

**RFP BIDDERS CONFERENCE AND
SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

RFP TITLE:	Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
BIDDERS CONFERENCE LOCATION:	Hosted Virtually via RingCentral
1st BIDDERS CONFERENCE DATE/TIME:	February 23, 2021 10:00AM
2nd BIDDERS CONFERENCE DATE/TIME:	March 4, 2021 2:00PM
SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:	March 12, 2021 5:00PM
QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:	March 17, 2021
PROPOSAL DUE DATE:	March 26, 2021 5:00PM
PROPOSALS DUE TO:	jlocke@mainehousing.org

Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.

Below are questions that were asked at both Bidders Conference dates in addition to those questions submitted in writing.

Question #	Question	Answer
1	Please clarify, in regards to the match requirement: If we have applied for philanthropy funds but have not yet been awarded, do you have to have the letter in place to claim it as a match?	Match must be documented as part of the application submitted in response to this Request for Proposal. Please review the following two resources for more information about documenting match: HUD FAQ #1561 : What are the documentation requirements for in-kind services as match? HUD FAQ#1559 : What are the documentation requirements for cash match?
2	I didn't see in the RFP that there were any additional points granted for trying to serve regions of the State that have low service capability. Does the review committee have any identification of regions that they would really want to encourage development in?	We will offer additional bonus points for providing services in those areas where there are not a large amount of services for youth. It is also an important part of YHDP for us to be able to serve YYA in their communities of origin instead of moving to a different part of the State.

3	If applying for more than one project, do you expect that each one have its own separate grant submission with its own narrative and budget?	Yes. Each of the projects described in this RFP require a separate application and will require a distinct grant agreement with HUD.
4	Except for Host Homes - Are you anticipating offering to fund more than one project from each strategy?	We would like to award as many projects as we can with the amount of funding we have available. The only exception is for Host Homes. We only intend to fund one pilot program.
5	Regarding Navigation Teams – the description in the RFP indicates that the services would be limited to youth that meet the category one definition of homelessness, is that interpretation correct?	No. This project type could serve youth who meet Categories 1, 2, or 4 of HUD’s Homelessness Definition. For more information on determining the homeless status of unaccompanied youth, please see HUD’s Determining Homeless Status of Youth Quick Guide .
6	Please clarify, for the Navigation Team projects does it refer to making links to <u>existing</u> shelters?	Yes. The Navigation and Diversion project is intended to be a mobile service that connects youth to the services and interventions that they need, which in some cases may be access to a safe place to spend the night (e.g., emergency shelter or transitional housing). If applicants do not have existing relationships with emergency shelters or other crisis options, they may describe how they would build the capacity to make these connections for youth.
7	Regarding partnerships being encouraged as a service model, would subcontracting be an accepted methodology?	Yes.
8	If the projects are selected in April, are you anticipating waiting until the new fiscal year to start?	Projects which are awarded will be notified on April 16 th . Awarded projects will then have approximately one month to complete grant applications in HUD’s online CoC program application and grants management system (approx. May 14 th). There will then be a review period by HUD to address any issues or questions. There is no set date confirmed by HUD for the signing of grant agreements.
9	Is the start date when the grant agreement is done or when the awards are made?	The grant agreement execution date is the date that HUD signs the grant agreement. Projects may not incur any costs prior to this date. The project’s operating start date is the first day in the month in which the recipient begins incurring eligible costs. Projects will have two years from the operating start date to spend these YHDP funds.

10	Could a grass roots coalition, which is not a 501(c)(3), be the lead but have a fiscal agent as an agent or sponsor?	The fiscal agent or other non-profit would need meet the recipient eligibility criteria and would therefore be the entity that signs a grant agreement with HUD. Recipients are not prohibited from partnering with other local organizations, informally or otherwise. This could include sub-awarding funds to sub-recipient organizations or procuring subcontractors.
11	Regarding the idea of being innovative: I hear that it is acceptable to combine different options, but I also heard that applying for two options requires two different proposals. Could you clarify that?	<p>Eligible applicants may submit proposals for more than one project. This would require two separate applications that will be scored independent from one another. There is no preference for applicants who apply for more than one project type.</p> <p>Rapid implementation of these projects will require significant organizational capacity. Applicants should consider their internal ability to develop, staff, and implement more than one project simultaneously before submitting multiple project applications.</p>
12	How would the scorers make the connection for applications where two projects are applied for?	If applying for more than one project you should outline in the narrative how one project will interact with another project. Each proposal would need to function on its own and will be scored as such.
13	How will scorers respond to applications which don't include every element?	It is understood that many applications will not include every single element captured in the project descriptions. This should not deter applicants from submitting applications that detail the services they can and will offer, with information about how they will make connections for young people to other agencies that may provide those services that they do not have the capacity for internally.
14	Re: Host Homes. Is there technical Assistance available for acquiring insurance?	There will be technical assistance provided to all awarded projects during the implementation process. This technical assistance may include support with exploring insurance options for the Host Homes project.
15	At one point it was mentioned that agencies can apply for less than or more than the amount allocated, is the hope to fund several smaller projects or to fund 1 or 2 much larger projects?	The funding amounts are guardrails for the amount allocated to each project type. The goal is to have services covered in areas where YYA experiencing homelessness are and want to stay, whether that is from one provider or multiple providers.
16	Is there a date for when the answers to these questions will be published?	There is not a specified date, however we will make every attempt to release the answers as close to March 12, 2021 as possible.

17	Could you clarify the date of the awards decision?	Applicants will be notified of our decision on April 16, 2021.
18	Where would youth transitioning from residential programs, hospitals, or crisis units fall under the homeless definition?	In order to be eligible when exiting an institution of some kind, you would have had to have been in that institution for 90 days or less and have been homeless prior to entering the institution. For more information on determining the homeless status of unaccompanied youth, please see HUD's Determining Homeless Status of Youth Quick Guide . As a reminder, all YHDP projects may serve youth who meet the criteria under Categories 1, 2, or 4 of the homeless definition.
19	How much detail is required in the budget? The RFP example was very basic.	Applicants should provide as much detail as necessary to demonstrate how they intend to spend their award under each eligible cost category (Supportive services, operations, administrative costs, etc.) A more detailed budget will be necessary for the projects which are selected for an award and will need to be entered into eSnaps.
20	What % of budget should be applied to each category? especially interested in Admin allocation.	The administrative budget line has a cap of 10%. There are no other caps for eligible cost categories.
21	What are the reporting requirements? Timecards? Audits? Other outcome data?	<p>Recipients that use YHDP (CoC Program) funds to pay for staff salaries must be able to provide documentation that the staff worked the stated number of hours on the CoC Program grant-funded project and that the time was spent on eligible costs. All costs charged to these YHDP projects must be reasonable and appropriate in accordance with the Omni Circular (2 CFR 200). For more information on CoC Program requirements, please see the following resources: CoC Program Interim Rule, CoC Program Grants Administration User Guide.</p> <p>As far as more general reporting requirements, folks will be responsible for entering client-level data into Maine's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and completing Annual Performance Reports (APR).. Funded projects will be required to participate in Maine's YHDP Continuous Quality Improvement process, which may produce additional methods and measures for evaluation.</p>
22	For any project funded, they're going to go through the same system as any Continuum of Care funded project for their Annual Performance Report?	Yes. There will also be a Continuous Quality Improvement process, led by the folks who are tasked with moving the CCP forward in Maine. It is possible that from the CQI process other reporting requirements may be asked of these projects. From a HUD perspective, the only reporting is from the HMIS.
23	In the "Allowable Expense" are, I see childcare and transportation – are you covering costs for clients that need childcare? Can we purchase vehicles for	According to Section § 578.53(4) of the CoC Program Interim Rule, eligible childcare activities include the costs of establishing and operating child care, and providing child-care vouchers, for children from families experiencing homelessness,

	<p>our staff or is that just mileage reimbursement?</p>	<p>including providing meals and snacks, and comprehensive and coordinated developmental activities, are eligible. Section § 578.53(15) outlines eligible transportation activities, which does include the cost of purchasing or leasing a vehicle in which staff transports program participants and/or staff serving program participants.</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>If we're looking at the lease program: Transitional housing – RRH are we allowed to serve individuals who do not have a rental voucher? If they do need a voucher, can we use these funds to support an overage rental? If a client has a voucher in hand and rent is more than the voucher can we use these fund to make up the difference? Do they need to have a voucher or can we serve clients that are not in the position?</p>	<p>The joint TH-RRH model is intended to serve as low-barrier, short-medium term crisis housing for young people (TH) with a seamless transition to a permanent housing placement when the youth chooses (RRH). Rapid Rehousing is a time-limited housing intervention that is typically funded with rental assistance dollars to provide participants with a rent subsidy for a period of up to 24 months – during which time the intention is to provide case management and connection to ongoing supportive services so that they achieve housing stability and are able to take over the full cost of the rent on their own once the assistance ends. You may find this resource useful: https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/YHDP-TH-RRH-Joint-Component-Project.pdf</p> <p>Lastly, if a program participant is enrolled in the TH-RRH projects and does have another housing subsidy available to them, it would not be allowable to use YHDP program funds to supplement the cost of the rent paid by that subsidy. YHDP funds may, however, be used to pay for costs that are not being paid for by another source. For example, if a young person was staying in the TH side of a TH-RRH project and moved on into an apartment with the use of a Section 8 voucher, they could be transferred to the RRH side of the project where rental assistance funds may be used to pay the cost of a security deposit and they would be eligible to receive ongoing case management.</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>Who will the proposal review team consist of?</p>	<p>The RFP scoring committee will consist of representatives from the Maine statewide Youth Action Board, Office Child and Family Services, MaineHousing, Department of Corrections, and homeless services providers.</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>Can you speak to the clinical services that is stated as being required for the outreach/diversion project? Is it preferred for a licensed clinician to serve on the youth serving diversion/outreach team?</p>	<p>These project designs came out of a big and collaborative planning process and we know that some of this may be aspirational to have these projects include all of the design elements. While it would be great to have licensed clinical staff, it would not preclude your application.</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>Is there a requirement for number of beds with the TH project?</p>	<p>There is no requirement regarding the number of TH units funded in a TH-RRH project, however, the project must be able to provide enough rapid rehousing assistance to ensure that at</p>

		any given time a program participant may move from TH to permanent housing. This may be demonstrated by identifying a budget that has twice as many resources for the rapid rehousing portion of the project than the TH portion, by having twice as many RRH units at a point in time as TH units, or by demonstrating that the budget and units are appropriate for the population being served by the project.
28	How much supervision is required in the TH/RRH project?	There are no requirements regarding the amount of supervision or staffing structures for any of the YHDP funded projects. Under the transitional housing component, supportive services must be made available to residents throughout the duration of their residence in the project. Under the rapid rehousing component, program participants must meet with a case manager not less than once per month.
29	Are both master-lease and rental assistance apts. required to have HQS inspections? Can these be done by trained agency staff?	Yes, HQS must be completed for all units supported by CoC rental assistance or leasing funds. Trained agency staff may complete HQS inspections.
30	Can rental assistance help tenants pay a rental cost higher than the FMR?	Yes, rental assistance funds may be used to pay for units that are higher than FMR, so long as they are rent reasonable. Rent reasonableness should be determined by considering the reasonableness of the rent in relation to rents being charged for comparable unassisted units at the time the individual is seeking the unit, taking into account the location, quality, size, type, and age of unit, as well as any amenities, housing services, maintenance, and utilities provided by the owner. For more information about FMR and rent reasonableness under the CoC program – see this resource
31	Are there any predefined outcomes/objectives for these projects? How will success be measured?	There are 4 Core YHDP Outcomes: Stable Housing, Permanent Connections, Education and Employment, and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. The community has not yet established formal performance measures for these projects. This will be part of the continuous quality improvement process identified in the Coordinated Community Plan. All projects must participate in CQI efforts. At minimum, projects should expect that part of this evaluation will include analysis of project-level HMIS data.
32	What are the HUD restrictions on the 18-24 in the Transitional Housing environment? Do we have to take any young adults that are referred? Can we screen and evict?	Projects funded with YHDP are required to participate in their CoC's Coordinated Entry process. This means that projects with housing units (e.g., TH-RRH) will be required to fill those units through referrals from the Coordinated Entry system. The CoC has written standards in place that describe when a project may have the discretion to decline a referral. Regarding eviction, YHDP projects will be required to comply with all state and local tenant laws. As a reminder, all YHDP-funded projects are

		required to operate with a Housing First orientation. Housing First is a model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold).
33	Once awarded, if we can't acquire housing in the intended underserved area of can we shift to alternative dwellings in another nearby area where we are able to enter a master lease?	Yes, so long as the project is able to provide the required case management services (e.g., RRH participants must meet with a case manager no less than once per month), there are no geographic restrictions related to where housing units are identified for youth.
34	Please describe specifically the differences between low barrier transitional housing vs no barrier	As you know, all projects funded with YHDP dollars must operate with a Housing First orientation. Housing First is a model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold). Transitional housing are considered to be using a Housing First model if they operate with low-barriers, work to quickly move people into permanent housing, do not require participation in supportive services, and do not require any preconditions for moving into the transitional housing (e.g., sobriety or minimum income threshold).
35	Does this TH/RRH allow for partners/couples to live together?	Yes, shared housing and/or roommate situations are allowable under the CoC Program (and therefore, YHDP).
36	Do clients need to be associated with vouchers to be eligible for TH/RRH	No, the joint TH-RRH model is intended to serve as low-barrier, short-medium term crisis housing for young people (TH) with a seamless transition to a permanent housing placement when the youth chooses (RRH). Rapid Rehousing is a time-limited housing intervention that is typically funded with rental assistance dollars to provide participants with a rent subsidy for a period of up to 24 months – during which time the intention is to provide case management and connection to ongoing supportive services so that they achieve housing stability and are able to take over the full cost of the rent on their own once the assistance ends. You may find this resource useful: https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/YHDP-TH-RRH-Joint-Component-Project.pdf
37	What happens if we enter a master lease but then the units are vacant for a few months if no client is ready? Will we still be able to use funds to pay the landlord?	Yes. Under the CoC Program, recipients receiving funds for leasing must follow section 578.49 of the CoC Program interim rule, which does not have a regulatory requirement around the length of time that grant funds can be used to pay for a unit that is vacant. This is because under leasing, the lease is between the recipient and the owner of the property and the recipient is required to make payments on a unit in compliance with the lease, regardless of whether the recipient has housed a program participant in the unit or structure. Therefore, the

		amount of time that the unit may be held is at the discretion of the local program.
38	Do the monthly unit rent fees have to align with voucher payment standards as determined by HUD or can we support rates that are on the current market but are higher with the lease funds?	Units supported with leasing funds must be at or below Fair Market Rent, and must also be rent reasonable. For more information about FMR and rent reasonableness under the CoC program – see this resource
39	Is the proposal to be single or double spaced?	There are no specific formatting requirements
40	Are there other formatting requirements for the proposal?	There are no specific formatting requirements
41	Due to the number of supporting documentation materials required, it is assumed that the supporting materials are not part of the page count. Is that accurate?	There is no page count for supporting documentation, the only specified page count is for the Project Description and Narrative portion of the application. Any supporting documentation will not count toward the 10 page limit of the Project Description and Narrative.
42	Is there a preference in the manner in which the proposal is submitted – for example, as one PDF with all supporting materials incorporated into one PDF file with pages that are numerated?	The preferred method for submitting applications would be in at least two .pdf files: One pdf should include the YHDP application, 10 page project description and narrative, and the proposed budget and budget narrative. The other would include all additional supporting materials, in order, as outlined in the “Supporting Materials” section of the RFP.
43	If a Table of Contents is provided, is it excluded from the page count?	Any Table of Contents provided would not count toward the total page count.
44	If there is additional supporting documentation that could speak to the capacity or expertise of the applicant, can those documents be included and considered supporting materials and as such excluded from the page count? If so, are there restrictions on what could be included as additional supportive documentation?	Additional supporting material should be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agency Articles of Incorporation ● Documentation of 501(c)(3) status, if applicable ● Current List of Board of Directors with identification of officers and terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certified Organization Audit/Financial Statements of most recent two years: Copy of Single Audit (Required by 2 CFR 200 Subpart F if \$750,000 or more in aggregate Federal funds expended); or ○ Financial statements audited by a CPA (if not bound by the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F) ● Agency Financial Management Policies and Procedures ● Documentation of Service Match ● Relevant Memorandums of Understanding

45	The RFP states the project description and narrative is a maximum of 10 pages for each project. Does this include all components of the narrative as stated in the RFP (i.e. Organization Experience, Project Description, Incorporation of YHDP Principles, Understanding of Commitment to COC Standards, Plan to address other standards/principles, Project Initiation, Experience with HMIS, and Budget and Budget Narrative? Or are any of these sections excluded from the 10 page count (such as budget and budget narrative)?	<p>The following components would be considered part of the 10 page Project Description and Narrative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organization Experience ● Project Description ● Incorporation of YHDP Principles ● Understanding of Commitment to COC Standards ● Plan to address other standards/principle ● Project Initiation ● Experience with HMIS <p>The Budget and Budget Narrative would not be considered part of the 10 page count</p>
46	If an agency is submitting a proposal in partnership with another agency, are the required supporting materials listed in the RFP (i.e. Articles of Incorporation, Documentation of 501(c)(3) status, list of Board of Directors, Audited Financial Statements, etc.) required by only the lead agency or both the lead agency and partnering agency?	We would request that the same list of documents for each agency accompany the application.
47	Can tables/charts be incorporated into the proposal? If the answer regarding single or double spacing is that the proposal is to be double-spaced, can any tables be single-spaced?	There are no specific formatting requirements
48	Are proposals to be submitted to the RFP contact person listed on the RFP (Joseph Locke) or is there a specific email address the proposal is to be submitted to?	All applications should be submitted to Joseph Locke (jlocke@mainehousing.org) by 5:00PM on March 26,2021
49	Will bidder's receive confirmation of the receipt of the proposal relatively immediately to ensure the proposal successfully went through?	All applicants will be notified that their application has been received within a reasonable amount of time after submission. It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all necessary elements of the application are included.
50	For each project area, does the bidder need to propose a service that serves the entire age range referenced in each category, or can a bidder propose to serve YYA within the age range but not the full age range? For example, if a project states the target population is 12-24, can the bidder propose a service that serves youth aged 18-24?	Applicants may submit proposals that serve only a segment of the target age range included in the RFP.

51	What is the definition of inreach (as referenced in Project #1)?	Inreach means: contacts and case management within institutional settings to ensure positive exits into supportive and safe systems of care.
52	Can additional information be provided as to the definition of 24/7 support and what this support consists of?	The reference to 24 hour support means that projects will have policies or mechanisms in place to ensure that young people are able to have their services needs met outside of regular business hours, within reason. During those times when case managers are not available, projects should have clear policies in place for how a young person may connect with services or emergency personnel in the event of crisis.
53	Are there staffing qualifications/preferences?	There are not predetermined qualifications for staff Projects are encouraged to provide opportunities for YYA in leadership and employment.
54	Is there a minimum age requirement for staff working in any of the identified projects?	Staff must meet the requirements of all Federal and State labor laws.
55	For the Transition Housing – Rapid Rehousing project, can funds be used to assist a youth with rent if the youth does not have a voucher?	Yes, please see the response to Question #36 for more information.
56	What are differences between the RRH component of Project #4 and Project #2? What are the concrete differences a youth would experience if they were served by one versus the other?	Project #2 will pair youth with a Housing Choice Voucher that is administered by MaineHousing (e.g., Section 8), and then assist them with the housing search and lease up process. Youth in this project will receive supportive services for up to 24 months with the goal of achieving housing stability. Once the supportive services end, the youth will retain that voucher. Project #4 offers youth the option of Transitional Housing or Rapid Rehousing (or a seamless transition from TH to RRH). This RRH model is different from project #2, in that the rental assistance will be funded by the project budget itself. Youth will be eligible to receive time-limited rental assistance and supportive services, with the goal of achieving housing stability and taking over the cost of their lease, for a period of up to 24 months.
57	Can funds be directly passed through to youth as incentives? For example, can an agency utilize funds to pay youth a stipend for participating in meetings geared towards program evaluation or other supportive functions in assisting in the implementation and evaluation of the service?	Yes, YHDP project funds may be used to pay young people for their time directly, so long as they are being paid for activities that are eligible costs under the CoC Program Interim Rule. For example, program evaluation efforts may be an eligible administrative cost. In this case, a project may adjust administrative funds to pay a young person for the time they spend actively engaged in that effort.

58	Can funds be used to pay for a youth to attend driver's education and to pay for a youth to receive driving hours from a licensed driver's education program?	Yes, if there is a reason that the youth cannot use public transportation and that they didn't learn to drive or have lost the ability to drive during the course of physical or mental illness, domestic violence, substance abuse, and homelessness, a driver's education course, driver's permit or driver's license could be an eligible activity if the budget includes Supportive Services. Please see Section 578.53(e)(10) of the CoC Program Interim Rule for more information on eligible Life Skills Training costs.
59	Can funds be used to purchase furniture and other basic need items for youth as they transition into an apartment?	These are not currently eligible costs according to the CoC Program Interim rule; however, they may be eligible if the project requests an alternative requirement.
60	Can funds be used to purchase items for youth to assist them in overcoming barriers to education or employment, i.e. special footwear needed for a job, college applications, etc.?	In general, all eligible costs are outlined in the CoC Program Interim Rule. Work clothes/shoes and college application fees are not explicitly identified as eligible costs in the Interim Rule; however, it may be possible to pay for these expenses if they are necessary for a young person to obtain or maintain housing. Work clothes/shoes would only be eligible if required for the young person's job or job training program. Remember that the use of any CoC funds should align with the goal of the project, and all costs must be reasonable and appropriate. Technical assistance (TA) will be available to all awarded recipients, which will include exploring potential eligible costs.
61	Regarding the Transitional Housing to Rapid Rehousing: May we require that each client/tenant in both TH and RRH have a dedicated case manager?	Yes, applicants have the discretion to establish a scope of supportive services and applicable policies and procedures that align with their project design.
62	Does HUD allow us to evict a tenant who is creating an unsafe living environment for themselves (substance use, etc)?	YHDP projects will be required to comply with all state and local tenant laws; including those that pertain to eviction. However, please remember that these projects are required to operate with a Housing First orientation. Housing First is a model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold). Before proceeding with eviction or termination of assistance, HUD would encourage recipients to work closely with program participants, using a trauma informed approach, to support their housing stability so that they do not return to homelessness.
63	Are security deposits an allowable expense under supportive services?	Security deposits are not an eligible supportive services cost; however, they are an eligible use of rental assistance or leasing funds.
64	Please define the lead agency responsibilities	By lead agency, we assume you mean recipient of the award. As a recipient all YHDP projects are responsible for project administration and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. Additionally project will be asked to participate

		in a Continuous Quality Improvement process.
65	Does the lead agency have a fiduciary responsibility with regard this grant?	By lead agency, we assume you mean recipient of the award. As a recipient, all YHDP projects will necessitate a grant agreement between the recipient organization and HUD. The project funding will be draw down directly by the recipient. Project recipients will be responsible to adhere to all relevant financial guidelines.
66	Within the THRRMPH service are their limitations within the funding allocated as to what can be used for personnel?	There are not specified allocation amounts for personnel costs in the Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing model, however the scoring committee will review to ensure that costs are appropriate for the proposed client to staffing ratios
67	Given how tight the timeline is for this RFP, would Maine Housing consider extending the response time?	MaineHousing and the MCOC expressly reserve the right to modify or withdraw this RFP at any time, whether before or after any responses have been submitted or received. MaineHousing and the MCOC will not be liable for any costs incurred as a result of any changes to this RFP.