

OSHDP Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development**Healthcare Workforce Development Division**

400 R Street, Suite 330
Sacramento, California 95811-6213
(916) 326-3700
Fax (916) 322-2588
www.oshpd.ca.gov

**Workforce Education and Training (WET)
Peer Personnel Training and Placement
Request for Application (RFA) #15-8274
Questions and Answers from Mandatory Bidders' Conference
April 14, 2016**

The following is a summary of the questions asked at the Mandatory Bidders' Conference for RFA #15-8274 held on April 14, 2016, and their respective answers.

Question 1: Page 4 paragraph 1 suggest that the intent of this program is to target a consumer already on some kind of educational path and it states to target individuals with lived experience in high schools, adult education programs, regional occupation programs, community colleges, and those already working and/or volunteering in the Public Mental Health System (PMHS).

Answer 1: The Purpose and Description of Services, #1 pages 3 and 4 of the RFA, states the following:

The Grantee shall engage in activities to recruit individuals who are either currently employed/volunteering or are seeking employment/volunteering in the PMHS as peer personnel to participate in Grantees' training and support program. Recruitment activities shall target individuals with lived experience who could address the cultural and language needs of the diverse community they will serve. Recruitment efforts may target individuals with lived experience in high schools, adult education programs, regional occupation programs, community colleges, and those already working and/or volunteering in the PMHS. Outreach tools may include but not be limited to presentations, personal outreach, information sharing sessions, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

This is not an all-inclusive list; however, applicants are required to target, at minimum, the following through recruitment activities:

- Individuals who are either currently employed/volunteering or are seeking employment/volunteering in the PMHS as peer personnel; and
- Individuals with lived experience who could address the cultural and language needs of the diverse community they will serve.

Question 2: It is not a requirement to have matching funds, but if we have matching funds would it be appropriate to mention that and where on the application would you put that?

Answer 2: To maintain the integrity of the competitive solicitation process, OSHPD cannot advise the applicant on what specific information to provide in its application. The applicant may provide information sufficient to identify the strength of the proposed program.

Question 3: Our organization is in a grant agreement for a Peer Professional Training and Placement program through OSHPD. Can we apply for this RFA?

Answer 3: Yes, as this is a separate RFA and funds awarded through other RFAs will not have any bearing during the evaluation process. However, previously awarded funds cannot be co-mingled with this RFA.

Question 4: How much of the funding from this RFA is attributed to Senate Bill (SB) 82 versus Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) WET funding?

Answer 4: The \$2,000,000 allocated for RFA #15-8274 is attributed to SB 82 legislation and is outlined in the Budget Act of 2013. However, OSHPD may use additional MHSA WET Consumer and Family Member Employment funds if deemed necessary.

Question 5: Placement was mentioned as an important part of this RFA. If someone were placed in a job other than an identified peer personnel position, would that be acceptable?

Answer 5: No, the purpose of this RFA is to place individuals in peer personnel positions. Participants must be placed in a position, regardless of the position title, that is designated to provide peer personnel type services. In order to be counted, the peer should not be subject to mainly administrative duties, as providing peer personnel type services should be a critical component of their job duties whether paid or not.

Question 6: Section 5 states participants must be placed in the PMHS, would that include someone placed working for a housing provider or health provider in a peer capacity?

Answer 6: Participants must be placed in peer personnel positions in the PMHS. Peer personnel, placement, and PMHS are defined on page 29 #10, 11 and 12, respectively. "Peer Personnel" means individuals with experience as a mental/behavioral health services consumer, family member, and/or parent/caregiver placed in designated peer positions within the Public Mental Health System. "Placement" means assignment in a peer personnel position as an employee or volunteer that can be paid or un-paid in the public mental health system. "Public Mental Health System (PMHS)" means publicly-funded mental health programs/services and entities that are administered, in whole or in

part, by the State Departments or county. It does not include programs and/or services administered, in whole or in part by federal, state, county or private correctional entities.

Question 7: Are there any sustainability requirements beyond the Grant time period, or is this just a two year project?

Answer 7: The only time limit is the length of the contract. There shall be no activity on an Agreement after its expiration.

Question 8: Can we train, place and support a different amount of people? For example, train 100 people and place 80.

Answer 8: Please refer to page 6, item D 2a in the RFA. Each applicant is required to identify the number of individuals to be trained, placed and supported by their respective programs. Applicants will be held to the number of individuals they indicated would be trained, supported, and placed in the application, as this number will be used in the budget.

Question 9: If the trainer has a baseline measurement for the course that indicates passing and not passing, would those that are considered trained be the ones that have passed?

Answer 9: Applicants will need to identify a mechanism to determine successful completion of the training program. Page 8, item h of the “Detailed Work Plan and Schedules” of the RFA states “The applicant shall identify the mechanism that will be used to determine successful completion of courses and entire curricula.” However, applicants will be held to the number of individuals they indicated would be trained, supported, and placed in the Detailed Work Plan of their application, as this number will be used in the budget.

Question 10: As far a placement and volunteering, are there limitations or a number of hours?

Answer 10: No, there is not an hour requirement. As such, any requirements would be determined by the needs of the county or Community-Based Organization (CBO) that each applicant would work with.

Question 11: Regarding the volunteers, it is not full time, so how do we track the hours at the time of evaluation?

Answer 11: When providing support to placed participants during the six-month period, the Grantee can work with the employees and employers to track the hours and report them on the quarterly Progress Reports as “Average Hours Worked per Week” in section VII. Placement.

Question 12: Is this a new Proposal? If not, how do we get the information from the previous RFAs?

Answer 12: This is the third cycle for this particular RFA. The previous two RFA/Request for Proposal (RFP) are located on our website at <http://oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/WET.html>. Go to “RFAs/Funding Opportunities” and then select “Past Request for Proposals/Funding Opportunities”.

Question 13: This is the third cycle of this RFA, are there lessons learned from the first two RFAs that are included in this one?

Answer 13: After each RFA, OSHPD solicits input from focus groups and incorporates lessons learned into the development of new RFAs. There is also an “Evaluation” component in the RFA that requires Grantees to evaluate the peer personnel training and placement program at the completion of contract activities. The Evaluation includes a summary of all program activities and outcomes, a comprehensive survey for program participants and employers where participants were placed, and a highlight of major successes and/or challenges in completing all the program activities. This information helps in the development of future RFAs as well.

Question 14: We anticipate that the majority of our program applicants will not have completed secondary education. Can General Education Development (GED) prep or assisting applicants with the completion of their adult high school to help them be prepared for employment?

Answer 14: The training activities included in the RFA are not negotiable. However, there is a counseling component of the RFA. Under this provision, applicants are required to assist recruited participants in the development of individualized career plans that identify courses to take for a defined peer personnel position, including but not limited to, short-term and long-term goals for entering, re-entering or advancing in the public mental health workforce and helping them become more job ready.

Question 15: How many grants will be awarded?

Answer 15: There are not a minimum number of grants that must be awarded. There is a maximum award amount for each grant for \$500,000. The competitiveness of the applications will determine the number of grants awarded.

Question 16: How are we paid for the number of people that we train and place? Can we train more people than we place?

Answer 16: This is a pro-rated payment structure; Grantees are paid for the number of individuals that are trained, placed and supported. The target number of participants to be trained, placed and supported for each program must be delineated in the Detailed Work Plan as part of the application process. Grantees will only be paid for the number of participants that are identified in the Detailed Work Plan.

Question 17: Is there any particular geographic area that should be targeted?

Answer 17: There is no set area needed or required. Applicants may propose one county or multiple counties. Page 13 C in the Evaluation Process section of the RFA states that “The final awards will be [given] to the highest scored applications. OSHPD intends for this RFA to support multiple Counties in California by providing a distribution of awards throughout the State. Applications seeking to support underserved geographic regions, which are not addressed by other similarly scored applications, may receive preference.” As such, geographical factors will be considered although there is no requirement to target certain areas. For example, if the top five scored applicants are supporting the Bay area, but there are ten applicants from other regions, OSHPD may not fund the five applicants from the Bay area as the intent is for awards to be geographically distributed.

Question 18: In-person training or on-line training, is there a preference for one or the other?

Answer 18: Either is acceptable if it enables an individual to satisfy the minimum requirements for entry into a position of need for the county and/or CBO as verified by the county Mental Health Director.

Question 19: Section B states the training may include targeted case management, assistance and triage, and Section B 3 states that it shall include, is it may or shall?

Answer 19: The issues listed in the RFA for training are stated in the California Budget Act of 2013, item #4140-001-3085, provision #2, which funds the peer personnel training and placement program. The RFA outlines the main training elements that are included in the training section on page 4. The fifth bullet identifies “Other related peer training and support functions necessary to facilitate the deployment of Peer Personnel as an effective and necessary service to clients and family members, and as triage and targeted case management personnel.” Therefore, there is flexibility on the different types of trainings, but specifically there should be a focus on crisis management, suicide prevention, recovery planning, and targeted case management assistance as identified in the training component description of the RFA. Additionally, the duration of time spent on each training topic is at the discretion of the applicant. Please note that the Evaluation Tool on page 13 of the RFA contains scoring criterion that will consider the following items:

- Strength of the program, and priority areas including the training curricula used to facilitate the deployment of peer personnel as effective and necessary service to clients and family members; and
- How the Detailed Work Plan is consistent with the services described in Section C. Scope of Work.

Question 20: Is there a cap on the amount of funding?

Answer 20: Please refer to page 8 #5 a in the RFA. The total cost of all tasks throughout the duration of the Grant Agreement for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16, FY 2016-17, and FY 2017-18 cannot exceed \$500,000. An applicant may, consistent with its work plan, rate proposal, and budget category limitations, request the distribution of grant funding under this RFA, but in no event shall total funding for an applicant under this RFA exceed \$500,000.

Question 21: Page 20 the RFA identifies the need to partner with counties and CBOs, is there is a minimum or maximum number for partnering with counties and/or CBOs? Is there different weight for having one or ten?

Answer 21: No, there is no minimum or maximum number required. That being said, OSHPD is looking at geographic distribution of awards to support counties and CBOs across the state so that may be considered during the evaluation process.

Question 22: Do county agencies determine on an annual basis how many peer counselors they need? Is this information that is available or do we have to contact the county?

Answer 22: That information may be publicly available. However, the expectations are that applicants work with and collaborate with counties to have them fill out the verification form on page 20 of the RFA, and assess their needs within the timeframe of this RFA.

Question 23: On page 6 item 2a, what is the minimum number of peer placement that is acceptable and competitive in the decision process of who is awarded the grant?

Answer 23: OSHPD has not identified a minimum number. It is up to the applicants to determine what their program can accomplish with the funding requested and within the confines of the RFA. There is a section on the evaluation tool on page 13, titled "Budget Rates," OSHPD will score the cost effectiveness to successfully implement and administer the peer personnel program in relation to how many individuals are proposed to be trained, placed and supported and proposed engagement activities.

Question 24: In the evaluation process, there is a point total for each section? Is there a limit for each section for the amount of information?

Answer 24: There is not a minimum or maximum length requirement for each section. However, applicants must follow the format provided and use the templates and tables provided to address each section in the order that they are asked.

Question 25: Could you look into the answer for the published question #4 on your website, the difference in peer personnel and targeted case management personnel?

Answer 25: The answer states there is flexibility on the different types of training, but specifically there should be a focus on crisis management, suicide prevention, recovery planning, and targeted case management assistance as identified in the training component description. The amount of training necessary would be determined by the contractor.