There is no minimum amount that must be requested. As long as there are other proposals received that qualify for funding, \$300,000 is the maximum annual amount that would be awarded to an agency proposing to provide services within one CoC, whether it is for one category or a combination of categories. If an applicant proposes to provide services in more than one CoC, it may apply for up to \$300,000 annually per CoC. OTDA expects to receive more qualifying proposals than it can support with the funds available for STEHP. OTDA strongly advises applicants to develop budgets within the stated limit**

**inclusive of all subcontracts within other STEHP proposals. Applicants should thoroughly justify the proposed program and need for STEHP funds.**

QUESTION: When developing the budget, are we supposed to base it on one year or five years?

**ANSWER: Budgets should be developed for one year only.**

QUESTION: The instructions state that the budget should be for a one-year period, but the contracts will be for 5 years. Is there a way to build in cost of living increases for staff to ensure we are paying competitive/living wages for the entire grant period?

QUESTION: Part A page 32 – Given that the budget should be completed from an annual perspective, how do we account for the increase of costs of operating and changes in NYS minimum wages that are expected?

QUESTION: The RFP notes that funding is awarded in one-year increments. Does that mean that the total award announced in year one will be allotted over five years, or do we have to apply for new funding at the end of year one? (For example, if we receive an award for \$300,000, will this be \$300,000 over five years, or \$300,000 over one year with a renewal proposal at the end of the first year?)

**ANSWER: It is anticipated that any resulting contracts would be renewed each year at the amount awarded in year one, although annual funding is subject to the Award Procedure outlined on page 20 of the RFP.**

QUESTION: Is there a maximum/minimum percentage of funds that must be allocated to each category?

QUESTION: Are agencies expected to follow the expected distribution of funds laid out on page 13? We have been able to have flexibility in the past with expenditures between Rapid and Prevention. Will this flexibility be continued?

**ANSWER: If applying for multiple categories, there is no required percentage of funds that must be allocated to each category. The distribution of funds on page 13 relates to OTDA's entire amount available under the STEHP program.**

QUESTION: What is the maximum percentage that can be requested per year for salary and fringe?

QUESTION: In previous STEHP RFP's I thought that staff costs were limited to 25% of proposal. On page 17 of the RFP, under the selection process it refers to "overall cost reasonableness and effectiveness of the project" is there a range or percentage of staff to direct assistance that OTDA deems reasonable?

**ANSWER: There are no minimum or maximum percentage requirements or caps related to how much salary can be requested in the budget. For example, STEHP can support salaries**

**and fringe only. Please keep in mind that any part of a salary requested for administrative personnel that receive compensation in excess of \$199,000 would require a waiver per Executive Order 38. Fringe benefits (associated with salaries requested) are capped at the New York State Office of State Comptroller's current approved rate, 62.48%.**

QUESTION: If we apply for both outreach and prevention in a single application, how do you determine how much of the request is allocated from the 50% for outreach/emergency shelter/transitional housing/rapid rehousing and how much is allocated from the 50% for prevention activities?

QUESTION: Is the contract award an all or nothing proposition, or can an agency receive partial funding?

**ANSWER: An applicant may receive all, part or none of its request based on the Selection Process described in Section XI, pages 16-19 of the RFP. If applying for multiple categories, there is no required percentage of funds that must be allocated to each category. The distribution of funds on page 13 relates to OTDA's entire amount available under the STEHP program.**

QUESTION: We are a STEHP funded domestic violence transitional housing program and as such are prohibited to directly participate in the CoC HMIS system. Our intention is to include the cost of a software system that could interface with STEHP reporting requirements and provide de-identified aggregate data for the CoC. There is a substantial upfront cost for databases and we would like to know how to reflect this in a 5 year budget. Would the agency be able to utilize transitional housing upkeep and repairs in the subsequent budgets?

**ANSWER: Subsequent annual budgets would be negotiated at the time of renewal. Upkeep and repairs are eligible expenses in the Transitional Housing category. Application budgets should be developed for one year based on projected expenses for the first year.**

QUESTION: Are budget modifications over 10% of a given category (Personnel, OTPS) allowable by OTDA? Please clarify.

**ANSWER: Budget modifications over 10% may be allowed by OTDA, and are subject to approval by the New York State Attorney General and New York State Office of the Comptroller.**

QUESTION: Are training-related costs for staff to be considered as part of the "Other Items" as instructed on page 32 "the other narrative form should only be used to describe extraordinary costs" although staff training is not an extraordinary cost as it relates to developing the organizational capacity?

**ANSWER: Staff training can be requested on the "other" line. In this instance, completing the justification field should be sufficient. The narrative form should only be used to describe extraordinary costs.**

QUESTION: MWBE – what budget lines and items will be considered for the MWBE discretionary spending calculation?

**ANSWER: For the purposes of this application, contractual expenses with for-profit businesses, equipment, and supplies are examples of expenses that should be included in the MWBE goals. Should a contract be developed as result of this application, OTDA will review every line in the budget during the contract development period and inform the awardee which expenses will be added in the calculation.**

### **Matching Funds**

QUESTION: Although a match is not required at this time (pg. 16), it is a possibility for the future. When would we get notice that a match would be required and the percentage?

**ANSWER: Notification of any change to the match requirement would be issued at the time of annual budget renewals.**

QUESTION: Why are the acceptable volunteer hours rate (\$5 per hour) lower than minimum wage? Other grants value volunteer hours at a rate consistent with similar positions in the agency. (Note: According to CAP Fiscal Manual: Volunteer services will be valued at rates consistent with those paid for similar work in the Organization.)

**ANSWER: The value of volunteer hours may be negotiated if matching funds are required.**

QUESTION: Although the RFP indicates that there is no required match, is there any advantage or extra points that an application may earn for listing matching funds in the submission?

**ANSWER: The ESG match requirement is satisfied by the amount of State funds supporting STEHP. Consequently, matching resources will not be considered in the scoring methodology for applications.**

### **Eligible Expenses**

QUESTION: Page 8 of the RFP says “administrative expenses, inclusive of indirect costs of up to 5% of the award amount, may be charged with an itemized listing of costs. Page 32 states that while 5% administrative costs (which don’t fall into other categories) are allowed, “indirect administrative costs are not allowed.” Can you clarify what counts as administrative, what counts as indirect, and what is allowable?

QUESTION: Page 32 of the RFP indicates that applicants may request up to 5% of the requested amount for administrative expenses, with an itemized list of costs. Would OTDA accept itemized administrative costs of up to 10% of the requested amount?

QUESTION: Are non-profit applicants able to use their federally approved indirect cost rate agreement in lieu of an itemized listing of costs, in accordance with Uniform Guidance §200.331?

QUESTION: Are Indirect Costs allowable as part of the 5% Administrative expenses?

QUESTION: Administrative cost has been raised to 5% of the total award. Are administrative costs defined in the same manner as the current contract period? Can you please clarify the definition of indirect administrative costs as mentioned on page 32?

QUESTION: For the 5% administrative category, do we have to detail what makes up the 5% dollar amount?

QUESTION: Are STEHP funds subject to the OMB "Super Circular" Uniform Administrative Requirements since they are partly federal, and if so, should STEHP reimburse the Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate of a STEHP contractor in full, not limited to 5% of award?

QUESTION: If STEHP funds are subject to the OMB "Super Circular", should the requirement to provide an itemized listing of administrative expenses be removed, for contractors with a Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate?

**ANSWER: Administrative expenses are generally for agency expenses that cannot be directly attributable to operating the STEHP program. Administrative expenses of up to 5% of any resulting award may be budgeted with a general itemized list of costs included in the justification. The administrative cost may not include any portion of costs that are assignable to other federal, state or funding agencies. STEHP does not use the Federal Approved Indirect Cost Rate. STEHP funds may be subject to the OMB "Super Circular" if a resulting STEHP contract contains federal funds. Resulting contracts will indicate whether Federal or State fund have been used.**

QUESTION: Would leasing/purchasing a vehicle for program use be an allowable expense?

QUESTION: Our question is would you allow the grant to cover a lease on a car or van that would be used for outreach?

**ANSWER: Vehicle purchases are not allowed. Vehicle leases are permitted if the vehicle will be transporting program participants on a routine basis. The billable amount of the lease payment should be pro-rated based on the percentage of time the vehicle is used for this program.**

QUESTION: Would subcontracting services for SOAR case management be an allowable expense?

**ANSWER: Yes.**

QUESTION: Would subcontracting services for a mental health and substance abuse counselor/therapist be an allowable expense?

QUESTION: Can STEHP funds be utilized to subcontract with a mental health/ substance abuse provider to provide on-site services?

**ANSWER: ESG regulations, and therefore the STEHP program, allow for hiring and/or subcontracting mental health counseling in the Street Outreach, Shelter and Transitional Housing categories and substance abuse counselors in the Shelter and Transitional Housing categories.**

QUESTION: Would subcontract with our LDSS to provide on-site case management and PA benefits enrollment be an allowable expense?

**ANSWER: STEHP funds may not be used to supplant existing resources or services. Eligible STEHP activities include assistance with attending appointments, assistance with public benefit applications, etc.**

QUESTION: May we purchase furniture and supplies for participant apartments?

QUESTION: Is the purchase of furniture for Emergency Shelter an eligible expense?

QUESTION: Under any of the STEHP categories, would costs associated with addressing emergency client needs such as essential clothing (gloves, hats, socks, or required work related items) personal care items (tooth brush, soap, etc), water, immediate food, fees associated with obtaining ID or other documents needed for the client to qualify for services, employment or obtain financial assistance or other benefits be allowable? If so would such costs fall under Supplies or Other?

QUESTION: We find that some of our homeless customers lack ID and other documents needed to secure some types of housing. Is purchase of these documents for customers in need an allowable Rapid Rehousing expense?

**ANSWER: Assistance with obtaining mainstream benefits is allowed in every category. Street Outreach allows for purchase of items that will address urgent physical needs such as food, blankets, clothes or toiletries. Purchase of furniture, food, and supplies is allowed under the Shelter and Transitional Housing categories where the applicant will retain the items in its control and/or use them for a congregate/rotating participant population. Expenses related to obtaining ID and other necessary documents are also eligible in the Shelter and Transitional Housing categories. Purchase of personal items for participants such as ID, furniture, food, and supplies is not allowed in the Rapid Rehousing and Prevention categories.**

QUESTION: Under the Street Outreach Category would costs associated with printed information or other low-cost items (such as pens, chap stick, water or items with service info printed on them) to be handed out in an effort to engage homeless individuals and to disseminate information be allowable costs?

**ANSWER: Street Outreach allows for expenses that are associated with addressing an urgent physical need, engaging the population to build a relationship and providing a connection or path to shelter and stable housing. The cost of items noted appear to be allowable as long as the applicant presents the case of how the items will address a**

physical need, engage the population and provide a connection to more stable housing. Please see ESG regulation 576.101 in Attachment A for more information on Street Outreach.

QUESTION: In the new RFP the language is found on p.28. "Rental Assistance cannot be paid for project based HUD funded programs with the exception of Public Housing Authorities." Please advise.

ANSWER: ESG regulations state "except for a one-time payment of rental arrears on the tenant's portion of the rental payment, rental assistance cannot be provided to a program participant who is receiving tenant-based rental assistance, or living in a housing unit receiving project-based rental assistance or operating assistance, through other public sources."

QUESTION: On page 10 of the RFP, the eligible Rapid Re-housing expenses are listed and rental and utility arrears up to a 6 month period are listed. Can you please clarify or provide additional information – does this mean that once a household has been assisted by our organization via rapid re-housing services that we could assist them with back rent or utilities if they got behind? This is not for arrears prior to receiving rapid re-housing assistance (or is it?) because that would be prevention, correct?

ANSWER: Utility and rental arrears may be provided under either the Rapid Rehousing or Prevention categories. A program participant is determined to qualify for the Rapid Rehousing category if the current living situation is from Category 1 of the Homeless definition on page 6 of the RFP, (including those from category 4 as long as they otherwise qualify under Category 1). A participant is determined to qualify for the Prevention category if the current living situation is from categories 2,3 or 4 of the Homeless definition, or if the participant meets (i), (ii) and one condition from (iii) of the At-Risk of Homelessness definition on page 5. In every Prevention determination, it must be shown that income is determined to be 30% of AMI. Use the current 2019 median family income tables provided at this link: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il19/IncomeLimits-30-FY19.pdf> If your area is not shown, use the New York State 30% of median limit provided at this link: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il19/State-Incomelimits-Report-FY19r.pdf> Income limits are updated annually. It is assumed that while serving any participant, an agency would use whatever means appropriate to assist as long as the assistance is within regulations. Further information about utility payments and arrears can be found on page 75979 of the ESG regulations, Attachment A of the RFP, and further information on rental arrears can be found on page 75980. Applicants are encouraged to read Sections 576.103, 576.104, 576.105 and 576.106 of the ESG regulations if applying for the Rapid Rehousing and Prevention categories.

QUESTION: Section VI – Under multiple sections, "Participant personal vehicle expenses" are noted as Ineligible. Are gas cards considered a personal vehicle expense?

ANSWER: A gas card given to fuel a participant-owned vehicle is not an eligible expense.

QUESTION: Can STEHP funds be used to prepare grant-funded personnel for the HUD Housing Counselor Certification Exam, exam costs, and ongoing continuing education?

**ANSWER: If the STEHP application shows that housing counseling is funded separate and apart from case management and it is intended for STEHP participants, then yes, the costs mentioned are eligible.**

QUESTION: In the past, OTDA grants have indicated that any repairs on a shelter paid for with a grant would require the facility to stay in the same place for at least seven years. For example: If an organization is awarded funding in 2019, completes repairs in 2020, but moves facilities in 2021, would the funds need to be repaid to OTDA?

**ANSWER: Minor repairs for shelter facilities are eligible expenses, although the types of repairs should be thought of as “wear and tear” such as unplugging clogged drains and patching holes in walls. If STEHP invests in repairs for a building, OTDA does expect the building to be used for the life of the contract until September 30, 2024. Funding for major repairs or renovation should be sought through other sources. Information about the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) Existing Emergency Shelter Repairs grant opportunity can be found at <http://otda.ny.gov/contracts/2018/HHAP/>.**

QUESTION: In the RFP, under ineligible expenses, it states that funds for Prevention Services cannot be used to fund the "Salary of any personnel related to Street Outreach, Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, and Rapid re-housing activities". Does this mean that one employee could not be the Housing Case Manager for both the Prevention Program and Rapid Re-housing Program? We have centralized the STEHP grant with one employee for both Prevention and Rapid-rehousing services.

**ANSWER: A proposal can be structured such that one employee could be the Housing Case Manager for both a Prevention Program and a Rapid Re-Housing Program. The salary commensurate with the time the Housing Case Manager spends on Prevention services must be for claimed under the Prevention category. The salary commensurate with the time spent on Rapid Rehousing services must be claimed for under the Rapid Rehousing category.**

QUESTION: (Agency) plans to apply for funds to pay for an additional Case Manager position. This will allow us to expand our Supportive Living Program to serve additional participants. This program offers transitional housing and is licensed by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). It serves homeless men and women, over the age of 18, in recovery from Substance Use Disorder.

Staffing costs of this program were funded by McKinney-Vento HUD grants from the late 1990's until two years ago, when as a transitional housing program it was not prioritized by the COC for funding. Fairview has tried to keep the program up and running on Congregate Care Level II funding alone, but it is simply not enough to pay client rents and staffing costs.

The Supportive Living Program has a Certificate of Need issued by OASAS for 45 beds, however, only thirty-nine of these beds are currently operational. We propose to open the remaining 6 beds, of which there is an immense need. At this time, we have two full-time Case Managers and one

Coordinator, all of which carry caseloads at capacity with clients who have high intensity needs due to the opioid epidemic. The additional Case Manager, funded by this grant, would allow us to redistribute caseloads to a more manageable size and increase the program capacity by six. With these changes, the rate of recidivism will decrease and thus lower Medicaid costs. It will allow also us to provide increased individual attention to each client. Without this grant, the number of beds in operation will need to be cut.

The question is: Is this position eligible to be funded by the STEHP grant given the Case Manager would be serving existing clients as well as 6 “new” clients?

**ANSWER: STEHP funds for Transitional Housing case management services are eligible as long as they are not supplanting other funding sources. The applicant should fully demonstrate how the STEHP funds would increase services in the housing program.**

QUESTION: On page 15, under Additional Rapid rehousing and Prevention Standards, one line indicates "Prohibition of use with other subsidies". I'm not clear about the exclusions based on the cited footnote. Are these funds allowed to be used as a security deposit or a first month's rent in tandem with a New York City subsidy that pays rent for other-month's rent?

**ANSWER: Yes, STEHP funds for Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention may be used for security deposit and first month's rent when a participant will ultimately be receiving another ongoing rental supplement.**

QUESTION: *Ineligible: Payments to medical, mental health and substance abuse providers on behalf of the participant.* The agency has on staff a 1 FTE nursing position. The nurse provides services agency-wide. Staff in this position will dedicate 4 hrs./week to the proposed STEHP project in alignment with the NYS Prevention Agenda. Can STEHP funds be used? The project is an emergency shelter.

**ANSWER: The nurse position at an emergency shelter for the benefit of all residents is eligible as long as it requires no payment from or billing to participants and insurance. Please see ESG regulation 576.102 (v) Outpatient Health Services. In the proposal, the applicant should explain how other appropriate services are unavailable to the population served.**

QUESTION: I am interested in finding out if the STEHP grant offers funding for organizations offering supportive services only. Our program is currently aiming to offer transitional supportive case management to formerly incarcerated adults within the homeless population.

**ANSWER: Supportive case management is an eligible expense as part of one of the eligible categories of funding, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention. Please refer to pages 7-11 of the RFP.**

QUESTION: Can STEHP funds be used for a day time drop-in program that would provide services and activities to both homeless people living in emergency shelters and on the streets? If so would this qualify as a use under emergency shelters or street outreach?

**ANSWER: The Shelter category allows for a drop-in center project where participants come to your location. The Street Outreach category should only be used when the project is searching for homeless persons who are staying in uninhabitable living conditions, such as abandoned buildings, under bridges and temporary encampments.**

QUESTION: Would it be an acceptable use of funds to propose one use for the first year or two of the program, and then expand uses of the funds after that? For example, if there is a need for both rapid re-housing and transitional housing in an area, and applicant is planning to create a transitional housing space/program but it is not built yet, would it be permissible to apply for and use the funds for rapid rehousing in years one and two and then use a portion of the grant for rapid rehousing and a portion for transitional housing after that?

**ANSWER: OTDA expects that applicants will be able to offer a proposal that meets community needs and would operate proposed services for all five years of any resulting contract.**

QUESTION: Are staff training costs (conference fee, travel, etc.) covered in this RFP for Transitional Housing, Prevention and Rapid Rehousing outside of HMIS and SOAR that are noted?

QUESTION: Can we include training in our expenses? Is this allowable?

**ANSWER: Staff training related to job performance, serving the proposed population and conferences related to the STEHP program are eligible. Formal education expenses, such as earning degree certificates on the part of staff, are not eligible expenses.**

QUESTION: Part A Section C. Transitional Housing Page 9: "other services such as child care when parent is receiving services, transportation, job placement and job training" – Is there a maximum length of time this is allowable? It also states, "On-going regular day care expenses" are ineligible. Which line item on the budget covers child care?

**ANSWER: Paying a participant's third-party day care expense is ineligible under all categories. Shelter and Transitional Housing may provide child care as a service for parenting residents. Please see ESG regulation 572.102 (H) (ii) which describes child care expenses. Expenses should be placed on the appropriate individual line in the budget.**

QUESTION: Are new programs that are under development eligible for STEHP funding through the current RFP?

**ANSWER: Yes, new programs are eligible as long as they will be fully operational during the entirety of the contract, October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024.**

QUESTION: Are applicants allowed to propose programs that are designed to serve specific subpopulations of people who are homeless/at-risk of homelessness (e.g. persons with disabilities, senior citizens, etc.?)

**ANSWER: Yes.**

QUESTION: Can agencies with long term permanent housing HHAP units that are occupied with high risk, very low-income families apply for this STEHP grant?

**ANSWER: No, agency-operated Permanent Housing programs where the agency acts as the landlord are not eligible under any category.**

QUESTION: Can agencies with long term permanent housing units apply for funding under the STEHP grant to assist current clients who are formerly homeless in moving on to non agency owned permanent housing?

**ANSWER: Eligible STEHP participants must be classified as Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness according to the definitions on pages 5 and 6 of the RFP. Permanent Supportive Housing program participants are generally not an eligible population to be served under STEHP.**

QUESTION: Under which of the five service categories are expenses to temporarily house homeless individuals or families in hotels, if emergency shelter space is not available – would it be Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing, or Prevention?

**ANSWER: Motel expenses in lieu of emergency shelter are categorized under Shelter. Applications proposing to use STEHP funds to place households in hotels should indicate why expenses are not supported by the local social service district.**

QUESTION: Would you pay for a part-time fiscal clerk to support financial assistance processing in rapid re housing or prevention applications?

**ANSWER: Yes, staff salary associated with processing financial assistance in rapid re-housing or prevention programs is eligible.**

QUESTION: We are considering a Drop-In Center to be partially funded through STEHP under the category of Emergency Shelter that would serve individuals meeting any of the 4 categories of homelessness, as permitted. We also operate an overnight emergency shelter currently funded in part through STEHP. We would like our Drop in Center staff to provide services to the literally homeless and link them to our emergency shelter or other housing resources as appropriate. We would also want Drop In Staff to prevent homelessness and unnecessary entry into the overnight

shelter, where possible. If we serve a person at the Drop In who is homeless (cat 1 3 or 4) or at imminent risk of homelessness (Cat 2) and we are successful in preventing their immediate homelessness, would we count them as an emergency shelter client? Would the staff time be considered an ES, HP or RR expense. Let's say we gave the individual who presented as homeless bus fare after confirming he could temporarily stay with a relative for no more than one week. If he then returned to the Drop In and staff worked with him toward a longer-term housing plan, would the client and the services fall under ES, RR or HP?

QUESTION: Would a Drop In Center as described above be permitted to provide HP services to a population that meets the at risk of homelessness definition or just the Cat 2, 3 or 4 homeless definition?

**ANSWER: You may not bill for services to Prevention participants in the Shelter category, but you may allocate space in your Drop-in Center to a Prevention Program and bill for that space and those participants in the Prevention category. Staff must then document time spent on the STEHP program in appropriate categories so that staff salaries can be claimed accordingly. Please refer to Section VI, Eligible Activities, Expenses and Service populations and the ESG regulations in Attachment A of the RFP for further information.**

### **Programming**

QUESTION: Do the Workplan Overview and Properties relate to a one-year workplan, even though the grant is five years?

**ANSWER: Yes, the Workplan Overview and Properties should relate to the first program year.**

QUESTION: For what time period do you want the positive housing outcome rate? Is this for a period of time for our existing STEHP contracts or is it a projection forward for our new request?

**ANSWER: The time-period for positive housing outcome rate and other data requests throughout the application should be for an annual period commensurate with this procurement's term, October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024.**

QUESTION: In several places the application asks for data. Is there a specific timeframe OTDA is looking for data to be provided for? Should we not provide data going back more than a certain number of years?

**ANSWER: The time-period for data requests throughout the application should be for an annual period commensurate with this procurement's term, October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024. Data should be based on historical data if such data is available.**

QUESTION: For how many clients in emergency shelter is the 6 month follow up required? Do we have to successfully make contact with each client to meet this metric, or will good faith efforts suffice?

QUESTION: Relatedly, six month follow up with victims of DV who were served in an emergency shelter may pose a challenge to confidentiality. How should we approach that requirement since the needs of this population differ from other homeless populations?

**ANSWER: Please see the definition of six-month follow-up on page 28 of the RFP. OTDA expects all contractors to attempt to contact any participant that has exited to permanent housing six months after discharge for the purpose of determining housing status. A good faith effort is expected, and results should be captured on the STEHP quarterly report. OTDA realizes contractors will not be able to make contact with every former participant. Participant-initiated contact is acceptable, particularly with survivors of domestic violence.**

QUESTION: For Drop-In centers (counted as shelters for these purposes) working with disconnected/unaccompanied youth, metrics around follow up and positive housing rates seem challenging, since by their nature drop-in services can be less structured and shorter-term. How should providers of shelter/drop in approach this expectation of housing outcomes/follow-up if it may not fit a drop-in model?

QUESTION: Can you share average positive housing outcomes rates achieved across the existing STEHP grantee network by category, to provide more context/baseline?

**ANSWER: Please see the definition of positive housing outcome on page 27 of the RFP. The intent of the grant is to work toward the goal of more stable housing, realizing that some populations have more barriers than others. Street outreach and drop-in center projects should have case management which provides a connection to more stable environments such as overnight shelters, transitional and permanent housing. All projects are expected to be entering data into the CoC's HMIS (or a comparable data system) where the outcomes will be captured. The STEHP program report requests a contractor's outcome on positive housing outcomes, but OTDA does not calculate averages by categories. Your CoC HMIS data may be able to provide existing average positive housing outcome rates.**

QUESTION: Section VI-D, Page 9: "OTDA encourages objective determinations that allow for meeting individualized needs in order to promote housing stability for the duration of the program and after discharge." We currently provide rental assistance up to the local Fair Market Rate (FMR); however, we find that rented housing exceeds the FMR. Is it allowable to provide assistance under Rent Reasonable standards instead, given we provide adequate justification?

QUESTION: We are an organization serving a low-income community in New York City that is gentrifying. 24.8% of renters in the area are severely rent burdened (spending more than 50% of income on rent). What resource do we use to determine Fair Market Rent?

**ANSWER: ESG regulations, and therefore the STEHP program, follow both FMR and Rent Reasonable standards. Please note if the gross rent for the unit exceeds either the FMR or Rent Reasonable standard, contractors are prohibited from using STEHP funds for any portion of the rent, even if the household is willing and able to pay the difference. Please see the resource links provided for a description on this requirement and the FMR data sets.**

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3070/esg-rent-reasonableness-and-fmr/>  
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html>

QUESTION: Under Client Eligibility/Program Requirements, (p. 17) the RFP states that units must be below FMR. If the landlord is giving the client preferential rent that brings it below FMR, would that unit be eligible?

**ANSWER: Yes, as long as the total rent of the apartment for the duration of the lease is at or below FMR, the unit is eligible.**

QUESTION: Is it allowable to provide ongoing rental subsidies on a graduated payment system to encourage independence (e.g. 100% of rent for first 3 months; 75% of rent months 4-6; 50% of rent months 7-9; 25% of rent months 9-12) or are we required to provide 100% of rental payments up to the allowable amount?

**ANSWER: Each agency develops its own standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent that participants must pay, if any. Your example, as presented, is an acceptable method of providing rental assistance.**

QUESTION: We are an organization serving a low-income community in New York City that is gentrifying. 24.8% of renters in the area are severely rent burdened (spending more than 50% of income on rent). For the purposes of qualifying individuals for assistance under the Prevention priority, do we use the 30% AMI for the New York area as defined by HUD?

**ANSWER: Yes, the link to the current Area Median Income tables is provided. In your example, find the family size on the New York, NY line to determine correct AMI for family size. All Prevention participants must have initial income eligibility, and must continue to be income eligible every 90 days that they are served.**

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il19/IncomeLimits-30-FY19.pdf>

QUESTION: On page 9, for the Rapid Re-housing category it indicates that we must offer case management activities to all program participants at least once per month for a minimum of 6 months and on page 11 for the Prevention category, it states that case management meetings must occur at least once a month while the participant is still in the prevention program.

Since this initiative is driven by a Housing First model, case management is typically not a requirement for program participation and is client driven. If a participant indicates they do not want any case management services, and this is documented, are case managers still expected to offer and/or attempt meetings with participants on a monthly basis?

QUESTION: Does six-month case management for Rapid Re-housing clients still apply to this funding cycle? In the past we needed to provide a client who we assisted with Rapid Re-housing funds with case management for six-months prior to discharging the client from the program. Does this still hold true?

**ANSWER: ESG, and therefore STEHP, requires a minimum of monthly case management meetings while the participant is in a Rapid Rehousing or Prevention program. Please see ESG regulation 576.401 (e) on page 75986 (Attachment A). OTDA expects Rapid Rehousing**

providers to offer, at a minimum, case management services for at least six months. OTDA realizes some Rapid Rehousing participants may disengage from services before the end of six months.

QUESTION: Is there a time limit that services can be provided?

QUESTION: If a Program provides HP (Prevention) services is there a required time-period for which case management services must be provided? If the client did not receive rental/financial assistance or is no longer receiving, can the staff/client determine an appropriate discharge date?

**ANSWER: Rapid Rehousing and Prevention services, after the initial 30 days allowed for determining participant and apartment eligibility, are strictly limited to 24 months over a 3-year period. Transitional Housing services are usually limited to 18-24 months. STEHP does not limit Street Outreach or Shelter participation.**

QUESTION: Provide the service area, city(ies) and county(ies). If multiple counties are served, how much funding will be directed toward each county? Our organization is serving participants from all five NYC boroughs, i.e. five counties. We don't have specific program sites or resources dedicated to each of these counties—how would you suggest we best answer this question?

**ANSWER: Please list the counties you intend to serve. In NYC, you may present a combined dollar total for all NYC boroughs served.**

QUESTION: The RFP defines eligibility for Rapid Re-Housing services as “homeless persons or families in categories 1 and 4 of the homeless definition, as long as those in category 4 also qualify under category 1”. Therefore, for individuals who have fled domestic violence (category 4) and do not have other residences or resources to support at the time that they flee their abusive partner, but also have not entered into emergency shelter, would they qualify for Rapid Re-Housing if they are “couch surfing”, or temporarily staying at the residence of a family/friend?

**ANSWER: No, the person described should be assessed for the Prevention category. Prevention may serve those from categories 2, 3 or 4 of the Homeless definition, and those from the At-risk definition. In all cases, income must be determined to be at or below 30% of AMI. Use the current 2019 median family income tables provided at this link: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il19/IncomeLimits-30-FY19.pdf> If your area is not shown, use the New York State 30% of median limit provided at this link: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il19/State-Incomelimits-Report-FY19r.pdf> Income limits are updated annually.**

QUESTION: Can you clarify the eligibility for Literally Homeless, Category 1, part iii: *Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.* What sorts of institutions qualify under this sub-category?

**ANSWER: Institutions that qualify include, but are not limited to, jail, drug treatment facilities, and hospitals.**

QUESTION: Per pages 5-6 of the RFP, do formerly/chronically homeless families and individuals qualify for prevention services under the “at-risk for of homelessness” definitions, and if so, which category does that population fall under?

**ANSWER: Per Section VI. of the RFP, Prevention participants may be at risk of homelessness by definition on page 5, or from categories 2, 3 and 4 of the homeless definition on page 6 with an income below 30% of AMI at intake. Eligibility is determined at the time a potential participant requests services.**

QUESTION: Is this opportunity geared towards organizations whose central focus is on homelessness, or are organizations that provide affordable housing coupled with preventative services also competitive?

**ANSWER: The opportunity is available to organizations who propose to provide the eligible activities to the populations listed in Section VI of the RFP.**

### **Uploads**

QUESTION: If we have a county in our service area under the “NYS Balance of State Continuum of Care,” who do we contact to review, obtain approval and signatures for our proposed plan?

QUESTION: We would like to offer services and supports to the homeless in two counties that do not have a COC. We currently provide services to homeless Veterans in those counties and have seen first-hand the need to expand to the general homeless population. Is that possible? If so how do we proceed?

**ANSWER: All counties in New York are now covered by a CoC. If the services would be offered in Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery, Schoharie or Putnam, they must have the support of the Balance of State CoC, NY 525. Information about the Balance of State CoC is provided at this link: <http://otda.ny.gov/resources/continuum-of-care/> Contact information for the purposes of obtaining support for your proposed project is [BoS.nys@otda.ny.gov](mailto:BoS.nys@otda.ny.gov), to the attention of Mike McMahon and Scott McCumber, Co-Chairs of the Balance of State CoC.**

QUESTION: Offeror’s Acknowledgement of Understanding of Post-Employment Provisions –at the bottom signature, it also requests Contract # ?- not certain if we should leave that blank or use (our current STEHP contract number).

QUESTION: Certificate of Good Faith Efforts – at bottom signature, also requires Contract #?

**ANSWER: You may leave the contract number blank on these documents.**

QUESTION: We are instructed to upload our CoC’s HIC and PIT. The HUD HDX system generates multiple reports based on the data. Do you want the summary reports, or should we download all reports, combine into one document and upload that?

QUESTION: Regarding the PIT question: the CoC is comprised of 3 counties - Onondaga, Oswego, and Cayuga - would you like us to discuss the entire PIT with all 3 counties, or just discuss Onondaga individually? Our HMIS Administrator has this data.

QUESTION: Could you please explain Questions #18 & #19 under the program specific questions. What is the difference between the two forms? Could you screen shot each one? The Emergency & Transitional Housing Inventory & the Point In Time were conducted on the same day (01/24/19). Is how you answer the question is what makes it different?

QUESTION: Is this what is being referred to in Question 19, "Upload your CoC's Homeless Assistance Programs Housing Inventory Chart and relate it to your program"? We cannot find the document you refer to in the RFP materials.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-housing-inventory-count-reports/>  
[https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC\\_HIC\\_State\\_NY\\_2018.PDF](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_HIC_State_NY_2018.PDF)

ANSWER: The Point in Time Count and Housing Inventory Count are data representative of your CoC, which has then been reported to HUD. If your CoC has not provided you with the data, it can be found at the following

links: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/?filter Year=&filter Scope=CoC&filter State=NY&filter CoC=&program=CoC&group=PopSub> and <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-housing-inventory-count-reports/> OTDA will allow the applicant to choose how the information is presented as the applicant is also asked to relate the charts to the proposed program in Program Specific Questions 18 and 19.

QUESTION: The CoC Template asks the CoC to indicate whether it is willing to participate in the NYSHADE project. Is this a requirement for funding?

QUESTION: My CoC currently does not participate in NYSHADE due to technical issues. Will my application loose points due to saying no to bullet five on the letter of support template? If my CoC wants to participate in NYSHADE once the technical issues have been fixed can I note yes on the letter of support template and have the CoC sign an MOU at a later date? The CoC would sign once the technical issues were confirmed fixed.

QUESTION: Is participation in NYSHADE a *requirement* of all CoC members to be eligible for STEHP funding?

QUESTION: The 2019 STEHP RFP includes a template for a required letter of support from our CoC. Point #5 of this letter discusses the CoC participating in NYSHADE as a whole by signing an MOU. What exactly does this participation or MOU entail? And, if our CoC does not agree to participate as a whole, will this affect the scoring of all individual applications within the CoC?

QUESTION: If our project is fully endorsed by the CoC, will the priority status of our proposal be affected if the CoC does not indicate that it is willing to participate in the New York State Homeless Assistance Datawarehouse Environment (NYSHADE) by signing an MOU with OTDA and submitting data on a regular basis?

**ANSWER:** The goal of NYSHADE is for OTDA to better understand the nature and scope of homelessness statewide through the collection of CoC data in HMIS. NYSHADE participation by all CoCs is highly encouraged so that OTDA can meet this goal. A “Yes” or “No” answer on the CoC template has been requested. OTDA will interpret blank answers on this template as “No”. If a “Yes” is provided, OTDA will expect the applicant to engage its CoC in the process to become an active participant in NYSHADE if it is not already. A copy of the NYSHADE MOU is attached to this document as reference. To be eligible for STEHP funding, each applicant must upload a signed letter. How the questions are answered on the letter will not be a threshold factor in determining the application’s eligibility.

**QUESTION:** We are applying for the new STEHP funding but we are not requesting any funds under procurement such as office supplies, audit, or anything that would lend itself to MWBE solicitation. So what do we do about the MWBE Utilization Plan and MWBE supplier notice? We are not using any MWBEs in the performance of our contract.

**QUESTION:** Can you explain what exactly you're looking for when it comes to the M/WBE Utilization Plan? For example, is this form to be filled out only if a non-profit is planning to utilize a subcontractor to fulfill its contract?

**ANSWER:** All applicants should complete MWBE forms 4976, 4970 and 4934. The spaces to upload these forms are marked as “required upload”. If the applicant is requesting funds for supplies, contractual relationships with for-profit businesses and equipment, forms 4937 (Utilization Plan) and 4938 (Supplier Letter of Intent) should be completed as well. The spaces to upload 4937 and 4938 are not marked as “required upload”, and therefore you will be able to submit the application without including these forms if your application contains no MWBE-applicable expenses.

**QUESTION:** For the Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises EEO Policy Statement Form, there is a new section inquiring as to the percentage of M/WBE Goals. Can you explain this section? And is the percentage amount a reflection of who will be hired or indicative of an agency's willingness to participate if awarded?

M/WBE Contract Goals

- % Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Participation
- % Minority Business Enterprise Participation
- % Women's Business Enterprise Participation

**ANSWER:** The overall goal that must be applied to MWBE-applicable expenses such as supplies, contractual relationships with for-profit businesses and equipment is 30%. As outlined on page 22 of the RFP, contractors may specify how much will be spent with an MBE and how much will be spent with a WBE for the total of 30%. Applicants should complete this form to the best of their abilities. All final Utilization Plans must be approved by OTDA during the contract negotiation process.

**QUESTION:** I am looking at the required documents that need to be uploaded for the STEHP submission. Do any of them need to be notarized?

**ANSWER: None of the documents need notarization.**

QUESTION: We would like to know what are some examples of the entities that provide certification that the project is approved by the local social service district and the continuum of care body. Should the endorsements from the agencies be provided in letter form, or should they be electronic?

QUESTION: In New York City, both HRA and DHS function as a DSS for homeless services; can we use either for our Certification of Approval required on page 39?

**ANSWER: The local social service district certification template can be found on page 39 of the RFP, or a Microsoft Word version may be downloaded from the Presubmission Uploads section of the forms menu in Grants Gateway. In most parts of the state, the Department of Social Services is the entity to contact. In NYC, you may submit certification from either Human Resources Administration (HRA) or Department of Homeless Services (DHS). The completed certification should be uploaded in two places in Grants Gateway; Program Specific Question 17 and in the Presubmission Upload section.**

**The Continuum of Care Letter of Support template can be found on pages 40-41 of the RFP, or a Microsoft Word version may be downloaded from the Presubmission Uploads section of the forms menu in Grants Gateway. It should be completed by the chairperson of your local CoC. Contact Information can be found at:**

**<https://www.hudexchange.info/grantees/contacts/>. The completed letter should be uploaded in two places in Grants Gateway; Program Specific Question 16 and in the Presubmission Upload section. Please note that if you are not a current member of the CoC, regular participation and coordination with the body is required if awarded STEHP funds.**

QUESTION: Have all the LDSSs been made aware that they will be reviewing the application? We spoke with ours and they said they didn't receive any communication regarding this.

**ANSWER: Applicants should communicate directly with their respective local district regarding the proposed program and request for certification of approval.**

QUESTION: Are we permitted/encouraged to include attachments beyond those specifically requested? If our proposal involves maintaining working relationships or linkage agreements (*not* subcontracts) with organizations that we will collaborate with in order to address the individual services needs of STEHP participants, do we need to attach MOU's, linkage agreements, or other evidence of such relationships?

QUESTION: If we have an additional letter of support (or it could be an MOU) that we would like to attach, is that possible and if so, where should we attach it?

QUESTION: What is the purpose of the optional "Applicant Freespace" section of the pre-submission uploads part of the application, if the items included will not be used for the review of the proposal? What types of documents or media does OTDA intend applicants to submit here?

QUESTION: Will you give any points for additional letters of support from sources beyond DSS and COCs?

**ANSWER: Applicants are permitted to upload such items in the “Applicant Freespace” provided in the Presubmission Upload section of Grants Gateway. Uploading documents here is optional.**

QUESTION: Annual Number Served Chart (page 35). Should this chart reflect anticipated numbers for Year One, or would it be better to show numbers for another Year that would not have some of the startup issues one would encounter in Year One (such as few discharges)? Should we count only new admissions to STEHP or, if we are a current grantee, should we count participants whom we roll over and continue to serve using STEHP funds awarded through this RFP? In column 3, should we include 6-month follow up data on participants who were served using STEHP funds from a prior year?

**ANSWER: The information requested on this chart should be projected for an annual period for the time period starting October 1, 2019.**

QUESTION: Living Destinations Chart (Page 36): Should we include only those exits that we expect to occur during Year One, or should we include the projected destination of all people served in Year One regardless of when the discharge occurs? In other words, if we were to serve 100 people in Year One – with 60 of these same people exiting in Year One, and the remaining 40 exiting in Year Two – should our response be based on the total of 100 discharges taking place over the course of Years One and Two, or only on the 60 discharges taking place in Year One? (I realize there may be multiple exits per person, but we are trying to keep our response to the chart as simple as possible.)

QUESTION: I’m wondering if you can clarify the time period captured by the “Living Destinations Chart,” found on page 36 of the STEHP RFP and referenced in question 33. Does this chart reflect projected annual totals? Please clarify if you can.

**ANSWER: The information requested on this chart should be projected numbers of people discharged from the proposed STEHP program for an annual period for the time period starting October 1, 2019.**

QUESTION: Page 56 of RFP (page 1 of 2) Non-Collusive Bidding Certification Could you respond with more information as to completing this document?

QUESTION: I have a question about the STEHP RFP Pre-Submission Upload Non-Collusive Bidding Certification. Is this required for all proposals, regardless of whether we are submitting a joint bid? I am unclear about which fields to complete and would appreciate some guidance.

QUESTION: Is the Non-Collusive Bidding Certification form a requirement for a non profit who executes their contract utilizing their own staff?

**ANSWER: The certification is required for all proposals. Applicants should indicate the current date on page 1. On page 2, applicants should complete the “Potential Contractor” information with your agency’s information (1st section of exhibit 1). The “Responsible**

**Corporate Officer” section should be completed by the person who will sign any resulting contract.**

**If the application is combining bids with other lead contractors, those agencies should be listed in the “Joint or combined bids” section. (This does not include subcontractors). If there are no other lead contractors, that section should be left blank.**

QUESTION: How do the common nonprofit staff positions of Program Director and Case Manager in an eviction prevention program fit into the EEO-Job Categories specified in the pre-submission upload “4934 MWBE Staffing Plan?”

QUESTION: Can you explain what exactly you're looking for when it comes to the M/WBE Staffing Plan? For example, is this form to be filled out only if a non-profit is planning to utilize a subcontractor to fulfill its contract?

**ANSWER: All applicants should complete the Staffing Plan (form 4934) based on the proposed staff positions to the best of the applicant’s ability at time of proposal. Applicants should determine how staff positions are best classified based on job duties at your organization.**

QUESTION: RFP page 58, Question #3 “Upload the completed “Summary of Annual Funding Request and Number Served” form found in the PreUpload section. If an applicant is proposing to serve more than one county, should the applicant submit a SEPARATE “Summary of Annual Funding Request and Number Served” for each county? Or combine all counties?

**ANSWER: One Summary of Annual Funding Request and Number Served form per application should be submitted listing all counties served and showing combined totals.**

### **STEHP Requirements**

QUESTION: On page 15, it states that legal service providers are excluded from mandatory HMIS participation, but must maintain a comparable database. Can you clarify what this means? What is a comparable database? On page 42, the only exclusion appears to be for domestic violence population, not legal services providers. Please clarify.

QUESTION: (Is it) Correct that as a legal services provider If we are providing either eviction prevention legal services rental arrears assistance or a combination of both, we do not have to enter into HMIS?

QUESTION: In section IX. Program Requirements, item (12) - pp. 16 of the RFP, it states: "Report eligible participant data in the local Continuum of Care Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Database, or comparable database which conforms to local HMIS guidelines, timelines and user agreements (Ideally system will be able to export and/or import data to minimize duplication of reporting effort)" Do you have a list of comparable databases that conform to local HMIS guidelines? The RFP states that HMIS administration is an allowable cost in the budget. If

additional technical capacity or enhancements to software or systems other than HMIS are needed, are these considered allowable costs as well?

**ANSWER: All STEHP contractors must enter into HMIS or a comparable database. A comparable database is one that functions to the specifications of HUD's required data standards and keeps current when standards change. Domestic Violence providers are prohibited from using the HMIS that is connected to the CoC's implementation and they must use a comparable database. Legal services providers may use a comparable database to protect client level data if being connected to the CoC's implementation would violate client-attorney privilege. Page 15 of the RFP is amended to state "Excludes victim service providers, which must maintain a comparable database. Legal services providers may maintain a comparable database." All other providers must use the HMIS implementation operated by the CoC, except NYC providers who should contact the CoC System Administrator for direction. Only HMIS or comparable system expenses are eligible under STEHP.**

QUESTION: We use an HMIS comparable database, can we be reimbursed for Rapid's usage of the database? As in, prorate our total cost based on the amount our Rapid Program uses the database? If so, how would we prorate this?

**ANSWER: For a DV or legal services provider, you may be reimbursed for the STEHP program's pro-rated usage of the total HMIS comparable database expense, or your provider may send you an itemized bill.**

QUESTION: Throughout the RFP it states "... programs should be participating in the coordinated entry process to the maximum extent practicable". Please elaborate. In cases of agencies that are the only ones serving in a county, how is this applicable?

QUESTION: Our CoC is in the process of developing plans to include RR (Rapid Rehousing) in Coordinated Entry. Could STEHP funded RR services be able to be restricted to eligible clients that are in a shelter operated by the STEHP funded agency?

QUESTION: Can you clarify what is meant by "coordination with Continuum of Care?"

**ANSWER: Any STEHP-awarded projects must participate in and coordinate with the CoC whether they cover one county or multiple counties. Each CoC is in the process of developing a 'coordinated entry system' and STEHP grantees are expected to participate to the maximum extent practicable. Given that STEHP projects should participate in their CoCs coordinated entry process, STEHP funded Rapid Re-Housing services should not be restricted to eligible clients in a shelter operated by the STEHP funded agency.**

### **Miscellaneous**

QUESTION: Can you please tell us the month STEHP contract funds were first awarded five years ago? We are asking in order to reflect the "catch up" rental expenditures we have been able to utilize since then.

**ANSWER: STEHP funds were awarded in October 2014 for the contracts that are in effect currently until September 30, 2019.**

QUESTION: What is the anticipated start date of the contract?

**ANSWER: October 1, 2019.**

QUESTION: Is invoicing for contract payments monthly or quarterly?

**ANSWER: Quarterly.**

QUESTION: Regarding question 40, if an organization is applying specifically for shelter funds, does OTDA only want to see shelter audits? If additional audits are requested beyond shelter audits, how does OTDA want the agency to prioritize all of its agency audits from the previous five years?

**ANSWER: Question 40 has a 4,000-character narrative limit and does not accept uploaded material. The question "has your agency or program been audited" requires a yes or no answer. The response to the follow up questions should summarize results and findings of any audits completed.**

QUESTION: How are "private funds" defined? Does it include general fundraising and general operating support, or just discrete grants funding specific programs?

**ANSWER: Private funds include general fundraising and operating support as well as grants from private foundations.**

QUESTION: During the last funding cycle, approximately \$3 million was allocated to NYCFAA. Have those funds been reallocated to support Prevention services this funding cycle?

**ANSWER: Approximately 40% of available STEHP funds will be allocated to NYC, with prevention activities in NYC prioritized. NYCFAA is no longer an eligible category of funding.**

QUESTION: If an organization receives ESG funding and requests STEHP funding (for separate items), would there be a conflict as I believe STEHP funding has some relation to ESG? The asks are separate and would not overlap.

**ANSWER: An organization may receive ESG funds and STEHP funds for separate activities.**

QUESTION: On page 18 of the RFP, OTDA references regional percentages of funds, can you provide additional information on what those percentages are?

**ANSWER: The reference to regional percentages on page 18 refers to the regional percentages shown on page 13 of the RFP (40% for NYC, and 60% for Rest of State).**

QUESTION: Assuming we are awarded this contract, will our existing program clients roll over to the new contract seamlessly? Will the new contract impact our existing clients in any way, if so, how?

**ANSWER: Clients served under a previous STEHP contract can be served under a new STEHP contract.**

QUESTION: Are there any specific trainings our Rapid Case Manager would need to attend, or trainings they should attend? Are they reimbursable under this grant?

**ANSWER: STEHP does not mandate training. Each agency is responsible for properly training its staff to administer the program within ESG regulations and STEHP program parameters as outlined in the RFP. Training expenses are reimbursable as long as they are related to the STEHP program.**

## **New York State Homeless Assistance Datawarehouse Environment (NYSHADE)**

### **PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AMONG New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and CONTINUUM OF CARE**

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This Participation Agreement (the "**Agreement**") is entered into as of the Effective Date (as defined herein) between the New York Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, (OTDA) and \_\_\_\_\_ the Continuum of Care (the "**Agency**") regarding access and use of the New York Statewide Homeless Assistance Datawarehouse Environment (NYSHADE).

#### **I. Introduction**

NYSHADE, a de-identified database of homeless client demographic and service activity, allows authorized personnel at homeless and human service provider agencies throughout the State of New York to aggregate demographic and service delivery information, subject to appropriate inter-agency agreements, for the purpose of analyzing statewide homeless datasets to investigate and understand the relationship between public policy and homelessness in New York. In compliance with all State and Federal requirements regarding client and consumer confidentiality and data security, NYSHADE is designed to collect and deliver timely, unduplicated, credible, quality data about services for persons experiencing homelessness or persons at risk of becoming homeless.

The vision of NYSHADE is to enhance collaboration and data collection capabilities, leading to a better understanding of the homeless population in the state. NYSHADE will be a rich repository of information that will store data, which will be utilized to analyze trends, identify gaps in services, identify mobility patterns among homeless people, and to inform homeless funding and policy.

The purpose of NYSHADE is to give policy makers, service providers and funders an improved understanding of homelessness within the State of New York. The analysis of statewide data will allow for better planning and resource allocation and an increased ability to address the present and future needs of people experiencing homelessness in New York.

The primary benefits anticipated in working with data at the statewide level include:

- i The ability to bring together a consolidated unduplicated picture of homelessness across the state and across regions in order to better understand the characteristics and mobility patterns of the homeless population.
- i The ability to identify the prevalence of chronic homelessness across county boundaries thereby enabling service agencies to offer and provide appropriate services to the affected homeless population.
- i The ability to provide elected officials, the federal government, and other funders of homeless services a better understanding of the needs of individuals and families

experiencing homelessness, and the ability to better target their investments in housing and homeless services.

## **II. OTDA/AGENCY Responsibilities**

1. OTDA will provide the Agency access to reports generated by the NYSHADE in accordance with the NYSHADE "**Policies and Procedures**", dated September 2012, as same may, from time to time be amended, attached to this Agreement and made a part hereof. The Agency may also request ad hoc reports from NYSHADE, as time permits.
2. OTDA will respond to all report requests and shall distribute such reports to NYSHADE or the Agency, as appropriate.
3. OTDA will not charge a fee to the Agency to participate in NYSHADE. OTDA will assist the Agency in identifying sources of funds to cover the reasonable costs associated with participation in NYSHADE. OTDA's obligations under this Agreement are subject to the availability of funding for the NYSHADE project.
4. OTDA, or its agent, will provide both initial training and periodic updates to that training for core Agency and HMIS staff regarding participation in NYSHADE.
5. OTDA, or its agent, will provide basic user support and technical assistance in accordance with the attached Policies and Procedures and the schedule established by an advisory panel of representatives from the Agencies participating in the NYSHADE (the **NYSHADE Work Group**).
6. The Agency will submit all universal data elements, specific data elements, and some descriptor data elements for all non-domestic violence clients to NYSHADE on the 20<sup>th</sup> day following the end of each calendar year quarter. Additional data elements may be added to comply with Federal and/or State reporting requirements, or other needs upon the guidance of the NYSHADE Work Group.

## **III. Privacy and Confidentiality**

### **A. Protection of Client Privacy**

1. A subset of homeless client service delivery information including basic identifiers will be submitted to NYSHADE, which will use a de-identification tool to match records, assign a single number, and strip all client identifiers from the records. After the match is completed, no client identifying information will be retained in the dataset. The tool will not allow re-identification once the random number has been assigned. These are computer generated numbers used to de- duplicate the client records. OTDA will follow procedures as set forth in the Policies and Procedures to ensure privacy and protect the confidentiality of data submitted to the NYSHADE.

2. No one from OTDA will have access to client identifying information on any client whose data is entered into the NYSHADE. Staff from OTDA and the Agency will only have access in NYSHADE to de-identified aggregate data.
3. No Agency will have direct access to information contained in the NYSHADE.

#### B. Sharing of Information

1. The Agency shall adhere to all of its own policies, procedures, rules and regulations that govern the Agency's sharing of client information in connection with its participation in NYSHADE.
2. The Agency shall not share data elements on NYSHADE related to progress notes and psychotherapy notes, but will share the program-specific data elements about the sub-population data for those who have disabilities, for federal reporting purposes.
3. The Agency shall bear primary responsibility for oversight and the accuracy of all data submitted to NYSHADE.

#### D. Custody of Data

1. The Agency acknowledges that OTDA has ownership over all information aggregated into NYSHADE.
2. In the event the Agency wishes to withdraw from NYSHADE, it must notify OTDA in writing in accordance with Section V of this Agreement. It shall also submit a Withdrawal Request Form to OTDA. A withdrawing Agency may not request removal of data already entered in the NYSHADE; however, such Agency may request a summary of the data. After providing written notification, a withdrawing Agency is no longer required to submit quarterly data.
3. In the event that NYSHADE ceases to exist, the Agency will be notified and be provided a reasonable amount of time to access and save applicable statistical and frequency data. Thereafter, the information collected will be appropriately stored and then purged from NYSHADE.
4. In the event that OTDA or its obligation to administer NYSHADE ceases to exist, the custodianship of the data within NYSHADE may be transferred by OTDA to another department or organization for continuing administration and the Agency will be informed in a timely manner.

#### IV. Data Entry and Regular Use of NYSHADE

1. No licenses or fees will be charged to the Agency to participate in NYSHADE.
2. The Agency will provide specified data elements maintained by the Agency in its HMIS.

3. The Agency will submit data in a consistent manner, and will strive for submission in accordance with the schedule in this Agreement.
4. The Agency will routinely review records prior to submission to NYSHADE for completeness and data accuracy. Since NYSHADE uses only existing HMIS data, the Agency shall implement and maintain procedures to ensure that complete and accurate data is entered into the HMIS. The Agency agrees to develop additional procedures regarding the submission, review, and data correction processes, if necessary.
5. The Agency will not knowingly submit inaccurate information into NYSHADE. To assure the accuracy of data and information submitted to NYSHADE, the Agency shall run appropriate data quality tests and shall correct any errors identified by those tests prior to the submission of data to NYSHADE.
6. Transmission of material in violation of any Federal or State regulations is prohibited.
7. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, the Agency agrees to abide by the Policies and Procedures, and any other regulations, guidelines or policies applicable to the use of HMIS and NYSHADE which have been or may be issued by OTDA or the Federal government.

## **V. Terms and Conditions**

1. The parties hereto agree that this Agreement is the complete and exclusive statement of the Agreement among parties and supersedes all prior proposals and understandings, oral and written, relating to the subject matter of this Agreement.
2. The Agency shall not transfer or assign any rights or obligations under this Agreement without the written consent of OTDA.
3. This Agreement shall remain in force until terminated in writing by OTDA or the Agency, with 30 days advance written notice, except in the event of a breach of any term of this Agreement, whereupon the termination of the Agreement shall be immediate, at the sole discretion of OTDA.
4. This Agreement may be modified or amended only by written agreement executed by the parties hereto.
5. This Agreement shall be in effect as of the date it is executed by OTDA (the "**Effective Date**")

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have entered into this Agreement.

Agency:

By:

Title:

Date:

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

By:

Title:

Date: