



CITY OF HOUSTON

Housing & Community Development Department

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July 9, 2019

**Subject: Letter of Clarification No.1 NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)
HARVEY PUBLIC SERVICES**

Reference: Request for Proposal No.: T29076

To all Prospective Proposers:

This Letter of Clarification is issued for the following reasons:

- To provide the links to the Harvey Federal Registers:

1st Federal Register for the Harvey Funds: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-09/pdf/2018-02693.pdf>

2nd Federal Register for the Harvey Funds: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-08-14/pdf/2018-17365.pdf>

- To delete Exhibit "B" Drug Policy Compliance Agreement, pages 45 thru 48 in its entirety.
- To answer the following questions:

1. Question: Eligibility Checklist (Direct / indirect tie back to Hurricane Harvey)
Does an agency that is contracted by the City Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD) to provide administrative oversight of agencies that may have served persons directly or indirectly qualify to apply for funding or does the organization itself, have to have provided services to persons directly or indirectly affected by Hurricane Harvey.

Answer: To qualify for funding, All applicants must:

- Be organized under Texas State law
- Have no part of net earnings inuring to the benefit of any member, founder, contributor or individual

- Have a functioning accounting system that is operated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, or have designated an entity that will maintain such an accounting system
- Have a program that meets one of the CDBG national objectives and must qualify under public services eligible activity
- Have a direct or indirect tie back to Hurricane Harvey
- Be eligible to participate in HUD and city-funded programs
- Respond to the needs of the City of Houston as outlined in the Hurricane Harvey Action Plan and Needs Assessment (<https://recovery.houstontx.gov/hud-requirements-reports/>)
- Applicants that are non-profit organizations must provide evidence of current 501(c)(3) tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service and evidence of good standing with the Texas Secretary of State.
- Applicants must be current with all financial obligations with the City of Houston. The City of Houston will not fund a program or agency with outstanding disallowed costs, defaulted loans, debarment actions or any other legal encumbrances, regardless of the merits of the submitted proposal.
- Certify that they operate a drug-free environment
- Certify that they comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended (P.L. 110-325)
- Board of Directors must certify a three (3) month cash flow reserve, specifically for the program being applied as this is a reimbursement program
- Certify that they have a Non-discrimination Policy and provide copies of that policy
- Applications may not request less than the budget floor.
- Maintain compliance with all terms of their most recent Public Services contract requirements and not have a serious unresolved HUD or City monitoring finding or audit findings of a material nature regarding any of the Applicant's Public Services funded projects or other federal funded projects.

2. Question: Conflict of Interest
Does a conflict interest exist if the organization applying for funding has a current contract with the City (HCDD) or collaborates with agencies in which it currently provides administrative oversight.

Answer: This does not present a conflict.

3. Question: I was trying to obtain the notes from the NOFA meeting from yesterday is there any way to access them online? If you can help me please I would be very grateful.

Answer: The NOFA can be accessed by HCDD website listed below:
<http://www.houstontx.gov/housing/rfp.html>

4. Question: We're requesting more clarification about how to complete the Drug Policy Compliance Declaration appropriately for the DR RFP.

Referencing Executive Order No. 1-31 Revised, section 4.0 Scope states "This procedure applies to all City of Houston contracts for labor and/or services except the following... 4.4 Contracts with non-profit organizations providing services at no cost or reduced cost to the public." Would we be exempt as an organization that provides services at no cost to people who are homeless? If so, how should we complete this declaration to reflect that we qualify for this exemption?

Answer: Yes, it has been removed from the NOFA.

5. Question: With regards to Part II, Eligibility and Criteria section, it provides that all applicants must be "organized under Texas State law". Would an organization based outside of Texas, but with programming within the state and evidence of good standing from the Texas Secretary of State, be eligible to apply?

Answer: Yes, must be in good standing with Texas Secretary of State.

6. Question: The NOFA says you can assist those impacted directly and indirectly. Can you define what is meant by indirectly?

Answer: Please refer to the federal register.

7. Question: Explain the process for acquiring an environmental clearance and when is that applicable?

Answer: Environmental clearance is done prior to any project receiving funding. This is completed by Housing and Community Development.

8. Question: Define resident. Must resident be a US citizens or can they show proof that they resided in a Harvey impacted home at the time of the storm and currently reside in the City of Houston? If parents are not US citizens, can children born in the United States file for assistance?

Answer: A resident is someone that resides in the Houston City Limits.

9. *Question:* Can you apply for relief assistance dollars to help repair or replace mobile homes that were damaged during Harvey? We have identified communities that received little to no relief assistance and are currently living in horrible, unsafe and unsanitary trailers heavily destroyed by Harvey. They tend to own the trailers but lease the lot.

Answer: No, these funds are for services only. Please refer to 24 CFR 570.201(e).

10. *Question:* The NOFA says furnishings and personal property are ineligible; would this include furniture and appliances for direct client assistance?

Answer: That is correct

11. *Question:* Does the grant allow for staff training?

Answer: Yes, this is an allowable cost.

12. *Question:* Will the reporting be monthly? If so, what day will it be due, and what reporting format and supporting documentation will be required to be submitted with the report?

Answer: Reporting will be monthly and due the 20th day following the month completed. Reporting and supporting documentations will depend on the program. This will be discussed further during negotiations.

13. *Question:* On page 4, third paragraph, the RFP states, " The Harvey Public Services Program is intended to assist eligible persons residing in the City of Houston who were directly or indirectly impacted by Hurricane Harvey". Could you further clarify the difference between a direct and indirect impact of the storm? How closely must an indirect impact tie back to the storm?

Answer: Per the federal register, there must be a direct or indirect impact to Hurricane Harvey. Example: Direct Impact could be a family's home was damaged by the storm. Indirect Impact could be that as a result of the storm there was an overall increase to homelessness due to the entire homeless system being diverted to Harvey relief; longer length of homelessness to lack of unit availability. Please remember, that data will need to be used to back up agency's tie back.

14. *Question:* On page 9, second paragraph, the RFP states, "Priority needs for homeless services include: shelter services and case management services directly tied to a housing program within the Way Home system." Has COH prioritized the types of homeless shelter it will fund through this solicitation, or all programs eligible as long as they are members of the Way Home?

Answer: Being a member of the Way Home is not the standard, the proposed project must directly tie back to a housing program within the Way Home system. Proposers should ensure their project is in alignment with the Way Home.

15. Question: On the grant budget, is it allowable for an agency to request 100% of a staff member's salary from COH through this solicitation?

Answer: This is allowable if 100% of the staff member is working on the grant funded through this NOFA.

16. Question: Please confirm that a correctly submitted application consists of 1 paper copy and 5 electronic copies each one on its own thumb drive. The instructions on Part 1: Public Services Program Checklist are different and describe a requirement for one original and four copies of Parts 1-14.

Answer: One (1) paper copy and five (5) electronic copies each on its own thumb drive.

17. Question: Is the paper copy of the application intended to be bound in a three-binder or is another method preferred?

Answer: Yes, it is intended to be bound in a three (3) ring binder.

18. Question: How does a nonprofit document evidence of good standing with the Texas Secretary of State? Is it a "certificate of status" or a "certificate of account status"?

Answer: Please see following link: <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/copies.shtml>

19. Question: There is no mention of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in Part 9 Assurance and Certifications except in regard to accessibility. Should we create our own statement confirming compliance with the entire statute and have it signed?

Answer: That would be acceptable.

20. Question: Does a nonprofit organization designate itself as "A CORPORATION" on Exhibit I Form "A": Fair Campaign and then list all of its board members and administrative officers?

Answer: That will be fine. If the form is filled out incorrectly, the HCDD staff will contact the applicant.

21. Question: On the form for Exhibit II Affidavit of Ownership or Control: What information is entered into the blank spaces ORIG. DEPT. and File/I/D No.?

Answer: The information referenced will be completed by HCDD.

22. Question: Do we create and include a signed statement certifying that we do not engage in the boycotting of Israel?

Answer: No

23. Question: Is the workforce development allowable activity for clients' workforce development or agency staff or both?

Answer: Workforce development is intended at a client level.

24. Question: Would infrastructure required for starting teletherapy (mental health) be allowable?

Answer: This could be allowable, but will need to confirm once a budget is received. Please review the CDBG Public Service regulations for allowable costs, which may be found 24CFR 570.21 (e); 24CFR 570.206; 24CFR 570.207.

25. Question: Will the Coalition have to re-procure the operator of the navigation center?

Answer: Procurement must meet State and Federal standards.

26. Question: If we request for \$2M- does that mean we get \$1M one year, \$1M the second year? Or do we get 2 Years to spend down the award?

Answer: As written, this NOFA is for a 12-month period. A renewal award will be at the Department's request. The amount requested is the amount expected to be spent down in 12-months.

27. Question: If the Navigation Center doesn't get approved - what are our responsibilities to pay back the funds/time spent in preparation of this activity?

Answer: No projects have been funded and any funding spent on any projects in anticipation of this NOFA are at the risk of the agency.

28. Question: When you request Case Management funds - is that available for clients who are homeless? Is housing counseling services, healthcare costs, and case management services available for clients who are homeless

Answer: Those are all acceptable uses of case management services.

29. Question: Please provide examples of what would be considered certification of a drug-free environment.

Answer: Drug policy not required

30. Question: Please provide examples of what would be considered certification that an organization is in compliance with the American's Disabilities Act of 1990

Answer: Please provide organization policies and procedures.

31. Question: Please define what is considered leverage. Is this all additional resources that an organization has to support the project, regardless if it has been considered match for another source of funding?

Answer: It is the additional resources an organization uses to support the project.

32. Question: If an organization anticipates engaging with subcontractors that have already been through a procurement process prior to the contract, is there a timeframe in which that procure process is still valid to satisfy compliance?

Answer: That procurement must meet federal and state requirements.

33. Question: The funding available for CDBG-DR Public Services over a 5 year period is \$60M. Will the amount available be \$15M per year for 4 years? And if so, what amount will be available in year 5?

Answer: The amount available will be dependent on the number of applicants awarded funding. \$60M is to be spent down in five (5) years.

34. Question: If an organization plans to submit an individual application as well as participate in a separate collaborative application, under another lead agency, will their maximum funding amount be capped at \$5M between all applications over a 5 year period? Or just on the application in which they are the lead agency

Answer: Just the application they are the lead agency.

35. Question: Please confirm if pages 45-48 of the NOFA are required documents for the application, or samples if it pertains to your program.

Answer: Please refer to Page 1

36. Question: The CDBD-DR Harvey RFP Contract document on page 9.5.0 Data Driven Evaluation, references "using the model provided" but no model is included in the document. Is there a model that is preferred for this RFP?

Answer: Please see word attachment.

37. Question: **Budget for Child Care Services**
Inquiring as to the possibility of Child Care costs billed on a unit basis due to the nature of services provided.
The cost of care is built into the unit rate per child. All other costs can be billed as required. The WorkSource uses this method as well.

Answer: Unsure of what exactly is being asked. Please provide as much detail as possible in the NOFA application.

38. Question: **Eligibility (Clarification)**
I understand that clients served have to have a tie back directly or indirectly. My questions is do organizations applying have to meet this criteria as well. If so, and at the risk of being redundant and the submitted previously- what qualifies as an indirect tie back for an organization.

Answer: Please see earlier clarification and refer to the federal register.

39. Question: Per p. 4 of the RFP, The Harvey Public Services Program is intended to assist eligible persons residing in the City of Houston who were directly or indirectly impacted by Hurricane Harvey. Please define what is specifically meant by "direct and indirect impact"

Answer: Please see earlier clarification and refer to the federal register.

40. Question: Will furniture or other “tangible” resources be eligible for funding under this contract under Unmet Needs?

Answer: Furniture and other “tangible” resources are not eligible under this NOFA.

41. Question: If an agency’s program is funded with Harvey Public Service funding, can the program choose its method for verifying eligibility (i.e. reside in a low-income area or obtain income verification)? Can it use both?

Answer: No, it cannot use both.

42. Question: Please clarify if the 12% indirect cost percentage cap is based on the total award or on salaries, or some other portion of the budget

Answer: 12% cap is based on the request made to this NOFA.

43. Question: Is there a preference or requirement to work within the twelve neighborhoods identified with high social vulnerability, per the Local Needs Assessment?

Answer: There is no requirement. There are additional points awarded for those programs located in a complete community.

44. Question: Is an organization, whose place of incorporation is located outside of the State of Texas, eligible to apply for the grant?

Answer:
Yes.

45. Question: Is there a page limit?

Answer: No

46. Question: Will reimbursement payments be made on a monthly basis or according to another schedule?

Answer: Reimbursements will be made on a monthly basis.

47. Question: For the evaluation of leveraging resources (financial or in-kind), is there a threshold that must be met in terms of acceptable supporting documentation? For example, if a company provided that they would furnish \$25,000 worth of materials/equipment needed to perform the proposed services, what form of documentation would need to be provided in order to receive points for this criteria (i.e. an e-mail from a senior officer, a letter of commitment from the company, an MOU, etc.)?

Answer: Only cash leverage is used for points, which is demonstrated in the detailed budget.

48. *Question:* Under the Activity Need and Justification criteria, it provides that 5 points will be awarded for both *good* and *average* need justifications. Is this correct?

Answer: Yes

49. *Question:* Can an applicant propose services at multiple locations within a single proposal or must there be separate proposals for each such location?

Answer: Yes, the applicant can propose services at multiple locations.

50. *Question:* What is consider direct and indirect impacted under the COH CDBG-DR eligibility?

Answer: Please see earlier clarification and refer to the federal register.

51. *Question:* To determine eligibility what documents substantiate that a person was directly or indirectly impacted by the Hurricane Harvey Disaster defined under the CDBG-DR grants funds?

Answer: Please see earlier clarification and refer to the federal register.

52. *Question:* Capital IDEA does not do a procurement process for training providers, however, the organization has MOUs with accredited and NCCER certified training and vendor's entities such as Houston Community College, Harris County Department of Education, and NCCER certified schools to provide trainings to participants. These entities are paid by CIH for training services. How would CIH proceed with the above training providers under the CDBG-DR grant funds?

Answer: These types of specifics will be discussed with the applicant should they be awarded funding, during contract negotiations.

53. *Question:* Capital IDEA currently provides financial assistance, to removed barriers to training and employment to participants enroll in train. (Bus card, token, supplies, tools, uniforms, minor car repairs). Is this an allowable cost under the CDBG-DR funds?

Answer: Some of the items listed above are allowable and others are not. Please refer to 24CFR 570.207

54. *Question:* Capital IDEA services will include services to removed barriers to training. CDBG-DR pay contracted for transportation services so participants can get back and forth to training?

Answer: We do not understand the question. Transportation could be an eligible cost.

55. *Question:* Capital IDEA services will include services to remove barriers to training. Can CDBG-DR pay a License day care provider directly?

Answer: This could be an eligible activity.

56. *Question:* Residents who lived in the city and was directly or indirectly impacted, however, they now live outside the city limits as a result of Hurricane Harvey? Would CDBG-DR fund cover training cost for these residents?

Answer: CDBG-DR funds are for residents of the City of Houston.

57. *Question:* The YMCA is interested in applying for this grant. I have a few questions: If we connect mindfulness with mental health and fitness would this be appropriate for funding?

Answer: It could be eligible.

58. *Question:* Would sports for youth in Harvey affected areas be fundable through linking the programs to mental wellness?

Answer: It could be eligible.

59. *Question:* What are the expectations of verifying direct or indirect impact by Harvey for participants to receive job training services? What specific methods are approved to serve as verification of Harvey impact?

Answer: Per the federal register, there must be a direct or indirect impact to Hurricane Harvey. Example: Direct Impact could be a family's home was damaged by the storm. Indirect Impact could be that as a result of the storm there was an overall increase to homelessness due to the entire homeless system being diverted to Harvey relief; longer length of homelessness to lack of unit availability. Please remember, that data will need to be used to back up agency's tie back.

60. *Question:* I just had a meeting with our finance person to begin the budget process for the Harvey Public Service T29076 proposal. We were a little confused by the spread sheet we down loaded from the website. I do remember from the meeting that we were NOT to change the spread sheet, but it seems there maybe something wrong with the formulas (or maybe me). The PS% and the Admin costs associated with salaries are not calculating. Can you help me understand what I'm doing wrong or send a new budget sheet?

Answer: This spreadsheet is editable. Any edits made could cause formula changes, please make them if necessary.

This Letter of Clarification will be considered part of the solicitation referenced on the first page of this document.

Furthermore, it is the responsibility of each PROPOSER to obtain any previous Letter(s) of Clarification associated with this solicitation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tywana L. Rhone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Tywana L. Rhone
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Procurement Services Division
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Attachment

Program: _____ (name) _____ Logic Model

Situation: _____

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long

Assumptions

External Factors