

**PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE SUMMARY**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) NUMBER: N00R8201992**  
**TRANSITIONAL SHELTER AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR SINGLE ADULTS**  
**JANUARY 14, 2009**

**PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE:**

The Department of Human Resources/Baltimore City Department of Social Services conducted a Pre-Proposal Conference in Room 148 at Talmadge Branch Building, 1910 N. Broadway Street, 1st Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21213 on January 14, 2009. Sign in sheets of those attending is **Exhibit 1**.

The Summary is being issued to document the Pre-Proposal Conference. The Procurement Officer convened the conference, recognized State of Maryland employees and reiterated that all vendors sign in. The Procurement Officer then reviewed the RFP: Section 1 (reviewed issuing office, questions and inquiries, closing date, and State Project Manager), Section 2 (reviewed nearly every point related to the terms and conditions of the solicitation), Section 4 (emphasized two volume submission consisting of technical and financial offer in separate sealed enclosures, formation of proposal, required forms with proposal submission – pointed out fillable forms located on eMaryland Market Place website and PDF forms located on DHR website), Section 5 (explained evaluation process and how State selects best proposal).

The Homeless Emergency Environmental Service Unit (**HEESU**) Program Manager summarized the RFP, Section 3 (Specification).

The floor was opened to questions at the conclusion of each section to the RFP and at the conclusion of all five (5) sections. During the review of the RFP, it was stated questions may be submitted by mail, facsimile, or preferably, by email to the Procurement Officer. The summary of questions/answers follows and has been edited to include some extra information in response to questions for clarity, conciseness and most important, meaning.

**1. QUESTION:**

**Are we required to hire new staff to meet this requirement (Hiring Agreement) or would we be allowed to use staff we already have if this contract is in a building where we already have another program? Are we able to use in house people for this contract if the building is already staffed?**

**RESPONSE:**

The contractor would not be required to hire new staff for this contract as long as they have existing staff already in place and they're not going to hire additional staff to replace current staff. Essentially what it means is that should your company have a need to hire additional staff to meet the contract needs, then all of those job openings should be forwarded to the Maryland Department of Human Resources to allow us three business days to search the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients rolls to find qualified persons to send to you for interview through the normal process. We screen them first to make sure that they are qualified and if your company is awarded a contract, the contract will be forwarded to the Maryland Department of Human Resources, we will sign it, send

a copy back to the awardee, send you a packet, and welcome you into the program. Included in the packet are reporting forms to fill out in case there are job openings. There's a form that asks you to list each interview you may conduct from the Temporary Cash Assistance recipients pool with a disposition of the interview. And so again, the contract requires that the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the Baltimore City Department of Social Services be the first source you seek should this contract result in hiring needs. If you submit a Maryland TCA referral form which says you have a job if within three days we cannot find a qualified candidate for you we will sign a waiver, fax it to you that says for this particular job at this particular time you're free to hire whomever you wish because there isn't anyone qualified at this time.

**2. QUESTION:**

**We have 81 programs and we work with Temporary Cash Assistance clients all the time through some of our programs, would that make them ineligible for this? So, you see, we actually link TCA clients to programs i.e. Job readiness.**

RESPONSE:

This would be in addition to whatever Temporary Cash Assistance recipients you may have in other programs? It's something we call double dipping and you can't. For example we had a large state contractor who met Ms. Foster's program, Minority Business Enterprise, and when we asked them about the hiring agreement program they wanted to give us the candidates or the employees' or (Temporary Cash Assistance) recipient names that were met under the MBE. No, you can't do that.

**3. QUESTION:**

**So we would go through the HR?**

RESPONSE:

It's a user friendly system and we get back to you within the allotted times and it's a good program. There are tax incentives for hiring the TCA recipients. Did you know that your company can get up to \$8500 in tax benefits over two years for hiring a Temporary Cash Assistance recipient?

**4. QUESTION:**

**Would you work with us on retention of those people hired through that program?**

RESPONSE:

Yes, we do work with retention. If you look on page 2, of the Maryland Department of Human Resources Hiring Agreement you know, it's hard to find an organization or any agency that will put in place key factors that would promote retention, but the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients are provided with medical coverage for the first five or six months of their employment with you, say your company, their children are provided health care, they continue to receive food stamps at the amount that they were receiving when they weren't working. Child care subsidies are available. We help them with transportation. We also help them with counseling and I've already mentioned the tax credits, in essence, these things help promote keeping your employee. If an employee calls in and informs you, I don't have a babysitter, or I'm sick and I can't go to the doctor, the stated retention tools are going to enhance or increase the probability that the Temporary Cash Assistance recipient is going to stay on the job for as long as you need them. I would like to bring your attention to page 3, line item 5 in the Maryland Department of Human Resources Hiring Agreement, Attachment R of the RFP and then I'll be finished. It says agree to consider filling a minimum of blank of the job openings with the local department's referred candidates provided that the local department refers qualified candidates within three working days. We can't receive this with a zero on it. It's invalid; you must put a number there. We've had contractors who did not hire anyone or maybe hired one person, yet their efforts were deemed good faith. In other words, if you don't hire someone, that does not necessarily mean that you didn't try or it didn't come about. But on the other hand, our office has found companies who did not provide us with the job but we found that they hired anyway. We found them advertising on the Internet. We found them promoting from within. That's a problem, in essence, as long as we are within the guidelines, this is a good program for those especially who can get the tax credits and its user friendly.

5. **QUESTION:**

**Does the Hiring Agreement accompany the proposal or after? Do we submit it after the contract has been awarded?**

RESPONSE:

The Hiring Agreement is only submitted upon notification of award by the Procurement Officer.

6. **QUESTION:**

**So after the award then?**

RESPONSE:

Correct.

**7. QUESTION:**

**You're not expecting a blank one then?**

RESPONSE:

We are not expecting a blank form at the time the proposal is submitted. The Hiring Agreement Contract has to be submitted at the point that an organization has become the apparent contract awardee.

**8. QUESTION:**

**It's part of the attachment now but we don't submit it with the proposal, if I'm repeating correctly?**

RESPONSE:

Do not submit it with the proposal, the Hiring Agreement is submitted upon notification of contract award.

**9. QUESTION:**

**I have a two-part question. With the TCA recipient, does that include people who receive TDAP?**

RESPONSE:

The Hiring Agreement does not cover TDAP recipients.

**10. QUESTION:**

**Okay. Second, if it is found that the organization is in breach of this request for the hiring of TCA recipients, would that at any time during the course of the contract put that contract at risk?**

RESPONSE:

The Hiring Agreement constitute a term and condition of a contractual agreement. If the contractor/contract is determined to be non-compliance, it would be subject to the combined actions of the local department, the contract monitor, the Office of the Attorney General and the Hiring Agreement Office.

**11. QUESTION:**

**All of us have programs beyond this one if we're awarded; maybe not 81 but we have other programs. Are you open to receiving requests if there are positions open in other parts of the organization?**

RESPONSE:

Are you asking me if your organization has additional jobs? If so, then you should submit your organization employment needs via the Maryland State TCA Referral Form.

**12. QUESTION:**

**That should be a normal business thing. Now, if one of our clients goes, you know, we refer our clients, our TCA customers to you all and they get certified by the state as being eligible, then we have an opening, would they be precluded from being employed if they were deemed eligible?**

RESPONSE:

We would not accept TCA customers from a contractor who is tasked with placing the TCA customers in meaningful employment. We accept employment positions for TCA recipients that are not currently placed with vendors and under contract with the Department of Human Resources/Baltimore City Department of Social Services.

**13. QUESTION:**

**I just want to make sure, I understanding the 17 percent. I know it's 10 percent minority, 7 percent female. Is that correct?**

RESPONSE:

The 10 percent is for female, the 7 percent is African American.

**14. QUESTION:**

**I had it backwards. If I as an organization have 10 contracts it's supposed to be of the number of contracts or is it supposed to be a financial amount?**

RESPONSE:

The MBE goal is based on the total contract value

**15. QUESTION:**

**If we have a contract for \$1,000 it has to be \$100, that's what you're saying, 10 percent for the one?**

RESPONSE:

10% is designated for women

**16. QUESTION:**

**Of what we're contracted through this service provider, that would then go to a minority or a female?**

RESPONSE:

10% is designated for female. But remember the overall goal for this procurement is 25 percent, so you can't select one of the goals; you have to meet the total goal for the procurement, which is 25 percent.

**17. QUESTION:**

**Does that matter that if we're awarded and we are considered a minority enterprise, does that change that at all, we would be a hundred percent?**

RESPONSE:

If the prime contractor is a State Certified MBE, the prime contractor must solicit other State certified MBE's to meet the MBE goal.

**18. QUESTION:**

**In addition, to the fact that we are State certified MBE's?**

RESPONSE:

Yes.

**19. QUESTION:**

**I guess my concern with this as I'm listening is even if during this contract term, the MBE requirements is not met unintentionally, the ultimate factor is that the contract may be cancelled. In, one of your forms it says that action which can be taken consist of, suspending contract work or the funding. Now, from my understanding the purpose of this RFP is to provide services for the people who need the transitional beds which is the homeless. So in essence if they don't meet their goals the one who is hurt the most is the one that this RFP is really to support. Do you understand my question?**

RESPONSE:

It's not intended to hurt the people you're supporting, the contractor is required to make a good faith effort to meet the MBE goal. There are sanctions for not meeting the goal.

**20. QUESTION:**

**I guess the reason that I'm saying as a homeless advocate I'm listening with my advocacy ear and I understand everything that's going on and being said here, about the hiring agreement and the MBE. I want to know if those that really need to utilize the homeless services, will be ultimately punished. Do they suffer even more, if the contractor is pulled out underneath the people that need these types of services? Do you understand what I'm saying?**

RESPONSE:

That's the ultimate sanction. Anytime that the state issues a contract the state expects the contractor to comply with all of the terms and conditions. If there is a breach, meaning they don't comply with any of the terms and conditions, then the state has the option usually to do a few things, perhaps withhold payment, ask the contractor to cure, that is come up with a plan to meet the requirement, and the ultimate sanction being terminating the contract. And again, that's the ultimate sanction; it's not something that's taken lightly. But it is a possibility and it's in place for a lot of reasons. The state is paying the contractor for a particular service and if that service is not being provided then, the state needs to perhaps move on to another contractor who can provide those services. But that is the ultimate sanction for just not complying with any of the terms and conditions for a contract.

**21. QUESTION:**

**I guess we have a number of minority and female subcontractors but they are for the kind of support services like our audit, graphic layout, printing, and things like that. And we would be more than glad to continue with them and support them. My concern is we don't want them to be 25 percent of this award because the purpose of this is direct service, we provide that in-house, because you're not funding us to do promotional material and our audits and things like that. Would it**

**be better for us to do a waiver than to report those because they're the main things we contract for, most of the things we do in-house? And my second thing is just because we are ourselves a minority it's a shame that doesn't somehow count in this picture because we would be one hundred percent subcontractor to Baltimore City Department of Social Services.**

RESPONSE:

To answer the last part the law changed, thus, you are not allowed to count yourself in order to meet the MBE goal. Based on the scope of work for the project, support services that are required to provide direct services and State certified MBEs that are eligible to do the work are factors to consider meeting the MBE goal. You may request a waiver if you determine that the MBE goal can not be met.

**22. QUESTION:**

**Would it hurt your chances of securing the contract if you request a waiver? How will it actually affect your consideration?**

RESPONSE:

No, the MBE goal is not an evaluation criterion for the procurement.

**23. QUESTION:**

**I have a question, forgive my ignorance, I'm very new to Catholic Charities and I'm new to this. Ms. Adams, surely you have a cap on what is available for these 10 beds. Can you give me an idea what that number is?**

RESPONSE:

No, we do not disclose the budget.

**24. QUESTION:**

**You can't tell us that. It would be so helpful because the services needed for this population are needed. But if you don't, should we put forth what we believe is our most competitive offer we can deliver the services for.**

RESPONSE:

That is correct.

**25. QUESTION:**

**I guess my last question on that is, Ms. Foster, let's just say for the sake of argument because I want to fully understand this, if we are able to find one MBE who is registered that is Hispanic that can do all of the work, but that means we didn't meet the African American, but you have 25 percent, would that, that would still be not in compliance or not fully?**

RESPONSE:

No, you will still be in compliance for meeting the overall goal, but there is an outreach effort component to figuring out how you're going to meet the MBE goal with 10 percent woman and the 7 percent African American and you're going to have to document your effort to find MBEs in those areas.

**26. QUESTION:**

**I'm sorry; you said the law changed, if you're an MBE it doesn't count. Can we change that law back?**

RESPONSE:

That would be up to the State legislators

**27. QUESTION:**

**I'm curious why it changed.**

RESPONSE:

To provide more opportunity for Minority business and State Certified MBE to participate in contracts. You can do both but it can be different percentages.

**28. QUESTION:**

**If the stay is expected to be 30 days with the possibility of an extension of 30 days, we're just talking 60 days, During the first 30 days, if someone is an actively using drugs -- and we ask them to leave, what are your requirements for the time frame?**

RESPONSE:

The discharge timeframe requirements regarding someone who is actively using drugs would be determined based on case conferencing with the shelter counselor, HEESU Shelter Coordinator, HEESU Case Manager and the customer. Issues that would be addressed include but are not limited to: type of usage, length of usage, behavior related to the usage, level of motivation for sobriety, level of willingness to accept related services, and shelter rules. If a customer's behavior poses a threat to the safety of other residents, staff, and/or the customer, immediate discharge would be supported.

29. **QUESTION:**

**But what you're saying is there's no assurance that that person would exit because you're going to consider the situation on a case-by-case basis, so if someone was determined to be actively using but had not threatened someone it may be your determination that their exit could be delayed for how long?**

RESPONSE:

If someone is actively using substances and their related behavior has been determined to not pose a threat to the safety of other residents, staff and/or the customer, discharge planning would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Factors which would be considered in the determination would include: type of usage, length of usage, behavior related to the usage, level of motivation for sobriety, level of willingness to accept related services, and shelter rules.

30. **QUESTION:**

**Worst case scenarios.**

RESPONSE:

The homeless population served by HEESU includes customers who have a history of substance abuse. Since relapse can be expected to be part of the recovery process for some, every effort should be made by the shelter to engage customers in relapse prevention services. However, if a customer's behavior, whether it is related to substance use or other factors, is a threat to the safety of other residents, staff and/or themselves, immediate discharge should occur.

31. **QUESTION:**

**Right, and what I'm asking if there are house rules, let's say that's grounds for immediate exit or exit within 24 hours, would that be supported by your agency?**

RESPONSE:

The shelter should have rules that have been given to HEESU and each customer placed at the shelter. If a customer is in violation of the shelter rules and the written rules indicate the discharge consequences, HEESU would support a related discharge as long as expected procedures are followed including: written customer notification and completed incident report. However, if a customer's behavior, whether it is related to substance use or other factors, is a threat to the safety of other residents, staff and/or themselves, immediate discharge should occur.

**32. QUESTION:**

**The other question I had, monitoring medications, if someone has a medical complexity that requires injections and things like that, are you saying that we would have to have certified medicine aides on staff?**

RESPONSE:

No. The RFP does not require a Certified Medicine Aide to be available to monitor and administer medications. The customers are screened prior to placement and should be able to administer their own medications. For example, if someone who is insulin dependent is placed, that customer would have already been screened by HEESU to be able to administer their own injections and know how much insulin is prescribed. If HEESU assesses someone in need of housing who cannot administer their own medications, then shelter placement may not be appropriate.

**33. QUESTION:**

**We would just --**

RESPONSE:

According to the proposal you would be alerting them about their medications, you would be giving them reminders. If we have somebody who for example is on insulin they would need access to a refrigerator. That's why we do the screening. If they're on a medication they have to be able to manage that on their own. So if somebody is unable to manage their medications, they may not be appropriate for your shelter.

**34. QUESTION:**

**Direct advocacy is the key areas of vocational and social habilitation to facilitate self-sufficiency. Can you give me an idea when you all view that as an appropriate activity?**

RESPONSE:

Direct advocacy in the key areas of vocational and social rehabilitation to facilitate self-sufficiency is expected on a continuous basis for all customers because the ultimate goal is self-sufficiency for our customers. Vocational and social rehabilitation examples include but are not limited to: teaching independent skills, participation in educational and vocational services, participation in job readiness programs, assistance with locating employment opportunities which provide a fair living wage.

**35. QUESTION:**

**Must their location be accessible for people with limited mobility disabilities?**

RESPONSE:

Please refer to **RFP AMENDMENT NO. 1, BCDSS/AFS-10-050 TRANSITIONAL SHELTER AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR SINGLE ADULTS.**

**36. QUESTION:**

**You don't necessarily expect the 10 beds to be, just for one sex, you want them to be for male and female?**

RESPONSE:

The RFP requires a total of 10 shelter beds to be used for males and females. Accommodations must be made to separate the genders.

**37. QUESTION:**

**And they can be separate facilities?**

RESPONSE:

The beds can be in separate facilities, but this is not a requirement.

**38. QUESTION:**

**But the maximum is still just 10, so it's five and five?**

RESPONSE:

The RFP requires a total of 10 shelter beds to be used for males and females. Accommodations must be made to separate the genders.

**39. QUESTION:**

**Do you have a preference with the makeup from the need you see?**

RESPONSE:

The RFP requires a total of 10 shelter beds for males and females for the exclusive use of BCDSS/HEESU. The beds would have to accommodate whichever gender HEESU intends to refer.

**40. QUESTION:**

**I'm still not clear, are you saying we could submit a proposal for just females?**

RESPONSE:

No.

**41. QUESTION:**

**You're saying we have to serve both?**

RESPONSE:

You have to serve both.

**42. QUESTION:**

**But the majority of the people you see are males.**

RESPONSE:

Current statistics indicate more homeless single males than homeless single females are requesting services at HEESU but the 10 beds must be available to serve whichever gender is referred.

**43. QUESTION:**

**I have another question. During the time limit that a service user may be able to utilize this program, 30 days with the possible addition of 30 days, what if the person has not accomplished their particular goals to overcome their certain issues, would they be able to still utilize the service or what would happen from the point of the exiting of the 60 days?**

RESPONSE:

This is determined by HEESU on a case by case basis for each customer. The customer's discharge planning should start at the time of placement and progress should be reported on each weekly report so that HEESU is aware of the progress and is working with the shelter and customer. HEESU would consider an additional extension based on the merit of each case and the vulnerability of the customer

**44. QUESTION:**

**Is it a joint communication between the Offeror and HEESU or a three-way with the service user as well?**

RESPONSE:

The customer is a member of the team and would have involvement in the decision making process. Therefore, there would be joint communication between HEESU, the shelter and the customer.

**45. QUESTION:**

**I think you just answered my question. I was going to say are you bound by the lowest bid; you're saying you're looking at the whole picture?**

RESPONSE:

Yes, the technical has more weight than the financial and will be ranked according to the criteria listed in section 5.5 Criteria for Technical Evaluation.

**46. QUESTION:**

**Do you have an approximate cost for that transcript?**

RESPONSE:

No. The transcript can be obtained by contacting Walls-Gore Reporting, 410-269-0308

**47. QUESTION:**

**Will there be an amendment on this that the location be accessible to people with limited mobility? Could that be in it? I'm sure you're aware that more people with limited mobility suffer from homelessness as well and they have a greater hardship in finding a transitional home that is accessible.**

RESPONSE:

Please refer to **RFP AMENDMENT NO. 1, BCDSS/AFS-10-050 TRANSITIONAL SHELTER AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR SINGLE ADULTS.**

**48. QUESTION:**

**I just want to make sure I'm clear, you said one original and five copies of everything?**

RESPONSE:

The Offeror is required to submit one (1) original of the technical proposal with five (5) copies in a separate enclosure. The Offeror is also required to submit one (1) original and five (5) copies of the financial proposal with is Attachment A in a separate enclosure. The technical and financial proposals are to be in separate enclosures.

**49. QUESTIONS:**

**On Section 1.5 it says that must arrive to the office by February the 5th. When it's mailed should it be postmarked by February 5th or received by February 5th?**

RESPONSE:

If you're mailing your proposal you're taking a chance it's not going to be received by February 5, 2009 at 2:00 p.m., local time. So you may want to consider actually delivering it to 1910 N. Broadway. We have one entrance in the front of the building. I will be located in the front hallway foyer next to the guard station on February 5, 2009 between 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. local time to received proposals.

**50. QUESTIONS:**

Associated Catholic Charities offers 81 programs in the state of Maryland, some are registered and some are not. In this case you're saying that the program that would be administering the service is who is applying to be the vendor, would be required to be registered or the fact that the agency has a registration would be covered? Forgive my voice; it's getting scratchier by the moment. We're Associated Catholic Charities and Associated Catholic Charities is registered, but what she's asking is do the individual programs who may be applying for this need to register separately? No, we're all under -- that's the problem, we can't apply, we have to apply under the Catholic Charities.

Response:

Registration under eMaryland Marketplace (eMM) is based on company and the business entity that is authorized to do business in the State. The entity that is registered with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) is required to register with eMM. It is not necessary for individual programs within the company to register separately, unless the program is a business entity registered with SDAT.

**THE PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE CONCLUDED AT 11:35 A.M. LOCAL TIME.**