



**California Department of Public Health
Center for Infectious Diseases
Office of AIDS, Care Branch**

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS PROGRAM

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATION
RFA# 23-10079
County of Santa Cruz**

Release Date: April 24, 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program provides housing assistance and supportive services to prevent or reduce homelessness for persons living with HIV (PLWH). The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Office of AIDS (OA) is statutorily responsible for coordinating all state programs, services, and activities pertaining to HIV/AIDS (California Health & Safety Code 131019). OA assumes the grant administration responsibilities, as the State of California HOPWA Grantee. OA allocates HOPWA funds to 40 non-Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Areas of California.

The HOPWA program was authorized by the AIDS Housing Opportunity Act of 1992 and is funded through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in accordance with Title 24, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 574 (24 CFR Part 574).

Within OA, the HIV Care Branch administers HIV care and support programs, including HOPWA. The goals of the HIV Care Branch are to: (1) reduce the number of HIV infections, (2) increase access to quality of care, and (3) reduce HIV/AIDS related health disparities. These goals are consistent with the National HIV/AIDS Strategy goals.

The HOPWA program goals are to: (1) increase housing stability, (2) reduce risk of homelessness, and (3) increase access to care and support. HUD funds are utilized to administer the HOPWA program to provide housing assistance and supportive services to meet the needs of PLWH who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The HIV Care Branch contracts with local government and non-profit organizations to provide housing and supportive services to low income PLWH, rather than providing direct services.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Request for Application (RFA) is to fund one Eligible Entity (EE) to provide and enhance access to housing and supportive services for low-income PLWH in Santa Cruz County. The EE will obtain funding from OA to administer allowable HOPWA housing and/or supportive services listed in Table 1. HOPWA funds may be used only for persons determined to meet medical and financial eligibility requirements outlined in the “Program Requirements” section of this RFA. HOPWA funds may not be used for items or services that are eligible for coverage by other county, state, and/or federal programs. This provision is commonly referred to as the “payer of last resort” requirement.

The EE is not required to fund or provide all the allowable housing and supportive services. However, HOPWA clients must have access to case

management services, whether funded through HOPWA, Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP), Medi-Cal Waiver Program (MCWP), or some other source.

The EE must consider what is needed by the eligible population in Santa Cruz County and identify existing services in the community when determining what allowable housing and/or supportive services to fund. This includes, but is not limited to, other local and state HIV programs. The EE can request to update the proposed allowable services during the grant period if there is a change to the need of eligible population and/or the availability of other resources. The changes, if any, must be approved by OA.

Table 1: Allowable HOPWA Services

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Facility-Based Housing (FBH) Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Shelters • Leasing Costs (e.g., Hotel/Motel Voucher Assistance) • Transitional Housing <p>Housing Information Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIS (housing counseling, referral services, fair housing) <p>Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Month's Rent, Credit Checks, Utility Hook-ups, Application fees • Security Deposit Assistance <p>Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility (STRMU) Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Rent • Utility Assistance • Mortgage Assistance <p>Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance | <p>Supportive Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult day care and/or personal assistance • Alcohol and drug abuse services • Case Management, Client Advocacy, Access to Benefits/Services • Childcare and other child services • Education • Employment assistance and training • Health, Medical, Intensive Care Services • Legal services • Life skills management • Meals/nutrition services • Mental Health • Outreach • Transportation <p>Resource Identification (RID)</p> <p>Please refer to Attachment 4 for definitions of service categories.</p> |
|---|--|

III. SERVICE AREA

The EE must be able to provide services to eligible residents in all parts of Santa Cruz County.

IV. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

The *California HIV Surveillance Report 2020* provides statistics on PLWH throughout California. The table below shows (1) the number of PLWH in the service area, (2) the number and percent of PLWH who are in medical care, and (3) the number and percent of PLWH who are virally suppressed. To [view the full report](#), go to www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cid/daa/pages/oa_case_surveillance_reports.aspx.

Table 2. Continuum of HIV care for persons living with diagnosed HIV infection as of December 31, 2020

| County | Persons living with diagnosed HIV infection | In Care | Virally Suppressed |
|-------------------|---|-------------|--------------------|
| Santa Cruz County | 551 | 415 (75.3%) | 373 (67.7%) |

The table below shows (1) the number of clients who received one or more HOPWA services during 2021 in each of the selected service areas and (2) the percent of HOPWA clients by housing status.

Table 3. Clients Served by the HOPWA Program during Calendar Year 2020

| County | Total Clients Served | Percent of Clients with a Stable Housing Status | Percent of Clients with a Temporary Housing Status | Percent of Clients with an Unstable Housing Status |
|-------------------|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Santa Cruz County | 80 | 73.7% | 7.5% | 18.7% |

V. AWARD SUMMARY

The anticipated start of the grant is July 1, 2023 but may vary due to the time required to finalize the agreements, obtain signatures, and process the agreements between selected EE and CDPH. This is a five-year grant agreement and ends on June 30, 2028. OA will determine the funding allocation using the existing HOPWA formula. See table below for the anticipated award amounts for the service area.

Table 4. Anticipated Award Amounts

| Service Area | FY 2023-24 Estimated Allocation |
|---------------------|--|
| Santa Cruz County | \$215,353 |

The EE is not authorized to begin work until the agreement is finalized. Work conducted outside the effective start and end date of the agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement. All funding is contingent on the availability and continuation of federal funds allocated for the delivery of HOPWA activities.

VI. ELIGIBLE ENTITY

Funding is to be awarded to one EE that has the organizational capacity to fulfill program and administrative requirements. The EE may be (1) a local government entity such as a local health department, housing authority, or community development agency or (2) a non-profit community-based organization such as an AIDS service organization. The EE must demonstrate their ability to administer housing programs and/or HIV services. The EE must have an existing infrastructure and be physically located in Santa Cruz County.

EE must have the ability to issue checks to landlords, utility companies, mortgage lenders, or transitional housing facilities in less than 30-days. Check and other documents to landlords should not include AIDS, HIV, or other terms that may disclose a client's HIV status in the entity name. This may require a doing business as (DBA) for some entities.

If the EE intends to subcontract some HOPWA services, a description must be provided in the narrative response detailing how services will be delivered and how the awarded EE will monitor the subcontractor for performance and compliance with program requirements annually. Subcontractors must also have an existing infrastructure and be physically located in the designated service areas.

VII. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The EE must comply with OA and HUD program requirements as described in this RFA. OA will provide additional guidance and technical assistance to ensure the awarded EE has a clear understanding of all required programmatic, administrative, and fiscal requirements. The EE must have policies and procedures to ensure only clients who meet the medical and financial eligibility requirements listed below are served by the HOPWA program. In addition, the EE must ensure clients maintain program eligibility to receive HOPWA services.

To be eligible for HOPWA services, at least one person residing in the household has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. Eligible single-person or family households may receive HOPWA housing assistance. HOPWA regulation defines a family as a household composed of two or more related persons and includes a person or persons who are determined to be important to the care or well-being of the PLWH.

Individuals must provide:

- Documentation of HIV-positive status;
- Documentation of income at 80 percent or below [area median income \(AMI\)](#) as defined by HUD; and
- Be homeless or at risk of being homeless.

HOPWA funds cannot be used for services that could reasonably be paid for or be provided by another funding source. The EE must collaborate and coordinate with key points of entry such as RWHAP providers, health departments, substance abuse treatment programs, housing programs, migrant health centers, and mental health programs. The EE must have a system in place to: (1) receive referrals from key points of entry and (2) refer clients to other necessary services in the selected service areas. The EE is encouraged to maintain said working relationships by establishing written referral processes and/or memoranda of understanding with key community partners.

The EE must comply with all reporting and data collection requirements, which includes submission of the Annual HOPWA Progress Report. The EE must collect and enter client-level data into OA's care data system. The EE must have the staff capacity to comply with reporting and data collection requirements. OA will provide reporting and data collection guidance once awarded.

The EE must comply with budget caps on services and activity delivery (personnel salary and operating expenses), as required by HUD and OA. Below is a list of caps that cannot be exceeded:

- a. The cap on administrative charges is 7% of the total allocation
- b. The cap on indirect charges is 15% of administrative personnel costs
- c. The cap on supportive services is 20% of the budget
- d. The cap on Resource Identification is 10% of the budget
- e. The cap on activity delivery charges for STRMU, TBRA, FBH, Hotel/Motel, and PHP is 15%
- f. The cap on activity delivery charges for HIS, RID, and Supportive Services is 5%

VIII. Application Components

1. Program Description and Capacity (25 points)

This section includes five multiple choice and three short answer questions about applicants' organization and current services.

2. Implementation Plan (25 points)

This section includes two multiple choice and five short answer questions about applicants' plans for implementing the HOPWA program at their organization and in Santa Cruz County.

3. Budget Overview (25 points)

This section includes four multiple choice questions about what services applicants plan to include on their budget and plans for issuing checks.

4. Outcomes and Evaluation Plan (25 points)

This section includes one multiple choice and two short answer questions about applicants' plans for data entry and program evaluation.

IX. QUESTIONS AND APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS

If upon reviewing this RFA, a potential applicant has any questions regarding the RFA, discovers any problems, including any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or any other error, the applicant shall immediately notify OA via email to request clarification or modification of this RFA.

All such inquires shall identify the author, applicant entity name, address, telephone number, and email address, and shall identify the subject in question, specific discrepancy, section and page number, or other information relative to describing the discrepancy or specific question.

Questions/inquiries must be received by no later than May 5, 2023. Questions will be [accepted via email](mailto:HOPWARFA@cdph.ca.gov) to: HOPWARFA@cdph.ca.gov.

If a prospective applicant fails to notify OA of any problem or question known to an applicant by the date indicated in this section, the applicant shall apply at EE's own risk. Prospective applicants are reminded that applications are to be developed based solely upon the information contained in this document and any written addenda issued by OA.

X. RFA APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS

Following the closing date for application submissions, OA will evaluate each application to determine responsiveness to the RFA requirements. Applications

found to be non-responsive at any stage of the evaluation, for any reason, will be rejected from further consideration. Late applications will not be reviewed.

OA may reject any or all applications and may waive any immaterial defect in any application. OA's waiver of any immaterial defect shall in no way excuse the applicant from full compliance with the grant terms if the applicant is awarded the grant. Please note that submitting budgets with "to be determined" positions will not exempt the applicant from providing detail on specific services to be provided by the positions listed.

1. Grounds for Rejection

OA may, at its sole discretion, correct any obvious mathematical or clerical errors identified in the RFA. OA reserves the right to reject any or all applications without remedy to the applicants. Circumstances that will cause an application package to be deemed non-responsive include:

- a. The application is received after the deadline set forth in this RFA.
- b. Failure of the applicant to complete required forms and attachments as instructed in this RFA.
- c. Failure to meet format or procedural submission requirements.
- d. Applicant provides inaccurate, false, or misleading information or statements.
- e. Applicant is unwilling or unable to fully comply with proposed grant terms.
- f. Applicant supplies cost information that is conditional, incomplete, or contains any unsigned material, alterations, or irregularities.
- g. Applicant does not meet EE qualifications set forth in this RFA.
- h. Applicant does not use and/or modifies the Application Narrative Template or other provided attachments.

2. Application Review

Applications that meet the format requirements and contain all the required forms and documentation will be submitted to an evaluation committee convened by OA. The committee will assign numeric scores to each responsive application. The applications will be evaluated in each category based upon the quality and completeness of its response to the RFA requirements. The evaluation will constitute recommendations to OA management. Final approval of awardees will be made by the OA division chief.

Table 5: RFA Application Review Criteria Summary

| Review Criteria | Possible Points |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Program Description and Capacity | 25 |
| Implementation Plan | 25 |

| Review Criteria | Possible Points |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Budget Overview | 25 |
| Outcomes and Evaluation Plan | 25 |
| Total Possible Points | 100 |

XI. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RFA SUBMISSION

The table below shows a summary of the RFA timeline. Below the table are instructions for submitting an application.

Table 6: RFA Tentative Timeline and Award Schedule

| Event | Date |
|--|---|
| RFA Release | April 24, 2023 |
| Technical Assistance Webinar | May 2, 2023 |
| Deadline for Submitting Written Questions | May 5, 2023 |
| Deadline to Submit Email of Intent (Mandatory) | May 12, 2023 |
| Application Submission Deadline | May 19, 2023 |
| Anticipated Award Notification(s) | May 26, 2023 |
| Anticipated Appeal Deadline | June 2, 2023 |
| Anticipated Grant Start Date | July 1, 2023, or upon execution of the grant. |

1. Email of Intent

EEs are required to submit an email of intent prior to receive the applicable attachments to complete the RFA application. The [email of intent](#) must include the following language in the subject line: "HOPWA RFA-Email of Intent" and it must be received by May 12, 2023 to: HOPWARFA@cdph.ca.gov.

OA will email the attachments to the EEs once their email of intent is submitted to OA.

1. Application Certification Checklist
2. Application Cover Sheet
3. Application Narrative Section
4. Allowable HOPWA Services
5. Government Agency Taxpayer ID Form (CDPH 9083)

6. Payee Data Record (STD 204 and STD 205)

2. Application Submission Requirements

The provided application templates must be used when responding to the RFA. Do not reformat any of the templates. The size of the lettering must be at minimum 11-point, Calibri font. Applications that fail to follow the requirements may not be considered.

EEs intending to apply are expected to thoroughly examine the entire contents of this RFA and become fully aware of all the requirements outlined in this RFA. Applications are to be developed solely on the material contained in this RFA and attachments provided. The following is the order in which sections in the application must be submitted. A complete application package must be submitted.

A brief description of each section to be included is given below:

- a. **Application Certification Checklist:** Complete the checklist (Attachment 1). This sheet will serve as the guide to make certain that the application package is complete, and to ensure that the required documents are organized in the correct order.
- b. **Application Cover Sheet:** Complete the application cover sheet (Attachment 2). This sheet must be signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the EE.
- c. **RFA Application:** Complete an RFA Application Narrative (Attachment 3). This section will include the EE's responses to the Application Components outlined in section "VIII" of the RFA. All questions must be answered.
- d. **Organization Chart:** This is a diagram that will show the structure of your organization, the anticipated placement of this program in the structure, and the relationships between employees and organization parts.
- e. **Required Forms:** Include the following form(s) with the application as attachments. Please note that all forms must have the same exact entity name throughout, or they will not be accepted by the Contracts Management Unit. For example, if the licensed name of an agency is "Community Healthcare Center Inc.", all documents must include that full name and not a shorten version such as "Community Health".
 - a. Local health departments must complete a Government Agency Taxpayer ID Form CDPH 9083 (1/18). This form is required for payments to entities and will be kept on file at CDPH. (Attachment 5)

b. Community Based Organizations must complete a Payee Data Record, STD 204 (Rev. 3/21) (Attachment 6a) and STD 205 (Attachment 6b). It is required for payments to entities and will be kept on file at CDPH.

3. Application Submission Deadline

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. PST on May 19, 2023 to: HOPWARFA@cdph.ca.gov

4. Notification of Intent to Award

It is anticipated that Notification of the State's intent to award grant to an EE in the designated service areas to deliver HOPWA and services will be posted no later than May 26, 2023.

5. Disposition and Ownership of the Application

All materials submitted in response to this RFA will become the property of CDPH and, as such, are subject to the Public Records Act (Government Code Section 6250, et. seq.). OA shall have the right to use all ideas or adaptations of the ideas contained in any application received. The selection or rejection of an application will not affect this right. Within the constraints of applicable law, OA shall use its best efforts not to publicly release any information contained in the applications which may be privileged under Evidence Code 1040 (Privileged Official Record) and 1060 (Privileged Trade Secret) and which is clearly marked "Confidential" or information that is protected under the Information Practices Act.

6. Grant Award Appeal Procedures

An EE that has submitted an application and was not funded may file an appeal with OA. Appeals must state the reason, law, rule, regulation, or practice that the EE believes has been improperly applied regarding the evaluation or selection process. There is no appeal process for applications that are submitted late or are incomplete. Appeals shall be limited to the following grounds:

- a. OA failed to correctly apply the application review process, the format requirements or evaluating the applications as specified in the RFA.
- b. OA failed to follow the methods for evaluating and scoring the applications as specified in the RFA.

Appeals must be sent by email to HOPWARFA@cdph.ca.gov and must be received by June 2, 2023 The Division Chief of OA, or her designee, will then come to a decision based on the written appeal letter. The decision of the Chief of OA, or her designee, shall be the final remedy. Applicants will be notified by email within 15 days of the consideration of the written appeal letter. OA

reserves the right to award the grant when it believes that all appeals have been resolved, withdrawn, or responded to the satisfaction of OA.

7. Miscellaneous RFA Information

The issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment by OA to award grants. OA reserves the right to reject any or all applications or to cancel this RFA if it is in the best interest of OA to do so. The award of a grant by OA to an entity that proposes to use subcontractors for the performance of work under the resulting grant shall not be interpreted to approve the selection of subcontractors. Subcontractors can only be added or changed after a grant is awarded with OA approval of a formal grant amendment. In the event a grant is entered, but later terminated, OA has the option to enter into a grant with the entity or organization that had the next highest ranking in the evaluation process for completion of the remaining grant work.

In the case of any inconsistency or conflict between the provisions of the resulting grant, this RFA, addenda to this RFA, and an EE's response, such inconsistencies or conflicts will be resolved by first giving precedence to the grant, then to this RFA, any addenda, and last to the EE's response. OA reserves the right, after grant award, to amend the resulting grant as needed throughout the term of the grant to best meet the needs of all parties.

8. Grant Obligations

The successful EE must enter into a grant that may incorporate, by reference, this RFA as well as the application submitted in response to this RFA. It is suggested that EEs carefully review these grantee provisions for any impact on your application and/or to determine if the EE will be able to comply with the stated terms and conditions, as little or no deviation from their contents will be allowed.

Individual meetings with OA and the selected EE shall take place within 60 days after release of the Notice of Intent to Award. The purpose of the meetings will be to assure a common understanding of grant purposes, terms, budgets, timelines, and related issues.

9. Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion Certification

You on behalf of the applicant organization, certify, by submission of your proposal, that neither you nor your principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency. **Please check the System for Award Management (SAM) list at SAM.gov.**