

UNITY of Greater New Orleans
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #17-2
Rapid Rehousing to End Unsheltered Homelessness Project
August 3, 2017

Purpose of RFP

UNITY of Greater New Orleans, the lead agency for the homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) for New Orleans and Jefferson Parish, is seeking proposals from nonprofit and governmental agencies to provide rapid re-housing case management and rental assistance to unsheltered homeless individuals and families over the project year.

It is anticipated that \$484,760 will be available for this project, if funding is provided by HUD in the upcoming national CoC competition. If awarded by HUD, this project would fund one project sponsor to serve 35-40 households at any time with rental assistance and supportive services. The new sponsor should be expected to begin summer or fall 2018 if awarded through the HUD competition. Once funded, the project is eligible for annual renewal through the CoC funding competition based on project performance including program and fiscal compliance.

The target population for this project is homeless individuals and families who recently lived in unsheltered situations, although other homeless populations may also be served by this project as referred by the CoC Coordinated Entry System. The project will work in close collaboration with the new low-barrier shelter once it is in operation. If this project begins before the low-barrier shelter opens, it will operate independently from the shelter in the interim. In some cases, the program will be used as a bridge to permanent supportive housing for clients with serious disabling conditions who need longer supportive services and rental assistance in order to remain in housing. In other cases, clients are expected to be able to “transition in place” and sustain rents on their own after temporary assistance of 3-4 months.

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 Continuum of Care are equally encouraged to apply.

-----**Proposals are due Monday, August 28, 2017 by 12 Noon**-----

The selected project sponsor must be willing to:

- Accept clients from the coordinated entry system which prioritizes clients based on the VI-SPDAT assessment tool and length of time homeless.
- Provide supportive services to 35-40 households along with ongoing rental assistance for apartments found in the private market.
- Participate in weekly navigation meetings to facilitate transition of clients into the program.
- Clients should be rapidly housed in less than 30 days from referral into the program.
- Input data into HMIS within 24 hours of changes.
- Provide rental assistance and case management services, including assisting clients in obtaining income and mainstream benefits (employment, SSI, Medicaid, and assessment for Medicaid funded services) so that clients can sustain housing on their own or access PSH.
- Be willing to find and inspect housing for participants in either Jefferson or Orleans Parish depending on the client’s preference and the availability of rental units. Rent amounts for the housing units must be rent reasonable.
- Be willing to “front rents” for a period not expected to exceed 6 weeks until reimbursement is received from UNITY. This amount may average \$25,000/monthly once the program reaches full capacity.
- Once receiving funds through the Continuum of Care, maintain dues-paying membership in the UNITY Service Providers and Professionals Association.

UNITY will assist the selected project sponsor in developing a more detailed budget. The annual budget includes funding in these budget line items:

BUDGET	
Supportive Services	\$97,600
Rental Assistance	\$484,760
Admin	\$16,390
Total CoC Funding	\$484,760
Match	\$121,167

For further information about rapid rehousing or housing first programs, see www.naeh.org.

Meetings and Deadlines

- RFP Information Meeting: Thursday, August 3 at 9 a.m. in the 1st Floor Annex Conference Room, 2475 Canal Street.
- Deadline for submitting proposal to UNITY: Monday, August 28, 2017 at 12 Noon.
- UNITY informs applicants whether they were selected: Friday, September 1, 2017.
- Selected agencies submit any additional information needed by UNITY for HUD application: Friday, September 8, 2017.
- Anticipated Notification of Project Funding from HUD: January 2018
- Anticipated Project Start: Summer of Fall 2018

PROPOSAL FORMAT

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

- 1) **Title of Project: RFP 17-2 Rapid Rehousing to End Unsheltered Homeless Project**, name of organization, Tax ID #, DUNS # and contact information of the applicant organization. Attach evidence of non-profit tax-exempt status (i.e. IRS 501(c)3 letter).
- 2) **Interest and Organizational Experience (10 points)** - Describe your agency's experience and past performance in providing housing placement, employment search, planning for financial self-sufficiency, direct financial assistance and supportive stabilization services, especially experience providing housing and services to homeless individuals and families. Include past performance on other HUD-funded projects or similar projects, if applicable. Include past experience with Rapid Rehousing as well as experience working the clients with disabling conditions in need of permanent supportive housing.
- 3) **Housing First/Low-Barriers Approach (20 points)**- Describe how you will utilize a "Housing First approach" in which assistance is offered without requiring compliance with treatment, medication, lack of income or any other area that would interfere with quickly housing a family within 14 days of entry into program. Describe how your program will ensure no additional barriers are placed on clients while they are enrolled in the program. Describe your agency's plans to acquire further training and expertise in providing rapid rehousing services to families with the progressive engagement model.
- 4) **Plan for Effective Case Management and Supportive Services (20 points)** - Describe how you have provided effective case management to homeless, disabled or other special needs populations in the past. Include experience providing services in a "Housing First approach" in which assistance is offered without requiring compliance with treatment or medication. Describe your agency's plans to acquire further training and expertise in these practices and/or the progressive engagement approach to rapid rehousing. 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 and the case managers, if known.

- 5) **Staff Experience (10 points)** - Please describe the job duties and qualifications of the employees you will hire to provide these services and include a resume of the person who will supervise this staff. Also describe the evidence-based practices and interventions used by your staff and how staff acquire and maintain skills through training and supervision. Attach job description(s) of project staff and a resume of the person who will provide supervision.

- 5) **Implementation Timeline (5 points)** - Describe the plan for rapid implementation, specifically how the project will house the first program participant within 1 month of the award and have full enrollment within 5 months. Include a timeline for hiring and training staff.

- 7) **Financial Capacity (15 points)** - Submit the most recent independent audit (and A-133 audit if applicable). Budgets of selected applicants may be revised in consultation with UNITY upon notification of selection. 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). **Optional: Supportive services budget may be submitted as an attachment to demonstrate eligible supportive services that would be provided by CoC funds along with other matching funds to support program participants.**

- 8) **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 Transgendered; who are Young Adults or Elderly; 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.

- 9) **Program Enhancement (5 points)** - Describe what your agency will "bring to the table" in enhancing the performance of this program. Describe what matching funds will be used for your supportive services and rental assistance activities. Match may include in-kind sources and can include administrative costs.

Attachments: (mandatory to be considered for selection) (attachments not considered in page limit)

- * Attach a copy of your 2 most recent annual Financial Audits.
- * Attach proof of nonprofit tax-exempt status, if your agency is a non-profit organization.
- * Resume of supervisor
- * Job Description(s) of project staff
- * Match Commitment letter (25% of sub-recipient budget) indicating source of matching funds and uses of those funds on project activities.

- 9) **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 10 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, concerns and findings, etc.
 - Performance results from Annual Progress Reports and monitoring reports.
 - Consumer Feedback and Collaboration with UNITY Welcome Home Outreach Program

Please limit your proposal to no more than 6 pages (not including attachments).

Proposals must be addressed to Martha Kegel, Executive Director of UNITY, and submitted to proposals@unitygno.org no later than 12 noon on Monday, August 28, 2017. Do not submit proposals by any other method. If you have questions about the RFP, please contact Valerie Coffin, Director of Continuum of Care Programs, at vcoffin@unitygno.org. Please visit UNITY's homepage at www.unitygno.org periodically to see if answers to any questions submitted by you or others have been posted.