

Below are the questions that THHI received during the 2024 Universal RFP Pre-Proposal Workshop – General Homeless Services on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 and the 2024 Universal RFP Pre-Proposal Workshop – YHDP on Wednesday, April 10, 2024.

This document will be updated as additional questions come in from those that attended the workshop and will be e-mailed out at least weekly (if new questions are submitted).

Last updated: 4/26/2024

Questions from the Pre-Proposal Workshop: General Homeless Services held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024:

1. How is the lived experience assessment tool used in the scoring process?

A: THHI will take average of responses across all agency's applications (to not discriminate against smaller agencies in terms of number of applications submitted), and then, based on the average of folks with lived experience within your organization, rank and review will assign points ranging from 0 to 5.

2. For the letter to intent to renew or continue – what is a significant change that would require a new application?

A: It would be a budget that is now 15%-20% higher or lower than the initial application.

3. What is the difference between a letter of intent to renew or continued interest?

A: A letter of intent to renew is for agency that is requesting to renew current funding it is receiving. On pages 3 and 4 of Part II of the RFP, there is a list of all agencies that are eligible to renew. Renewals are on a 3-year cycle. A letter of continued interest is for projects that have conditionally approved in a previous RFP, which we would fund if we had more or different funding. These projects are also on a 3-year cycle. You can submit a letter in case we now have the funding. On pages 6 and 7 of Part II of the RFP, there is a list of all agencies eligible for continued interest. You can list multiple projects on the form provided so you don't have to submit multiple letters.

4. Is there going to be another workshop available throughout RFP process to ask any questions?

*A: There will not be other workshops available, but you can always submit questions at a later time to be answered by e-mail to **both** Lesa Weikel (weikell@thhi.org) and Erin Donovan (donovane@thhi.org). Questions must be submitted by **5 P.M. on Wednesday, May 1, 2024.***

Questions from the Pre-Proposal Workshop: YHDP held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024:

5. Will the slides shown in the pre-proposal workshop be available to attendees, or is the information on THHI's website?

A. Yes, the slides will be sent out to attendees and posted, and all information is on our website at: <https://www.thhi.org/2024rfp>

6. How is the lived experience assessment tool used in the scoring process?

A: THHI will take average of responses across all agency's applications (to not discriminate against smaller agencies in terms of number of applications submitted), and then, based on the

average of folks with lived experience within your organization, rank and review will assign points ranging from 0 to 5.

- 7. Can organizations submit project ideas that are single gendered? For example, if there is a transitional housing program that serves men, would they need to set up services for women as well?**

A: Piper Ehlen, our Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Technical Assistance Provider (TA), is looking into the answer and will provide it once she has it. Please review question 15 below for additional information.

- 8. At Starting Right, Now we house unaccompanied homeless youth which includes minors 15 years old while they work on graduating high school, sometime more than two years. Is there a way to submit a proposal that includes this demographic who are younger than 18 and housed longer than two years?**

A: This would be a submission under a transitional housing proposal. Per Piper, our HUD Technical Assistant provider, we can serve minors that are 15 years old, but she would have to check regulations and confirm with HUD directly to see if we could provide housing support for longer than 2 years. Please review question 14 below for additional information.

Questions submitted via e-mail to THHI:

- 9. Do you need the links for the ShareDrive to submit a proposal?**

A: Yes, you do need the links in order to submit a proposal.

- 10. If a request was not made for these links, I am not eligible to continue in the process, correct?**

A: You can request the links before the deadline of Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at 5:00 PM.

- 11. I missed the workshop. Is there going to be other workshops offered?**

A: There will not be any other workshops – however, attendance at the workshop was not mandatory – and agency that did not attend may still submit project proposals. Please review the items related to submission items – and what you need to do if you did not attend the workshop. The PowerPoint presentation, and all related RFP documents are posted to our website at <https://www.thhi.org/2024rfp>

- 12. Who do I email to obtain a Shared Drive Link to be able to submit a project proposal?**

A: Please submit the request using the Questions process - Questions from the agencies must be submitted in writing (via email) to both Lesa Weikel at WeikelL@THHI.org AND Erin Donovan at DonovanE@THHI.org. Questions must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. THHI will compile all questions and answers and post to our website the questions received and answers provided in an FAQ document. This document will be posted on the following Fridays – April 4/12, 4/19 and 4/26 and Thursday, 5/2/24. THHI will provide answers as quickly as possible, however a delay in a response is not grounds for late submissions.

13. If our agency is interested in providing our services at the Hub, do we still need to apply for the RFP? For instance, my program has Adolescent Health navigators that would be able to be at the site to provide onsite navigation services to help link youth to resources such as mental health, sexual health/family planning, and other community resources through our various partnerships with youth-serving organizations. Their salaries are already covered under another grant. I also know of other agencies that would be a great fit for the Hub, in terms of their ability to bring sexual health education workshops, etc. to youth. Would they need to apply formally through the RFP? And what happens if we missed the April 10th pre-proposal workshop? Does that make us ineligible?

A: Thanks for reaching out. If an agency wants to be a YHDP Partner – and does not need additional funding – all that is needed to be submitted is the YHDP Partnership Interest form – which can be found on the RFP page - <https://www.thhi.org/2024rfp>. Scroll down to near the bottom of the page, and you will see section 3 with all the links and there will be a link to the THHI 2024 Universal RFP – YHDP Partnership Interest Form. Please feel free to share. Attendance at the Pre-Proposal workshop was not mandatory and is not required to submit to be a partner or to submit a full RFP project proposal (if additional funding is needed).

14. Could a host home project for minor youth be for more than 24 months? (refer to initial question number 8 from the YHDP workshop).

*A: A host home would be considered exiting homelessness, and the SSO project would need to request the special activity to provide services for up to 24 months. The host home payments could not be made for longer than 24 months. **Given that this is Florida, they need to make sure they are following local laws that dictate how they can serve minors.***

15. Can organizations submit project ideas that are single gendered? Like a TH site-based program (refer to initial question number 7 from the YHDP workshop).

A: Here is the regulation: 24 CFR 578.93(b)(1)

"The housing may be limited to one sex where such housing consists of a single structure with shared bedrooms or bathing facilities such that the considerations of personal privacy and the physical limitations of the configuration of the housing make it appropriate for the housing to be limited to one sex;"

And our HUD contact added: They would need to look at the structure and can only limit to one sex if it meets that requirement. I would suggest they document how they arrived at that conclusion. They might also want to consider the demographics and if there is a need for a single-sex project.

If they would have a project that operates with single gender facilities, that project would also need to follow guidance on serving people according to their gender identity from the Equal Access Rule (copied below).

*It is important that a shelter operates in compliance with the [2012 Equal Access Rule](#) and the [2016 Gender Identity Rule](#). The Equal Access Rule requires that placement in facilities “with physical limitations or configurations that require and are permitted to have shared sleeping quarters or shared bathing facilities shall be made in accordance with an individual’s gender identity.” 24 C.F.R. § 5.106(c). This means that persons **must be placed and served according to their gender identity, regardless of one's sex assigned at birth**. The Equal Access Rule does NOT require that*

placements should be made "regardless of" gender identity; in fact, it is often essential to consider gender identity when making placements in these types of facilities.

However, when determining an individual's eligibility, providers must not discriminate against them based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status (i.e., "regardless of" a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status). Finally, keep in mind that while a provider using ESG or CoC funds is required to collect information on gender identity and, therefore, must ask for the required information, participants may refuse to provide the information and still receive services.

With regard to the specific scenarios that may arise for single gender facilities:

- **Non-binary:** *Individuals who report non-binary gender identities should be advised of the specific gender(s) served by the facility and then asked which option more closely aligns with their gender identity. Individuals who report as non-binary are best positioned to make this determination.*
- **Gender Identity Inconsistent with Population Served:** *The staff person must recognize the client's right to access a shelter consistent with either their gender expression or their sex assigned at birth. For example, when an individual identifies as a man, their request to be enrolled in a women's shelter may be accommodated if that individual feels more comfortable in a women's shelter.*

Additional guidance is provided below regarding strategies that projects can implement to meet residents' privacy and safety needs.

Some projects, particularly emergency shelters, may be based in physical facilities that were not designed for the purpose of providing shelter or housing, or for the number of residents they currently serve. Additionally, facilities may have been developed in accordance with outdated regulations that have since been updated to reflect the importance of accessibility, privacy and safety. Given the scope of existing resources, projects may not be able to immediately alter the physical spaces of the project. While this limitation restricts the extent to which a project can adapt, there are several strategies that projects can implement to meet residents' privacy and safety needs.

Staff must take non-discriminatory steps that may be necessary and appropriate to address privacy concerns raised by residents. The provider must ensure that its policies do not isolate or segregate clients within the project based upon transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming status unless a specific privacy request is made. In both the use of bathrooms and bed assignment, a variety of methods may be effective at addressing a resident's privacy needs.

- *Staff may offer a resident a room, floor or bed that is in proximity to staff workstations.*
- *Staff may offer a resident access to rooms, floors or beds set aside for residents with increased vulnerability. However, the accommodation should be available to clients based on a variety of factors that can increase one's vulnerability, and not just be restricted for use by transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming residents.*
- *Staff may offer to assist a resident in identifying an alternate project that will provide comparable services and provide a referral. Staff should make reasonable efforts to ensure a vacancy exists, that the resident is eligible for that project, and that the client is able to enroll in the alternate project.*

- *A strategy of last resort could be to offer a client a hotel or motel voucher. However, to be a comparable option, the voucher must be offered for the full period of time the original project site would be able to shelter the client, and the client has access to comparable services and resources either via an outreach team or a supportive service project.*

The use of bathroom and shower facilities for every client is an important part of maintaining hygiene and dignity. Many cities and communities have established bathrooms that are for individual use and do not have a gender marker on the door. Some facilities have designed bathrooms that permit congregate use by all genders, with individual stalls designed to maintain privacy and dignity. These options may or may not be reasonable for a given project. Regardless, strategies exist to accommodate any client with a need for individual or private showers or bathrooms. Clients with special health concerns, trauma histories or other needs may also make reasonable requests for accommodations. Some options for staff are:

- *Establish a single use bathroom for client use at specific intervals during the day. Often an existing staff member bathroom may be made available for this purpose without compromising the requirements of staff members.*
- *Provide certain times during the day that a bathroom can be scheduled by any client with a request to use a congregate facility privately.*
- *Ensure that toilet and shower stalls have locking doors or, at a minimum, curtains to allow for modesty and dignity.*
- *For shower use, consider implementing a schedule for all clients if communal showers are the only available type of shower.*

16. Can you tell me the difference between projects selected for funding, but never received funding, and projects that were conditionally awarded funding? In reviewing Part 2 of THHI's Universal Request for Proposals, it was brought to my attention that the agencies/projects listed under "Conditionally Selected Projects" that could submit a Letter of Continued Interest did not include a project(s) that was selected but never received funding.

A: Upon further review, it was determined that a project(s) proposal eligible for Continued Interest was left off the list. We will post a corrected list to the RFP website page.

17. Can you clarify how agencies that attended the pre-proposal workshop will receive their HMIS DQ report? Do we have to request it or will it be sent automatically?

A: HMIS DQ reports will be sent to all agencies, as applicable, that attended a pre-proposal workshop. We expect these to be sent out sometime the week of April 22, 2024.

18. How many employees should we have fill the Lived Experience Assessment form out?

A: The Lived Experience Assessment is a required part of this RFP and all employees at your agency are encouraged to submit it via Google Form as part of the 2024 Universal RFP Process.

19. I am attempting to open the link for the 2024 Application and I continue to get the COC membership application, instead of the RFP application, is there another way to get the application ?

A: We have verified that the link for “THHI 2024 Universal RFP – Application” (Excel file) does download the “THHI 2024 Universal RFP – Application”. Please ensure that you are on the correct page, <https://www.thhi.org/2024rfp> when downloading the documents. If you continue to experience this issue, restarting your computer or downloading the file from a different device may help.

20. Our project request is an expansion of our current project. For the RFP budget, do we only include those expenses that we are requesting?

A: For the “Budget Summary Form”, you would only list those expenses that you are requesting under this proposal, under the column for “Budget Request”.