

UNITY of Greater New Orleans  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #14-4**  
Permanent Supportive Housing Project (Reallocated PSH Project)  
September 26, 2014

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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 will provide tenant-based rental assistance and supportive services to approximately 10 chronically homeless individuals and/or families.

It is anticipated that an estimated total of \$120,000 will be available for this project, based on the reallocated amounts by HUD in the upcoming national CoC competition for 2014. 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 Summer or Fall of 2015. 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 that are in need of on-going supportive services in order to become and remain stably housed. Clients will be referred to the program from the PSH Registry and the Coordinated Assessment System which prioritizes clients for placement into the program. UNITY encourages agencies that have the ability to bill Medicaid for services OR agencies that do not currently bill Medicaid for PSH services but would be willing to become a Medicaid provider to apply for this project. There will a preference for agencies that do not currently have a CoC funded permanent supportive housing project.

Threshold criteria:

- Non-profit 501(c)3 Organization or Government Agency
- Applicant must provide 25% match for services, administrative costs and rental assistance.
- Applicant must provide 200% leveraging.

-----**Proposals are due by October 13, 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 rental assistance and case management services to approximately 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/Coordinated Assessment System, 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 2 months until reimbursement is received from UNITY. This amount may average about \$9,000 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.
- 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).

**BUDGET:** The annual budget for the project sponsor will include at least these approximate budget line items. UNITY will assist the project sponsor to further develop the budget.

Activity	Description of Funds	Total CoC Budget
Rental Assistance	Approx. \$91,800 (10 clients x FMR x 12 months)	\$ 91,800
Supportive Service	Case Management + Fringe Transportation	\$ 24,000
Administration	Administrative Cost	\$ 4,200
Match Requirement	25% total budget	\$ 30,000

**Anticipated Funding Available: \$120,000**

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**Applications must be emailed by noon, Monday, October 13 to [proposals@unitygno.org](mailto:proposals@unitygno.org). Agencies will be notified by October 17 whether they were selected as a project sponsor for the HUD application. Notification of funding by HUD is expected in the Spring of 2015. Anticipated project start date is Summer or Fall 2015.**

### PROPOSAL FORMAT

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

Title of Project: Reallocated PSH Project

- 1) Interest** - 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** - 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** - 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** - 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** - Describe your timeline for reaching full program capacity in housing approximately 10 participants within 3 months after the start date of your grant agreement.

6) **Financial Capacity** - 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** - 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; 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** - 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, on CoC committees, etc.
- Consumer Feedback and Collaboration with UNITY Welcome Home Outreach Program

The proposal narrative should be limited to no more than 6 pages. **Proposals must be addressed to Martha Kegel, Executive Director of UNITY, and submitted to [proposals@unitygno.org](mailto:proposals@unitygno.org) no later than noon on Monday, October 13, 2014.** Do not submit proposals by any other method.

Submission should include:

- 1) Narrative – no more than 6 pages
- 2) Budget
- 3) Documentation of Non-Profit Status (501(c) 3 IRS letter)
- 4) Two most recent financial audits
- 5) Documentation of match and leverage

If you have questions about the RFP, please contact Valerie Coffin, Director of Continuum of Care Programs, at [vcoffin@unitygno.org](mailto:vcoffin@unitygno.org) or 504-821-4496x112. Please visit UNITY's homepage at

[www.unitygno.org](http://www.unitygno.org) periodically to see if answers to any questions submitted by you or others have been posted.