

# Request for Proposals

## HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS) ADMINISTRATOR

### For the CHITTENDEN COUNTY CONTINUUM of CARE, The Chittenden Homeless Alliance

The Chittenden Homeless Alliance is seeking proposals from qualified applicants to become the HMIS Administrator to serve the Chittenden County Continuum of Care geographic area. All proposals will be evaluated on threshold criteria developed by the Chittenden Homeless Alliance Data Committee as detailed in the full RFP. The RFP is available on VCEH's website at [www.helpingtohousevt.org](http://www.helpingtohousevt.org); or by contacting Meg MacAuslan by telephone or email (see below).

The anticipated date of Chittenden Homeless Alliance's decision is August 6, 2015. The Chittenden Homeless Alliance reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to select none of the proposals submitted.

#### RESPONSE DEADLINE:

- All applications must be submitted electronically via fax or email to Meg MacAuslan.
- All applications are due **by email** by **3PM - WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2015**.
- Send a separate follow-up email to Meg to ensure successful receipt of your proposal.
- Submit all RFP questions to Meg via email only. See pages 5-6 of RFP for CoC and HMIS resources.

#### SUBMIT PROPOSALS ELECTRONICALLY TO:

Chittenden Homeless Alliance  
c/o Meg MacAuslan  
Email: [mmacaus@cvoeo.org](mailto:mmacaus@cvoeo.org)  
Phone: 802-862-2771, x725

## **SECTION I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Eligible entities**

Non-Profit Organizations, For profit corporations, 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 Chittenden County Continuum of Care (“Chittenden CoC”) with an HMIS Administrator (and potentially Lead) to administer the CoC Homeless Management Information System (“HMIS”). The Chittenden CoC 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 are used and analyzed to identify emerging trends and generate reports for provider agencies, local CoCs, funding agencies, and local/state/federal governments. The Chittenden CoC seeks an HMIS Administrator with experience with direct data administration of an HMIS database or similar system; implementation of data quality control and security; and an understanding of HUD regulations.

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 a subcontract of the HMIS Lead Agency who works in collaboration with the Chittenden CoC Data Committee, with ultimate authority residing with the Chittenden Homeless Alliance.

### **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.

### **Chittenden Continuum of Care: Chittenden Homeless Alliance**

The Chittenden CoC currently utilizes HousingWorks for its HMIS software; however, the Chittenden CoC is currently undertaking a process to designate a new HMIS Administration and HMIS Software, with an anticipated October 1, 2015 start date for implementation.

The Chittenden CoC currently has no dedicated HMIS Administrator, although some support is provided through HousingWorks, Inc. The HMIS Lead Agency for the Chittenden CoC is currently the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO). Substantial support is provided by the

Chittenden Homeless Alliance (facilitated by the Data Committee and directed by the Steering Committee), numerous service providers, state agencies and other entities.

In a previous RFP for HMIS software, the Chittenden CoC received information about three software systems currently under consideration:

- ServicePoint, vendor Bowman Systems
- HousingWorks, vendor HousingWorks, in partnership with Simtech Solutions
- Foothold Technology, vendor AWARDS

Responses to this HMIS Data Administration RFP may consider one or more of these HMIS software systems. It is worth noting that all three software systems are currently in use by agencies within the Chittenden CoC.

## **SECTION II. PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

### **A. PROJECT SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The following are minimum requirements for administering the Chittenden CoC HMIS system.

**I. The selected Respondent will be required to deliver the following to the VT Chittenden CoC:**

#### **HMIS ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **Oversight and Planning**

- Support HMIS Lead and Data Committee to
  - Ensure HMIS Implementation meets HUD Guidelines
  - Ensure HMIS Compliance for all Programs;
- Confirm Software Compliance
- With the HMIS Lead, Establish & Track Project Milestones
- Incorporate User Feedback into Practices and Planning

##### **HMIS Project Administration**

- Support HMIS Project Management
- Maintain End User Agreements and Documentation
- Maintain Data Sharing Agreements and Documentation

##### **Policies and Procedures**

- Review and Support Development and Update of HMIS Policies and Procedures, including but not limited to:
  - Privacy Policy
  - Disaster Recovery Plan
  - Data Release Protocol
  - Client Acknowledgement Policy
  - Data and System Security Guidelines*(Chittenden HMIS Lead and Data Committee have primary responsibility; the Chittenden CoC provides final approval)*

##### **Monitoring**

- Support Individual Agency HMIS Participation for each Homeless Program: CoC, ESG, PATH, RHYP, VA
- Monitoring Data Quality
- Enforce Data and System Security
- Provide Monitoring Reports to the CoC HMIS Lead Agency
- Ensure Availability of Data for Monitoring

##### **System Administration**

- System Operation
- System Maintenance
- Track and Resolve HMIS Issues
- Monitor System Operations and Administration in partnership with the HMIS Lead Agency

## **Training and Technical Support**

- New Agency Set Up
- Provide Prompt Help Desk Support
- Provide Software Training
- Provide Direct Software TA to Agencies
- With HMIS Lead and Data Committee, Identify Training Needs and Mechanisms
- Support Policies and Procedures Training

## **Reporting**

- With HMIS Lead and Data Committee, Identify CoC-level Reporting Needs & Mechanisms
- Ensure Reporting Capability (macro/micro)
- Provide CoC-level & NOFA Reporting
- 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
- Support Other Individual Agency Reporting Requests as approved by CoC

## **HMIS Software Vendor**

The Chittenden CoC is currently considering three separate HMIS systems:

- ServicePoint, vendor Bowman Systems
- HousingWorks, vendor HousingWorks, in partnership with Simtech Solutions
- Foothold Technology, vendor AWARDS

Responses to this RFP may consider one or more of these HMIS systems. Please specify which system(s) the respondent intends to administer. Again, please note that all three software systems are currently in use by agencies within the Chittenden CoC.

## **Budgetary Parameters**

Although it will be the HMIS Lead and Chittenden CoC's joint responsibility to raise funds for the operation of the HMIS system, the selected entity is expected to work in partnership with the Chittenden CoC to develop a budget, including potential revenue sources 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 VT BoS CoC. There is currently no dedicated funding to support HMIS administration.

## **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/> [HMIS-60/86-88]
- HUD Exchange-Homeless Management Information Systems  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/hmis/>
- New 2014 HMIS Data Standards (October 2014)  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/news/2014-hmis-data-standards-new-resources-published/>

- CoC Program Funding for Homeless Management Information Systems [HUD CoC grant]  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoCProgramFundingforHMIS.pdf>

## **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. Organizational Overview and Documentation**

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. Organizational Capacity**

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

#### **Oversight and Planning**

- 1) Please describe any experience you have working with other relevant social service systems and providers, including the homeless service system.
- 2) Please describe any experience or familiarity with systems planning including coordinated entry or system coordination.

#### **Project Administration**

- 3) Please describe any relevant experience managing an IT project similar to HMIS.
- 4) Please describe any experience your agency has with developing or supporting cross-agency policies and/or procedures.
- 5) 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**

- 6) Please describe any experience relevant to providing IT support and training/technical assistance.
- 7) 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.
- 8) Please describe how you are able to work with users who have a wide range of experience and capacity levels.

#### **Reporting**

- 9) Please describe any experience and/or expertise you have with reviewing and analyzing data.

#### **System Administration**

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

### **3. Proposed Approach**

- 1) Please describe how you propose to provide HMIS System Data Administration in a manner that will ensure all services are provided seamlessly to end users, especially during the next year of transition.
- 2) Please describe any potential suggestions for maximizing the use funds to ensure a successful HMIS implementation.
- 3) Please describe any expectations or requirements you would have from the HMIS Lead and/or Data Committee.
- 4) Please be sure to identify which HMIS software system(s) your proposal addresses. If more than one system is considered for administration, please clarify any distinctions in approach dependent on the system chosen.

### **4. Staffing Plan**

Please provide an organizational spreadsheet showing your proposed staffing pattern for the Chittenden 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 Chittenden 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, especially in partnership with the HMIS Lead Agency (CVOEO) and the Chittenden CoC Data Committee. Briefly discuss workflow and how this group might 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 the Chittenden 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. Chittenden 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 Chittenden 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 Chittenden CoC's discretion, be considered invalid.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Maximum Page Limit</b>
1. Organizational Overview	Two (2) pages; not including support documentation
2. Organizational Capacity	Sixteen (16) 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):

- Familiarity with Homeless Services and/or Social Service Providers and Systems
- Familiarity or Experience supporting an IT project/implementation such as or similar to HMIS, including communities in which multiple software systems may be in use.
- Familiarity or Experience with IT Policies and Procedures
- Familiarity or Experience with Monitoring from a Support Role
- Experience with IT Support and Training/Technical Assistance – understand the types of issues that may come up with end users
- Experience with Data Cleaning and/or Analysis
- Capacity to provide System Administration of Software
- Cost, including insights on realizing efficiencies, fundraising, etc.
- HMIS Lead eligibility  
(a private nonprofit organization, State, local government, or instrumentality of State and local government)



## **APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS**

### **Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR):**

A HUD report to the U.S. Congress on the state of homelessness in America.

### **Best Value Contracting**

The award of a contract to one or more qualified Respondents that is based not solely on the lowest price, but rather on an analysis of multiple factors including but not limited to price, quality of work, capacity, and experience.

### **Collaborative Applicant**

The Collaborative Applicant for the Chittenden County Continuum of Care is the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) of the City of Burlington. CEDO submits the annual HUD CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) application on behalf of the CoC as well as overseeing the implementation of the HEARTH regulations under the guidance of the Chittenden Homeless Alliance Steering Committee [Board].

### **Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Interim Rule**

This interim rule, published in the Federal Register on July 31, 2012, establishes the regulations for the Continuum of Care Program and focuses on regulatory implementation of the Continuum of Care Program, including the Continuum of Care planning process. See *McKinney-Vento*.

### **Final Contract**

The contract ultimately negotiated and entered into by and between the Chittenden County Continuum of Care and the successful Respondent pursuant to an award under this RFP.

### **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**

The community-wide database congressionally mandated for all programs funded through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development homeless assistance grants.

### **Housing Inventory Chart of Homeless Beds (HIC)**

A chart of all homeless beds available on a single day, coinciding with the PIT, within the CoC.

### **Housing & Urban Development (HUD)**

The U.S. Department that funds many low-income and affordable housing initiatives, including the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by HEARTH, through the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act As Amended by S.896 HEARTH Act of 2009**

The HEARTH Act was enacted into law on May 20, 2009, with the consolidation of three separate homeless assistance programs administered by HUD under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act into a single grant program [“*HUD CoC Program*,” formerly known as *Supportive Housing Program*, *Shelter Plus Care Program* and the *Section 8 Mod Rehab Program*]. The HEARTH Act also codifies into law the Continuum of Care planning process, a longstanding part of HUD’s application process to assist homeless persons by providing greater coordination in response to their needs.

**Point-in-Time Count (PIT)**

A count on a single day, to coincide with the HIC, of all homeless people within the CoC geographic area.

**Primary Decision-Making Group**

The Chittenden Homeless Alliance is responsible for compliance with the HUD CoC Interim Rule and coordinating HUD homelessness activities within the Chittenden CoC geographic area.

**Proposal**

Proposal refers to the complete response, including any exhibits or attachments, submitted by a Respondent as a result of this RFP.

**Respondent**

Respondent refers to any individual or entity submitting a response to this RFP.

**Scope of Work**

Scope of Work refers to the instructions and requirements stated in this RFP or portions thereof and any additional, supplementary instructions that are developed, incorporated, or promulgated subsequent to the distribution of this RFP.

**Chittenden Homeless Alliance – Chittenden County Continuum of Care (Chittenden CoC)**

The primary decision-making body charged by HUD to be responsible for overseeing and/or administering the CoC functions within the Chittenden CoC including submitting the annual HUD CoC application, project evaluation and CoC monitoring, HMIS implementation, conducting a Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless/Housing Inventory Chart of Homeless Beds, etc.