

UNITY of Greater New Orleans  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
Permanent Supportive Housing for the Chronically Homeless

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UNITY of Greater New Orleans, the lead agency for the homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) for New Orleans and Jefferson Parish, is seeking proposals for a Permanent Supportive Housing Project, which is expected to provide tenant-based leasing assistance and supportive services for at least 8-10 chronically homeless individuals and/or families per year.

It is anticipated that an estimated total of approximately \$120,000 will be available for this project, if funding is provided by HUD in the upcoming national CoC competition. If awarded by HUD through the competition, this Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Project would fund one agency to serve as project sponsor with a grant of approximately \$120,000 for a 1-year period expected to begin in the fall of 2014. It is anticipated that this grant would be renewed annually for the project sponsor assuming that it is in good standing with UNITY regarding program and fiscal compliance. The persons eligible to be served in this PSH project are mentally and/or physically disabled, chronically homeless individuals/families with the longest histories of homelessness who are in need of ongoing supportive services in order to become and remain stably housed. Clients will be referred to the program from the PSH Registry which prioritizes clients for placement into the program.

Nonprofit or governmental agencies are eligible to apply; agencies that are currently members of the UNITY Service Providers and Professionals Association as well as those agencies not currently receiving funds through the CoC are equally encouraged to apply.

-----**Proposals are due by January 3, 2014 by Noon**-----

PSH is affordable and permanent rental housing linked to supportive services designed to enable a person to become and remain stably housed. National studies show that PSH is a cost-effective solution to chronic homelessness and that it can successfully house and stabilize vulnerable persons living on the street who previously often were believed to be beyond help. UNITY expects the selected project sponsor to follow "Housing First" principles and to persevere in providing housing and services to each client despite the difficulties of doing so.

The agency selected as project sponsor must:

- Provide ongoing leasing assistance and case management services to at least 8-10 chronically homeless individuals or families in apartments found in the private rental market.
- Accept chronically homeless persons/families referred from the UNITY PSH Registry, which maintains a registry of homeless persons eligible for PSH and ranks them according to their risk of dying and the length of time they have been homeless. Participants for this project would be referred by the Registry.
- Be willing to find housing for participants in either parish depending on the participant's preference and the availability of rental units. Rent amounts for the housing units may not exceed the current area Fair Market Rents.
- Be willing to "front rents" for a period not expected to exceed 6 weeks until reimbursement is received from UNITY. This amount may average about \$9000 monthly once the program reaches full capacity.
- Once receiving funds from the Continuum of Care, maintain dues-paying membership in the UNITY Service Providers and Professionals Association.

**BUDGET:** The annual budget for the project sponsor is expected to at least include the approximate budget line items listed below. There is a possibility that the project budget could be larger and serve more persons, depending on whether additional existing grants are reduced and reprogrammed. Once selected, UNITY will assist the project sponsor to further develop this budget.

- Supportive Services: \$28,000 for case management services only (HUD requirement)
  - Leasing: \$80,000 for leasing assistance for 8-10 participants
  - Administration: \$ 3,780 for costs of administering the program
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**Anticipated Funding Available: \$111,780**

HUD defines chronic homelessness as follows: *"A chronically homeless person is defined as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who 1) has been continuously homeless for a year or more OR 2) has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. Disabling condition is defined as a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. To be considered chronically homeless, persons must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. living on the streets) and/or in an emergency shelter during that time. An episode is a separate, distinct, and sustained stay on the streets and/or in an emergency homeless shelter."* Please note that HUD has expanded the definition of "chronically homeless" to include family households.

For further information about housing first programs providing PSH for chronically homeless persons, the the following websites may offer useful information: [www.pathwaystohousing.org](http://www.pathwaystohousing.org); [www.csh.org](http://www.csh.org); [www.naeh.org](http://www.naeh.org); and [www.unitygno.org](http://www.unitygno.org).

**Anticipated Timeline for the PSH Project Implementation**

- Deadline for submitting proposal to UNITY: January 3, 2014 at noon.
- UNITY informs applicants whether they were selected: January 7, 2014.
- Selected agencies submit any additional information needed by UNITY for HUD application: by Jan. 14, 2014.
- HUD announces funding award in spring or summer 2014.
- HUD finalizes grant agreement with UNITY in summer or fall of 2014.
- Project sponsor will receive program orientation and training from UNITY in fall 2014.
- Project should begin October or November 2014.

**PROPOSAL FORMAT**

**Your proposal, no more than 6 pages, must address the following:**

- 1) Interest (5 points)** - Describe the special needs and challenges presented by chronically homeless persons and explain why your agency is interested in and committed to serving this population.
- 2) Experience (15 points)** - Describe your agency's experience and past performance in providing housing placement, direct financial assistance and supportive stabilization services to homeless persons with disabilities. Include past performance on other HUD-funded projects or similar projects, if applicable.
- 3) Housing First Approach (15 points)** - Describe how you will utilize a "Housing First approach" in which assistance is offered without requiring compliance with treatment or medication and in which your agency perseveres in providing housing and services despite often challenging behavioral health issues.

Describe your agency's plans to acquire further training and expertise in housing and case management for chronically homeless persons.

4) **Plan for Effective Case Management (15 points)** - Describe how you have provided effective case management with other similar programs in the past. Describe your plan for providing effective case management to assist participants obtain and retain housing in this program. Describe the duties of the employees you will hire to provide the services and how they will be supervised. Attach a resume of the person who will provide supervision. Give an example of how you would address a participant with challenging behaviors to help retain housing stability.

5) **Timeline (3 points)** - Describe your timeline for reaching full program capacity in housing 8-10 participants within 3 months after the start date of your grant agreement.

6) **Financial Capacity (15 points)** - Describe your agency's capacity and ability to front direct assistance payments to landlords (reimbursement from UNITY will not occur most likely until 6 weeks after your payments)

7) **Cultural Competence (5 points)** - Describe your agency's cultural competence. Include experience in serving with cultural sensitivity people who are racially, ethnically and religiously diverse; who speak languages other than English; who have a range of physical and mental disabilities; who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender; and who are extremely low-income. Describe the diversity of your board and staff, your agency's non-discrimination policies, and how you ensure that your staff meets the needs of clients with sensitivity toward clients' varied cultural and life experiences.

8) **Program Enhancement (7 points)** - Describe what your agency will "bring to the table" in enhancing the performance of this program. Describe what matching funds will be used to provide the annual cash match required by HUD for your supportive services activities.

9) **Other** (mandatory to be considered for funding) (these attachments not included in page limit)

- Attach proof of nonprofit tax-exempt status, if your agency is a non-profit organization.
- Attach a copy of your 2 most recent annual Financial Audits.

10) **Other Areas To Be Considered in Scoring of Proposals (DO NOT COMPLETE THIS SECTION. This is for information purposes only.)** Each proposal is eligible for an additional 20 points to be determined by an independent Review Committee which will consider other factors in deciding which proposers would make a good project sponsor. These areas include:

- Contract compliance with previous UNITY-funded projects regarding spending, timely billing, HMIS data quality, submission of required reports, findings and concerns, etc.
- Performance results from Annual Progress Reports and monitoring reports.
- Participation at SPPA meetings, in the New Orleans 100,000 Homes Campaign, on CoC committees, etc.
- Collaboration with UNITY Welcome Home Outreach Program and consumer feedback.

Please limit your proposal to no more than six pages. Attachments are not counted toward page limit. Proposals should be received at UNITY by noon, Monday, Jan. 3, 2014. Proposals **MUST** be submitted via **e-mail ONLY** to: [proposal@unitygno.org](mailto:proposal@unitygno.org). Proposals should be clearly labeled with the name of the project being applied for. Address submission to Martha J. Kegel, Executive Director. For more information, please contact Valerie Coffin, Director of CoC Programs, 504-821-4496 ext. 112 or [vcoffin@unitygno.org](mailto:vcoffin@unitygno.org).