



### Housing First Scattered Site Supportive Housing for Homeless Adults RFP Questions and Answers

1. I was wondering about Cayuga County for the new RFP that was just released. I don't see it on the list, but I see other Central New York rural counties. Is Cayuga included in this? If not, how do we request consideration for future grant opportunities?

ANSWER – Units are being awarded in counties where an SOS team has or will be assigned. Cayuga County does not yet have an SOS team so was not included in this initiative.

2. We cannot access the budget forms or the other required uploads in the Grants Gateway. There is no dropdown for the PreSubmission Uploads page. Please advise.

ANSWER – Please be advised that there was an error when creating this RFP in Grants Gateway and as a result, none of the required documents that need to be provided either in response to the budget questions or as part of the application are accessible. Please use the two budget documents, the provider contact form and the Sexual Harassment Certification form found on OMH's website where the RFP is listed:

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/rfp/2023/hfsssha/index.html>

The Budget Template and Budget Narrative Template will be uploaded in response to those two separate questions (6.7a and 6.7b) in the Program Specific Questions Section.

The Sexual Harassment Certification and the Provider Contact Forms will need to be uploaded into the Grantee Document folder.

3. Section 5.1 of the RFP, in part, states that “contractors must comply with the OMH Supportive Housing Guidelines.” Page 10 of the OMH Supportive Housing Guidelines states “Providers should utilize the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) current Fair Market Rents and the local housing authority’s utility allowances as a guideline for determining reasonable rental costs.” Due to the increase per unit over traditional OMH supported housing, will OMH allow providers to provide rental stipends higher than the Fair Market Rent for the respective MSA?

ANSWER –As cited, the OMH Supportive Housing Guidelines direct providers to use FMR as a guide but does not indicate it is a limit. However, the increased funding for this initiative is intended to provide enhanced services, pay for 1-bedroom and studio apartments (as opposed to shared apartments), and cover a lower-than-normal collectability rate. Providers would be expected to meet the stated goals of the RFP before spending funding on other purposes.

4. Section 5.3 states that “OMH will make additional funding available, up to \$2,000 per unit annually, to accelerate the rate of admission to the program, cover the residents’ portion of the rent, utility costs and other emergency expenses when the consumer does not yet have entities in place or initially refused to pay rent.” Is there a specific budget line name for this funding?

ANSWER –No, applicants should include the \$2,000 on the OMH/Medicaid Funding line along with the base rate identified in the RFP.

5. In cases where an allocation is for a set of multiple counties, must the 25 units be spread across all the counties noted? In other words, does a proposer need to present a plan to serve all three counties if that’s what is noted in the chart in 1.2?

ANSWER – Applicants must serve all counties identified for a particular program.

6. How are “temporary shelter settings” defined? For example, is someone who is “couch surfing” between acquaintances considered using a temporary shelter setting? As another example, if our organization has a transitional housing program for homeless people and they can stay up to 6 months, does that fit the definition of a temporary shelter for this program?

ANSWER – Temporary shelter setting is typically defined as an emergency shelter, boarding house, or other short-term transitional setting. If the referring entity (SOS/ACT) has determined an individual in a “couch surfing” arrangement to be homeless, they would not be excluded from this initiative. However, prioritization should be given to individuals who are street homeless or in an emergency shelter setting.

7. What are the parameters for “street homeless”? If an individual is coming out of rehab or incarceration with nowhere else to go, are they considered homeless under this program, even if they haven’t been on the street yet but would be?

ANSWER – Individuals discharging from rehab or incarceration would not be considered homeless for the purpose of this initiative. OMH has other resources specifically designated for individuals re-entering the community from incarceration.

8. Using a database search at <https://my.omh.ny.gov/analytics/saw.dll?Dashboard>, it appears as though there are no SOS programs in the three-county grouping we are looking at. And there are ACT programs related to only two out of the three. Will we be able to accept referrals from other resources?

ANSWER – SOS teams have either been awarded or are currently being procured for all counties identified in this opportunity. No additional referral sources will be allowed.

9. Will providers be able to accept referrals from other resources, such as CoC Coordinated Assessment process, or only the ACT and SOS programs?

ANSWER – No, referrals are limited to the sources identified in the RFP.

10. In the RFP (page 3), it is stated that “The individuals may have a mental illness diagnosis, a substance use disorder, physical health care needs, or a combination of all three. Mental health or other diagnostic criteria not required to access housing through this initiative”. Does this mean that diagnosis is not part of the screening process to expedite referrals? Once someone is admitted, will there need to be one of the three specified diagnoses once someone is admitted? At what stage in the process would the diagnostic assessment need to take place? And if they do not have one of these three, are they allowed to stay in the housing?

ANSWER – There is no diagnostic criteria required for eligibility to this program. Any individual who is homeless and referred by either an ACT or SOS team would be eligible.

11. Erie County has been allocated 25 units. Are these units only for individuals accessing ACT and SOS services in Erie County, and not from the surrounding counties?

ANSWER – These units may only be sited in Erie County.

12. On page 15, the RFP states “Finally clustering apartments around a building “hub” should be considered, if possible, to bring residents together for socialization and support.” Is there a minimum number of apartments that residents should be able to choose from – and if there choice is to live in an area that is not near the “hub”, is that consistent with the RFP? Is there an Olmstead concern for example, if an apartment building has 10 units, can all of these units be occupied by program participants?

ANSWER – Client choice in where to live should be respected as much as possible, so agencies can and should locate units away from the hub in instances where that is the client’s preference. There is no disability-specific eligibility criteria for these units, so Olmstead is not applicable.

13. Renting a studio or one-bedroom apartment is required under this initiative, except in the rare instance where a consumer wishes to live with another resident. Does this mean that two-bedroom units are not allowable when a participant is head of household?

ANSWER – While it is anticipated that most referrals to these programs will be for single adults, individuals can be supported in their preferred household composition. In instances where individuals are living with family or unrelated individuals, the OMH Supportive Housing Guidelines should be followed for rent allocation.

14. On page 17 - The additional funding, up to \$2,000 should be incorporated into the annual operating funding per unit noted in the chart above and reflected in the operating budget. Does this funding need to be identified separately in the operating budget or should it be incorporated into the various lines as long as the total is equal to \$21,500 (\$19,500 plus \$2,000),

using Erie as an example? Could this supplemental funding be used to increase services such as after-hours and emergency coverage?

ANSWER – See question 4 for how to allocate funding in the budget. If collectability rate of tenant share of rent ends up being higher than the anticipated 50%, funding may be used to provide enhanced services.

15. Would the following leasing scenario be acceptable under this program: A nonprofit grantee arranges to lease a building or home from a property owner, and then sublease rooms to the program participants that would have their own locks/living spaces, functioning as a studio. Would these spaces need to have their own bathrooms, cooking facilities, etc.?

ANSWER – OMH believes the identified population for these programs is best served in non-shared units (1-bedrooms and studios). While OMH would allow for shared units in instances where individuals desire roommates, the proposed scenario does not sound like it would meet the intent of this RFP.

16. We are seeking to confirm that awards will be as described on page 3 of the RFP.

Each contract awarded will be 25 units of housing. They will not be broken up into smaller awards, for example 10 units for one award to one organization and 15 units for another award to another organization serving the designated county/counties.

ANSWER -Correct. Awards will be made as described in the RFP on page 3.

17. Through this RFP, can we restrict eligibility requirements for housing so that all units go to homeless women (trans inclusive)?

ANSWER – No

18. Where can we find more information about the SOS and ACT teams?

ANSWER – For more information on SOS, applicants are encouraged to review the most recent SOS RFP [Request for Proposals \(ny.gov\)](#)

For more information on ACT, please consult the ACT page on the OMH website: [Assertive Community Treatment \(ACT\) \(ny.gov\)](#)

19. For clarity on applicants' roles in the final project: SOS and ACT will provide outreach and supportive services to residents, while the applicant is expected to provide the case management and housing components? Is that correct?

ANSWER – Awardees will be expected to coordinate with SOS/ACT teams to support individuals in achieving their goals and remaining stably housed.

20. In Grants Gateway, at the top of "Program Specific Questions", there is a note that says "Please Note Special Instructions for Question 6.6h." However, there is no section 6.6h. Please advise as to what this note means.

ANSWER – This is a copy and paste error/typo. Please disregard.

21. There is no mention of completing a work plan in the RFP; however, these properties are included in Grants Gateway. Are applicants expected to complete the work plan overview form and provide a work plan?

ANSWER – Somehow, that section of the RFP was omitted. See instructions:

The Workplan Overview Form will be used to create the Work Plan portion of the contract. Some of the information requested will be duplicative of information provided earlier in the application. Be sure to follow the guidance provided below.

The Work Plan Period should reflect the anticipated contract period. Contracts will be approved for a five-year term.

The Project Summary section should include a high-level overview of the project as instructed.

The Organizational Capacity section should include the information requested regarding staffing and relevant experience of staff and any applicable consultants to be involved in undertaking the proposed project.

The Objectives and Tasks section should identify grantee-defined objectives and tasks that are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. To get started, add your first Objective Name and Description and then click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After hitting Save, a field for the Task Name and Task Description will show under the Objective box. Complete both fields and hit the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After entering the Task information and clicking Save, you will now see a box for the Performance Measure information and a box to enter a second Task. Enter a Performance Measure Name and select the Performance Measure Data Capture Type from the dropdown box. The type you choose from the dropdown will show on the screen for you to complete. Once you've entered the name, data capture type and the text/integer/or date as applicable, click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page.

For Performance Measure Name restate the Objective then enter the narrative requested in the box below. Performance Measures are also grantee-defined and should reflect some measurable benchmark(s) in order to demonstrate adequate progress as required by the RFP. Once entered, click Save. You may continue to add Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures up to and including the max amount allowed by the state.

The online Workplan is essentially an outline/summary of the work associated with the Project(s) described in the sections above. Please note that if an application is selected for award, the Workplan will be subject to change and can be updated during the contract development/negotiation process.

Applicants should refer to Section 5.2.4 Grantee Defined Workplan of the 'Grantee User Guide' ([Click here for Grants Gateway: Vendor User Guide](#)) for detailed instructions on how to complete the Workplan.

22. If a couple (2 eligible individuals) were to desire housing together, could they be housed in a one bedroom? Would that situation still be considered two units? Or, would they need to be housed in a two bedroom?

ANSWER – Assuming both individuals are eligible for this program (enrolled in/referred by ACT or SOS team, and homeless), they would both be considered enrollees in the program (two units). Client preference should be considered regarding unit configuration.

23. Can the “up to \$2,000” additional funding be used to cover attorney fees which are often an unfortunate cost of operations?

ANSWER – No. The additional \$2,000 is intended to cover the anticipated low collectability rate of tenant rent. If the funding is not needed for that purpose, it may be used to provide additional services. Otherwise, it should be returned to OMH as underspending.

24. Under Section 1.2 on page 3 (Allocation of Units), it lists Albany/Schenectady/Saratoga as 25 total units. Can an applicant apply for just one of the three Counties?

ANSWER – No, awardees must serve all counties identified for a particular program

25. For participants who are not in the Housing First program for an entire calendar year, will the selected provider receive the full annual reimbursement, or will the reimbursement be pro-rated on a monthly basis?

ANSWER – See Question 31.

26. Does the selected provider receive the additional \$2,000 per participant annually, or only once to support initial move-in expenses?

ANSWER – Selected providers will receive the additional \$2,000 as part of their annual funding

27. OMH recently conveyed that certain county(ies) were inadvertently omitted from the list of areas in which OMH is launching Scattered Site Supportive Housing programs. How will OMH solicit proposals for the county(ies) left off, and on what timeline?

ANSWER – OMH intends to release an RFP to serve Orange/Dutchess counties in mid-September.

28. How long would an awardee have from time of award to the time that they'd be expected to have clients enrolled and housed?

ANSWER – OMH has not identified a specific timeframe for awardees to achieve full occupancy. OMH will work closely with awardees to facilitate timely start-up of the program and rent-up of the units.

29. Section 5.1 – “Under OMH supportive housing, a resident should hold their own lease or sublease and have the same rights and responsibilities as any tenant.” Does OMH prefer Tenant Based Leases or Sponsor Based Leases?

ANSWER – OMH prefers tenant-based leases.

30. Will participants qualify for Supportive Housing SPA plan funding that permits the state to pursue Medicaid reimbursement for Rehabilitative and Tenancy Support Services provided in OMH Funded Supportive Housing programs?

ANSWER – Yes. Applicants should include this funding in their budget if they intend to pursue this.

31. Can you explain the vouchering and reimbursement process and frequency for these funds?

ANSWER – OMH will provide funding for these programs by way of quarterly advances. Awardees will need to complete annual Consolidated Fiscal Reporting to reconcile revenue and expenses, and unspent funds will be returned to OMH.

32. How are we reimbursed if the projected number of clients has not been reached?

ANSWER – See Question 31.

33. Provider Contact Form – should this be uploaded into the documents section of the application?

ANSWER – It should be uploaded in the Pre-Submission uploads section.

34. Provider Contact Form – per the form, the form should be sent to the regional field office. Should documentation that this form has been sent to the regional office be included in the response?

ANSWER – Disregard the instruction on the form to send to the Field Office. It needs only to be provided as part of the application to this RFP in Grants Gateway.

35. Workplan – What start, and end dates should be used for the workplan?

ANSWER – This covers the five-year term of the contract.

36. Are there required objectives and tasks?

ANSWER – The objectives and tasks are Grantee Defined and there are no requirements by OMH.

37. How many objectives are expected?

ANSWER – There are no minimum number.

38. How many tasks are expected per objective?

ANSWER – There are no minimum number.

39. What is the admin rate associated with this RFP?

ANSWER –The maximum Admin & Overhead allowable is 15%.

40. Please confirm if the additional \$2,000 per unit annually, is in addition to the \$28,000 funding per units for both Year 1 and Year 2, which makes it a maximum of \$30,000 per unit per year. The language in the RFP is not clear.

ANSWER – Correct. Awardees will receive the base funding indicated in the chart in section 5.3 plus an additional \$2,000 to cover the anticipated low collectability rate of tenant rent. For example, the program awarded in Westchester County will receive total annual funding in the amount of \$30,000.