Request for Proposals

Continuum of Care Housing Voucher Specialist Consulting Services

RFP-2022-002

I. Introduction and General Information

The Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (CHIP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, and serves as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Coordinated Entry (CES), and Continuum of Care (CoC) lead agency for the City of Indianapolis. CHIP’s mission is to mobilize, advocate, and empower community collaboration toward ending homelessness and fosters an effective system of homelessness prevention and intervention in the greater Indianapolis area.

II. Project Specific Funding Information and Timeline

The key to ending homelessness is increasing the availability of and access to safe, supportive, and permanent housing. While the CoC has increased the amount of supportive housing and rapid rehousing resources through the HUD Continuum of Care competition and Emergency Solutions Grant, having access to and a strategy around the use of public housing vouchers to scale supportive housing choices and to meet the goals laid out in the Indianapolis Community Plan to End Homeless is essential. Public housing vouchers are a vital resource in the CoC’s efforts to expand permanent, affordable housing options to more households. Since 2017, the CoC has continued to build a stronger, more collaborative relationship with the Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA) to secure housing vouchers and to streamline the voucher process.

During 2017-2018, IHA created its first ever homeless preference housing choice vouchers which were offered through the Coordinated Entry System. However, during that first-year voucher utilization rates were low and the length of time from voucher referral to lease signing was too long. The low utilization rates risked the CoC’s continued ability to secure and leverage these housing vouchers.

In 2019, the CoC was offered an additional surge of housing choice vouchers from IHA that had to be leased up between September and December 2019. The CoC pulled together a surge team and was able to successfully house 188 households. This process further highlighted the need to improve workflows, processes, and to create a voucher strategy between the CoC and IHA. IHA experienced a budget shortfall in 2020 resulting in no housing choice vouchers issued to the CoC. In 2021, IHA went into a recapture year and reapproached the CoC with another opportunity for a voucher surge of up to 530 Housing...
Choice Vouchers with a homeless preference and an additional 203 Emergency Choice Vouchers. These vouchers are in addition to the HUD-VASH vouchers for veterans, the FYI vouchers for youth with foster care engagement, and the mainstream NED vouchers. Operating in this way has proven ineffective, as it is extremely difficult to organize and execute around a voucher strategy that shifts so drastically from year to year.

While the number of vouchers has increased this year, the CoC has not increased its capacity to meet this opportunity. The CoC still lacks a sufficient infrastructure and strategy around the expansion of housing vouchers, inclusive of Housing Choice Vouchers, Project Based Vouchers, Emergency Housing Vouchers, FYI Vouchers, and VASH vouchers. Currently, all these vouchers are being managed through a different process and in a fragmented way. There is not a clear strategic framework, set of standard operating procedures, or workflows to fully leverage these resources. Through the recommendations of the Transformational Road Map to Housing process and additional research into a similar initiative in Houston, TX, this project would contract with a consultant to engage key CoC stakeholders to solidify a voucher strategy, align vouchers to the Community Plan and the coordinated investment strategy, work to implement process changes, focus on operationalizing workflows, mitigating issues between the CoC and IHA, and ensure the activation and utilization of changing HUD guidance and waivers. The development of this strategy is more critical than ever and will help position the CoC to fully leverage housing vouchers as part of a more robust rehousing and housing choice strategy.

Specifically, the selected respondent will work closely with the CHIP Coordinated Entry and HMIS team, the Blueprint Council, the IHA Chief Operating Officer, and the Division for Housing and Homeless Policy within the Department of Metropolitan Development with the City of Indianapolis, to develop a voucher strategy for the Continuum of Care.

This work will be funded through a Targeted Initiative Fund (TIF) subaward agreement from United Way of Central Indiana. By responding to this RFP, respondents agree to abide by the conditions set forth in the grant agreement. This includes a requirement to conduct initial and periodic background checks for everyone performing work as an administrator, employee, contractor, or volunteer.

The timeframe for this agreement is April 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022. In the event, unforeseen circumstances impact completion of the project within this timeframe, CHIP may issue an amendment to the original contract.

III. **Scope of Work and Deliverables**

The selected respondent will be responsible for the following:

- Coordinate and collaborate with the Indianapolis Housing Agency leadership, City of Indianapolis Policy Director for Homelessness, and CoC Voucher Liaison under the Emergency Housing Voucher initiative
- Conduct a voucher inventory and needs assessment for the Continuum of Care to determine current voucher allocations, utilization, and needs
• Review and evaluate the status of the recommendations made through the 2018 Transformational Roadmap to Housing report
• Update to Transformational Roadmap to Housing report with progress, implementation plan and timeline
• Development of Continuum of Care/Indianapolis Housing Agency housing voucher strategy, inclusive of all voucher programs
• Evaluate the annual demand for Housing Choice and Project Based Vouchers and develop an implementation plan to meet the supportive housing goals set for in the Indianapolis Community Plan to End Homelessness
• Conduct feasibility assessment, in coordination with front-line IHA staff, to coincide with strategy recommendations
• Develop case statement, value-add statement, and draft job descriptions for dedicated specialized case manager and/or team within IHA to project managed all specialized homeless voucher programs
• Facilitation of a voucher taskforce to inform strategies and solidify plan and timeline for implementation
• Presentation of housing voucher strategy informed by feasibility assessment to Blueprint Council for adoption
• Develop of standard operating procedures, workflows, and project set guidelines to increase housing voucher utilization and reduce length of time from referrals to lease up
• Develop data sharing or HMIS expansion strategy to capture key metrics and performance indicators for vouchers
• Develop draft MOU or MOA outlining CoC and IHA partnership, roles, responsibilities, and outcome measures
• Creation of dashboard and monitoring plan to measure progress and performance
• Plan for ongoing oversight and sustainability of Continuum of Care/Indianapolis Public Housing Agency partnership and voucher strategy
• Draft update to IHA’s Section 8 Administrative Plan
• Develop training materials for homeless service providers on IHA procedures, forms, etc.

IV. Role of and Support Provided by CHIP

CHIP will identify a project manager, who will serve as the single point of contact to the respondent and will be available to meet as necessary to support and monitor progress within the scope of work. CHIP will provide access to necessary systems to the respondent for the duration of the scope of work.

V. Responses to the RFP

Respondents must include the following in their response. Please limit responses to no more than three (3) pages excluding the signed vendor/respondent statement.
• Respondent overview, if applicable, and qualifications, including years in the industry and experience, if any, with Department of Housing and Urban Development programs.
• Respondent’s working knowledge of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, Continuum of Care Program, rental assistance through HUD-VASH
• Respondent’s experience with the proposed scope of work
• Proposed project management plan, including staffing structure
• At least two examples of past work
• Respondent’s status or use of contractors certified as Minority, Women, Veteran or Disabled owned (MBE/WBE/VBE/DBE) business enterprises
• Proposed cost, including hourly rate with estimated number of hours by project component outlined in section II, technology costs (if applicable), and reimbursables (if applicable).
• References and brief organizational descriptions for two clients of similar projects
• Signed Non-Collusive and Vendor Statement from Appendix A

VI. Scoring of the RFP
Responses to this RFP will be scored based upon the following metrics:

• Respondent’s experience with the scope of work and deliverables outlined in section II. (25 points)
• Respondent’s proposed project management structure (25 points)
• Respondent’s experience with clients or work with public housing authorities, Continuum’s of Care, or Housing and Urban Development projects (20 points)
• Proposed cost (15 points)
• Examples of past work (10 points)
• Respondent’s proposed use of MBE/WBE/VBE/DBE (5 points)

VII. Proposal Submission
Responses to this RFP must be submitted to Christy Gelback-Diaz, cgelback-diaz@chipindy.org by 5 p.m. Eastern time on March 21, 2022.

VIII. Procurement Schedule
• February 28, 2022 Release RFP
• March 21, 2022 Proposals Due
• March 22-29, 2022 Review of Proposals
• April 1, 2022 Announcement of Selection and Begin Contracting Process
Appendix A: Non-Collusive and Vendor Statement (to be printed on letterhead)

By submission of this document, the individual signing certifies on behalf of its Company (if applicable) or self, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of its knowledge and belief:

1. The content of this request is true and has been arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communications, or agreement for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to service or cost with any other vendor(s) or with any competitor;

2. No attempt has been made or will be made by Respondent to include any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a response for the purpose of restricting competition and;

3. No employee, agent or consultant of the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (CHIP) has received or will receive any payment or any other form of compensation from Respondent as a result of award of an agreement or promise of award to Respondent.

By submission of this document, the individual signing on behalf of its Company, certifies that _________________________________ (Company Name) is not suspended or debarred from doing business with the Federal Government (2 CFR Part 200, Appendix II and 2 CFR 180.220 and 180.300). Additionally, if awarded the contract, we agree to comply with the applicable Indiana state law and Indianapolis Continuum of Care Policies and Procedures.

______________________________    ____________________________
Printed Name of Respondent     Title

_____________________________    ______________________________
Signature       Date signed