

Request for Information 1623-028



State of Alaska
Department of Health
Division of Behavior Health

Date Issued: May 5, 2023
Response Deadline: May 22, 2023, 4:00PM

Homeless Outreach: Rural Transitional Age Youth

Introduction:

The Alaska Department of Health (DOH), Division of Behavioral Health (DBH), is soliciting proposals from qualified offerors to provide linkage and outreach to homeless transition aged (16-24) youth (TAY) in hub rural communities, specifically Bethel, Ketchikan, Nome, and Juneau. The funds are to support staffing positions for such outreach services and necessary supportive expenses.

The Intent of this RFI is to assist the DBH Project Manager with answers to the following questions:

1. *Are there interested parties available to fulfill the needed work?*
2. *If there is interest, which community hubs can be served?*
3. *What work are the interested parties able to accomplish within the constraints of current funding?*
4. *If additional funding were made available, what additional work would an interested party be able to accomplish if with the additional funds?*

As answers are gathered and evaluated, the Project Manager (PM), with support from the Procurement Officer, will determine whether a formal solicitation is merited, and what elements and funds should be used to support the goal of assisting Alaska's Rural TAY.

Background Information:

Homelessness is a national problem which requires local community solutions. The Alaska 2022 Point in time survey identifies at least 2098 homeless individuals in Alaska. Approximately 20% of homeless are youth. Runaway and homeless youth are often unhoused, couch surfing, or staying in unsafe/exploitive environments. Runaway and homeless youth are vulnerable to multiple threats, including not having their basic food and shelter needs met, untreated mental health disorders, substance use, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection, sexual exploitation (including survival sex to meet basic needs), physical victimization and suicide. The American Academy of Pediatrics finds youth experiencing homelessness are twice as likely to attempt suicide as their peers who are not homeless. Also, youth who are homeless often experience a significant disruption in their education due to the transient nature of homelessness. The Voices of Youth Count from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago also found that 29% of homeless youth report having substance misuse problems and 69% of homeless youth report mental health problems. In Alaska in 2022, over 60% of homeless individuals report a disabling condition of some kind.

Scope of Work

If DOH conducts a solicitation for these services, the selected contractor will have demonstrated expertise in working with and meeting the needs vulnerable youth in the Alaska community and understands the unique needs of individuals who are homeless. Experience working with and navigating the regional programs for the

homeless, as well as knowledge of the local community needs and the ability to coordinate with multiple stakeholders is required. The proposed Outreach and Case Management Project allows for agencies to provide a customized and individualized approach within the structure to match the local community needs.

Specifically:

- To provide linkage and outreach to homeless transition aged (16-24) youth (TAY). The funds are to support staffing positions for such outreach services and necessary supportive expenses.
- Ideally, these positions will operate in teams of two, given the variable locations of the outreach needed.
- These positions will connect with the homeless, assess for risk, including risk of victimization, assist with accessing emergency behavioral health services and work with first responders to support referrals for services.
- The positions will respond to emergency systems of care and provide concrete assistance for individuals to connect to immediate concrete needs (shelter, food, and behavioral health supports).
- The positions will provide referrals to Crisis Stabilization Services as well as offer access to medical services (including vaccines) clothing and shelter referrals.

The goals of this project are to Connect homeless and runaway transitional aged individuals with the services they need to find a safe and supportive environment and decrease the incidence of homeless youth in the community.

Deliverables

If DOH conducts a solicitation, it may include the following deliverables in the solicitation:

- Provide ongoing and regular community outreach to identify and reach out to homeless or at-risk youth.
- Assess individual needs, facilitate access to necessary services and then help to engage in those services and maintain active contact with participants.
- Identify and create meaningful contacts and connections for TAY experiencing homelessness.
- Develop/ solidify relationships with local service providers and community organizations and function as an integral part of the local community, acting as a partner and resource for community providers.
- Track data and outcome measures.

Data points: Is it making a difference? How much change for the better did we produce?

Numbers:	Ratio:
# of TAY reached	% of TAY reached/TAY engaged
# of TAY engaged	% of TAY accessing services to TAY contacted.
# of TAY in services	% of TAY engaged/ TAY successfully completing a target goal (job, treatment, legal, etc.)
# of TAY sheltered/housed	% of TAY engaged/ TAY sheltered/housed

Budget

The Alaska Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, is issuing this RFI for two years of work in each of the four locations (Bethel, Ketchikan, Nome and Juneau) for \$35,500 per year, for two years.

Cost Proposal

DOH is most interested in providing a flat-fee, quarterly payment (\$11,833.34 per quarter). For that amount, please estimate the following:

Numbers:

- # of TAY reached
- # of TAY engaged
- # of TAY in services
- # of TAY sheltered/housed

If the organization has concepts that would fit a different payment schedule, please include those thoughts in the response.

Preferred Minimum Experience

Information provided below lists minimum requirements developed with input of experts in the field and the expectations of professionalism required:

- The offeror must have three (3) years in the last five (5) of experience providing community support, behavioral health or substance misuse services or similar services to transition aged youth. (TAY)
- Provider must have the infrastructure necessary to provide and supervise services in Alaska.

Response Information:

How to Participate

Interested applicants/firms who believe they can provide the services described above should indicate their interest by submitting an electronic response (.pdf format is preferable) with the following information:

- a. Company name
- b. Contact information (email) for the individual(s) who should be notified if DOH releases a solicitation.
- c. Clearly indicate which one of the four communities you are proposing to support (Bethel, Ketchikan, Nome, or Juneau).
 1. Note that an interested party *may* provide responses to more than one location.
 2. If responding to more than one location, please detail how the approach in one community may be different than the other.
 3. For the purposes of this RFI, proposals for each location will be evaluated as stand-alone responses, so the evaluation team can better determine the best course of action.
- d. A summary that clearly describes your company's capabilities and experience related to providing the services described in this RFI.
- e. A summary that clearly describes how the applicant/firm meets or exceeds the preferred minimum experience.
- f. A statement confirming that the company anticipates the project deliverables, as shown in the budget above, are reasonably within the estimated budget provided. Or, if not, why not?
- g. A detailed projection of quarterly expectations of deliverables as related to the cost proposal metrics.
- h. If the interested party believes it has capacity to engage more TAY if more funding was available, include what could be accomplished with increased funding.
 1. Use an order of magnitude of 25%, 50% and 75% more funds as guidelines.
 2. The projected additional work may be consolidated in the presentation of the summary in item "g." above.

- i. A summary of any concerns regarding the project as described. What potential obstacles should be anticipated?

Submission Instructions:

Applicants/firms must submit their response as a PDF file, sent via email, by May 22, 2023, at 4:00PM. Responses should be attached and sent via email to the following:

R. Todd Webster

Procurement Specialist
Alaska Department of Health
russell.webster@alaska.gov
907-268-4847

This RFI is issued to help DBH determine the direction it must go to serve TAY. Interested parties are *encouraged* to register their intent to respond with the Procurement Officer above. When questions are answered, all registered parties will receive a response via BCC so all potential responders may remain anonymous.

It is the responsibility of the interested party to follow up with the person(s) listed above to ensure your response was received prior to the time and date specified at the top of this RFI.

Important Notice:

This Request for Information does not constitute a formal solicitation. The purpose of the RFI is to determine if there are qualified offerors out there who would be interested in bidding on these services. The State will use this information to potentially develop a future solicitation.

The State of Alaska is not responsible for any costs associated with the preparation of responses. The issuance of the Request for Information does not obligate the state to purchase any goods or services, extend any rights to prospective vendors nor guarantee that the State of Alaska will proceed with a formal solicitation.