



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

Purchasing Memorandum

DATE: May 13, 2024

PLEASE ADDRESS INQUIRIES TO:

Joe Carucci, *Contract Management Specialist*

Telephone Number: (518) 776-2128

E-Mail: purchase@ag.ny.gov

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION NO.: 24-001

TITLE: HOPP – Housing Counseling and Legal Services

APPLICATION DUE DATE: June 3, 2024 by 5:00 PM EST*

***Email submissions MUST be dated prior to this date/time to receive consideration.**

PERIOD: July 16, 2024 to July 15, 2025 with four (4) one-year renewal options

SUBJECT: Answers to Questions/Inquiries

TO: ALL PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

In reference to the above Request for Application, the following questions/inquiries were submitted by the deadline indicated in the RFA. We are hereby providing answers to each question below:

1. QUESTION: Relating to the Goal reporting tab of the excel worksheet (Appendix II), are the goal years reflective of Grant year end date? Grant years run from mid-July through mid-July, so would the 2023 column reflect the July 16,2022 thru July 15, 2023 period?

ANSWER: No. The 2023 column reflects the current grant period of July 16, 2023 to July 15, 2024. Since this grant period is ongoing, we only ask that organizations fill out their goals through Q3 of the current grant which ended April 15, 2024.
2. QUESTION: For the Narrative (Current HOPP Grantee-Housing Counseling): Do we include all topics on pages 14 and 15:

ANSWER: The narrative for Housing Counseling should address all the criteria listed in Section IV.B.2. Please refer to Section VI. D for all Submittal Content.
3. QUESTION: For Expanding Services-Do we have to include this if not expanding?

ANSWER: No, this is only needed for current and eligible grantees who want to Expand Services to underserved communities.



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

4. QUESTION: We provide both housing counseling and legal services. Do we submit:
a) one unified RFA?

ANSWER: No. Applicants should submit one application for housing counseling and one application for legal services.

- b) two separate RFA's?

ANSWER: Yes

Applicants wanting to apply for Legal Services and Housing Counseling must submit separate and properly labeled narratives of no more than five (5) pages for each category.

Applicants wanting to apply for Legal services and Housing Counseling will need to submit Proposal Cover pages for each category.

Applicants wanting to apply for Legal Services and Housing Counseling must submit a separate budget for each.

Please refer to Section VI. D Submittal Content of the RFA.

- c) One RFA with two budgets?

ANSWER: No. See response to question 4b.

5. QUESTION: We have a long-standing history of providing Housing Counseling Services, and we plan to apply for continued support under the 2024 RFA. Additionally, we are considering applying to provide Legal Services, which would be an expansion of our services if awarded.

Could you please confirm that the evaluation of each proposal will be conducted separately? Specifically, we seek assurance that the assessment of our housing counseling application will not be influenced by our application to provide legal services.

ANSWER: The OAG confirms the evaluation will be conducted separately. The OAG also assures the Housing Counseling application will not be influenced by the application to provide Legal Services.

6. QUESTION: We are a current HOPP funding recipient for legal services and will be applying again for Category 1: Legal Services. We also plan to apply for Category 3: Expanding Services to Underserved Communities.

As stated on page 7, III. C. 1. (under Funding Requests): "Applicants can apply for up to three (3) individual grants; one (1) in each category. Applicants that apply for more than one grant should submit a separate application for each category requested. Only currently funded HOPP partners can apply for the Expanding Services to Underserved Communities grants." I'm writing to simply confirm that we should submit separate applications for Category 1: Legal Services and Category 3: Expanding Services to Underserved Communities, and not combine them into one application.

ANSWER: Yes, the OAG confirms that separate applications are needed for Category 1: Legal Services and Category 3: Expanding Services to Underserved Communities.



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

7. QUESTION: For Appendix II columns. Are we inputting #s for HOPP contract years 7/15 to 7/14? Or 1/1 to 12/31?
ANSWER: **The Goal Reporting numbers (for Current HOPP Partners Only) need to reflect the contract years:**
2020 – 7/16/20-7/15/21
2021 – 7/16/21-7/15/22
2022 – 7/16/22-7/15/23
2023 – 7/16/23-4/15/24 (see response to Question #1)
8. QUESTION: Under the current RFA, there is \$36.5 million available for the upcoming year. This is a 46% increase over the current program year. However, on page 7 of the RFA, paragraph C(2)(a) states that current grantees who are in good standing may apply for funding up to, but not greater than their prior year grant award. If there are 46% more dollars available, why can current grantees not request an increase in their budgets to meet the demand for services?
ANSWER: **During the last contract period that started 7/16/20, there have been two funding increases, first for the contract period starting 7/16/22 and then again for the contract period 7/16/23. Grantees were offered opportunities to increase their budgets in line with the increased funding, thus these increases are already accounted for in the current grant awards.**
9. QUESTION: For Appendix II columns. What if we do not have all the reporting data requested?
ANSWER: **If a current HOPP grantee is submitting a grant proposal and cannot complete the Goal Reporting numbers, they should first ask their Anchor Partner for any missing data. In the event that the Anchor Partner also does not have the data, applicants should fill out what they can and explain any blank spaces in the narrative.**
10. QUESTION: We have been a subgrantee of a legal services organization for the past 12 years and have verifiable track records of our housing counseling program. We are submitting a grant separately this year under Housing Counseling. Will we be considered a current HOPP Grantee?
ANSWER: **Yes, the current grantee designation includes current subgrantees. Former subgrantees who wish to submit an application to be a primary grantee should follow the procedure for current HOPP Grantees.**
11. QUESTION: Is there any specific guidance on either required or recommended number of clients/households assisted per grantee, or a generally accepted ratio of dollars spent per client served (for example, a \$100,000 request for 200 total clients served would come to \$500/client)?
ANSWER: **There is no guidance or recommendations for clients assisted or costs, as this is a statewide program the size and scope of these programs as well as the economics of managing them can vary significantly depending on region.**
12. QUESTION: Can providing any of the services outlined on page 4 of the RFA (including counseling on “financial capability, real estate taxes, post-purchase, home maintenance, resiliency, energy efficiency and repair resources, owner-occupant landlord education and support, and/or estate planning”) via individual counseling or workshops be counted as a household served on the project deliverables?
ANSWER: **Yes, these activities are eligible deliverables for HOPP.**
13. QUESTION: What is the definition of foreclosures prevented? We were unable to locate the definition alluded to in the RFA.
ANSWER: **Please see attached PDF - Definition of Foreclosure Prevented**



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

14. QUESTION: For the duration of HOPP our agency has coordinated budgets, reports, invoices etc. for our agency and our group of sub grantees:

For the Year 13 application do you need VRQs and Insurance, Appendix Certifications and proof of HUD Certification for all of the sub grantees or only the agency that is the primary applicant?

ANSWER: The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VRQ) and Proof of Insurance (NYS Workers' Compensation Insurance Coverage and NYS Disability Benefits Insurance Coverage) are required of the primary applicant. These forms will be required for sub grantees if they are receiving funds of \$100,000.00 or more. Both the primary applicant and sub grantee are required to submit the Certifications (in Appendix V) and HUD Certification.

15. QUESTION: As the applicant with sub grantees, do you prefer responses to the questions as a whole group which would combine our narratives as one application and also combine the counties, goals and outcomes, etc. (This had been the way it was done in the past and then each budget was created/signed separately by each group and then submitted cumulatively outlining the finances, goals and objectives as one whole group)?

ANSWER: The narrative is limited to five pages including subgrantees. Within the narrative, applicants can split out goals per organization or combine. Separate budgets must be completed and submitted for all grantees and subgrantees.

16. QUESTION: Can budgets be allocated differently for sub grantees based on changing needs, goals projected, met or exceeded etc. in recent years while the overall award request remains the same as previous years (as applicable)?

ANSWER: Funding request restrictions are limited to the overall grant amount, changes within that amount are at the discretion of the primary grantee.

17. QUESTION: Category 2 Criteria: Housing Counseling Part B Program Services section v. Funding Request
Provide the total funding anticipated for your homeowner stabilization program from all funding sources (including this request)

To clarify: If we utilize HUD funds, or Rural Preservation Funds, Neighborhood Preservation funds etc. to pay a portion of salary, fringe etc. of foreclosure/program staff we would only state that amount that is paid towards Foreclosure/homeowner stabilization services, not the whole award from those other sources related to other "tasks" such a pre-purchase, Homebuyer Education etc. If I am understanding this correctly, we would need to prorate the amounts from other sources per staff member? Can we total this as a lump sum for all our subs combined in our application, HOPP and then "Other sources of funds" or would you like it parsed out per group and then tallied?

ANSWER: The request is for the total amount of funding your organization anticipates for homeowner support services in the next year. The response only needs to be the total budget number, it does not need to be broken down by funding organization or prorated by staff salary.

18. QUESTION: Appendix II- The graph shows the years ranging from 2020 to 2023 Can you please correlate those years with the HOPP year 8 through 12? (Meaning, HOPP Y8 is 2020/2019, HOPP Y9 is 2020/2021, HOPP Y10 is 2022 /2021, HOPP Y11 is 2023/2022 and HOPP Y12 is 2023/2024.)

How do we put the actual numbers in the graph when the year is not a full fiscal year?

ANSWER: See responses to questions #7 and #1.



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

19. **QUESTION:** Please confirm a current HOPP grantee for Housing Counseling can apply for the Expended Services for Underserved Communities Grant in addition to the Housing Counseling grant. We understand that narratives and budgets are to be submitted as separate grant documents.
ANSWER: Yes, existing HOPP grantees for either Legal Services or Housing Counseling can apply for the Expanding Services funds.
20. **QUESTION:** Regarding the paragraph below, does this mean we can use 15% of funds towards addressing these with communities in the shape of events, coalition building and/or improving local policy? Or could we use towards funding owner assistance funding?
"Up to 15% of the grant funds may be used to support "special projects" to address systematic housing challenges such as: lending and servicing abuses, distressed mortgages, vacant and abandoned properties, and other problems that exacerbate foreclosures and destabilize neighborhoods."
ANSWER: Yes, all of the examples given in the questions could be the basis for a special project under this grant.
21. **QUESTION:** Is new hire to be hired during the grant period or can they be recently hired but will be new within the grant?
"Funding Request: Identify the extent to which the proposed funding will allow your agency to retain and/or expand homeowner stabilization services. Explain whether any program components or staff members would be new hires."
ANSWER: If your agency is creating a new position within HOPP services this should be explained as an expansion similar to a new hire, if this is replacing an existing position it would be considered retention.
22. **QUESTION:** For the funding in Category 3 (paragraph III(A) through (B)) - Expanding Services to Underserved Communities: Do you plan for this to be—like the legal services and housing counseling categories—a one year contract with the possibility of renewal for four years? Or is this category a new one-year contract that can be applied for at some point in the future? Put another way, if a legal services or housing counseling grantee does not apply for Category 3 funding this year, but develops a program that would benefit from this funding next year or the year after, would they be able to apply in future years even if they don't apply for Category 3 funding this year?
ANSWER: Funding for any portion of this grant cannot be guaranteed beyond the first year and extending grants beyond the first year is at the discretion of the OAG. However, if the program continues to be funded at the same level as it is in this RFA, the intention would be to renew funding for Category 3 programs.
23. **QUESTION:** Section III.C.2.a. (see p. 7) states, "Previously funded applicants under the HOPP Program in years one through twelve who are in good standing may apply for funding up to, but not greater than your prior year grant award." Can you please clarify if by "prior year grant award" you mean our FY2022-23 award or our current FY2023-24 award?
ANSWER: This refers to the current award for the contract that runs 7/16/23-7/15/24.
24. **QUESTION:** Appendix II—Goal Reporting (see p. 24 or the worksheet tab called "Goal Reporting"), asks us to provide information for the last few years. Can you please confirm if under the year 2023, we need to provide information for FY2022-23 (our last completed grant period) or our current grant period FY2023-24?
ANSWER: See responses to questions #7 and #1.



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU

All other RFA #24-001 terms and conditions remain the same.

This Purchasing Memorandum is to be signed, submitted and made a part of your proposal. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the person listed on top of this memorandum.

VENDOR: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE OF BIDDER: _____

DATE: _____