

HARRIS COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING
FY08 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Questions submitted during the pre-proposal conferences.)

Please continue to check the website for updates regarding the RFP.

GENERAL

Request for Proposal

1. Will you provide a list of all attendees from the RFP conference?

ANSWER: Please submit a public information request to Kathy Barton via email at Kathy.barton@cityofhouston.net or by mail at 8000 N. Stadium Drive, 8th Floor, Houston, Texas 77054.

2. We have been told the RFP was to be posted on your web page June 9, 2006. Can you tell us where it can be found?

ANSWER: The Request for Proposal was available to the public on the Area Agency on Aging Web page and was available for pick up at 8000 N. Stadium Dr., 3rd Floor, Houston, TX 77054, on Monday, June 16, 2008. The document can be found on the web page at <http://www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/index.html>.

3. What and where is the standard fee schedule? Does this apply to nutrition services (Congregate and Home Delivered) by municipalities?

ANSWER: There is no standard fee schedule included in the RFP. Bidders must include in their proposal a fee schedule that lists services and proposed prices. Refer to Page 54 of 206 in the RFP for the estimated scale.

4. If we are interested in bidding on multiple services, do we have to submit a proposal for each service? Or can we include all bids in one proposal?

ANSWER: Proposers bidding for more than one service must submit a complete proposal package, per service.

5. Have the mistakes in the 206 page proposal submission requirements and HCAAA Required Submission forms packet been corrected?

ANSWER: An erratum, which corrects technical errors in the RFP, was disseminated during each of the three (3) Pre-Proposal Conferences held July 9-10, 2008. An updated document has also be placed on the HCAAA web page.

6. Where is the Proposers Qualification Submittal Form?

ANSWER: The line in the RFP should read "Proposers Qualification Submittal Forms", which refers to all forms required for submission, as an interested bidder.

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7. Do sections 2 and 3 each have a 4 page limit (for a total of 8 pages for Form A-3) or is the limit for Form A-3, 4 pages total?

ANSWER: Form A-3, Page 77, relating to Collaborative Initiatives/ Relationships is limited to 4 pages. Form A-3, Page 78, relating to Program Activities is also limited to 4 pages total.

8. Are all attachments, forms, etc., required on the three copies, as well as originals?

ANSWER: Yes, all attachments, forms, etc., are required for the original and each of the three copies.

Current Contractors

9. Does this RFP require the vendor to be a non-profit agency to apply for funding?

ANSWER: No, vendors are not required to be a non-profit agency in order to apply for funding.

10. It takes six weeks at least to process a contract or proposal through our organization. Is there anyway to get an extension?

ANSWER: Yes, the deadline has been extended to 12 pm, noon, Monday, July 28, 2008. All proposals are to be submitted to the City Secretary's Office, at City Hall Annex, 900 Bagby St., Houston, TX 77001, as stated in the RFP, Page 16.

11. Page 6, "particular attention to minority individuals". Does this include sexual minorities? (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender)

ANSWER: Client eligibility is defined, per the Older Americans Act on Page 6. Items J and L, Page 11, also address the requirement of nondiscriminatory practices in the provision of services to clients. All proposers must operate in compliance with the Older Americans Act and its subsequent amendments.

12. Page 8, "opportunity to contribute", is this a mandate for fees or a reporting requirement?

ANSWER: This does not apply to supportive service vendors. It does apply to nutrition service vendors. Although the opportunity to contribute is voluntary for participants, it is mandated for nutrition service vendors to provide the opportunity for participants to contribute.

13. Do Medicare reimbursements apply to the required match?

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ANSWER: No, Medicare reimbursements cannot be used as match funds for this proposal, since Medicare and the proposal funds are both federal funds.

14. Page 15, can grant recipients purchase computer equipment with these funds?

ANSWER: Yes, computer equipment may be purchased with these funds, if included in the calculations for your unit rate.

15. Can a first timer request a mentor to assist with the proposal process?

ANSWER: No, mentors are not provided. However, partnering is encouraged.

16. The dollar amount listed in the proposal, is this for one year?

ANSWER: Yes, the dollar amount (\$9,300,000.00) is annual funding for all services.

17. Does 25% match include in-kind donations?

ANSWER: Yes, the 25% match does include in-kind donations.

18. We provide training in basic "hands-on" caregiver skills, falls and balances training, communication with dementia patients, nutrition and medication management. Do we submit proposals for caregiver information services or caregiver education and training?

ANSWER: Dissemination of information through large group presentations, seminars, health fairs and mass media constitute Caregiver Information Services. Information provided through individual counseling and support groups and Caregiver Training for individual caregivers and families constitute Caregiver Education and Training.

19. If invoices are due the 8th of the month, when is payment received?

ANSWER: Payment is processed within 30 days of receipt of invoice.

20. During the pre-proposal conference on Wednesday, July 9, 2008, one form said there were 23 pages of question. What happened to the other questions?

ANSWER: Questions relating to specific areas of service were presented at different Pre-Proposal Conference sessions. Questions and answers from all three (3) conference sessions will be mailed to those who attended either of the

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three (3) sessions. Questions and answers will also be posted on the HCAAA web page.

21. What is the financial schedule (Page 14) by what day of each month are invoices due?

ANSWER: The financial schedule addressed on page 14 regarding financial schedules will be coordinated with successful bidders. Invoices are due to the Business Management office by the 8th of each month.

22. Are the proposers required to have a vendor number with the COH prior to the submission of the RFP?

ANSWER: Vendor numbers are necessary, in order to transact business with the COH. Although vendors are not required to have a number prior to submission of the proposal packet, it is recommended that application is made prior to submission of the proposal.

23. Vendor number is needed after proposal approved or before contract is submitted?

ANSWER: It is ideal to obtain a vendor number after submission of the proposal package.

24. Can you should how binder and copies need to be put together?

ANSWER: Proposals should be submitted, as follows:

For Vendor Services:

Applicable Services: Adult Day Services, Demand, Transportation, Non-Emergency Medical, Emergency Response, Legal Assistance, Participant Assessment, Residential Repair Services, Caregiver Respite Care-In Home, Caregiver Respite Care- Non –Residential, Dental Services, Hearing Services, Prescription Assistance, Vision Services, Homemaker Services, Personal Assistance

Order of Forms:

Forms A1- Form A9

Forms B1-Form B3 (For Transportation Services ONLY)

Form B4 (For Prescription Assistance ONLY)

Direct Purchase of Service Vendor Application Bid Sheet

Standard Rate Sheet (Usual and Customary Rates)

Required City of Houston Forms (As applicable)

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For Services Requiring Contractor Services:

Applicable Services: Instruction and Training, Caregiver Education and Training, Caregiver Information Services, Medication Management, Mental Health Services, Congregate Meals, Home Delivered Meals, Demand/Response Nutrition Services

Order of Forms:

Forms A1- Form A9

Forms B1-Form B3 (For Transportation Services – If applicable)

Form F1

Budget

Summary Personnel Listings

Required City of Houston Forms (As applicable)

25. Which budget forms are needed?

ANSWER: Three Excel budget forms are included in the RFP. There is one for Nutrition services, and two for non-meal services. The file names for non-meal services are: Budget - Non-meal, and Budget - Non-meal Not title III-E.

26. Is a vendor number needed before submitting a RFP? Is it needed to submit the RFP?

ANSWER: Vendor numbers are necessary, in order to transact business with the COH. Although vendors are not required to have a number prior to submission of the proposal packet, it is recommended that application is made prior to submission of the proposal.

27. Do we submit a personnel cost form? Is it included in the forms now?

ANSWER: Please refer to the Summary Personnel Listings on the HCAAA web page.

28. How long does it take to get a vendor number after getting the package?

ANSWER: or numbers are necessary, in order to transact business with the COH. Although vendors are not required to have a number prior to submission of the proposal packet, it is recommended that application is made prior to submission of the proposal.

29. Are vendors required to have a certain amount of funding on hand, i.e., 90 days funding to support operations in lieu of being paid by the City for services rendered?

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ANSWER: Yes, 90 days funding is required for all vendors.

30. Are all pages in the proposal, including budget sheet and attachment, required to be sequentially numbered?

ANSWER: Although numbering proposal pages is not required, it can enhance readability.

31. Page 72 of 206, "The proposed budget is to be submitted on the diskette that has been provided. Where is the diskette? Do you want us to submit the budget only on that diskette, or may we use our own diskette?"

ANSWER: Yes/No, the budget is required on diskette. Diskettes containing the budget forms are available at 8000 N. Stadium Drive, 3rd Floor, Houston, Texas 77054, or you may download the budget forms and create your own budget cd.

32. How do you get the name of other providers so you can collaborate with them?

ANSWER: Information on current providers will be listed on the HCAAA web page, as well as the services currently provided by those providers.

33. My company operated under another name until about a year ago in which I formed another entity and was a split of regions in which I retained all clients in my new entity that I had under the old entity. Since I do not have a financial statement year under my new entity, will one under the old name be accepted?

ANSWER: Yes, financial statements from your previous company will be acceptable.

34. Due to staff changes at the HCAAA, we have not had a designated contract administrator. Consequently, it has been difficult to know who to call for assistance. Will HCAAA be fully staffed and have contract administrators assigned to each contract?

ANSWER: Yes, all vendors/contracts will have a HCAAA point of contact.

CITY OF HOUSTON FORMS

Affidavit of Ownership

35. Do municipalities (Mayor and council) complete this form? If so, do we check Non-profit entity and list our council members and mayor?

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ANSWER: Section 15-122 of the Houston Code of Ordinances, Definitions – *Contracting Entity*, exempts governmental entities from completion of this form. As a substitute, please provide a statement of the legal nature of the organization.

36. On the Affidavit of Ownership or Control. For a non-profit, does this require listing all governing board members with their home addresses?

ANSWER: Yes, both home and business addresses are required by Section 15-122 Definitions – *Affidavit*.

MWDBE

37. Do pages 147 and 148 of the RFP (MWDBE plan and letter of intent) have to be completed and submitted with the proposal, or are they to be proposed at contract completion?

ANSWER: Yes, pages 147 and 148 (MWDBE) should be completed and submitted with the proposal. (Also, see COH website for updated required forms.)

38. The forms for the City of Houston attachment C-MWBE Attachment C and D are not the same in the RFP as the City forms on the website. Which do we use?

ANSWER: Please use the updated versions of required COH forms found on the COH website.

Pay or Play

39. On the Pay or Play Plan – does it have to be 100% Employer's Plan or is a shared pay with the Employee participating?

ANSWER: It can be shared pay – see Program Element 33.

40. What if - If shared pay – the associate has decided to elect “no insurance” – what then?

ANSWER: The employer is required to have documentation on file that shows the employee has refused coverage and/or has coverage with another company.

41. Is it strictly health care or does vision/dental count?

ANSWER: The Pay or Play Program refers to health benefits.

42. Is health insurance for employees required before the RFP submission or can health insurance be included as a line item under benefits?

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ANSWER: Health insurance is required for employees only after successful bidding. The proposal may include a budget line item for staff health benefits .

43. If employees are offered health insurance benefits and elect not to participate, does that satisfy insurance requirement for \$100,000 or more?

ANSWER: Answer: Documentation must be provided for everyone who is a covered employee under Section 3.04 of E.O. No.1-7 (Pay or Play). If an employee elects not to participate, documentation must be provided which gives the employee's reasons for declining coverage. The contractor may request a waiver not to provide employee insurance coverage.

44. If an employee of a vendor has health insurance through their spouse, how does the vendor proceed with this, since the insurance was not provided by the vendor (employer)?

ANSWER: If the employee has insurance through their spouse, the vendor does not have to insure the employee. The employee should provide documentation to be kept on file by the vendor.

45. If you pay the COH for health insurance does the City then provide the health insurance for regular employees.

ANSWER: No, The payment to the City is a penalty for not having the required insurance.

46. If you are awarded \$100,000 or more and have to purchase health insurance for employees, would it be cheaper to purchase insurance through the COH?

ANSWER: Insurance cannot be purchase through the COH. If you do not contribute to health insurance benefits for your employees you must pay a certain amount to the City, per employee. Either you pay to the COH or you play by providing employee health benefits.

47. If employees are hired as contract labor working for the agency and through this proposal – will health insurance be required.

ANSWER: The Pay or Play Program is required for contracts equal to or greater than \$100,000, and for subcontracts in amounts equal to or greater than \$200,000.

48. Is proof of health benefits applicable to subcontractors?

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ANSWER: Please see the answer to Question 49.

49. Are vendor numbers still valid if your contract with the City of Houston has expired?

ANSWER: Answer: Vendor numbers remain active for up to a year before they are purged from the system. If you presently have a contract with the city, you have a valid vendor number. You can check the status of your number online at http://purchasing.houstontx.gov/solicitation_forms.htm

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

50. What is the primary qualification for medication program?

ANSWER: The primary qualification of the medication program is for a participant to be 60 years of age and older with financial need.

51. What is the City requirement for participant assessment “vendors”?

ANSWER: The requirement for participant assessment is the same for all vendor services.

52. Participant Assessment/Intake, Will there be a “no closed door” policy for all services, meaning that intake can occur anywhere in the system, or do clients have to go through the Patient Assessment contracts first?

ANSWER: If the question refers to Participant Assessment, Participant Assessments are for persons requesting or receiving in home services, such as Homemaker, Personal Assistance, Home Delivered Meals and Respite. Clients requiring participant assessment will be referred to the successful contractor.

53. How many providers are contracted to provide non-emergency medical transportation services?

ANSWER: Currently one contractor provides non-emergency medical transportation services.

54. We are a non-profit organization doing Chinese Community Cancer support activity. Are we eligible to apply for funds to transport Cancer patients to/from treatment? What kind of assessment needs to be done?

ANSWER: Demand Transportation is a service in this RFP. Participant Assessments are for persons requesting or receiving in home services, such as

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Homemaker, Personal Assistance, Home Delivered Meals and Respite. (See -
2. Demand Transportation, Pages 23-27.)

55. Do you still provide vehicles to transport the elderly for services to the contract holders? If so, how do we request for that, and what do you need to have for that service?

ANSWER: Transportation services are purchased separately. Clients are assessed for transportation needs at the time they request other services. Services will be coordinated between HCAAA staff and the client.

56. How can we find out who has been providing services and the cost of those services?

ANSWER: A list of all current HCAAA vendors and contractors with services provided will be listed on the HCAAA web page.

57. How many adult day care companies, do you currently have providing adult day care services?

ANSWER: Currently, two vendors provide adult day care services.

58. What is the current level of mental health services?

ANSWER: The current funding level for mental health services is \$100,000.00.

59. Regarding mental health (Page 42) and client access, do clients have to be homebound to qualify for mental health services or is this an accommodation?

ANSWER: No, Clients do not have to be homebound to qualify for mental health services.

60. How many contractors for mental health services do you currently have?

ANSWER: Currently, one contractor provides mental health services.

61. How many providers/vendors are providing family caregiver support services?

ANSWER: Currently, eight providers are listed under the Family Caregiver and Support Service Program.

62. Who are the current providers for dental services?

ANSWER: Robert Gohlke is the current dental provider?

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63. What is the current funding level for dental services?

ANSWER: The FY08 funding level for dental services is \$ 150,000.

64. Who are your current Vision vendors?

ANSWER: Our current vision provider is Eye Care Express.

65. Regarding the proposal narrative, what is the definition of administrative function and financial responsibilities?

ANSWER: Administrative function refers to the provision of services, and financial responsibilities refer to ability to pay required expenses.

66. If the agency information is the same, why would it be necessary to submit different packages of the same information for such services as PAS and Respite etc?

ANSWER: Each submitted proposal will go through level 1 review which will require a review of all required forms. Forms that are not submitted will result in disqualification of the proposal.

67. What is the unit of service for hearing services? Is it how many hearing tests, or is it how many hearing aids needed?

ANSWER: A unit is one contact; each day a client receives a hearing service is one contact. This does not relate to the reimbursement.

68. What is the proposed "lifetime" maximum for hearing services per patient?

ANSWER: This is an internally set benchmark, based on funding and demand.

69. What is the budgeted amount for emergency response (ERS)? How many units are expected for the contract period?

ANSWER: This is the first time this service would have been administered, to date a funding level has not been identified.

70. Since emergency response services is only a rental of the unit with monitoring, is health insurance a requirement? All service techs are licensed with TDSHS and

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I have liability coverage on all techs, who are the only ones with direct contact with client. I doubt my contract will exceed \$100,000.

ANSWER: The Pay or Play Program is required for contracts equal to or greater than \$100,000, and for subcontracts in amounts equal to or greater than \$200,000. Contracts under \$100,000 do not require health insurance.

71. Will there be a bid form for Emergency Response Systems and what is the funding level?

ANSWER: The bid form will be available online at the HCAAA web page and available at the Pre-Proposal Conferences. Emergency Response is a vendor service. There is no commitment of funding.

IN-HOME SERVICES

72. Participant Assessment/Access – Do clients have to physically appear for an intake with the Participant Assessment contractor, or can other service providers supply encoded assessment information? If not, this could represent a barrier to care.

ANSWER: If it is a home-based service, the assessment must be provided in the client's home. We are looking for vendors that want to provide assessments.

73. How many In-Home assessments are conducted annually?

ANSWER: 592 In-Home assessments are conducted annually.

74. What forms are used to assess clients in the in-home service category?

ANSWER: The DADS required assessment form is used to assess clients in the In-Home service category.

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

75. What does it take to be a caregiver?

ANSWER: This RFP solicits proposals for Caregiver Education and Training Support Services to caregivers. It does not solicit for the provision of caregiving services.

NUTRITION

76. Medicaid waiver meals - Does the HCAAA administer that program? If so, how does a meal provider get the list to become a provider since Medicaid Waiver recipients are allowed a choice in meal providers?

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ANSWER: HCAAA does not administer the Medicaid Waiver Meals Program.

77. If a proposer received the contract for assessments, how will the meal contractors, know or be notified to provide services?

ANSWER: Intakes will be forwarded to the HCAAA for approval. Upon approval the HCAAA will forward authorization to the contractor to complete assessments.

78. What meal contractor for congregate, home delivered and frozen meals do we use?

ANSWER: Please refer to the HCAAA web page which lists all current nutrition providers.

79. Is Valley Foods catering both congregate and home delivered meals?

ANSWER: Yes, and an agreement has been made with Valley Foods for a one year extension, effective October 2008.

80. Should proposed number of service units include attrition (unduplicated # served) or average daily number served?

ANSWER: The HCAAA recommends that budgets are calculated on the average daily numbers projected.

81. Does a proposer for home-delivered meals have to submit a separate proposal for the participant assessment piece?

ANSWER: Yes, the bidding to conduct participant assessment is a separate service and requires a separate proposal. Participant assessment services will be utilized in partnership with In-home and home delivered meals services.

82. The RFP says to budget for 251 service days, but there are 252 service days for 2008-2009. Please advise.

ANSWER: Please base your budget on 251 service days, which applies to all providers.

83. As a congregate meal provider, do you have to perform a client assessment? Or, will a designated agency provide the assessments under a separate contract to HCAAA?

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ANSWER: Congregate providers must complete an individual intake with annual reassessment.

84. If we are not requesting transportation, are we required to complete forms B1, B2, B3?

ANSWER: Transportation requests can be completed under contractual agreement on the nutrition budget. If you are not applying for contractor services, do not complete.

85. If a municipality does all their own zip codes, can they do small areas of adjacent zip codes without having to do whole zip code areas?

ANSWER: Per RFP, the entire zip code must be included in the Proposal. Municipalities are considered separate and encouraged to bid on adjacent areas.

86. Will HCAAA be issuing a RFP after the end of the extended meal services for one caterer for all of the direct service providers or will the direct service providers be allowed to bid out their meal provider services?

ANSWER: It is not the intention of HCAAA to issue a meal service provider RFP at this time. The direct service providers will be eligible to bid out their meal provider.