

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
for a
Youth Designated Access Point for CEA-BRHS
for
The City of Philadelphia,
Office of Homeless Services

Issued by:
THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA (“City”),
Office of Homeless Services (“Homeless Services”)
Responses must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Philadelphia, PA, local time,

on Friday, September 15th, 2017

Responses should be submitted via **email only** to:
Jessica Sones, Youth System Coordinator, at Jessica.Sones@phila.gov

Questions related to the RFI can be submitted via email no later than 5:00pm on **Friday, September 1st**
to:
Jessica Sones, Youth System Coordinator, at Jessica.Sones@phila.gov

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Youth Designated Access Point
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION; STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services (Homeless Services), on behalf of the Philadelphia Continuum of Care (CoC), is seeking applications from organizations who wish to operate a Youth Designated Access Point.

The primary purpose of this Request for Information is to give organizations an opportunity to inform the Office of Homeless Services of their competencies, capacity, and other additional information that may be relevant to how their organization could serve as a Youth Designated Access Point for the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry and Assessment Based Housing Referral System (CEA-BHRS). The Philadelphia Continuum of Care and Office of Homeless Services are preparing to implement CEA-BHRS (Coordinated Entry and Assessment Based Housing Referral System) in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs. CEA-BHRS is a process designed to coordinate program participant access, assessment, and referrals to homeless assistance services and housing. In order to appropriately connect young adults ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness with the CEA-BHRS system, the Office of Homeless Services is requesting applicants to submit information for consideration to become a Youth Designated Access Point.

This Request for Information (RFI) will help Homeless Services to identify qualifying 501(c)(3) organization(s) or local governmental entities with whom to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding related to the implementation of a Youth Designated Access Point for CEA-BHRS. Homeless Services encourages all non-profit or local governmental entities that may be interested in partnering with Homeless Services to become a Youth Designated Access Point to prepare a response to this RFI in order for the City to plan and identify sufficient resources for such a project. Responses to this RFI are considered non-binding, and are used to assist the City in selecting organizations that are best suited to serve as a Youth Designated Access Point. Responses to this RFI will help shape a future scope of work to be integrated into a Memorandum of Understanding, but are not a requirement to be considered for entering into a Memorandum of Understanding or contracting agreement.

B. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The mission of the Office of Homeless Services (Homeless Services) is to provide the leadership, coordination, planning, and mobilization of resources to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in the City of Philadelphia. Homeless Services is the Collaborative Applicant for the Philadelphia Continuum of Care (CoC). The Philadelphia CoC is an inter-agency planning body committed to coordinating and implementing a community-wide response to addressing homelessness in the city of Philadelphia. The response includes: outreach; shelter, housing and supportive services; and homeless prevention strategies that address the needs of persons experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. More information about the Office of Homeless Services and the Continuum of Care can be found at www.phila.gov/homelesservices. Applicants are highly encouraged to review the information related to Homeless Services programs and services, and Continuum of Care overview information.

C. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The federal Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) has put forth a mandate that communities create coordinated entry systems that assist individuals who are experiencing homelessness with accessing services and resources in the homeless service system. Minimum requirements from HUD's coordinated entry guidelines must be in place by January 2018. In Philadelphia the coordinated entry system is known as CEA-BHRS (Coordinated Entry and Assessment-Based Housing Referral System), which is pronounced "sea breeze." CEA-BRHS is a process designed to coordinate program participant access, assessment, and referrals to homeless assistance services and housing. CEA-BHRS is a system that will: streamline access and referral to homeless services and housing; use standardized assessment/prioritization tools and practices; and prioritize homeless assistance for those with the most severe needs. Applicants are highly encouraged to review information related to HUD coordinated entry core elements here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Core-Elements.pdf> and Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Notice-CPD-17-01-Establishing-Additional-Requirements-or-a-Continuum-of-Care-Centralized-or-Coordinated-Assessment-System.pdf>.

Homeless Services is seeking to establish one or more Youth Designated Access Points that can provide youth-friendly, trauma-informed services for youth ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness. Homeless Services is seeking to partner with youth-serving organizations that have an established reputation for serving youth and young adults, including young people experiencing homelessness. **There is not designated funding available for Youth Designated Access Points; however, Homeless Services will determine with the access points the minimum resources necessary to provide this service (which may include resources such as transportation or food vouchers, and language line services).**

Youth Designated Access Points will be physical spaces that young people ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness can be directed to visit in order to 1) learn more about the process of being connected to services within the homeless services system including prevention/diversion resources, emergency housing, and transitional and permanent housing options, and 2) be assessed for the purpose of being matched to an appropriate intervention as program availability allows.

D. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) organization(s) or local governmental entities.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

A. PROJECT DETAILS

(1) Youth Designated Access Point Requirements

- (a) Services** – Youth Designated Access Points will conduct standardized assessments and provide support, referrals, and follow up for youth/young adults ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness, in order to connect them with eligible resources including prevention/diversion, emergency housing, and transitional and permanent housing.
- (b) Organization and Personnel Requirements**
 - Youth Designated Access Points will identify a minimum of 1 designated staff person to be designated access point assessors.

- It is recommended that at least 1 designated staff person and 1 back up staff person be identified as assessors.
- Youth Designated Access Points will assign a supervisor to oversee the activities of the assessor and provide support and supervision to the assessor. In the case that the assessor is no longer able to perform his/her duties (for example, no longer in his/her role) the supervisor will assign a new assessor to be trained.
 - Role of assessor:
 - Assessors will meet with young adults during designated access point hours to complete assessments and referrals using uniform assessment tools.
 - Organizations will have assessors available to provide assessment and referral services to any young adult ages 18-24 experiencing housing instability who seeks services during advertised access point hours (to be determined by applicant organization).
 - Assessors will receive special training to complete CEA-BHRS assessments and complete assessments in HMIS.
 - Identify and schedule appointments for clients for referral services as required

(c) Hours and Location of Work

- Youth Designated Access Points will designate access point hours of a minimum of 6 hours per week. Youth Designated Access Points can also offer additional hours via appointment. It is recommended that Youth Designated Access Points consider the needs of young people when determining the hours that they will operate services (for example, to ensure they are able to meet the needs of youth who are in school).
 - Youth Designated Access Point hours of operation will be advertised for the CEA-BHRS system and included on the Homeless Services website as well as distributed via marketing materials to ensure that young adults experiencing homelessness are aware of the access points in Philadelphia.
- Youth Designated Access Points will designate physical space in which assessors can meet with young adults to complete assessments. It is recommended that this physical space be private so that confidentiality can be maintained. It is also recommended that a waiting area be available for young adults who are seeking services during access point hours.
 - Youth Designated Access Point locations should take steps to ensure that their location is accessible to individuals with disabilities, including accessible physical locations for individuals who use wheelchairs.

(d) Training – Youth Designated Access Points will participate in required access point training, including trainings related to HMIS, assessments, and other designated trainings.

(e) Evaluation and feedback – Youth Designated Access Points will engage with other members of the CEA-BHRS system, including Homeless Services staff and external partners, to assist with evaluation, feedback, and follow up requests about individuals assessed at your agency.

- (f) Data entry -- Youth Designated Access Points will enter data by deadlines determined by Office of Homeless Services. Office of Homeless Services will establish guidelines related to data entry deadlines for access points.

(2) Role of Office of Homeless Services in Supporting Youth Designated Access Points:

- a) Oversee the start-up and ongoing implementation of the Youth Designated Access Point to ensure that all program milestones and outcomes are met.
- b) Provide training and technical assistance to Youth Designated Access Point staff on HMIS database and CEA-BHRS assessment processes.
- c) Assist in monitoring and problem solving around implementation of Youth Designated Access Point policies and procedures. Provide direct contact person at Homeless Services for trouble shooting related to young adult access point policies and procedures, or navigating difficult participant cases.
- d) Develop referral process to Homeless Services shelters for young adults in need of emergency shelter who are assessed at Youth Designated Access Points.
- e) Determine with selected Youth Designated Access Points the resources necessary to operate services (which may include resources such as transportation or food vouchers, and language line services). Designated funding is not available for Youth Designated Access Points; however, Homeless Services will explore providing necessary resources such as transportation, food vouchers, and language line to support operations.

III. APPLICATION FORMAT, CONTENT, AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS; SELECTION PROCESS

A. APPLICATION FORMAT

- Applications must be typed on 8-1/2 inch by 11 inch white paper with all pages numbered and either 1 ½ spaced or double-spaced. **Single spaced applications will not be accepted.**
- Applications will not be accepted via fax transmission.

B. APPLICATION CONTENT

Applications submitted in response to this RFI must include the following information, in the sections and order indicated:

1. Applicant Background and Profile - **(Maximum of 1 page)** Provide a narrative description of the Applicant itself, including the following:
 - a. Applicant's organization identification information, including name, organization address, telephone number, website address, and federal taxpayer identification number or federal employer identification number;
 - b. A primary contact for the Applicant, including name, job title, address, telephone number, and email address;
 - c. A description of Applicant's organization background, including the following:
 - i. Organization mission

- ii. Services organization provides
 - iii. Primary population(s) organization serves
 - iv. Any other information about Applicant’s organization that Applicant deems pertinent to this RFI.
2. Applicant Qualifications and Relevant Experience – **(Maximum of 2 pages)** Provide a statement of qualifications and capability to perform the services sought by this RFI, including the following:
- a. Experience working with young adults ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness.
 - b. Capacity of your organization’s staff to meet with youth experiencing homelessness and conduct CEA-BHRS assessments.
 - c. Any challenges you anticipate in becoming a Youth Designated Access Point.
 - d. Additional resources that you anticipate that you will require in order to become a Youth Designated Access Point (including, but not limited to, transportation resources, food resources, language line).
 - e. Ability to start this work in January 2018.
3. Proposed Scope of Work - **(Maximum of 1 page)** Describe the applicant’s proposed services consistent with the scope of services and timeline outlined in Section II, “Scope of Work”, of this RFP. At a minimum, the scope of work should include responses to the following:
- a. Who in your organization will be trained and support access point services. Please indicate the credentials of the staff who will be trained as assessors and how this responsibility will fit within their other assigned duties.
 - b. The number of hours per week your organization will provide Youth Designated Access Point services. Please indicate if you will also offer additional hours via appointment (optional, not required). Please indicate if you have determined the specific days/hours that you will operate the Youth Designated Access Point; if so, please indicate what they will be. If you have not determined the specific days/hours that you will operate the Youth Designated Access Point, please indicate what factors and/or limitations your organization will consider to make this determination.
 - c. Your organization’s plan to integrate Youth Designated Access Point requirements into your current space. Please indicate the specific meeting space that you will use to meet with youth, including capacity for waiting area, privacy for individual meetings, ability to access HMIS database during meetings (computer/internet access), and any other considerations. Please indicate the accessibility of your space for individuals with disabilities, including individuals who need wheelchair access.
 - d. Whether you anticipate that current clients of your organization will access services through the Youth Designated Access point. If so, will you provide services to them during the advertised access point hours as described above, or will you allow them to make appointments outside of specified hours.

C. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must submit their responses electronically as a single document to:

Jessica Sones

Responses are due by 5 pm, Philadelphia, PA, local time on Friday, September 15th, 2017.

D. SELECTION PROCESS

In the selection of entities that could serve as a Youth Designated Access Point, Homeless Services will consider the following elements, among others:

- Experience serving youth and young adults, and specifically with youth and young adults experiencing homelessness -- Selected organizations will have a proven track record of providing youth-friendly and trauma-informed services to youth and young adults, and specifically to youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness.
- Site hours able to meet the needs of youth/young adults -- Selected organizations will be able to offer minimum of 6 hours per week as an access point and will be able to provide these hours in times when youth/young adults generally seek services (afternoon/early evening hours preferred but not required)
- Reasonable staffing and space plan -- Selected organizations will establish a reasonable staffing plan and space plan for how they will accommodate the access point requirements within the context of their other core services
- Ability to meet Youth Designated Access Point Requirements as outlined above as well as any additional HUD Compliance requirements

IV. RFI ADMINISTRATION

A. SCHEDULE

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Posting of RFI | Friday, August 18, 2017 |
| Deadline to Submit Questions Related to RFI | Friday, September 1, 2017 |
| Applicant Response Deadline | Friday, September 15, 2017 |
| Panel Review | Week of September 18, 2017 |
| Finalists notified; Site Visits with Finalists | Week of September 25, 2017 |
| Applicant Selection(s) | September 29, 2017 |
| MOU Execution | October 20, 2017 |
| Training | November 2017-January 2018 |
| Access Points Operational | January 23, 2018 |

Schedule is subject to change. Any schedule changes will be sent out in writing to applicants.

B. TERM OF MOU

The initial terms of the MOU for applicants selected as a Youth Designated Access Point will be from fall 2017 through June 30, 2018 (exact dates to be determined). A redetermination will be made in June 2018 between parties regarding continuation or amendment of MOU.