

## Eligibility and Proposal Submission Questions

1. Question: We are seeking clarification on eligible applicants/agencies that have contracts with OMH with whom we could partner. Do you have a list of the agencies that service this area, specifically Putnam County where we have an approved site that would be ideal.

**Answer: You can find a listing of OMH mental health programs on the OMH website <http://bi.omh.ny.gov/bridges/index> . Some of these agencies may be eligible applicants/agencies with whom you could partner. It is your responsibility however to reach out to these agencies.**

2. Question: We are in the process of merging with another agency that has a 58-bed supportive housing program. The residence is funded with low-income tax credits, but currently has little other public funding. We would like to set aside some of the units to serve individuals with mental illness through this RFP. Would this be eligible or are you only funding operating costs for programs that are newly constructed?

**Answer: This particular RFP is for agencies that are going to construct and then operate new buildings and programs, not already constructed or open.**

3. Question: On the OMH site it states that the applicant pool is limited to non-profits with current OMH contracts and organizations that also participates in Health Homes. On page 5 of the Hudson River RFP, section 2.7, eligible applicants are NFPs that a)have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for monitored by a city, state, or federal govt agency and/or b)provide mental health services to persons with serious mental illness through programs licensed by OMH. There is a discrepancy between the two documents. Which is correct?

**Answer: Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that a) have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for and monitored by a city, state or federal government agency or b) are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that provide mental health services to persons with serious mental illness through programs that are licensed by OMH or are under contract with OMH or the county Local Government Unit (LGU). Agencies must be willing to develop a collaborative partnership with a Health Home but it is not considered a requirement to apply for this RFP.**

4. Question: If an agency collaborated with a Health Home for a proposed housing development for this RFP, would said agency meet the eligibility requirements?

**Answer: Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that a) have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for and monitored by a city, state or federal government agency or b) are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that provide mental health services to persons with serious mental illness through programs that are licensed by OMH or are under contract with OMH or the county Local Government Unit (LGU). A provider who does not meet these criteria may partner with an applicant that does meet the criteria listed above. Either the agency or The Health Home would need to meet the eligibility criteria listed.**

5. Question: We are a 501 c3 that owns and operates two supportive housing residences and have both HASA and NY/NY III contracts, however, the part before “b” is a little confusing in that, it says (and/ or) regarding being licensed or under contract with OMH. Is having the contract or license through OMH is also a mandated requirement?

**Answer: Having a contract or license through OMH is not a mandated requirement. Eligible applicants can be not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that a) have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for and monitored by a city, state or federal government agency.**

6. Question: A.)If a provider does not have direct OMH or DCMH funding, is it true that that provider is thus **not** eligible to apply. B.)Can that provider apply as a development partner with a mental health agency?

**A.)No, this is not true. Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that a) have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for and monitored by a city, state or federal government agency or b) are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that provide mental health services to persons with serious mental illness through programs that are licensed by OMH or are under contract with OMH or the county Local Government Unit (LGU). B.)A provider who does not meet these criteria may partner with an applicant that does meet the criteria listed above.**

7. Question: Can a service provider without direct experience with OMH still apply for funding under this RFP?

**Answer: Eligible applicants are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that a) have experience providing housing for any special needs group that is contracted for and monitored by a city, state or federal government agency or b) are not-for-profit agencies with 501(c) (3) incorporation that provide mental health services to persons with serious mental illness through programs that are licensed by OMH or are under contract with OMH or the county Local Government Unit (LGU). A provider who does not meet these criteria may partner with an applicant that does meet the criteria listed above.**

8. Question: Can more than one site be proposed? If so, can the request for both sites be consolidated into one proposal or would a second submission be required?

**Answer: More than one site can be proposed. There are currently five (5) RFPs issued; one for each of the NYSOMH regions: NYC Region , Long Island Region, Hudson River Region, Central Region, and Western Region. As long as the sites are located in the same geographic region as specified by the RFP, one proposal is appropriate to submit. Please clearly articulate your plans for the development of multiple sites if this is your stated plan. If you are submitting a proposal for more than one site but the sites will be located in different geographic regions, then one proposal per geographic region must be submitted.**

9. Question: Is RFP County or Region specific?

**Answer: There are currently 5 Regional RFPs published on the OMH website for SP SRO housing; one for each of the following regions: NYC Region, Long Island Region, Hudson River Region, Central Region, and Western Region. Each region covers specific counties. This listing of counties in each region can be found at <http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/aboutomh/FieldOffices.html>. Bidders should indicate, if known, the county within that particular region being targeted for SP SRO housing development. If the county is unknown, bidders should indicate as such.**

10. Question: If we are looking at doing projects in two different counties, is that two separate proposals?

**Answer: There are currently 5 Regional RFPs published on the OMH website for SP SRO housing; one for each of the following regions: NYC Region, Long Island Region, Hudson River Region, Central Region, and Western Region. Each region covers specific counties. This listing of counties in each region can be found at <http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/aboutomh/FieldOffices.html>. If the two different counties are located in the same region, only one proposal is required. If the two counties are located in two different regions, then two separate proposals must be submitted, one for each region.**

11. Question: With respect to the eligible individuals to be served under the grant, the RFP delineates in Section 5.1 (among other category types): “individuals with serious mental illness identified as high users of Medicaid...who are referred by Health Homes” (first bullet of Section 5.1) as well as “individuals residing in NYS who have a mental illness and who are high users of Medicaid Services” (third bullet). Can you further clarify what the difference is between these two types of individuals? Is the latter meant to allow for individuals who are high Medicaid users but not yet affiliated with a Health Home? If so, who will be making the determinant as to what constitutes a high Medicaid user if the individual has not yet been identified as such by a Health Home?

**Answer: There is no difference between the populations indicated in Section 5.1 first bullet and third bullet. The difference is being referred by a Health Home versus being referred by other referral sources. Agencies should work with regional Health Homes, local governmental unit(s), Single Point of Access, State Psychiatric Centers, and Article 28 and 31 to identify high users of Medicaid.**

12. Question: Regarding the requirement explained in Section 5.1 that the provider establish a partnership or collaborative agreement with at least one Health Home serving the region, is the “region” considered to be all of New York City or is it expected that the provider work with a Health Home located in the borough in which the housing project is situated? For example, could a project situated in Upper Manhattan affiliate with a Health Home located in the Bronx?

**Answer: The Health Home should be the one that the client is attached to; if a health home wants to provide services to someone that they had served in the Bronx when they move to Manhattan that is fine. The health home provides client centered services. Unlike having the health home being the referral source, this is about the health home working with where ever the person lives and the housing agency providing the rental subsidy.**

13. Question: Can one application for multiple projects within one region be submitted? If so, is it only one operating budget or would there be operating budgets for each site?

**Answer: Yes; bidders should attach an operating budget for each site being proposed.**

14. Question: Is the individual referred for housing under this RFP required to participate in a Health Home?

**Answer: No, Health Home participation is voluntary.**

15. Question: Since there is a 20-page limit for narrative, please clarify specifications: Single spaced? Margins? Does this include attachments such as a site map (if you have it)?

**Answer: There is no specified single vs double spaced narrative or margin spacing. Bidders may include attachments; these attachments will not be counted towards the 20-page limit for narrative response.**

16. Question: The RFP states mixed housing is encouraged, supported, however it appears mixed housing is required for RFP reward?

**Answer: Mixed use housing is required for RFP award.**

17. Question: Would OMH entertain a proposal that is just MH units in the building but integrated into the community?

**Answer: No, this RFP is to develop mixed-use housing within a building. A building cannot include 100% OMH funded units.**

18. Question: If you listed 8 units in letter of intent, can you increase until request in proposal?

**Answer: Yes.**

19. Question: When writing the proposal narrative, should we follow the outline that starts on page 16 of the RFP?

**Answer: Yes.**

20. Question: Is the proposal emailed to Moira Tashjian and also mailed hard copy?

**Answer: Proposals should be sent to:**

**Carol Swiderski**

**Contract Management Specialist 2**

**New York State Office of Mental Health**

**Community Budget Unit-7th Floor**

**44 Holland Avenue**

**Albany, NY 12229**

**Attn: Supported SRO Housing RFP-Central Region or  
Hudson River Region or  
Long Island Region or  
NYC Region or  
Western Region**

21. Question: May the application for beds have more beds than what was in the LOI?

**Answer: Yes.**

22. Question: If the LOI mentioned a particular county may the application target another county so long as the new county is in the same region?

**Answer: Yes.**

23. Question: Do we need to carve out beds for NY NY III Pop A- Homeless, B-State Hosp., C-Young Adult. If so, how many beds do we carve out for these pop?

**Answer: No, these units are not NY NY III units.**

24. Question: Will referrals require an HRA with Community Care approval?

**Answer: NYC referrals will require HRA 2010 e community care approval.**

25. Question: Are senior citizens a special needs group?

**Answer: No.**

26. Question: With additional attachments, can you simply say X agency has c x % occupancy rate see attached – instead of putting larger chart within narrative?

**Answer: Yes.**

27. Question: The requirement is submitting by U.S. mail or hand delivery. Does U.S. mail include FedEx or does it have to be USPS mail?

**Answer: U.S. mail does include FEDEX as an acceptable means of submitting the proposal. The proposal must be received by 5:00 PM on 02/10/14.**

28. Question: Is it required to have an agreement/mou in place with a Health Home for the application submission?

**Answer: No.**

29. Question: If we apply to serve more than just one population/criteria (page 13) are we required to designate a specific number for each criteria in the proposal? Can we change the criteria we serve based on the need and number of referrals once the program is open and operating?

**Answer: You are not required to designate a specific number for each targeted population in the proposal. As long as you serve individuals who qualify under any one of the eligibility criteria upon the buildings opening, you are within the requirements of the RFP.**

30. Question: In our proposal, do we need to articulate how many of our OMH SRO units will be dedicated to each of the four high need populations listed in the RFP?

**Answer: No- You are not required to articulate a specific number for each targeted population in the proposal.**

31. Question: Can the budget forms be produced on Excel?

**Answer: No, please use the forms provided.**

32. Question: Should the Appendix B budget form reflect the operating budget for all the units in the project (OMH and non-OMH units) or just the OMH units in the project?

**Answer: Appendix B budget form should reflect the operating budget for the OMH units in the project. If known, applicants should also identify other sources of revenue in addition to OMH funding (rent from non-OMH units).**

33. Question: As the Appendices are not in Excel; however, they involve various calculations. Can respondents to the RFP create their own Appendix forms in Excel as long as it mirrors the form in the RFP?

**Answer: No, please use the form provided.**

34. Question: Our organization currently has 15 contracts with other agencies. As per Reference Form (Appendix E), are we to include ALL 15 contracts?

**Answer: Bidders are not required to include all contracts they have with other agencies, one contract from another agency is sufficient.**

35. Question: Is there a limit to the number of attachments that can be included in addition to the RFP?

**Answer: No.**

36. Question: Is OMH's priority to rapidly develop beds, even if they are in a single-use facility, or will the priority be to develop mixed-use housing opportunities?

**Answer: The priority is to rapidly develop mixed-use housing opportunities for individuals diagnosed with a mental illness.**

37. Question: How many beds total are projected to be developed for the NYC region?

**Answer: The RFP for NYC region is for the development of up to 300 beds.**

38. Question: We are closing on construction of a mixed tenancy building with 42 units set aside for special needs single adults. The building goes into construction in January 2014. We would apply for services, operations, and capital funds. Is a project in construction eligible? If not, can an application be submitted for services and operations?

**Answer: This particular RFP is for agencies that are going to construct and then operate new buildings and programs, not already constructed or open.**

39. Question: Of the 75 units, does a designated portion have to be SH and a designated portion low income affordable housing?

**Answer: No.**

40. Question: Does an agency need to take all 75 units for the project or could we take a portion of the units? ie. Can an agency take 25, and a different agency takes 50?

**Answer: There is no set minimum or maximum number of units an applicant can apply for, thus one agency may apply for 25 units and another for 50 units.**

41. Question: Can OMH-funded housing and/or services be provided to a family in which only one member has a diagnosis of Serious Mental Illness as defined in Appendix A? Must a diagnosed individual be separated from family in order to receive housing and services?

**Answer: The OMH-funded housing and/or services are to be used to provide housing and support services to individuals who have a diagnosis of Serious Mental Illness as defined in Appendix A; the individual does not need to be separated from their family in order to receive housing and services, the family may reside with the individual. However, to remain eligible for low income housing tax credits, the family income must not exceed the threshold set to be considered low income. The individual(s) without a Serious Mental Illness would be expected to have a lease and be responsible for his/her portion of the rent.**

42. Question: If a single individual being served by this program develops a close relationship with an individual who is not diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness, will the two individuals be allowed to live together in an apartment that has been funded through this program?

**Answer: The OMH-funded housing and/or services are to be used to provide housing and support services to individuals who have a diagnosis of Serious Mental Illness as defined in Appendix A; the individual can be in a relationship and reside with an individual who is not diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness in the same apartment. However, to remain eligible for low income housing tax credits, the total income must not exceed the threshold set to be considered low income. The individual without a Serious Mental Illness would be expected to have a lease and be responsible for his/her portion of the rent.**

43. Question: What latitude is allowed for referrals from existing, local Community facilities (i.e. shelters, inpatient units)? To what extent will the decisions about referral to a specific SP-SRO be made by the local/regional partners (Health Home, SP-SRO operator, and OMH Operated Psychiatric Center)?

**Answer: Referrals must be made and received from the local governmental unit/regional partners based on your regions' current practice. In NYC, referrals must have a HRA 2010e community care level approval. In other regions, the Local County Single Point of Access must be utilized for referrals. All referrals must meet the eligibility criteria as set forth in the RFP.**

44. Question: Can an agency apply if we don't have an application in with HCR yet?

**Answer: Yes.**

45. Question: Are adult home residents a priority population?

**Answer: No.**

46. Question: We are an organization that provides care to seniors and the chronically ill in skilled nursing facilities, in an adult home, in enriched housing units, and a continuing care retirement community. We do not currently provide mental health services. Are we eligible to apply?

**Answer: Yes, however, you need to describe how you will fulfill the mental health services and staffing requirements.**

47. Question: Is it possible to accept individuals who are currently residing in other SP SRO programs, but are not doing well for whatever the reason and would benefit in moving to a new program/area?

**Answer: This is a programmatic, case by case decision and would not be a blanket policy decision.**

48. Question: How is "high" Medicaid user defined? Is there a specific amount/threshold that needs to be met?

**Answer: A High Medicaid user is defined as an individual who is eligible for enrollment into a Health Home or presumed eligible for enrollment into a health home. Individuals served by ACT Teams are also considered presumed high Medicaid users for purposes of this RFP.**

49. Question: Will individuals moving from licensed transitional housing be eligible for the housing?

**Answer: Yes.**

50. Question: Is an agency able to back fill for this new SP-SRO?

**Answer: If it is clinically appropriate to meet an individuals need to back fill then an agency would work with this field office to move forward on the back fill.**

51. Question: Are any of these beds in the RFP reserved for NY/NY III population?

**Answer: No.**

52. Question: Are graduate of licensed non- profit housing providers eligible? Considered high uses of Medicaid?

**Answer: Yes graduates of licensed non-profit housing providers are eligible; they may be high users of Medicaid.**

53. Question: Can we backfill this target population into our licensed OMH Community Residences & then transition a client from our licensed CR's into the SP-SRO?

**Answer: If it is clinically appropriate to meet an individuals need to back fill then an agency would work with this field office to move forward on the back fill.**

### **Program Related Questions**

54. Question: Is 24-hour staff presence a requirement for the housing units supported by these contracts?

**Answer: 24 – hour front desk staff is strongly encouraged, however OMH is flexible and will evaluate the need for 24-hr staff presence on an individual project.**

55. Question: Are there specific requirements toward building security systems that must be in place? Personnel or OTPS?

**Answer: 24 – hour front desk staff is strongly encouraged, however OMH is flexible and will evaluate the need for 24-hr staff presence on an individual project.**

56. Question: Will the SRO beds be considered as Congregate Care Level II?

**Answer: No, SP SRO beds are unlicensed Supported Housing units.**

57. Question: Is SP-SRO distinct form CR-SRO regulations?

**Answer: Yes, SP-SRO is different from Cr-SRO housing. SP SRO housing is unlicensed Supported Housing that follows the OMH Supported Housing Guidelines. These guidelines can be found at <http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/adults/SupportedHousing/supportedhousingguidelines.html>**

58. Question: What level of service planning is expected?

**Answer: Service planning should be person centered and provide for flexible supports. Such support services include: negotiating leases; assistance in resolving issues between the landlord and the recipient, or between roommates; financial consultations; and assistance in daily living skill development when appropriate. These services must be flexible and made available on an as needed basis. Housing providers should also be an advocate for the recipient, and assist residents with linkages to a full range of Community Support Services will be available to the recipient, including: employment opportunities (e.g., supported work), transportation, mental health treatment, case management, assistance with obtaining entitlements, 24 hour crisis outreach services, medical/dental care.**

59. Question: Will they be required to sign leases?

**Answer: Yes, a lease or sublease is a requirement for SP SRO housing.**

60. Question: Is the Housing support plan and individual service plan two different plans?

**Answer: These two terms refer to the same type of plan.**

61. Question: In section 5.5.3, question 4, the term "housing service plan" is used. Later on in the same section, in question 8, the term "support plan" is used. Do these two terms refer to the same type of plan, or are they different types of plans? If they are different, what is the definition of "housing service plan" (or where can we find the definition)?

**Answer: These two terms refer to the same type of plan.**

62. Question: Do we provide services and link non-OMH non special needs pop to services in community?

**Answer: No. Supported Housing support services and linkages are required only for individuals with Serious Mental Illness residing in OMH funded units.**

63. Question: Please explain what is meant by "include the agency's policies regarding family re-unification". Are you asking about how an individual's housing status would be affected if family re-unification happens, that is, if another person is interested in joining the household? If not, please clarify what is required.

**Answer: The example above is an acceptable way in which the bidder may approach the question. In addition, please indicate how your agency would encourage and support an individual with reconnecting with family.**

64. Question: May the primary recipient of services live with family members such as a spouse, children or significant other? Are there any guidelines for non-OMH tenants?

**Answer: The OMH-funded housing and/or services are to be used to provide housing and support services to individuals who have a diagnosis of Serious Mental Illness as defined in Appendix A; the individual can be in a relationship and have family members or significant others reside with an individual who is not diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness in the same apartment. However, to remain eligible for low income housing tax credits, the total income must not exceed the threshold set to be considered low income. The individual(s) without a Serious Mental Illness would be expected to also have a lease and be responsible for his/her portion of the rent.**

65. Question: Can OMH-funded housing and/or services be provided to a family in which only one member has a diagnosis of SMI as defined in Appendix A? Must a diagnosed individual be separated from family in order to receive housing and services?

**Answer: See Response to Question #64.**

66. Question: If a single individual being served by this program develops a close relationship with an individual who is not diagnosed with a SMI, will the two individuals be allowed to live together in an apartment that has been funded through this program?

**Answer: See Response to Question #64.**

67. Question: Are there guidelines regarding “vacancy rates” for OMH occupants?

**Answer: Occupancy rates for Supported Housing are budgeted at 90% or a 10% vacancy rate.**

68. Question: Can the applicant also provide and bill for Health Home care coordination if they are a provider of the service, or must the HH services be provided by another agency?

**Answer: The Health Home care coordination may be provided by the same agency as the housing services.**

69. Question: What latitude is allowed for referrals from existing, local Community facilities (ie shelters, inpatient units)? To what extent will the decisions about referral to a specific SP-SRO be made by the local/regional partners (Health Home, SP-SRO operator and OMH operated Psych Center)?

**Answer: Agencies must work with the local/county governmental referral system to receive and accept referrals; this includes any referrals from the Single Point of Access System, Health Homes, CUCS, OMH operated Psychiatric Facilities, Article 28, Article 31, RTF, and shelter systems. The**

**agency should work collaboratively with the local partners to ensure successful placements.**

70. Question: The RFP specifies that “units may be designated as apartments or as studios or two bedroom apartments.” Is the assumption that two bedroom apartments would be shared by two individuals meeting the SMI designation?

**Answer: There is no assumption about who would rent the two bedroom apartments.**

71. Question: Is a 2 bedroom apartment that we expect to rent to two different individuals meeting OMH requirements considered one unit or 2 for the purposes of this proposal?

**Answer: Each individual meeting OMH requirements under targeted populations through this RFP and receiving funding through OMH would be considered a unit, therefore in this situation would be considered two units for the purposes of this RFP.**

72. Question: By what date should providers plan to have residents in the sites?

**Answer: For housing developed with capital funding, typical time frames for the concurrent processes essential to completing a project is approximately 30 to 36 months from acquisition of property to the opening of the building with residents in the site.**

### **Staffing Related Questions**

73. Question: Does the site need a dedicated program director or can it have a program director who oversees multiple sites?

**Answer: Based on the agency structure and size of the project and need would determine what staff direction is necessary. There is not a set formula requiring said director on site.**

74. Question: Are there expected service staffing requirements? If so, what are the requirements?

**Answer: As with supported housing, the housing case manager will be responsible for all tenancy related supports for the individuals living in the program.**

75. Question: Are there staffing recommendations or requirements?

**Answer: As with supported housing, the housing case manager will be responsible for all tenancy related supports for the individuals living in the program.**

### **Operating Funding Related Questions**

76. Question: Will adjustments be made to "Property Operating" funds for inflation over time?

**Answer: No.**

77. Question: Is there a cap on the amount of administrative overhead that can be charged to the services budget?

**Answer: Industry standards for not-for-profit administrative overhead percentage is typically between 15-20%. However, OMH does not have a maximum or minimum admin amount that can be charge within the budget.**

78. Question: Please confirm that there is some flexibility with regard to allocation of expenses between operating expenses and property expenses. Our specific concern is allocation of front desk/ security costs.

**Answer: There is flexibility between the OMH On-site services and support funding and property operating funding. Applicants must ensure there is adequate funding for the provision of quality on-site services and supports. 24 /7 front desk security is strongly encouraged, however flexibility is allowed in situations where the budget cannot support this.**

79. Question: Will the method of payment for operational funds be a drawdown of uncovered expenses on a monthly or quarterly basis once the rent contributions have been received?

**Answer: The method of payment is in the form of quarterly advances. Applicants are encouraged to read more information about Aid to Localities Spending Guidelines at <http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/spguidelines/>**

80. Question: OMH SH guidelines allow an average of \$500/recipient contingency expense. Assuming a recipient's circumstances qualify for contingency fund use, is contingency expense an allowable budget expense for SP SRO programs?

**Answer: Yes, the provider may budget for a contingency amount within the award.**

81. Question: Can you budget for staff with OMH funds who will not be providing direct services, such as those providing record keeping, custodial duties, rent collection, tax credit assistance, etc?

**Answer: Yes, programs require support functions to operate, so budgeting for these support functions is allowable.**

82. Question: More clarity around what on-site service costs are covered by OMH:

- on-site security personnel?
- on-site psychiatrist's office?
- on-site intensive case management private office?
- on-site case manager in bldg. during the day?

**Answer: On-site services include but are not limited to direct care staff, non-direct care staff, fringe benefits, OPTS, Equipment and administration. Property costs include but are not limited to front desk worker, building superintendent, janitor, porter and building manager.**

- on-site security personnel? Property Cost**
- on-site psychiatrist's office? Property Cost**
- on-site intensive case management private office? Property Cost**
- on-site case manager in bldg. during the day? On-site cost**

83. Question: What is the cap on administrative overhead/indirect costs?

**Answer: See Response to Question #77.**

84. Question: Can we combine funding sources into a single line item? Ex: one case manager to serve OMH to non-OMH clients, with the salary drawn from both OMH and another source?

**Answer: Funding can be combined to fund a portion of an FTE. An estimate should be made to determine the amount of time the FTE will be performing OMH services to the amount of time serving other groups. If the FTE performs 25% OMH work do not allocate 75% of their salaries and fringe benefits to OMH dollars.**

85. Question: Can you tell me how the startup funds will be calculated for the RFP entitled, "Supported SRO Housing for Adults with Serious Mental Illness, New York City, Supported SRO Housing 2013?" In previous RFPs, OMH has given a very clear straightforward formula. There was no mention of that in this RFP.

**Answer: Agencies that are issued capital contracts with OMH through this RFP will be eligible for a separate Program Development Grant (PDG) funding which is budgeted as one-time funding of \$8482 per bed.**

### **Proposal Evaluation and Scoring Related Questions**

86. Question: What is the focus of the Phase II Interview?

**Answer: The focus of the Phase II Interview is to have a structured interview for further conversation regarding RFP narrative responses and program implementation strategies, ie use of Evidenced Based Practices, implementation of Supported Housing Guidelines, as well as to discuss capital development process as proposed in Narrative of the RFP.**

87. Question: Will projects with Letters of Intent from funders be scored more favorably?

**Answer: Letters of Intents for this RFP are mandatory. All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent to be eligible to apply. Letters of Intent from other potential funders will not be factored during the RFP review process. Please refer to Section 4 Evaluation Factors for Awards for a list of factors to be examined during the RFP review process.**

88. Question: Will applicants that currently own land for development (or have site control) be scored more favorably that applicants that do not have site control?

**Answer: Please refer to Section 4 Evaluation Factors for Awards for a list of factors to be examined during the RFP review process. Extra points will not be awarded to applicants that have site control.**

89. Question: Will applicants who score above 70% in Phase I be made aware of its actual Phase I score?

**Answer: No, upon completion of the procurement process, OMH will issue award and non-award notifications to all bidders. Agencies may request a debriefing in writing requesting feedback on their own proposal, regardless if it was selected for an award, or disqualified, within 15 business days of the OMH dated letter. OMH will not offer ranking,**

**statistical, or cost information of other proposals until after the NYS Office of the State Comptroller has approved all awards under this RFP. Written debriefing requests may be sent to the Designated Contact, as defined in Section 2.1.**

90. Question: Please clarify the direction (p. 18), “Describe the resources your agency has to meet the needs of individuals who move directly into Supported Housing.”

**Answer: Describe your agency’s fiscal and staffing resources that can be used to provide supported housing services to meet the needs of individuals who move directly into Supported Housing from shelters, State Operated Psychiatric Centers, State Operated residential programs, and Article 31 or 28 hospitals.**

91. Question: How is the scoring determined for the Housing Development section if a site has not yet been identified.

**Answer: If a site is not yet identified, please include an adequate and reasonable explanation of how the property will be acquired and project time-frame.**

92. Question: Will projects be evaluated on the amount of capital funding they request (i.e. will projects that request less capital funding be viewed more favorably)?

**Answer: Please refer to Section 4 Evaluation Factors for Awards for a list of factors to be examined during the RFP review process.**

### **Capital Development Related Questions (Property)**

93. Question: Must all units be completed before providers can make units available, or can providers make units available in phases, as construction is complete?

**Answer: The building must have a valid Temporary Certificate of Occupancy and be safe for individuals to reside in; a phase in plan must be developed to ensure individual safety.**

94. Question: Must each apartment be equipped with its own kitchen, or is it allowable to have multiple studio or two bedroom units sharing a single kitchen? Is it allowable to have multiple studio or two bedroom units sharing a single bathroom?

**Answer: Each apartment must be equipped with its own kitchen and bathroom.**

95. Question: Is there a required housing style (single apt, studio) or square footage for an individual's living space?

**Answer: Apartments must be at least 300 square feet for studios and include a full sized refrigerator and apt. sized stove. There are no specific square footage requirements for one or two bedroom apartments.**

96. Question: The RFP does not mention one bedroom units. May we include one bedroom units?

**Answer: Yes, one bedroom apartments are acceptable.**

97. Question: Can you convert an existing site?

**Answer: This would depend on the specific circumstances of the proposal and it should make sense for both programs.**

98. Question: Where can agencies find resources on real estate development - Regulations/Procedures -OMH Advice-Other Specifics...

**Answer: Once awarded Providers will work closely with Field Office and Central Office Housing staff who will be available to address questions and order appraisals, feasibility and other studies.**

99. Question: -is purchase of condominium in existing building allowed?

**Answer: This would depend on the specific circumstances of the proposal.**

100. Question: -is it okay for a change in proposed beds form RFP or could this change once structure found?

**Answer: Yes.**

101. Question: If a project includes shared apartments with separate bedrooms, will this be considered, or do all units have to be single room efficiencies?

**Answer: Studio, one bedroom and two bedroom apartments are all acceptable housing configurations.**

102. Question: Are there any encouragements from OMH regarding the composition of OMH units (apartments vs. studios, families vs. singles)?

**Answer: OMH does not have any specific requirements regarding the composition of OMH units.**

103. Question: Are housing redesign projects acceptable and/or favorable? Is it possible to, in addition to the OMH SRO units, fold in a CR and convert it to apartment-based treatment?

**Answer: This would depend on the specific circumstances of the proposal.**

104. Question: What is the latest possible date that sites would site/sites have to be designated?

**Answer: There is no latest possible date the sites would have to be designated. The number of units are limited and once all units are designated and developed, the process of awarding capital and operating funding will cease.**

105. Question: What, if any, are the square foot requirements for one or two bedroom units?

**Answer: There are no set square foot requirements for one or two bedroom units; studio apartments must be at least 300 square feet.**

106. Question: Does OMH have a preference for unit size? The RFP refers to studios and 2-BR apartments. AT the bidder's conference, specific mention was made to furnishing the units with full-size appliances. That seems contradictory to furnishing a studio apartment. Are 1-BR single units an option?

**Answer: There is no preference to units, studio, one bedroom and two-bedroom apartments are supported through this RFP.**

107. Question: Would OMH consider, encourage or discourage development in an identified Empire Zone?

**Answer: This potential would be fine depending on the other aspects of the proposal.**

108. Question: Is there any leeway on the unit configuration? Can we have large SRO units with kitchenettes and shared bathrooms in Manhattan? Can we propose multi-bedroom units if the model works with tax credits?

**Answer: Studio, one bedroom and two- bedroom apartments are the model of housing supported through this proposal.**

109. Question: We are wondering if this project has to be done utilizing a capital site or can it be done by leasing apartments in an already mixed complex owned by a landlord.

**Answer: This potentially would be fine depending on the proposal and specifically the operating budget. There is no additional funding for lease costs, however, there is additional funding for debt service on either a DASNY or HFA mortgage or private mortgage if 9% credits.**

110. Question: For projects requiring capital funding for development of housing units, is there a specific time frame within which the units are expected to be completed and made available to residents?

**Answer: No, however OMH Capital Development uses an approximate time frame of 0 to 30 months from start to finish.**

111. Question: How long does it take to complete the appraisal?

**Answer: Appraisals are ordered from local appraisers who work in the specific market. When requested, OMH will request the appraisal and turnaround time in a timely manner. The length of time would depend on the firm's work load, type and difficulty of the appraisal. If one firm quotes too long of a turnaround time then another will be solicited.**

112. Question: What is the typical timeline assumption for construction to begin?

**Answer: OMH does not set specific timelines as all projects are different. However, you will be required to work closely and keep OMH up to date with respect to the progress of the project.**

### **Capital Development Related Questions (Funding)**

113. Question: In regards to the funding of this program, would the funding be an outright grant through the NYS OMH without a requirement for repayment or is this a financing grant that needs to be paid back?

**Answer: OMH provides an interest free construction loan for its share of the project cost. However, the permanent financing is via a bond mortgage with DASNY or HFA. It is also possible for the Provider to obtain a private mortgage for 9% low income housing tax credit projects. In all cases, the annual debt service is provided as additional funding by OMH.**

114. Question: Can projects use NYC Housing Development Corporation for 4% Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Tax Exempt Bonds rather than NYS Housing Finance Agency?

**Answer: Potentially yes depending on the specifics of the project.**

115. Question: The RFP alludes to OMH debt service funding – how much debt service funding is OMH willing to provide?

**Answer: The amount of annual debt service is the exact cost associated with financing the approved OMH share of the capital.**

116. Question: Section 5.3.3 speaks to capital and operating funding. Because the RFP contemplates that projects will be financed using 4% LIHCs and related bond financing in addition to a NYS capital allocation, what is OMH's and/or HFA's expectation regarding permanent debt on the property? Is it to be assumed that the construction bond debt will be completely retired at completion and replaced with OMH capital financing? Or should the provider assume some amount of permanent debt, and if so, will the operating subsidy be increased to a level higher than \$16,481 per bed to offset the debt costs?

**Answer: OMH provides an interest free construction loan for its share of the project cost. However, the permanent financing is via a bond mortgage with DASNY or HFA. It is also possible for the Provider to obtain a private mortgage for 9% low income housing tax credit projects. In all cases, the annual debt service is provided as additional funding by OMH.**

117. Question: Can the source for bonds and 4% credits (and additional subsidy) in NYC be the NYC Housing Development Corporation or are we required to go through the NYS HFA?

**Answer: Potentially yes depending on the specifics of the project.**

118. Question: Is it possible to include funding toward the establishment of a capital reserve to address key physical plant replacement/repairs? If so, what guidelines do you have around amounts in this category and technical aspects of presenting in the budget?

**Answer: OMH does not require a capitalized reserve to be established but rather requires operating funding to be set aside on an annual basis to fund a capital reserve. However, it is recognized that tax credit guidelines and investors require a capitalized reserve. In those cases, OMH requires those reserve accounts be established with a portion of the Developer's Fee and it could reduce the OMH annual set aside requirement.**

119. Question: If capital funding is requested, what is the minimum number of years for committed use of the units toward the program purpose?

**Answer: If capital funding is requested, the minimum number of years for committed use of the units toward the program purpose is 40 years.**

120. Question: Will having HUD funds designated for this project at all will interfere with the model? Does the ability to still ask the 4% credits exist, or entire HUD award have to be returned, or could it work so OMH, HUD and credit equity all fund parts of the capital costs?

**Answer: OMH is open to all creative funding options. If there is a specific project that could be worked out using HUD funds, we want to hear about**

**it. However, HUD capital funding typically requires first lien position and so does DASNY mortgages so historically that has been an obstacle.**

121. Question: With the HUD capital funds come PRAC (project rental assistance- just like the HUD 202 program. Would the PRAC be used to operate the real property management side, and the OMH operating subsidy for just supportive services?

**Answer: OMH would have to review the entire operating budget, which includes all expenses and all sources of income such as OMH operating, HUD PRAC and rental income from the non-OMH units. The expectation would be that any additional net income could enrich staffing or enhance the program in some way.**

122. Question: It is our understanding that the "MOC" or Master Operating Contract provides a flat amount of \$13,899 per year for many years to come with no promises of an increase at any particular point in time. However, our operating costs continue to increase every year. Can we determine the amount of increase we would estimate to require each year for the program period (20 years) and up front capitalize that amount in an operating reserve that we could draw on as the \$13,899 becomes insufficient to cover our operating costs? If so, can we bond the capitalized operating reserve, which bond interest payments would be covered by OMH?

**Answer: OMH doesn't require an operating reserve; however, we recognize that many tax credit investors do. Our existing protocol for establishment of operating reserves is that it is to be set aside from Developer's Fee. Therefore, we would not allow them to finance an operating reserve from the OMH paid mortgage.**

123. Question: If projects require either 4% or 9% LIHTC, does that mean they will need to be awarded before the project goes DOB for approval?

**Answer: On 4% projects OMH would seek DOB approval based on estimates. Once the project is bid, more serious negotiations would be required to determine if there is enough funding approved in the project and work with you on it. Conversely, since 9% projects are competitive and uncertain, OMH would wait until the project was awarded credits prior to obtaining DOB approval.**

124. Question: How are the equity proceeds of the 4% LIHTC to be used? Can they all be applied to OMH and non-OMH units? Can they be applied to non-OMH units only?

**Answer: OMH ideally would like to realize savings from the 4% tax credits. However, it is understood that most of the equity will likely need to be used to pay for the non-OMH units share of the project due to the availability of other capital resources.**

125. Question: Is there a requirement to use the 4% LIHTC?

**Answer: If the project is smaller and it doesn't make sense then no.**

126. Question: Can a smaller project be proposed that would be funded without tax credits?

**Answer: Yes.**

127. Question: Please clarify what the OMH capital funds can be used for?

**Answer: OMH capital can be used for acquisition, renovation or construction, architect fees and other related soft costs of the project.**

128. Question: Will development costs be reimbursed once applicant receives qualified status?

**Answer: No. The project must be submitted to DOB and approved before any costs can be reimbursed. However, OMH can pay for studies such as appraisal, feasibility and environmental to help evaluate potential sites.**

129. Question: How will coordination with w/ other state capital funding sources work?

**Answer: It's up to the Developer to seek and coordinate funding from other sources; however, OMH is willing to participate in project meetings and regularly communicates with other State Agencies about mutual projects.**

130. Question: HUD Funding – In light of the 5% cut to HUD CoC funding does OMH recognize the obstacle to obtaining any funding from HUD at this point in time?

**Answer: Yes.**

131. Question: How does one combine 9% LIHC and tax exempt bonds?

**Answer: Tax exempt bonds cannot be used on 9% projects. Instead, the Provider needs to obtain a private mortgage for the OMH share of the project costs and the debt service for that mortgage will be added to the operating contract.**

132. Question: May we use the capital for gap funding (around \$20K-\$50K per OMH unit)? And, if so, are we subject to the same limitations in the developer's fee?

**Answer: This would depend on the specifics of the project.**

133. Question: If a site is identified, will the non-profit provider be required to provide the contract deposit?

**Answer: Yes. Capital Funds cannot be reimbursed until the project is approved by the Division of Budget.**

134. Question: If the provider pays for the deposit, will they be reimbursed at construction closing?

**Answer: Yes.**

135. Question: How long will it take for OMH to fund the purchase price and close on sales contract?

**Answer: Once Division of Budget (DOB) approval is obtained and a capital contract is approved by the other Control Agencies, OMH is able to process payments. You should allow 4 to 6 months for a closing in a purchase contract in order to fulfill the preliminary requirements of obtaining DOB approval.**

136. Question: What is the timeline for securing other funding? What if the plan is to apply for local government funding but that process is still months away from the deadline of this proposal, how should it be included in summary?

**Answer: There is no timeline for securing other funding. OMH realizes that other funding sources may have different application time frames. Applicants should describe in the proposal the other funding sources that will be sought and a timeframe for seeking these additional funds.**

137. Question: Is an applicant still obligated to apply for tax credits if they don't need to partner with anyone to develop the project or if their partner is also a non-profit?

**Answer: Yes. The equity raised from the tax credits offsets costs.**

138. Question: We are considering partnering with a low income apartment building owner who would agree to dedicate a portion of their existing units for housing people with SMI. Capital funding would be used for renovating those units. Additional units would be developed if the number of existing available units is insufficient. Is this an acceptable development plan structure?

**Answer: More details would be needed to be able to answer this question. One potential issue is the long term ownership. To accept capital funding, the non-profit Provider would need to have control and ownership of the property for 40 years.**

139. Question: How is the \$/unit for the capital funding contract determined? Does tax credit equity and bond financing have to be maximized in order to determine the OMH dollars per unit?

**Answer: The OMH capital funding should be at most a prorated amount equal to the same percentage of the number of OMH units vs. total units.**

140. Question: Is the \$250K per unit maximum per person or per apartment – i.e. is a two-bedroom apartment with two clients eligible for up to \$500K?

**Answer: Capital construction costs are budgeted on average at \$250K per unit, not per client.**

141. Question: From what date can expenditures related to the project be reimbursed by OMH funding?

**Answer: Once Division of Budget (DOB) approval is obtained and a capital contract is approved by the other Control Agencies, OMH is able to process payments. You should allow 4 to 6 months for a closing in a purchase contract in order to fulfill the preliminary requirements of obtaining DOB approval.**

142. Question: When do the OMH capital funds flow to the developer? Are funds provided as an advancement or as a reimbursement?

**Answer: Capital can be paid in advance for the purchase closing. After that, the Provider can submit invoices as they are billed to request payment. All payments will be made to the Provider and the Provider will be responsible for paying the bills to their contractor.**

143. Question: Is a final cost certification required?

**Answer: Yes.**

144. Question: Is the capitalization of an operating reserve an allowable line item in the total development cost budget that is eligible to be reimbursed by OMH funds?

**Answer: No. This is to be paid out of Developer's Fee.**

145. Question: Is there a minimum term for which units must stay as OMH units, once OMH capital dollars are invested?

**Answer: The minimum term is 40 years.**

146. Question: At the RFP info session it was stated that the capital reserve can be 6/10ths of the 1% of the acquisition and construction cost. Where is this and any other rules regarding the development budget located?

**Answer: This is located in the OMH NYC Housing Development Manual, March, 2008.**

147. Question: Will OMH provide the money for the deposit for securing the site or does the non-profit put up money and gets reimbursed later?

**Answer: The Provider will be reimbursed after the project receives Division of Budget and Contract approval.**

148. Question: If an agency submits a single proposal for multiple sites, is it an all or nothing award, or is it possible to receive a partial award (fewer units)?

**Answer: An applicant may be awarded fewer or more units than originally proposed in the submitted proposal.**

149. Question: Are the funds available through this RFP from the OMH budget, or elsewhere?

**Answer: OMH Budget.**

### **Mixed-Use Integrated Housing Related Questions**

150. Question: Will the Olmstead decision be a factor in evaluating proposals and if so, what guidelines, such as a numerical calculation, should applicants consider?

**Answer: Olmstead is not solely based on percentages of unit and building mix but an overall integration of neighborhood, programmatic function. The spirit of integration is achieved when all amenities and experiences are equal.**

151. Question: At the Bidders Conference the presenters emphasized the need to include other affordable housing units into this project. Can beds related to the Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) offered through OTDA/ HHAC be used as the other affordable housing beds or is that considered a duplication because the MRT beds also represent a special needs population?

**Answer: Low income individuals who are homeless can be part of the mixed population.**

152. Question: What is the percentage of OMH units in the mixed use building?

**Answer: There is not a set percentage other than this will not be a 100% Mental Health funded program.**

153. Question: Regarding mixed-use housing, can you combine the proposed adults with Serious Mental Illness population with another NY/NY III award population, ex: families where the head of household has a substance use disorder.

**Answer: The mixed use population is Mental Health and low income.**

154. Question: What is the required mix of affordable units to be in compliance with the Olmstead Act?

**Answer: There is not a set requirement.**

155. Question: Can we tie tx apt beds/sh beds in with mixed housing?

**Answer: These units are Supported housing and low income.**

156. Question: If an agency receives OMH Funding for perm SRO-housing within a mixed housing program, will these qualify as units or be used for units for new funding?

**Answer: This particular RFP is for agencies that are going to construct and then operate new buildings and programs, not already constructed or open.**

157. Question: As a provider of services for individuals living with disabilities, could "integrated housing" include these individuals who are not living with mental illness but do have a development disability? i.e., Autism Spectrum Disorder

**Answer: There can be multiple disability groups but it must also include non-disabled individuals with low income. OMH will not fund non mental health units.**

158. Question: Is a mixed-use building, proposed as 25% OMH SRO, 25% HASA, 25% DOHMH and 25% low-income community units, considered integrated?

**Answer: Olmstead is not solely based on percentages of unit and building mix but an overall integration of neighborhood, programmatic function. The spirit of integration is achieved when all amenities and experiences are equal.**

159. Question: Is it possible to propose a higher ratio of SMI beds in the mix if location fully integrated in community?

**Answer: Olmstead is not solely based on percentages of unit and building mix but an overall integration of neighborhood, programmatic function. The spirit of integration is achieved when all amenities and experiences are equal.**

160. Question: We have already received a HUD 811 capital grant for 22 units for mentally disabled adults. Do we have to return half of the HUD funds in order to comply with the OMH directive that no more than 50% (but OMH prefers less) of the units be for adults with serious mental illness? The project was originally conceived as a 22 unit project.

**Answer: It is not OMH's expectation to supersede other funding sources. OMH will also not fund projects that are developed as 100% mental health housing.**

161. Question: The percentage of OMH supported housing clients to fair market rent. Is there a set percentage, a maximum percentage or a minimum percentage of population to population.

**Answer: There are no minimum or maximum percentages of populations between OMH Supported housing clients and fair market rental units, however OMH will not fund projects that are for 100% OMH Supported Housing clients.**

162. Question: Request for guidance or recommendations regarding proportionate use of SRO units and low-income units when working toward mixed use and fully integrated housing? At the bidder's conference, it seemed that presenters indicated that 50% was a meaningful percentage to consider for mixed use housing. Is 50% the recommended maximum percentage of OMH SRO units to still be considered mixed use and/or to determine if we can accommodate "a proportionate number of low income apartment housing for individuals and families? And, if some of the non-OMH, low income units were to be occupied by individuals with a disability, would those individuals be considered part of the disabled population or low income population when evaluating mixed use housing?

**Answer: Presenters at the Bidder's Conference stated there are no set percentages of special needs mental health housing units and non-special needs low income housing units that define integrated housing. Consideration should be given to the State's Olmstead Plan. The spirit of integration is achieved when all amenities and experiences are equal. Each project will be evaluated on an individual basis for providing mixed use integrated housing.**

163. Question: Can the additional non-OMH units be comprised of senior housing? Or would it really be up to our discretion as long as they met the income guidelines?

**Answer: Generally the income guidelines to meet the tax credit requirement is what is looked at. It's fine if you want to rent to seniors.**

164. Question: In terms of looking at the match of OMH units to mixed use units, is OMH seeking to look at the number of units (apartments), the number of people, or the number of bedrooms? For example, if we were looking at a 50/50 split between OMH and mixed use, if you had 5 mental health 2-BR apartments (10 people), would you need 5 mixed use 2-BR apartments for a 50/50 match or would you need individual "head of households" in single units?

**Answer: Generally the OMH units should be single apartments. However, the split is looked at by Unit. So in your example, if you had 5 single OMH units, it is fine for you to have 5 affordable 2-BR units for families.**

### **Miscellaneous Questions**

165. Question: Do you have a preapproved list of architects that we are required to work with? Can other architects become qualified for the RFP? How?

**Answer: OMH does have a list of qualified Architects, however an Architect not on the list, can apply to OMH Bureau of Housing and Development to become a qualified vendor. The architect should send a letter or email to [Maira.tashjian@omh.ny.gov](mailto:Maira.tashjian@omh.ny.gov) for further information.**

166. Question: Clarify Community Notification requirements

**Answer: OMH requires the sponsoring agency to notify the Community Board in writing of the intention to establish such facility and include in such notice the specific address of the site, the type of residence, the number of residents and the community support requirements of the programs. Sponsors are encouraged to informally contact interested parties prior to the formal notification process.**

167. Question: As an unlicensed program, is it correct that the units will be exempt from site selection? (this was asked and answered at the Bidder's Conference but we were asked to submit it for inclusion)

**Answer: See Response to Question #166**