



County of Santa Barbara Coordinated Entry System Coordinating Agency Request for Qualifications • 2018

The County of Santa Barbara, Division of Housing and Community Development is pleased to issue this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify an interested and qualified provider to serve as the Coordinating Agency for the Coordinated Entry System for the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara Continuum of Care (CoC) for 2018.

General Information

TITLE: County of Santa Barbara Coordinated Entry System Coordinating Agency – 2018 Operating Year
CONTACT: Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director, Housing & Community Development
CONTACT EMAIL: DLockhart@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
CONTACT PHONE/FAX: 805-568-3523 / 805-560-1091
ISSUE DATE: October 6, 2017

Contents

- 1 Overview
 - 2 Objective
 - 3 Scope of Work
 - 4 Timeline
 - 5 Funding
 - 6 Application
 - 7 Method of Evaluation
- Exhibit A Scoring Criteria

Application Deadline:
Monday, October 23, 2017
5:00 pm

County of Santa Barbara
Community Services Department
Housing and Community Development Division
123 E. Anapamu St., Second Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
www.countyofsb.org/housing

1. Overview

A Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a community-wide system to standardize and expedite the process by which people experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness, access housing and homeless resources. It connects the community's network of homeless services and housing resources while streamlining, standardizing and coordinating the homeless intake, assessment, and referral processes. Through CES, people experiencing homelessness will be matched to services and housing based on their preferences and level of need. Standardizing the intake process across the county, sharing information in real-time, and adopting uniform prioritization policies are all at the core of a high-performing CES.

Coordinated Entry Systems are a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program recipient agencies. Other Federal programs providing funding for homeless services, including those provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs, also require recipient agencies to participate in CES. The State of California mandates that agencies receiving State ESG funds and No Place Like Home funds participate in their community's CES. For additional information on CES, including the qualities of an effective CES, and HUD resources relating to CES, please visit the HUD Exchange website at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/responsibilities-and-duties/#coordinated-entry>.

HUD has mandated that all CoCs implement their CES by January 23, 2018. Leading up to this implementation, the County of Santa Barbara is seeking an interested and qualified provider to serve as the Coordinating Agency for the CES. The CES Coordinating Agency will play a pivotal role in leading the CoCs efforts in implementing the CES, and in advancing the County's and CoC's broader vision and initiatives to end homelessness in Santa Barbara County. The CES Coordinating Agency will partner with the County, the CoC Board, and the network of homeless and mainstream service providers to ensure streamlined access to services and housing, particularly for the most vulnerable amongst the homeless population. Through managing the CES process the Coordinating Agency will assist community partners to more effectively manage resources dedicated to addressing homelessness. And through coordinating efforts to boost positive housing and service outcomes across the CoC, the CES Coordinating Agency will contribute to raising awareness of and generating additional, tangible support for, housing and supportive services throughout the County.

2. Objective

The Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care (SM/SB CoC) is seeking to establish a CES that is consistent with HUD requirements for coordinated entry. The guiding principles of a CES include:

1. The system will provide low-barrier, low-threshold points of entry that take into consideration transit issues and regional preferences, and will meet people where they are.
2. The system will be person-centered, will respect consumer choice, safety and cultural preferences; will be culturally competent and trauma-informed; and will be flexible enough to respond to changing needs.
3. The system will use a standardized assessment tool and process across all points of access. The assessment will be made available via multiple methods, such as over the phone, in person at fixed locations and in the field.
4. The system will rely on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a centralized and accurate database managed by the County that will have real-time availability of housing and service resources.
5. The system will reduce barriers by working with service and housing providers to improve program accessibility, limit restrictive program criteria and turnaways, and focus on matching the person in need to the right resources.
6. There will be a strong communication and affirmative marketing plan, including branding and a distribution strategy in order to educate consumers, providers and the community about CES.
7. The system will address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, and victims of trafficking by providing safe and confidential access to the CES and victims services.
8. Trustworthiness and transparency will be fundamental principles of the system. Consumers will not be misled about the probability of obtaining housing through CES.

9. The system will coordinate with other systems of care within Santa Barbara County, including but not limited to the health and behavioral health care systems, the criminal justice system, educational institutions, and providers of government and private mainstream resources.

Specifically, the CoC is looking to implement a de-centralized CES within three geographical regions of the County: North, Mid-, and South County. The system will use existing staff at multiple entry points in each region, which may include but not be limited to: street outreach teams, emergency shelters, warming centers, health care providers, behavior health care providers, jails, information lines/211, veterans services providers, and drop-in centers.

3. Scope of Work

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is seeking to identify the most qualified and interested service agency to take on the responsibility of serving as the CES Coordinating Agency countywide, including the hiring and supervision of CES Coordinating Agency staff to fulfill the Scope of Work (SOW) below. The overarching responsibility of the CES Coordinating Agency is to ensure that homeless persons receiving services in the County are accessing those services through the CES. The CES Coordinating Agency is responsible for the success of the CES project including its day-to-day activities, oversight, and evaluation, and management of the CES. There is one CE Coordinating Agency for the entire CoC. Specific duties include:

- Develop MOU's with entry-point providers to establish staffing levels and CES protocols. This includes the consistent use of the standardized CES assessment tool and process as designated by the CoC; use of low-barrier, low-threshold, culturally-competent and trauma-informed, client-centered approaches to outreach and assessment.
- Provide training, as needed, to entry-point staff on the CES assessment tool and process, and strategies for engaging the hardest to serve.
- Identify and recruit new entry-point providers/locations.
- Specific arrangements will be made with each entry-point provider to ensure consistent and complete entry of data into the Homeless Management and Information System (HMIS); arrangements for transportation; and procedures to get consumers housing ready. In some cases, the CE Coordinating Agency staff may need to assist in the performance of some of these duties.
- Ensure that there is adequate geographic and population coverage in each region of the County through fixed-location entry points and outreach teams capable of conducting field assessments and follow up.
- Ensure there is safety planning in place for individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence or who are victims of human trafficking.
- Develop an affirmative marketing plan/advertising strategy for information the community-at-large, the service provider network, and consumers about CES and how to access it. The strategy should specifically address how it will reach those with the highest barriers to accessing assistance.
- Based on scores from the standardized CES assessment tool and process, maintain the housing-priority list for each region.
- Convene bi-weekly housing conferences to match consumers at the top of the housing-priority list with permanent housing units. This process should be consistent with Housing First principles and consumer choice.
- Coordinate with the service provider network to ensure that a plan for post-placement services is in place before each consumer is placed in permanent housing.
- Conduct outreach to public and private housing providers to locate and maintain a list of appropriate housing options in all three regions of the County. This includes employing creative approaches to identifying and recruiting new housing providers.

- Assist service providers if previously-housed consumers need to be relocated. Work to ensure any vacated units remain in the housing pool available to the SM/SB CoC.
- Analyze the housing retention rates of previously-housed individuals on a quarterly basis, and work with the service provider network and the County to recommend and implement improvements in post-placement services across the region.
- Track data to report on performance measures outlined in the RFQ Application. In Quarter 3, provide a report to the County and CoC Board on the efficacy of CES implementation to date, with recommendations for system improvement.
- Independently, and in conjunction with the County and CoC, raise public awareness of the efforts and outcomes of the homeless service network countywide, as well as broader efforts to end homelessness.
- Research and apply for grants to fully fund the CES Coordinating Agency's annual budget. The County will, to the extent feasible, include requests for CES funding in its annual applications to HUD for CoC and ESG funds, and the State for State ESG and other grants. However, it will be the responsibility of the CES Coordinating Agency to leverage those and other funds to fully fund ongoing operations.

4. Timeline

HUD has mandated that CoC's have a fully-compliant CES in place by January 23, 2018. County and consultant staff will be available to directly assist with the initial phases of implementation; however, respondents to this RFQ should be able and willing to move quickly to independence, including hiring and/or assigning appropriate staff as needed to fulfill the SOW as soon as practicable. It is likely that the CES will be phased in, initially involving the coordination of service providers that are mandated to participate in CES (e.g., ESG and CoC-funded agencies), and eventually broadening to include providers from a range of disciplines that regularly interact with the homeless population (e.g., other homeless service providers, healthcare providers, behavioral health care providers, mainstream resource providers).

5. Funding

This RFQ does not constitute a notice of funding availability; but rather seeks to identify the most qualified service provider willing and able to fulfill the CES Coordinating Agency SOW and seek funding to support its operations. Currently, the County has pending State ESG and Federal CoC funding applications that include requests for funding a CES Coordinating Agency. It is anticipated these funds will be available mid-2018. The County and CoC Board will work with the selected CES Coordinating Agency to identify additional funding sources necessary to implement the SOW in early 2018. The RFQ Application requests the development of a 12-month budget, the specific term of which will depend on when resources available through the County, and leverage available from the applicant, become available.

6. Application

Applications are available on-line to download at <http://www.countyofsb.org/housing>. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all required materials listed below are submitted by the deadline identified in this RFQ and in the format described:

- One (1) complete original, wet-signature Application, including the Budget Workbook
- Nine (9) copies of original, signed Application and Budget Workbook
- An electronic copy of the original, signed Application and Budget Workbook

The electronic copy of the complete application, including all required attachments must be submitted via email to mmoreno@co.santa-barbara.ca.us no later than 5:00pm on October 23, 2017.

The original application and nine (9) printed copies must be received at the address below by 5:00 pm on October 23, 2017. Applications based on date of post mark will not be accepted.

County of Santa Barbara
Community Services Department, Housing and Community Development Division
123 E. Anapamu St., Second Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Attn: Miriam Moreno, Housing Program Specialist

The original application and printed copies should be paper-clipped on the top left corner. Please do not staple.

7. Method of Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by County HCD and an ad hoc committee comprised of non-conflicted members of the CoC Board for the following criteria:

- Applicant Capacity and Relevant Experience
- Financial Feasibility and Capacity,
- Approach to the Scope of Work,
- Agency resources available as leverage for the project,
- Staffing plan and budget,
- Timeline,
- Projected Accomplishments

It is anticipated that the Continuum of Care Board will make their recommendation to County HCD staff in November 2017, who will then work closely with the selected applicant to implement the program and secure sustainable funding. The County Board of Supervisors will exercise approval over funding decisions related to County funds, and all Federal and State funds which pass through the County.

EXHIBIT A
 County of Santa Barbara
Coordinated Entry System Coordinating Agency
Application Scoring Criteria

Continuum of Care Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee	
Applicant Capacity and Relevant Experience <i>Scoring Scale: 1-5</i> <i>Weight: 4</i> <i>Max. Score: 20</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience providing similar types of services and assistance • Experience addressing the needs of the target population(s) • Experience in coordinating services countywide, and across the service provider network • Sufficient capacity for project oversight and administration • Adequate capacity for data collection and reporting, and participation in the Santa Barbara County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
Financial Feasibility and Capacity <i>Scoring Scale: 1-5</i> <i>Weight: 2</i> <i>Max. Score: 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient capacity to effectively manage the finances of the project (Funding often is on a reimbursement basis) • Timely audited financial statements • No outstanding and/or unresolved financial audit findings
Approach to Scope of Work <i>Scoring Scale: 1-5</i> <i>Weight: 8</i> <i>Max. Score: 40</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a detailed and adequate response to all aspects of the Scope of Work • Approach appears comprehensive, realistic and appropriate • Identifies barriers to service and necessary support from partners that demonstrate insight to the requirements of a successful CES
Staffing Plan, Budget and Leveraged Resources <i>Scoring Scale: 1-5</i> <i>Weight: 4</i> <i>Max. Score: 20</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staffing plan appears reasonable and adequate for the Scope of Work • The project budget appears reasonable and adequate for the Scope of Work • The agency proposed specific in-kind and/or financial resources that can be leveraged for the project
Timeline and Project Accomplishments <i>Scoring Scale: 1-5</i> <i>Weight: 2</i> <i>Max. Score: 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timeline appears reasonable, realistic and will allow for a first-phase of CES operation by January 23, 2018 • The project accomplishments appear reasonable and realistic