Request For Proposal

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency

for the North Dakota Homeless Continuum of Care
North Dakota Coalition for Homeless People

ndhomelesscoalition.org

North Dakota Coalition for Homeless People (NDCHP) is seeking proposals from qualified applicants to become the HMIS Lead Agency to serve the lead for the North Dakota-500 Statewide Continuum of Care. All proposals will be evaluated on threshold criteria developed by NDHCP as detailed in the full RFP. Issued by NDCHP on April 5, 2019.

RESPONSE DEADLINE:
All applications must be submitted electronically via email, due by 12PM - FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019.

SUBMIT PROPOSALS AND ALL QUESTIONS TO:
NDCHP Board of Directors, Cody Schuler, HMIS Liaison
Email: cody@fmhomeless.org
Phone: 701-936-7171

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Eligible entities
Non-Profit Organizations, State or Local Government and Institutions of Higher Learning.

Statement of Purpose
The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to obtain proposals from eligible and qualified entities (Respondent(s)) to provide the ND Statewide Continuum of Care (CoC) with a Lead Agency to oversee, and potentially administrate, the CoC Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The NDCHP Board of Directors, in consultation with the CoC Steering Committee, will engage the services of the Respondent(s) that it determines is/are the best qualified based upon the Evaluation Criteria set forth.

Homeless services, emergency assistance and local government agencies use HMIS to collect demographic and service information about homeless and formerly homeless households who seek and obtain services. HMIS data is used and analyzed to identify emerging trends and generate reports for provider agencies, local CoCs, funding agencies, and local/state/federal governments. The NDCHP Board of Directors seeks an HMIS Lead Agency with experience overseeing a private contractor,and/or possible direct data administration, of an HMIS database or similar system; has implemented data quality control and security; and brings an understanding of HUD regulations and grant processes.

A successful applicant will have a familiarity and/or direct working knowledge with various types of homeless programs such as permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, and emergency shelter programs and networks. The system must be operated pursuant to HUD regulations through the HMIS Lead Agency who works in collaboration with the CoC Steering Committee, with ultimate authority residing with NDCHP.

HMIS Implementation
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a centralized database that allows a community to obtain an unduplicated count of persons served by homeless programs. Additionally, HMIS provides information about the flow of individuals and families who access services, what types of services are being provided and can be a tool to help evaluate the effectiveness of homeless programs while providing information for crucial policy development. HMIS was congressionally mandated and implemented by HUD in the early 2000s. Each HUD CoC is responsible for the designation of a single HMIS software for the geographic area and to ensure the participation of required federally-funded agencies. HUD aspires for all agencies serving homeless people to participate in the HMIS that covers its community regardless of whether not the agency receives federal funding. However, at a minimum all federally-funded agencies are expected to participate, with the exception of domestic violence agencies, which are prohibited from entering data into HMIS by the Violence Against Women Act; as well as legal service providers. HUD requires the domestic violence agencies to use a comparable system and to share their de-identified, aggregate data with their CoC.

North Dakota Statewide Continuum of Care
The ND CoC utilizes ServicePoint for its HMIS software with vendor Wellsky (formerly Mediware/Bowman Systems). HMIS-ServicePoint data administration is currently administered by NDCHP via a private subcontractor (Institute for Community Alliances).

Coordinated Entry
The ND CoC has a dual CoC coordinated entry system consisting of a formal partnership with the West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care, the Fargo-Moorhead Coalition to End Homelessness, and the sovereign White Earth Nation. Cross border data sharing and homeless service/system collaboration are key to this partnership. When possible, the HMIS Lead must establish a collaborative relationship with the HMIS Lead in Minnesota.

SECTION II. PROPOSAL PREPARATION

A. PROJECT SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following are minimum requirements for operating the ND CoC HMIS system.

I. The selected Respondent will be required to deliver the following to the ND CoC: HMIS LEAD

RESPONSIBILTIES

Oversight and Planning
- Coordinate HMIS Strategic Planning Process (*ND CoC responsible for final approval*)
- Oversee Selection & Procurement of HMIS Software (*ND CoC responsible for final approval*)
- Update or Develop HMIS Governance Charter & MOU (*ND CoC responsible for final approval*)
- Update CoC on HMIS Implementation
- Ensure HMIS Implementation meets HUD Guidelines
- Ensure HMIS Compliance for all Programs; including, but not limited to, working in consultation with the ESG recipient
- Confirm Software Compliance
- Support HMIS Committee and related activities
- Establish & Track Project Milestones
- Incorporate User Feedback into Planning
- Engage in cross state border planning and collaboration with Minnesota HMIS for dual-CoC coordinated entry and service delivery in border communities

HMIS Project Administration
- HMIS Project Management
- HMIS Grant Management
- Complete HMIS Grant Application
- Maintain Agency Agreements and Documentation
- Track Agency License Fees
- Manage Software Vendor Payments
- Develop & Manage HMIS Budget
- Facilitate Lead facilitation with ND CoC to Ensure Sufficient Funding for HMIS Implementation
  - (*ND CoC shares responsibility for funding*)
- HMIS Project Staffing
- Manage HMIS Subcontractors
- Maintain End User Agreements and Documentation
- Maintain Data Sharing Agreements and Documentation

Policies and Procedures
- Update or Develop Data and System Security Guidelines
- Update or Develop HMIS Policies and Procedures
  - (*ND CoC responsible for final approval*)
- Ensure CoC has a Client Acknowledgement Policy
- Ensure CoC has an HMIS Data Release Protocol
- Update or Develop and Update Privacy Policy
- Update or Develop and Update Disaster Recovery Plan
- Engage in HMIS related coordinated entry policies
  - (*ND CoC and West Central Minnesota jointly responsible for approved policies)*

Monitoring
- Ensure Individual Agency HMIS Participation for each Homeless Program: CoC, ESG, PATH, RHYP, VA, etc.
- Monitoring Data Quality
- Enforce Data and System Security
- Monitor Agency Participation
- Inform agencies of Monitoring Results or Findings
- Provide Monitoring Reports to CoC
- Provide consultation and reports to each administrator of all related homeless programs [HUD-CoC Programs; HUD-ESG Programs; HHS-RHY Programs; VA-Homeless Programs; HHS-PATH; and others as determined by the ND CoC]
- Assist CoC to Enforce Findings
  - (*ND CoC responsible for enforcement*)

Administration and Support
- Monitor System Operations and Administration
- Identify Training Needs and Mechanisms in collaboration with the CoC
- Identify CoC-level Reporting Needs & Mechanisms
- Review/Submit Performance Measurement Reporting to CoC
- Review/Submit AHAR Reports to HUD
  - (*ND CoC responsible for final approval before HUD submission and Public Release*)
- Review/Submit PIT & HIC Reports to HUD in Coordination with Collaborative Applicant
  - (*ND CoC responsible for final approval before HUD submission and Public Release*)

HMIS ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES
Administered internally by HMIS Lead <u>or</u> through direct oversight of a qualified subcontractor(s).

System Administration
- System Operation
- System Maintenance
- Track and Resolve HMIS Issues

Training and Technical Support
- New Agency Set Up
- Provide Prompt Help Desk Support
- Provide Software Training
- Provide Direct Software TA to Agencies
- Provide Policies and Procedures Training

Reporting

- Ensure Reporting Capability (macro/micro)
- Provide CoC-level & NOFA Reporting
- Ensure Availability of Data for Monitoring
- Compile AHAR Data Reports
- Compile PIT & HIC Data Reports
- Compile Performance Measurement Data Reports
- Support Individual Agency Reporting Needs for each Homeless Program: CoC, ESG, PATH, RHYP, VA
- Other Individual Agency Reporting Requests as approved by CoC

HMIS Software Vendor

Currently the software vendor for the ND CoC is Wellsky [ServicePoint]. The ND CoC is not open to proposals that recommend a change to the software vendor at this time.

Budgetary Parameters

Although it will not be the selected HMIS Lead's sole responsibility to raise funds for the operation of the HMIS system, the selected entity is expected to work in partnership with the ND CoC to identify and procure additional revenue sources (and in-kind support) to cover associated costs and ensure effective operations of the HMIS within the CoC. Currently, each provider agency is responsible for paying for their individual license fees for use of the HMIS within the ND CoC (est. $15,000). There are several potential opportunities to leverage additional funding sources, but at this time the only dedicated funding to support general HMIS implementation is a dedicated HUD CoC-HMIS grant (est. $74,000) and funds from the State of North Dakota (est. $75,000). The selected HMIS Lead will assume direct oversight of the CoC-HMIS grant in the role of a HUD Grant Recipient (date effective will be determined by NDCHP and selected HMIS Lead, to be no later than six months from the formal start date).

HMIS Resources & Guidance

- McKinney-Vento Act as amended by the HEARTH Act: **CoC Program Interim Rule**
  https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/

- HUD Exchange-Homeless Management Information Systems
  https://www.hudexchange.info/hmis/

- HMIS Data and Technical Standards
  https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/hmis-data-and-technical-standards/

B. PROPOSAL DETAILS

In response to this RFP, Respondents must provide *clear*, *complete*, and *concise* responses to each of the following questions and information requests.

1. <u>**Organizational Overview and Documentation**</u>

Provide the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the Respondent. Identify a primary contact person regarding the response. Provide an overview of the Respondent's business entity, including legal structure, full legal name, and state of organization. Provide documentation on Respondent's business entity including organizational documents, federal employer identification number and evidence of Respondent's good standing with the state.

2. <u>**Organizational Capacity**</u>

The selected agency must possess technical expertise, demonstrated success, and knowledge with:

Oversight and Planning
1. Please describe your experience and approach to strategic planning and stakeholder engagement.
2. Please describe your experience and approach to convening stakeholders in a collaborative manner and facilitating workgroups – particularly groups of stakeholders covering a large geographic area (state or regional).
3. Please describe any experience you have working with other relevant social service systems and providers, including the homeless service system.
4. Please describe any experience or familiarity with systems planning including coordinated entry or system coordination.

Project Administration
1. Please describe your experience and approach to grant administration and project management.
2. Please describe your experience with managing project budgets.
3. Please describe your experience with identifying and securing funding for programs (for example applying for grant funding, securing private donations, etc.).
4. Please describe any relevant experience managing an IT project similar to HMIS.
5. Please describe any experience your agency has with developing cross-agency policies and/or procedures.
6. Please describe any experience or capacity for monitoring compliance with policies and procedures, including approach to providing feedback to stakeholders being monitored.

Training and Support
1. Please describe any experience relevant to providing IT support and training/technical assistance.
2. Please describe your approach to providing Training and Support including ways in which you are able to be responsive to user needs by providing innovative and accessible mechanisms of training and support.
3. Please describe how you are able to work with users that have a wide range of experience and capacity levels.

Reporting
Please describe any experience and/or expertise you have with grantee reporting.
Please describe any experience and/or expertise you have with reviewing and analyzing data.

System Administration

Please describe any experience and/or expertise your agency has with performing IT system administration.

   a. IF NONE – please describe your experience and approach to monitoring subcontractors – particularly IT subcontractors.

3. **Proposed Approach**
   1. Please describe the services your agency can provide in Year 1 as HMIS Lead (given limited initial budget). Include your potential plan for staffing and division of roles and responsibilities.
   2. Include a proposed budget for Year 1, with funding to support current HMIS System Data
   3. Administration for at least 3 months.
   4. Please describe your plan for transitioning the role of HMIS System Data Administration from the current subcontractor to internal agency staff (if applicable). If you do not plan to transition HMIS System Data Administration responsibilities please describe how you propose to manage and oversee the HMIS System Data Administrator in a manner that will ensure all services are provided seamlessly to end users.
       5. Please describe several potential innovative strategies for the ND CoC to increase the funding available for HMIS over several years.
   6. Please describe any potential suggestions for maximizing the use of the current HMIS budget to ensure a successful HMIS implementation.

4. **Staffing Plan**

Please provide an organizational spreadsheet showing your proposed staffing pattern for the ND CoC HMIS implementation. Please describe specific staff roles, organizational chart for HMIS staff, level of expertise (education, certification, and training) required to fill each position (HMIS and homelessness expertise) and how this staffing pattern will lead to the overall success of the ND CoC HMIS implementation while keeping costs at a minimum. Indicate how the individual positions will fit into the whole creating an effective and efficient team. Briefly discuss workflow and how this group
will function together to meet the desired outcomes and deliverables described within this RFP. Describe how your organization will keep track of staff hours dedicated to HMIS for the purposes of tallying staff time spent working on projects for ND CoC. Provide resumes for each individual so identified and/or a brief summary of each individual's qualifications to perform the work in question.

5. **Budget and Financial Resources**

Please provide a comprehensive proposed annual project budget based upon the staffing patterns described above. Please provide justification and proof of cost effectiveness for each line item. Please do not title a line item "miscellaneous". Administrative overhead is an allowable expense. Please provide details and justify percent requested. ND CoC HMIS implementation must have its own separate set of financial records, bookkeeping practices and auditing. Comingling of funds, accounts, or budgets is not allowed. Please provide an explanation of how your organization will maintain sound financial records for the HMIS implementation.

6. **References**

Respondent must provide a minimum of three (3) letters of reference, with current/accurate contact information, from entities for which Respondent has performed services of a similar scope as those contemplated under this RFP within the past two (2) years.

C. STRUCTURE OF PROPOSAL

Each Respondent is required to submit a complete Proposal and attest to the accuracy and completeness of its Proposal. In all respects, the Respondent must comply with the instructions, formats and stipulations of this RFP including proper submission, proper format, meeting deadlines, inclusion and presentation of pricing information, and the terms and conditions of the proposed Final Contract.

The ND CoC desires to consider Proposals in a consistent and easily comparable format as established in this RFP. Proposals not organized as set forth in this RFP may, at the ND CoC's discretion, be considered invalid. Do not refer to other parts of your Proposal in lieu of answering a specific question. Do not provide references to filings or forms publicly available in lieu of providing specific information in the Proposal.

Section	Maximum Page Limit
1. Organizational Overview	Two (2) pages; not including support documentation
2. Organizational Capacity	Ten (10) pages
3. Proposed Approach	Five (5) pages
4. Staffing Plan	Two (2) pages
5. Budget and Financial Resources	Two (2) pages

D. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each Proposal will be evaluated on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the following (in no particular order):

- Strategic Planning Capacity and Experience with facilitating stakeholder engagement in planning efforts – particularly at a statewide level
- Familiarity with Homeless Services and/or Social Service Providers and Systems
- Capacity in Grant Administration and Project Management
- Ability to develop funding strategies and coordinate funding sources and budget
- Experience or capacity managing an IT project/implementation such as or similar to HMIS
- Experience with Policies and Procedures
- Experience with Monitoring
- Familiarity with IT Support and Training/Technical Assistance – understand the types of issues that may come up with end users
- Experience with Grantee Reporting
- Experience with Data Cleaning and/or Analysis
- Internal Capacity to provide System Administration of Software
- Capacity to provide oversight of System Administration of Software