



**Whatcom County Housing Program
Request for Proposals
(RFP #18-13)**

Project Title: Continuum of Care Program Sponsor Based Rental Assistance Leasing Specialist Services (formerly known as Shelter Plus Care Program)

Estimated Contract Period: January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019

Proposal Due Date: All applications must be received by 2:30 PM on Tuesday, August 28, 2018.

Submit Proposal To: Attn: Sara Winger, Purchasing Coordinator
Whatcom County Courthouse
311 Grand Ave., Suite 503
Bellingham, WA 98225

Faxed and e-mailed applications will not be accepted.

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I. Project Summary

1.0 Purpose of Request for Proposals (RFP)

The Whatcom County Housing Program seeks to contract with qualified providers to provide Sponsor Based Rental Assistance Leasing Specialist Services, as described in the Project Scope below.

2.0 Background

The Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Sponsor Based Rental Assistance (SBRA), formerly known as Shelter Plus Care, is a federally funded program that provides long-term rental assistance to people with disabilities who have experienced homelessness. SBRA primarily serves people with serious mental illness, chronic substance use disorders, and HIV/AIDS or related diseases. (see Programmatic Crosswalk of Changes: CoC, SHP, SPC Program Regulations at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2046/programmatic-crosswalk-of-changes-coc-shp-spc-program-regulations/> for more information about the program). The SBRA program requires that housing assistance be matched with supportive services (e.g., case management, mental health services) funded through other sources. In Whatcom County, the SBRA program is administered by the Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authorities (BWCHA), through participating “sponsors”. Sponsors take responsibility for the rental units either through ownership, master leasing of the rental housing unit and or facility, or by co-signing tenant leases.

The purpose of this RFP is to fund support services associated with the provision of housing by sponsor agencies. Sponsor agency support services typically include locating available housing units in the community, acting as leasing specialists, and working with tenants and participating landlords to resolve tenancy issues that may arise. Sponsors are also responsible for paying tenant rent, in the event of tenant abandonment of the unit, and for paying for tenant caused damages that are in excess of normal wear and tear and that exceed the federal SBRA damages coverage.

This RFP is part of Whatcom County's ongoing efforts to create a continuum of housing services and supports for low-income individuals and families experiencing homelessness, in a manner that is cost effective and responsive to the needs of the individuals served, as well as the community.

3.0 Project Scope

SBRA Leasing Specialist Services funds may be used to fund leasing activities that may include the following SBRA client-related leasing activities:

- Locate housing units for SBRA clients that meet federal SBRA requirements and the BWCHA SBRA program requirements.
- Assist SBRA clients with renting or leasing housing units.
- Provide all required paperwork and documentation to BWCHA for SBRA clients.
- Provide housing supportive services to program participants, including but not limited to:
 - Educating clients about the cleaning and maintenance of housing units.
 - Informing clients about tenant responsibilities under Landlord Tenant Law.
 - Communicating and resolving conflicts with landlords and other residents.
 - Communicating with other service providers in the community.
- Comply with Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data collection and recording activities under the management of the Whatcom Homeless Service Center (WHSC).
- Maintain master lease liability insurance on units utilized by SBRA clients as necessary.

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4.0 Population to Be Served

Individuals and families served must meet the eligibility criteria of the federal SBRA program. Client eligibility is determined by the Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authorities. The BWCHA SBRA program serves homeless individuals or those in emergency shelters who have serious mental illness and who have incomes at or below 30% of area median income. Individuals served must be approved for and receive a SBRA voucher from the Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authorities.

5.0 Period of Performance

The contract period for SBRA Leasing Specialist Services solicited under this RFP is January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. The contract may be extended by mutual agreement for a period of up to one year at a time for a total of no longer than four years.

6.0 Funding Availability

The funding source for this RFP is likely to be County held Mental Health Millage.

7.0 Administrative and Program Requirements

Responses to this RFP will be accepted from any legally constituted entity that meets the following conditions:

- The applicant is a private, nonprofit organization or a community mental health agency established as a public nonprofit organization.
- The applicant has a demonstrated capacity to ensure adequate administrative and accounting procedures and controls necessary to safeguard all funds that may be awarded under the terms of this RFP.
- The applicant must adhere to all funding source requirements.
- The applicant has a current Federal Tax ID number.
- The applicant demonstrates the capability to meet program expenses in advance of reimbursement.

Further, applicants must meet the following Program Requirements:

- Applicants must be a SBRA sponsor agency through the BWCHA.
- The applicant must support the goals and strategies established in the current Whatcom County Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness and subsequent Local Plan Updates.
- The applicant must participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) under the management of the Whatcom Homeless Service Center (WHSC).

II. Procurement Process

1.0 Procurement Timeline

The Procurement Timeline outlines the tentative schedule for the RFP process. All dates after the proposal submission due date are approximate and may be adjusted as necessary, without amending this document.

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Request for Proposals Issued | Wednesday, July 18, 2018 |
| Applicant Conference | Thursday, August 2, 2018 at 9:30 AM 509 Girard St., Bellingham – Creekside Conference Room |
| Proposals Due | Tuesday, August 28, 2018 by 2:30 PM |
| Award Notification | Estimated date – Tuesday, September 11, 2018 |
| Estimated Contract Start Date | January 1, 2019 |

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2.0 Applicant Conference

The purpose of the conference will be to explain the RFP process and answer general informational questions. All prospective applicants are encouraged but not required to attend.

Following the Applicant Conference, a list of questions and answers from the Applicant Conference will be distributed to all known recipients of the RFP documents. The Q&A document will be issued as an Addendum to the RFP. **All applicants will be required to sign the Addendum Cover Sheet and submit it with their applications.**

No further inquiries, whether oral or written, will be accepted or answered after the Application Conference.

3.0 Deadline for Submittal

To be considered, applications must be received **no later than 2:30 PM on Tuesday, August 28, 2018** at the following location:

Attn: Sara Winger, Purchasing Coordinator
Whatcom County Courthouse
311 Grand Ave., Suite 503
Bellingham, WA 98225

Late applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding. Responses transmitted directly to Whatcom County Government electronically or by fax, will not be considered.

4.0 Application Costs

The County is not liable for any costs incurred by the applicant before the issuance of a contract. All costs incurred in responding to this RFP, including, but not limited to, travel costs to attend the Applicant's Conference and the Application Evaluation Committee meeting(s), any consultant fees, and any costs associated with contract negotiation sessions, are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

5.0 Ownership of Application Materials

Applications and other materials submitted in response to this request become the property of the County, are public record, and will not be returned. It is understood and agreed that applicant claims no proprietary rights to the ideas or approaches contained in its application.

6.0 Notice of Solicitation

Failure of the County to notify any party or parties directly regarding the availability of this RFP shall not void the process.

III. Proposal Contents

1.0 Proposal Format

- A. Applications must be typewritten in black 12-point font on standard 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper with one-inch margins and stapled once in the upper left corner. Applications submitted on recycled paper and printed double-sided are encouraged. Applications submitted with binders or covers will be rejected. Page numbers are required. Extensive artwork, photographs, and printing should be avoided. Do not include any materials not requested in this RFP and its attachments.

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- B. Applications must be limited to five (5) pages, not including the letter of interest, the Application Cover Sheet, the external financial audit or review, references, and the Budget and Personnel Detail Worksheets.
- C. Applicants must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies of the application in a sealed envelope, plainly marked on the outside with the applicant's name and address and the words "Request for Proposals #18-13."
- D. The original printed packet must have original signatures. **Applications that do not contain an original and the prescribed number of copies will be deemed unacceptable and will not be considered.**
- E. All responses must contain the information requested in Section III.2.A – Section III.2.G below and Attachment B – Budget and Personnel Detail Worksheets

Please respond to each section in the same order in which it is asked. Any deviation from these specifications must be clearly addressed in writing. Failure to supply materials required will result in a rejection of the entire submittal.

2.0 Proposal Contents

A. Letter of Interest and Application Cover Sheet – Attachment (Maximum points: 5)

Complete the attached Application Cover Sheet. An authorized signatory of the applicant's organization must sign the cover sheet.

B. Project Proposal – Limit to two (2) pages (Maximum points: 35)

Please provide a complete description of your agency's approach to project implementation, including the following:

- What types of services and assistance your leasing specialist provides to Sponsor Based Rental Assistance (SBRA) clients.
- Number of SBRA clients you plan to serve.
- The percentage of the leasing specialist time that is spent on SBRA activities (if your leasing specialist provides services to non-SBRA clients for your agency.)
- How you will carry out the Scope of Work, as described above.

C. Management Proposal – Limit to three (3) pages (Maximum points: 25)

Please provide a description of the following:

- Agency's history, mission, and organizational structure.
- Key staff, including subcontractors, who will conduct work related to this project, including a description of their qualifications, education and/or experience, and any licenses and/or certificates they hold.
- How the agency does or will meet the requirements set forth in the Administrative and Program Requirements (Section I.7) above.
- Agency's experience related to this RFP, including:
 - Working with low-income households in Whatcom County
 - Serving people that have a history of chronic homelessness
 - Serving individuals with mental health issues and/or disabilities; and
 - Working with landlords and/or operating low-income housing programs or facilities.

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- Agency's ability to cover the costs of security deposits and/or first and last month's rent, unpaid rent (in the event of an abandoned unit), legal expenses associated with tenant evictions, and tenant caused damages beyond normal wear and tear in the event such expenses exceed the amount of funding provided through the federal Sponsor Based Rental Assistance program and through Whatcom County.
- Agency's quality control measures and mechanisms for ensuring sound financial and accounting practices.

D. Cost Proposal – Attachment B1, B2 and B3 (Maximum points: 25)

Please complete the Budget Summary Worksheet (Attachment B1), the Composite Hourly Billing Rate Calculation (Attachment B2) for each staff member, and attach supporting documentation for indirect cost rate method chosen (Attachment B3), as applicable. **These cost worksheets are included in an EXCEL WORKBOOK. Please see that there are multiple worksheets available in the EXCEL file "RFP 18-13 Budget Template". Complete the forms in EXCEL, print them out as directed below, and include them with your application.** You may be asked to submit them electronically.

Attachment B1: Budget Summary Worksheet

This worksheet provides a summary of costs, based on calculations and information from Attachments B2 and B3. If your agency will rely upon matching funds for this project, please provide an itemization showing the sources of matching funds in the space provided under "Other Funding Sources".

Attachment B2: Composite Hourly Rate Worksheet

Please use this form to determine the total hourly rate of compensation for project staff to be funded under contract with the County. This form should be completed for each project staff member. The composite hourly rate can then be multiplied by the number of hours or percent FTE (based on 2080 hours per year) each staff member will devote to the project to arrive at total personnel costs. Total personnel costs can then be entered on the appropriate line in Attachment B1, Budget Summary Worksheet. **Applicants should print out and submit a composite hourly billing rate worksheet (Attachment B2) for each staff member included in the proposal. The County reserves the right to review supporting evidence of the rates used in the worksheet.**

Attachment B3: Indirect Cost Rate Worksheet

"Indirect program costs" are expenses associated with doing business and delivering the program or services that are not easily assigned to a particular service or activity under that program but are necessary to the general operation of the program (e.g., office supplies, phone, utilities, postage, etc.). The Program Indirect Cost Rate will not necessarily be the same as the agency's indirect cost rate. It should reflect indirect costs associated with the program that will deliver community services solicited through this RFQ. An example of how to complete the worksheet is on the 4th tab of Attachment B.

E. Copy of most recent audit or external financial review (Maximum points: 5)

F. References (Maximum points: 5)

Include a list of at least three (3) individuals or entities who may be contacted to provide information regarding the applicant's ability to carry out the terms and purpose of this RFP.

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Provide names of contacts, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses (if available). These may not include members of the applicant's staff.

IV. Proposal Evaluation and Selection

1.0 Evaluation Committee

An Application Evaluation Committee (AEC) appointed by the Whatcom County Housing Program Specialist will review and evaluate eligible applications and make recommendations to the Whatcom County Housing Program. The AEC will consist of at least three individuals who are knowledgeable about the specific professional services sought.

2.0 Role of the Application Evaluation Committee

A. Unacceptable Applications

The Whatcom County Housing Program Specialist will first determine which applications are not responsive to the RFP and must be deemed unacceptable. **Unacceptable applications are those which meet at least one of the following criteria:**

- Incomplete application;
- Submission of a proposal that proposes services that deviate from the technical requirements set forth in this document;
- Applicant does not meet the administrative requirements of this RFP;
- Failure to comply with any part of this RFP or any exhibit to this RFP, including, but not limited to, deadline for submittal and application format;
- Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information.

B. AEC Evaluation and Applicant Interviews

The AEC members will then independently evaluate and rate each application, awarding points up to the maximum points available for each section. They will then convene as a group on the date indicated on the Procurement Timeline shown above to interview applicants concerning the content of their applications.

C. Additional Information by Request

During the review process, applicants may be asked to provide clarifying or additional information, including evidence of compliance with Administrative Requirements (see Exhibit 1, Additional Requirements Checklist, for a list of items that may be requested). **Applicants should be prepared to provide additional information, as requested.**

D. Final Recommendation to the County

Following the independent review process and the submission of any clarifying or additional information, the AEC will convene as a group on the date indicated on the Procurement Timeline shown above to discuss the applications. Based on the evaluation of the application materials and any additional inquiry, the AEC will determine a cumulative score for the applications. The AEC will then present its recommendations to the Whatcom County Housing Program staff and Human Services Manager.

3.0 Evaluation Criteria

The maximum number of evaluation points available is 100 points, as detailed in Section III.2 above. The following maximum points will be assigned to the proposals for evaluation purposes:

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- Letter of Interest and Application Cover Sheet (5 points)
- Project Proposal (35 points)
- Management Proposal (25 points)
- Cost Proposal – Attachment B1, B2 and B3 (25 points)
- Copy of most recent audit or external financial review (5 points)
- References (5 points)

In evaluating each proposal, Whatcom County reserves the right to consider past County contract performance and any other data or information that the County deems indicative of performance in making its funding decisions.

4.0 Contract Award/Notification to Selected Applicant(s)

The authority to enter into a contract rests with the Whatcom County Executive, except as designated. Contracts are anticipated to be in effect from January 1, 2019 until December 31, 2019.

Any contract resulting from this RFP will be between the Whatcom County Health Department and the applicant organization. Contractors will be required to comply with the terms and conditions of the Whatcom County Contract for Services Agreement. A copy of the standard Whatcom County Contract for Services Agreement is available at <http://www.whatcomcounty.us/documentcenter/view/16618>.

The successful applicant who enters into a contract with Whatcom County subsequent to the RFP process will not be reimbursed for services provided prior to the final execution and signature of the contract by all parties.

Contractors will be required to maintain books, records, documents, and other evidence directly related to performance of the work in accordance with Generally Acceptable Accounting Procedures. Whatcom County, or any of its duly authorized representatives, shall have access to such books, records, and documents for inspection and audit for a period of three years after completion of work. Contractors will document the use of County funds and will complete all required reports and billing documentation in a timely manner. Additional data may be required for audit or evaluation purposes. Contractors will additionally provide a certificate of general liability and property damage insurance naming Whatcom County as co-insured.

5.0 Right to Appeal

Non-selected applicants have the right to appeal the decision of the County, limited to procedural or legal errors in the selection process. In the event that no such procedural or legal errors are found to have occurred, the decision of the County shall be final.

An aggrieved applicant may, within five (5) working days after the award of a contract, appeal in writing to the Assistant Director of the Whatcom County Health Department. The appeal must state all facts and arguments upon which the appeal is based. The Assistant Director will review the RFP and the facts alleged as grounds for the appeal. The Assistant Director will render a written decision within thirty (30) working days of the receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Assistant Director will be final.

6.0 Debriefing of Unsuccessful Proposals

Upon request, a debriefing conference will be scheduled with an unsuccessful applicant. The request for a debriefing conference must be received by the Whatcom County Housing Program Specialist within five (5) business days after the notification letter is mailed to the applicant. The debriefing must be held within three (3) business days of the request. Discussions will be limited to a critique of the applicant's

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proposal. Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted in person or on the telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of one hour.

7.0 Right to Reject or Negotiate

The County reserves the right to reject any or all applications if such rejection is in the County's best interest. This RFP is a solicitation for offers and is not to be construed as an offer, a guarantee, or a promise that the solicited services will be purchased by the County. The County may withdraw this RFP at any time and for any reason without liability to applicants for damages, including, but not limited to, application preparation costs.

Additionally, the County reserves the right to negotiate with the potentially selected applicants and may request additional information or modification from an applicant. When deemed advisable, and before any contract is let, the County reserves the right to arrange an onsite, pre-award review to determine the applicant's ability to meet the terms and conditions of the RFP.

8.0 Acceptance of Terms

By submitting an application in response to this RFP, the applicant accepts all terms and conditions of this RFP, as well as all County and State regulations and requirements pertaining to the operation of the solicited services. If awarded a contract, the applicant's response will become part of the contract agreement. The applicant will be bound by the terms of the RFP, unless the County agrees otherwise. The County reserves the right to introduce additional terms and/or conditions during contract negotiations.

V. Application Checklist

Please ensure that your completed application includes all of the following:

- _____ 1. A Letter of Interest
- _____ 2. A completed Application Coversheet (Attachment A), including documentation of non-profit status
- _____ 3. A completed Project Proposal, with answers to each of the bulleted items and/or providing all requested information
- _____ 4. A completed Management Proposal, with answers to each of the bulleted items and/or providing all requested information
- _____ 5. A completed Cost Proposal (Attachments B1, B3; Attachment B2 is for calculation purposes only), providing all requested information
- _____ 6. A copy of the agency's most recent audit or external financial review
- _____ 7. Three references
- _____ 8. Addendum Cover Sheet, if applicable

You may be asked during the evaluation process to provide one or more of the items listed in Exhibit 1, Additional Requirements Checklist.

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Attachment A – Application Cover Sheet

Applicant Information

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Legal Requirements

Please provide the information requested:

- ☐ Documentation of private or public non-profit status
- ☐ IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN): _____
- ☐ State of Washington Business License Number(s): _____
- ☐ Program Licensure or Certification Status, if applicable: _____

Other Information

Please indicate the total amount of funding requested: \$ _____

I understand the terms and conditions of the RFP and certify that the above-named agency will comply with all Whatcom County requirements if a contract award is made. All information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Authorized Signature and Title

Date

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Exhibit 1 – Additional Requirements Checklist

The following are additional items that may be requested to assist in the evaluation of your application for funding. **Please do not provide this information at this time.** Should additional information be requested, only a single copy of the requested items will be required.

- _____ 1. Copy of current Business License
- _____ 2. Copy of IRS 501(c)(3) documentation
- _____ 3. Licensure/certification information: _____
- _____ 4. An organizational chart
- _____ 5. A list of applicant's Board of Directors, including names, addresses, occupation, officers, and meeting schedules.
- _____ 6. Job descriptions of key staff who will be involved in the program
- _____ 7. Agency's strategic plan, including mission and vision statement
- _____ 8. Board strategic planning documents, including mission and vision statement
- _____ 9. A copy of agency by-laws
- _____ 10. Staff orientation, training, and qualification procedures
- _____ 11. Agency personnel policies
- _____ 12. Insurance certificate documenting proof of insurance coverage sufficient to satisfy the County:
 - 'Whatcom County' must be identified as the certificate holder.
 - Under the description of operations, language must include, "This insurance shall be considered primary and shall waive all rights of subrogation. The County insurance shall be noncontributory".
 - Insurance must include the following minimum coverages:
 - Property Damage - \$500,000.00 per occurrence.
 - General Liability & Property Damage for bodily injury - \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence.
 - Professional Liability Insurance - \$100,000,000 per occurrence.
- _____ 13. Other _____