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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**Housing Assessment Resource Agency (HARA)**

**FOR**

**Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network**

Issued By:

Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network

United Way of the Lakeshore

31 E Clay Ave

Muskegon, MI 49442

Miranda Paggeot

Homeless Network Coordinator

(231) 332-4012

***Proposal Submitted by:***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Please type* Agency Name & **include as proposal cover.**

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|  |  |
|  | **RFP** |

04/26/2023

Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network Muskegon County Continuum of Care is issuing an RFP for Housing Assessment Resource Agency (HARA).

All required bid documentation for this project may be obtained at the

Muskegon County CoC website,

[www.muskegoncoc.org](https://www.washtenaw.org/2431/Open-Bids)

**Proposer will deliver an electronic response to this solicitation in .pdf format to Miranda Paggeot at:**

[miranda@unitedwaylakeshore.org](mailto:miranda@unitedwaylakeshore.org) Please include your agency name in the E-mail subject line.

**By Thursday, June 1, 2023 @ 4:00PM EST**

A **MANDATORY MEETING** WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, **MAY 17, 2023**, AT **11:00AM** AT UNITED WAY OF THE LAKESHORE 31 E CLAY AVE MUSKEGON, MI 49442.

A virtual option is also available and can be accessed by using the link below:

United Way of the Lakeshore is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: ***RFP Informational Session***

Time: May 17, 2023, 11:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86348869841?pwd=RUdKNmxuSXBvUE1GZVBHYVFVazZGQT09

Meeting ID: 863 4886 9841

Passcode: 647956

Dial by your location

+1 305 224 1968 US

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Find your local number: https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kc5LxGu2nA

**Proposals received after the above cited time will be considered a late bid and are not accepted.**

* Please direct technical questions regarding this RFP to the **Mandatory information** meeting on May 17, 2023

Thank you for your interest.

**PROPOSAL INFORMATION**

**I. PROPOSAL DEFINITIONS**

**Definitions**

**“Proposer”** An individual or business submitting a proposal

to Muskegon Continuum of Care

**“Contractor/Vendor"** One who contracts to perform services in

accordance with a legal agreement

**“MCHCCN”** Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network

**“CoC”** Continuum of Care

**“HARA”** Housing Assessment Resource Agency

**II. TERMS**

A. MCHCCN reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this RFP. If a proposal is selected, it will be the most advantageous regarding budget, the CONTRACTORS qualifications and capabilities to provide the specified service, and other factors that the MCHCCN may consider.

B. The MCHCCN reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to accept or further negotiate cost, terms or conditions of any proposal determined by the MCHCCN to be in the best interest of the MCHCCN.

C. In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFP, addenda will be provided. Deadlines for submission of RFP's may be adjusted to allow for revisions.To be considered, Vendor will deliver one (1) e-proposal in .pdf format to the MCHCCN as indicated on or before the date specified.

D. The initial award of this contract shall be for a period of up to 18 months.

E. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. Contractor warrants that to the best of contractor’s knowledge, there exists no actual or potential conflict between contractor and the MCHCCN, and its Services under this request, and in the event of change in either contractor’s private interests or Services under this request, contractor will inform the MCHCCN regarding possible conflict of interest which may arise as a result of the change. Contractor also affirms that, to the best of contractor’s knowledge, there exists no actual or potential conflict between a CoC member and Contractor.

F. Proposer/Applicant Appeal Process – **An appeal can only be made by an applicant regarding the scoring of its own application**. An applicant may file an appeal with the Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network based upon a claim that one or both apply:

a. The reviewers (meaning MCHCCN Review Committee) overlooked critical information about the project contained within the application and/or submitted scorecard that would have caused the project to meet the thresholds set by the funding agency and/or be scored higher. No additional information may be submitted.

b. There is evidence of lack of fairness in evaluating and scoring the application. Evidence of lack of fairness will be considered and reviewed.

If an applicant agency believes the above to be applicable to its situation, it may file an appeal in writing via email to the MCHCCN Coordinator and the MCHCCN Chairperson of the Network.

The MCHCCN will establish and publish a timeline outlining project application deadlines. Applicant organizations will be **informed no less than 5 days prior to any NOFA deadline regarding** **whether their project application would be included as part of the CoC Application** **submission**. **Unless otherwise specified in written competition materials, appeals shall be due within two (2) business days after announcement by the MCHCCN of initial project selection**.

An appeal must be in the form of a letter on the applicant agency’s letterhead and must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and specify all issues being contested. During the appeal process following a funding decision, the applicant may clarify information contained in the application and/or scorecard. No new information may be provided for consideration.

**III. AWARD**

An award will be made to the proposal with the most relevant experience and qualifications.

V. SCOPE OF WORK

An effective coordinated entry process is a critical component to any community’s efforts to meet the goals of Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. Provisions in the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) require that CoCs establish a Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System. HUD’s primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present.  Coordinated entry processes help communities prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Coordinated entry processes also provide information about service needs and gaps to help communities plan their assistance and identify needed resources.

**Qualities of Effective Coordinated Entry:**

· Prioritization. HUD has determined that an effective coordinated entry process ensures that people with the greatest needs receive priority for any type of housing and homeless assistance available in the CoC, including PSH, Rapid Rehousing (RRH), and other interventions.

· Low Barrier. The coordinated entry process does not screen people out for assistance because of perceived barriers to housing or services, including, but not limited to, lack of employment or income, drug or alcohol use, or having a criminal record. In addition, housing and homelessness programs lower their screening barriers in partnership with the coordinated entry process.

· Housing First orientation. The coordinated entry process is Housing First oriented, such that people are housed quickly without preconditions or service participation requirements.

· Person-Centered. The coordinated entry process incorporates participant choice, which may be facilitated by questions in the assessment tool or through other methods. Choice can include location and type of housing, level of services, and other options about which households can participate in decisions.

· Fair and Equal Access. All people in the CoC’s geographic area have fair and equal access to the coordinated entry process, regardless of where or how they present for services. Fair and equal access means that people can easily access the coordinated entry process, whether in person, by phone, or some other method, and that the process for accessing help is well known. Marketing strategies may include direct outreach to people on the street and other service sites, informational flyers left at service sites and public locations, announcements during CoC or other coalition meetings, and educating mainstream service providers. If the entry point includes one or more physical locations, they are accessible to people with disabilities, and easily accessible by public transportation, or there is another method, e.g., toll-free or 211 phone number, by which people can easily access them. The coordinated entry process is able to serve people who speak languages commonly spoken in the community.

· Emergency services. The coordinated entry process does not delay access to emergency services such as shelter. The process includes a manner for people to access emergency services at all hours independent of the operating hours of the coordinated entry intake and assessment processes. For example, people who need emergency shelter at night are able to access shelter, to the extent that shelter is available, and then receive an assessment in the days that follow, even if the shelter is the access point to the coordinated entry process.

· Standardized Access and Assessment. All coordinated entry locations and methods (phone, in-person, online, etc.) offer the same assessment approach and referrals using uniform decision-making processes. A person presenting at a particular coordinated entry location is not steered towards any particular program or provider simply because they presented at that location.

· Inclusive. A coordinated entry process includes all subpopulations, including people experiencing chronic homelessness, Veterans, families, youth, and survivors of domestic violence. However, CoCs may have different processes for accessing coordinated entry, including different access points and assessment tools for the following different populations: (1) adults without children, (2) adults accompanied by children, (3) unaccompanied youth, or (4) households fleeing domestic violence. These are the only groups for which different access points are used. For example, there is not a separate coordinated entry process for people with mental illness or addictions, although the systems addressing those disabilities may serve as referral sources into the process. The CoC continuously evaluates and improves the process ensuring that all subpopulations are well served.

 · Referral to projects. The coordinated entry process makes referrals to all projects receiving Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and CoC Program funds, including emergency shelter, RRH, PSH, , as well as other housing and homelessness projects. Projects in the community that are dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness fill all vacancies through referrals, while other housing and services projects determine the extent to which they rely on referrals from the coordinated entry process.

· Referral protocols. Programs that participate in the CoC’s coordinated entry process accept all eligible referrals unless the CoC has a documented protocol for rejecting referrals that ensures that such rejections are justified and rare and that participants are able to identify and access another suitable project.

· Outreach. The coordinated entry process is linked to street outreach efforts so that people sleeping on the streets are prioritized for assistance in the same manner as any other person assessed through the coordinated entry process.

· Ongoing planning and stakeholder consultation. The CoC engages in ongoing planning with all stakeholders participating in the coordinated entry process. This planning includes evaluating and updating the coordinated entry process at least annually.

· Informing local planning. Information gathered through the coordinated entry process is used to guide homeless assistance planning and system change efforts in the community.

· Leverage local attributes and capacity. The physical and political geography, including the capacity of partners in a community, and the opportunities unique to the community’s context, inform local coordinated entry implementation.

· Safety planning. The coordinated entry process has protocols in place to ensure the safety of the individuals seeking assistance. These protocols ensure that people fleeing domestic violence have safe and confidential access to the coordinated entry process and domestic violence services, and that any data collection adheres to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

· Using Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and other systems for coordinated entry. The CoC may use HMIS to collect and manage data associated with assessments and referrals. Communities may use CoC Program or ESG program funding for HMIS to pay for costs associated with coordinated entry to the extent that coordinated entry is integrated into the CoCs HMIS.

 · Full coverage. A coordinated entry process covers the CoC’s entire geographic area.

[Coordinated Entry Policy Brief (hudexchange.info)](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf) -  <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4427/coordinated-entry-policy-brief/>

**Request for Proposals:**

MCHCCN is seeking an agency to support in one or more aspects of the Coordinated Entry Process and serve as the Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA) for the homeless system for the 2023-2024 ESG funds. The HARA is funded by Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Emergency Solution Grant funding (ESG).  MSHDA will be awarding the **MCHCCN** Emergency Solutions Grant funding for the October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024, grant term.  Additional funding is being requested, and information from this RFP will help inform requests being made for additional resources, including an award of **$137,213** HOME ARP HPP Program MSHDA policy manual for ESG can be found on the MSHDA website or by visiting the link below.

[Guide for Review of Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) (michigan.gov)](https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/-/media/Project/Websites/mshda/homeless/esg/policy-and-procedures/ESG-Policy-Manual.pdf?rev=d5b978f4a1074251b4d8f201b4fbcaca&hash=67CE10E37E7CEA7CDD0752F7402E2B2F)

A link to the MSHDA ESG application is listed below.

[ESG-FY22-23-Exhibit-1.pdf (michigan.gov)](https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/-/media/Project/Websites/mshda/homeless/esg/funding-opportunities/ESG-FY22-23-Exhibit-1.pdf?rev=b82a0471270d46e2840dc979145fb5d1&hash=7A20E4E88225066BA208227A640B82F4)

Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network Written Standards for ESG/CoC Delivery can be found on the MCHCCN website ([www.muskegoncoc.org](http://www.muskegoncoc.org)) or by visiting the link below:

[MCHCCN Written Standards Service Agreement](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.muskegoncoc.org%2Fuploads%2F4%2F8%2F5%2F7%2F48576857%2Fmchccn_service_standards_revised_06062022.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

**Core Responsibilities**

The Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA) is an agency selected and affirmed by the CoC or LPB to facilitate the prioritization and referral of households within the homeless crisis response system or Coordinated Entry System. CoCs or LPBs may also support the HARA to complete primary entry functions such as access and assessment. Other agencies may also be identified by the CoC or LPB to provide access and assessment, but MSHDA ESG funding requires recognition of one HARA per CoC or LPB. The HARA agrees to the following responsibilities:

• Implement the prioritization process for literally homeless households as developed by the CoC or LPB.

• Complete referrals based on prioritization, eligibility, and participant choice to all CoC- or LPB identified housing resources within the geographic area of the CoC or LPB.

• Provide routine reports to the CoC or LPB on the prioritization and referral processes, including number of households identified and served by the CoC or LPB.

• Employ staff as Housing Resource Specialists to provide Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services and Rental Assistance dollars for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing.

• Employ staff to oversee the Housing Choice Voucher Homeless Preference waiting list.

• Maintain knowledge of MSHDA housing developments within the CoC or LPB, the availability of Project Based Vouchers within any developments, and at least quarterly contact with each development regarding availability of units.

• Assist developers to ensure that case management services are available to new units made available through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program, and if applicable, refer applicants to the Project Based Voucher waiting list.

• Ensure accessibility in each county served through established office hours

• Execute grant documents for the community’s allocation, including:

o Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CoC or LPB and with all Key Partners.

o Sign contract and applicable documents required by MSHDA.

o Initiate and execute subgrantee grants as needed.

• Assure use of funds in accordance with the grant agreement, communicating knowledge of any fraudulent activity to MSHDA and the CoC or LPB.

• Submit quarterly Financial Status Reports (FSRs) in the MATT 2.0 system.

• Submit quarterly 7001.b HMIS data reports as part of the quarterly FSR submission. MSHDA ESG Policy Manual (10/2021) Page 36 of 50

• Advise the CoC or LPB of agencies not using dollars in a timely manner to avoid loss of funds to the community and possible recapture by MSHDA.

• Evaluate the quality of services and provide oversight to funding subgrantees based upon documented outcomes and in partnership with the CoC or LPB.

• Collect and submit quarterly Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPERs) that address specific performance outcomes supported by HMIS data (domestic violence agencies use alternative system). CAPERs are submitted to MSHDA via MATT 2.0 with a copy to the CoC or LPB.

• Monitor ten percent (10%) of all participant files, as well as the financial records of subgrantees

**Eligibility Requirements:**

**HARA**

* Experience fiscal management of State and federal funds, spend down, tracking, and monitoring.
* Mission aligned organization.
* Work closely with MCHCCN on reporting requirements.
* Experience with HMIS and/or similar databases
* Experience working in health and human services field.
* Experience working with clients/community who have experienced trauma.
* Have positive working relationships with health and human services agencies in Muskegon County
* Have proven positive track record in working with Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community, Veterans, and those experiencing domestic violence.
* Have or can build landlord relationships.
* Have experience in grant writing and budgeting.
* Willing to have or have a local brick and mortar presence.

**Application Narrative:**

**Please provide a written narrative to each of the following**

1. Please describe how you will fulfill the responsibilities of the HARA including:

* Staffing
* Hours of operations
* Location(s)

2. Please demonstrate how staff will be supervised and supported.

3. Please describe in detail your organizations mission, types of programs and services offered and how homelessness programs fit within that mission.

4. Describe your agency’s experience in supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness with housing and support services.

5. Describe how you propose to address individuals and families experiencing homelessness with housing and support services as interim HARA.

6. Please describe your experience with managing programs using HUD, MSHDA and other public resources.

7. Describe your agency’ racial equity framework and/or equity strategic planning efforts to date.

8. Describe your agency’s HMIS experience.

9. How will organization ensure compliance with interim HARA program requirements. This includes:

* Financial Management System
* Participant Eligibility
* Record Keeping
* Reporting
* Timely expenditures

10. Describe any expected barriers to service and/or additional needs you might have to do this role well. (This question will not be scored)

**Needed Documents:**

* Cover Letter
* Essay responses
* Most current fiscal audit
* Agency budget
* Agency staffing chart
* Signature Page

MSHDA Additional Documents needed for Contract Due Diligence with:

* Organizational Mission Statement and Target/Service Area Map
* List of Board Directors
* Organizational Chart-including staff roster with relevant program staff
* Most recent completed financial audit
* Single Audit Certification Form (MSHDA Form)
* Conflict of Interest Certification form (MSHDA Form)
* Conflict of Interest Policy
* Fair Housing Certification Form (MSHDA Form)
* Fraud Policy
* Indirect Cost Allocation
* Proof of Liability Insurance
* Proof of Crime and Dishonesty Insurance
* Proof of SAM.gov UEI Active Status

Non-Profit Applicants:

* Most recent 990 (Corporate Tax Return)
* Current Fiscal Year Operating Budget
* Certificate of Good Standing, dated within last 12 months.
* IRS 501 (c)(3) Designation
* Articles of Incorporation
* Organizational Bylaws
* CHDO Authorization letter (if CHDO)
* Employee Status (list indicating the number of paid personnel working 35 hours pr more per week and the number of paid personnel working less than 35 hours per week)

**Schedule of Events:**

RFP Deadline: June 1

Mandatory Meeting: May 17, 2023

Notice of Award June 15, 2023

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SAMPLE

**SIGNATURE PAGE**

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Signature of Authorized Signer Date

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Contact Name (Print) Federal Tax Identification Number

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Title Agency Name

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Office Phone Number Agency Address

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Cell Phone Number City State Zip

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Contact Email County

**The above individual is authorized to sign on behalf of Agency submitting proposal.**