

**State of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

RETURN TO:
Dana Crawford-Smith
301 Centennial Mall S
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-471-7575

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| SOLICITATION NUMBER | RELEASE DATE |
| RFI Emergency Housing | September 30, 2022 |
| OPENING DATE AND TIME | PROCUREMENT CONTACT |
| October 31, 2022, 2:00 p.m. Central Time | Dana Crawford-Smith |

This form is part of the specification package and must be signed in ink and returned, along with information documents, by the opening date and time specified.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

SCOPE OF SERVICE

The State of Nebraska (State), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is issuing this Request for Information RFI Emergency Housing for the purpose of gathering information to identify vendors in Nebraska that are in the process of implementing emergency housing and/or provide temporary emergency housing to adults.

Written questions are due no later than October 7, 2022, and should be submitted via e-mail to dhhs.rfpquestions@nebraska.gov

Bidder should submit one (1) original of the entire RFI response. RFI responses should be submitted by the RFI due date and time.

Sealed RFI responses should be received in DHHS by the date and time of RFI opening indicated above.

BIDDER MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

By signing this Request For Information form, the bidder guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Information.

FIRM: _____

COMPLETE ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ FAX NUMBER: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: _____

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I. SCOPE OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The State of Nebraska, Department of Health and Human Services (hereafter known as DHHS), is issuing this Request for Information, RFI Housing for the purpose of seeking agencies who are available to provide emergency and/or temporary housing to meet the increased needs of vulnerable adults who are homeless or near homelessness.

ALL INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET AT: <http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>

A. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The State expects to adhere to the tentative procurement schedule shown below. It should be noted, however, that some dates are approximate and subject to change.

| | ACTIVITY | DATE/TIME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Release Request for Information | September 30, 2022 |
| 2 | Last day to submit written questions | October 7, 2022 |
| 3 | State responds to written questions through Request for Information "Addendum" and/or "Amendment" to be posted to the internet at: http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html | October 17, 2022 |
| 4 | RFI opening Location: https://sonvideo.webex.com/sonvideo/j.php?MTID=me999a63060a | October 31, 2022 2:00 PM Central Time |
| 5 | Conduct oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations (if required) | To Be Determined |

II. RFI RESPONSE PROCEDURES

A. OFFICE AND CONTACT PERSON

Responsibilities related to this Request for Information reside with the State Purchasing Bureau. The point of contact for the RFI is as follows:

Name: Dana Crawford-Smith
Agency: DHHS
Address: 301 Centennial Mall S
Lincoln, NE 68508
Telephone: 402-471-6500
E-Mail: dhhs.rfpquestions@nebraska.gov

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

A subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) may not be issued as a result of this RFI. There will not be a contract as a result of this RFI and the State is not liable for any cost incurred by vendors in replying to this RFI. If an RFP is issued, the information provided will assist the State of Nebraska in developing the Request for Proposal. This RFI does not obligate the State to reply to the RFI responses, to issue an RFP, or to include any RFI provisions or responses provided by vendors in any RFP.

C. COMMUNICATION WITH STATE STAFF

From the date the Request for Information is issued and until RFI opening (as shown in the Schedule of Events), contact regarding this RFI between potential vendors and individuals employed by the State should be restricted to written communication with the staff designated above as the point of contact for this Request for Information.

The following exceptions to these restrictions are permitted:

1. Written communication with the person(s) designated as the point(s) of contact for this Request for Information;
2. contacts made pursuant to any pre-existing contracts or obligations; and
3. State-requested presentations, key personnel interviews, clarification sessions, or discussions.

Violations of these conditions may be considered sufficient cause to reject a vendor’s response to the RFI. No individual member of the State, employee of the State, or member of the Interview Committee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFI. The State of Nebraska will issue any clarifications or opinions regarding this RFI in writing.

D. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Any explanation desired by a vendor regarding the meaning or interpretation of any Request for Information provision should be submitted in writing to DHHS and clearly marked “RFI Number Housing; Emergency Housing Questions”. It is preferred that questions be sent via e-mail to dhhs.rfpquestions@nebraska.gov

It is recommended that Bidders submit questions sequentially numbered, include the RFI reference and page number using the following format.

| <u>Question Number</u> | <u>RFI Section Reference</u> | <u>RFI Page Number</u> | <u>Question</u> |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| | | | |

Written answers will be provided through an addendum to be posted on the Internet at <http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html> on or before the date shown in the Schedule of Events.

E. ORAL INTERVIEWS/PRESENTATIONS AND/OR DEMONSTRATIONS

The State reserves the right to conduct oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations if required at the sole invitation of the State.

Any cost incidental to the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations shall be borne entirely by the vendor and will not be compensated by the State

F. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE

The State is accepting either electronically submitted responses or hard copy, paper responses for this RFI.

1. For bidders submitting electronic responses:

- a. Bidders submitting electronically can upload the response via ShareFile here: <https://nebraska.sharefile.com/r-r26672888c8e54abfb59dbacce9c30a2>

ShareFile works with Firefox, Internet Explorer and Chrome. It does not work with Microsoft Edge.

- b. Proprietary information should be uploaded as separate and distinct files. If multiple responses are submitted, the State will retain only the most recently submitted response. It is the bidder's responsibility to submit the response by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Events. Electronic responses must be received by DHHS by the date and time of the response opening per the Schedule of Events. No late responses will be accepted

- c. **ELECTRONIC RESPONSE FILE NAMES**

The bidder should clearly identify the uploaded RFI response files. To assist in identification please use the following naming convention:

- i. RFI Emergency Housing ABC Company
- ii. If multiple files are submitted for one RFI response, add number of files to file names: RFI Emergency Housing ABC Company File 1 of 2.
- iii. If multiple RFI responses are submitted for the same RFI, add the response number to the file names: RFI Emergency Housing ABC Company Response 1 File 1 of 2.

2. For bidders submitting paper/hard copy responses:

- a. Bidders who are submitting a paper response should submit one response marked on the first page: "ORIGINAL". If multiple responses are submitted, the State will retain one copy marked "ORIGINAL" and destroy the other copies. The Contractor is solely responsible for any variance between the copies submitted. Responses should include the completed Form A, "Vendor Contact Sheet". Responses must reference the RFI number and be sent to the specified address. Please note that the address label should appear as specified in Section II A on the face of each container or contractor's response packet. If a recipient phone number is required for delivery purposes, 402-471-7575 should be used. The RFI number should be included in all correspondence. The State will not furnish packaging and sealing materials. It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure the response is received in a sealed

envelope or container and submitted by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Events. Sealed responses must be received at DHHS by the date and time of the opening per the Schedule of Events. No late responses will be accepted.

United States Postal Services (USPS) delivered responses shall be mailed to:

ATTN: Dana Crawford-Smith RFI Emergency Housing
DHHS - Central Procurement Services
PO BOX 94926
Lincoln, NE 68509

Hand delivered responses or responses delivered by Federal Express (FedEx), United Parcel Service (UPS), etc. shall be delivered to:

ATTN: Dana Crawford-Smith RFI Emergency Housing
DHHS - 3rd Floor Reception Desk
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509

- b. Proprietary Information should be presented in separate sections (loose-leaf binders are preferred) on standard 8 ½" x 11" paper, except that charts, diagrams and the like may be on fold-outs which, when folded, fit into the 8 ½" by 11" format. Pages may be consecutively numbered for the entire response, or may be numbered consecutively within sections. Figures and tables should be numbered consecutively within sections. Figures and tables should be numbered and referenced in the text by that number. They should be placed as close as possible to the referencing text.
3. The State will not furnish packaging or sealing materials. It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure the response is received either electronically or in a sealed envelope or container and submitted by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Events. Sealed responses must be received at DHHS by the date and time of the response opening per the Schedule of Events.

It is the responsibility of the contractor to check the website for all information relevant to this Request for Information to include addenda and/or amendments issued prior to the opening date. Website address is as follows:
<https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>.

The State shall not incur any liability for any costs incurred by contractors in replying to this solicitation, in the demonstrations and/or oral presentations, or in any other activity related to responding on this solicitation.

A separate sheet must be provided that clearly states which sections have been submitted as proprietary or have copyrighted materials. RFI responses should reference the request for information number and be sent to the specified address. Please note that the address label should appear as specified on the face of each container. If a recipient phone number is required for delivery purposes, 402-471-7575 should be used. The Request for Information number must be included in all correspondence.

G. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Data contained in the response and all documentation provided therein, become the property of the State of Nebraska and the data become public information upon opening the response. If

the vendor wishes to have any information withheld from the public, such information must fall within the definition of proprietary information contained within Nebraska's public record statutes. All proprietary information the vendor wishes the state to withhold must be submitted in a sealed package, which is separate from the remainder of the response. The separate package must be clearly marked PROPRIETARY on the outside of the package. Vendor may not mark their entire Request for Information as proprietary. Failure of the vendor to follow the instructions for submitting proprietary and copyrighted information may result in the information being viewed by other vendors and the public. Proprietary information is defined as trade secrets, academic and scientific research work which is in progress and unpublished, and other information which if released would give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose (see Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712.05(3)). In accordance with Attorney General Opinions 92068 and 97033, vendors submitting information as proprietary may be required to prove specific, named competitor(s) who would be advantaged by release of the information and the specific advantage the competitor(s) would receive. Although every effort will be made to withhold information that is properly submitted as proprietary and meets the State's definition of proprietary information, the State is under no obligation to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary information and accepts no liability for the release of such information.

H. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OPENING

The sealed responses will be publicly opened and the responding entities announced on the date, time, and location shown in the Schedule of Events. Responses will be available for viewing by those present after the opening. Vendors may also contact the state to schedule an appointment for viewing RFI responses.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

Background:

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has been awarded federal funding from the Administration of Community Living (ACL), in response to COVID-19 and the need to enhance and improve Adult Protective Services (APS). The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) 2021 Supplemental funding and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for APS under SSA Title XX Section 2042(b) were awarded to Nebraska.

Purpose:

The purpose of these grants is to provide a funding opportunity in accordance with Section 2042(b) of Subtitle B of Title XX of the Social Security Act, otherwise known as the Elder Justice Act (EJA), as authorized and funded through the CRRSA and ARP of 2021 awards. The purpose of this opportunity is to enhance and improve APS services provided by states and local units of government. Funds awarded under this opportunity will provide, but are not limited to:

- a. APS programs in states and territories with resources to establish and enhance the availability for shelter and other emergency, short-term housing and accompanying “wrap around” services for vulnerable adult clients.
- b. Establish, expand or enhance statewide and local level elder justice networks for the purpose of removing bureaucratic obstacles in improving coordination across the many state and local agencies interacting with APS clients who have experienced abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- c. Financial assistance with assisting APS clients in securing the least restrictive option for emergency or alternative housing, and with obtaining, providing, or coordination with care transitions as appropriate.

Location:

Statewide Nebraska, including Tribes

Applicable Law:

Because funds to support the activities under this RFI involve federal funds, usage of these funds is subject to federal law, in addition to any applicable state law. Funds shall be used for activities authorized under the Elder Justice Act Section 2042(b) of Title XX of the Social Security Act [Public Law 74-271] [As Amended through P.L. 115-123, Enacted February 9, 2018]; COVID-19-Response and Relief Supplemental Act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Please visit ACL’s website at: <https://www.acl.gov/grants/managing-grant> to view the terms and conditions.

Eligible Entities:

- DHHS is seeking information from “non-federal entities” as set forth in 45 CFR § 75.2 or 2 CFR § 200.69. A “non-federal entity” is limited to local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, or nonprofit organizations; further definitions in the Uniform Grant Guidance or the Health and Human Services Grant Guidance may apply. If this RFI involves funds from the United States Department of Labor, the definition of “non-federal entity,” per 2 CFR § 2900.2, includes for-profit entities as well. Any response submitted by an ineligible Applicant shall be rejected.
- These entities in Nebraska shall be implementing and/or currently providing emergency housing/shelter to adults, including vulnerable adults, while permanent living arrangements are being made.

- These entities shall provide transitional living services, as defined by the State and Federal rules and regulation.
- Provide homelessness prevention or shelter services for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in compliance with any State and Federal rules.
- These entities must have at least two years of experience successfully providing homeless assistance services using a Continuum of Care approach.
- Provide evidence of participation in one of the three Continuums of Care in Nebraska for the need for the proposed services, identified in their response.
- Be exempt from taxation under section 501© 3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or represent a number of eligible applicants.
- Not discriminate based on age, religion, sex, race, color, disability, sexual orientation, gender identify, or national origin (24 CFR 5).
- Operate drug-free premises.
- Follow national policies including Trafficking Victims Protection Act, Whistleblower Protections, and Defense Of Marriage Act: Implementation of Same Sex Spouse/Marriages.
- Organizations that are religious or faith-based are eligible on the same basis as any other organization to receive these funds.
- Organizations that are directly funded under this grant may not engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction or proselytization as part of the programs or services funded under this grant.
- If an organization conducts religious activities, the activities must be offered separately in time or location from the programs or services funded under this grant and the participation must be voluntary for program participants.
- An organization physically located in Nebraska that is responsible for providing public and medical health services to vulnerable adults.
- Other organizations that have a substantial adult clientele that are at risk of homelessness and/or homeless.
- Organizations must be registered with the Nebraska Secretary of State.

Scope of Work:

The Contractor(s) must be able to ensure services (or key program activities) are provided to individuals eligible for services.

1. Contractor(s) shall provide case management services to the vulnerable adult
 - a. Understand and coordinate implementation of a hospital’s discharge plan of the vulnerable adult.
 - b. Understand the roles and responsibilities of the hospitals upon the vulnerable adult being discharged.
 - c. Understand the roles and responsibilities of Managed Care Organizations (MCO).
 - d. Assist clients in obtaining Federal, State and local benefits, including but not limited to:
 - i. Medicaid (42 CFR chapter IV-subchapter C)
 - ii. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (7 CFR parts 271-283)
 - iii. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) (20 CFR parts 601-603, 606, 609, 614-617, 625, 640, 650)
 - iv. Supplemental security Income (SSI) (20 CFR part 416)
 - v. Child and Adult Care Food Program (42 U.S.C. 1766(t) (7CFR part 226))
 - e. Coordinate and participate with cross system sectors providing services and multi-disciplinary team (MDT) upon request.
 - f. Assess housing and service needs.
 - g. Arrange, coordinate and monitor delivery of services to meet the individual needs of the vulnerable adult and progress.
 - h. Provide information and referrals to other providers as necessary.

- i. If a victim services provider, providing ongoing risk assessment and safety planning with victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.
 - j. Collaborate in the development of an individualized housing and service plan towards permanent and safe housing for the vulnerable adult.
2. Contractor(s) shall review the Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PSSR) and determine appropriate level of care.
3. Intake processes are person-centered and flexible.
4. Remove pre-requisites such as abstinence, sobriety, minimum income requirements, health or mental history, financial history, completion of treatment, occurrence of victimization, participation in services, medication adherence, age, criminal history, or other conditions unless required by law or funding source.
5. Admit to program services is expedited with speed and efficiency.
6. Exits to homelessness are avoided.
7. Clients are educated about their rights and responsibilities as lease holders.
8. Input from the participants is welcomed regarding the agency's policies, procedures, and practices. Opportunities include involvement in: quality assurance and evaluation processes, surveys, focus groups, social gatherings, integrating peer specialists and peer-facilitated support groups to compliment professional services.
9. Training staff in clinical and non-clinical strategies, including harm reduction, motivational interviewing, trauma-informed and strength-based approaches.
10. Services are continued despite changes in housing status or placement. Ideally, the service relationship should continue despite a service hiatus during short-term institutional stays.
11. Staff are sensitive to and support the cultures of the clients. When possible, staff demographics reflect the participant population they serve in order to provide appropriate, culturally specific services.
12. Contractor(s) shall have nursing staff available 24/7, 365 days, to provide medical attention as needed.
13. Contractor(s) shall ensure staff possess all required credentials related to job title, including but not limited to, licensure in Nebraska as required.
14. Contractor(s) shall make available at least one to two (1-2) beds, although need may be higher at times.
15. Contractor shall submit billing claim to insurance provider prior to billing through this contract.
16. Contractor(s) shall provide personnel, equipment, office space, etc. to meet the needs of the aforementioned requirements.
17. Contractor(s) shall ensure their staff are covered by professional liability insurance.
18. Contractor(s) shall be the direct employer and shall provide income tax withholding and worker's compensation coverage as required by law; and follow all other applicable legal requirements of an employer of staff within the organization.
19. Contractor(s) shall maintain an occupational safety plan and a communication plan for unexpected incidents and errors. These plans will be provided to DHHS prior to start of any assignment.
20. Contractor(s) shall ensure the staff perform all duties as may be required by DHHS.
21. Contractor(s) shall prohibit certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as outlined here: <https://www.acl.gov/grants/managing-grant>
22. Create and maintain records and allow DHHS access to funded records.
23. Submit a "Large Purchase Request Form" to DHHS prior to the purchase of the item in question, for review and either approval or denial, when a proposed purchase will exceed \$5,000.

Performance Requirements:

Awardees must meet the performance goals established by the Awardee.

1. Standard performance measurements are:
 - a. Increase the percent of discharges to permanent housing.
 - b. Reduce the percent of individuals who return to homelessness after discharge to permanent housing destinations.
2. Reduce the missing/null data error rates, such as social security number, legal status. Services cannot be withheld when necessary to protect life or safety.

Reporting Requirements:

Reporting for each month will be required ten (10) calendar days after the last day of the month and must include:

1. An invoice that identifies the work completed, rate per activity approved by DHHS, and copy of denial of unpaid claim, from the insurance provider.
2. Required verification of completion of activity as determined by DHHS.
3. Completed reporting forms, as approved by DHHS, by the due dates identified by DHHS.
 - a. Reports must be submitted electronically through a portal identified and supported by DHHS.
 - b. Submit required performance measurements on a quarterly basis or as requested by DHHS.
 - c. At any time during the term of the award, DHHS may require the Awardee or Subrecipient to provide written justification of unmet performance goals.
4. Awardees must provide reports, data and other information as requested by DHHS for review and programmatic monitoring by the due dates established.

Project Overview:

1. Project period:
 - a. A subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) may not be issued as a result of this RFI. There will not be a contract as a result of this RFI.
 - b. The State is not liable for any cost incurred by vendors in replying to this RFI.
 - c. If an RFP is issued, the information provided will assist the State of Nebraska in developing the Request for Proposal.
 - d. This RFI does not obligate the State to reply to the RFI responses, to issue an RFP, or to include any RFI provisions or responses provided by vendors in any RFP.

DHHS Responsibilities:

1. DHHS will notify the contractor(s) immediately in the event of any unexpected incident or error involving their agency and/or staff.
2. DHHS will provide access to all necessary records to ensure high quality continuity of care services.
3. DHHS will carry out the project/program and will comply with the terms, conditions and requirements of the CRRSA and ARP federal awards.
4. Provide technical assistance on large purchase requests, consistent with the Contractor's internal policies and procedures.
5. Review and either approve or deny large purchase requests corresponding to direct purchases made by the Contractor.
6. Submit to the Administration for Community Living, any large purchase requests that would have the effect of making a change to the project/program scope or budget that results from the Contractor's large purchase requests, prior to DHHS' approval of the corresponding large purchase request.

Form A

Vendor Contact Sheet

Request for Information Number Emergency Housing

Form A should be completed and submitted with each response to this solicitation document. This is intended to provide the State with information on the vendor's name and address, and the specific persons who are responsible for preparation of the vendor's response.

| Preparation of Response Contact Information | |
|---|--|
| Vendor Name: | |
| Vendor Address: | |
| Contact Person & Title: | |
| E-mail Address: | |
| Telephone Number (Office): | |
| Telephone Number (Cellular): | |
| Fax Number: | |

Each vendor shall also designate a specific contact person who will be responsible for responding to the State if any clarifications of the vendor's response should become necessary. This will also be the person who the State contacts to set up a presentation/demonstration, if required.

| Communication with the State Contact Information | |
|--|--|
| Vendor Name: | |
| Vendor Address: | |
| Contact Person & Title: | |
| E-mail Address: | |
| Telephone Number (Office): | |
| Telephone Number (Cellular): | |
| Fax Number: | |