

Contra Costa Health, Housing, and Homeless Services Division

Request for Letters of Intent

Contra Costa Coordinated Entry Project: Antioch Library Evening CARE Center for Families Published: December 1, 2017

I. General Instructions

Contra Costa Health, Housing, and Homeless Services (H3 or “the County”) is seeking letters of intent from suitably qualified County and/or community-based providers to participate as contractors for the Contra Costa Coordinated Entry Expansion Project. **This Request for Letters of Intent will be for a winter pilot of an Evening Coordinated Assessment Resource (CARE) Center for Families at the Antioch Library.**

Applicants responding to this Request for Letters of Intent must submit a two-page letter that includes the following: a program narrative describing the operational and service delivery program, and characteristics and qualifications of applicant agency(ies). The County will fund the operation of the selected project(s) through the HUD CoC Program. **The contract period is 4 months, from January 1, 2017 through April 30, 2018.** Applicants must begin program operation immediately after signing a contract with H3.

H3 is expecting to award one contract to cover the services to be implemented through this program. Letters submitted by an agency in collaboration with other agencies will be accepted if the collaborating agencies meet the requirements outlined in this request. Any contracts awarded will be based upon the quality of the letter, organizational capacity of the applicants, and availability of funds. Depending on the number and qualifications of applicants, H3 may, after receiving approval from the H3 Director, move directly to a contract negotiation phase with selected applicant(s) or determine not to make any award.

A. Format, Delivery and Due Date

This Request and all related materials are available online at the H3 webpage:
<http://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#simpleContained3>

Please provide one electronic copy of your letter of intent as a PDF. Additional specifications:

- ✓ Written in Times New Roman in size 12 font
- ✓ Single-spaced pages
- ✓ Margins 1” on all sides
- ✓ 2-page text limit for Letter

Electronic copies of letters of intent in PDF format should be emailed to the following:

Jaime.Jenett@hsd.cccounty.us

Electronic submissions are due at the above electronic addresses by **5 pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2017**. Late letters will not be accepted and will not be reviewed. There will be no exceptions.

In order presented, letters of intent, on agency letterhead, should include the following:

1. A project narrative that includes:
 - a. Program Description: Service delivery model, how the applicant will operate and manage the project, proposed staffing and services offered, goals for program, leveraged services, etc.;
 - b. Agency Qualifications: Experience providing similar services, agency capacity; and
 - c. Budget justification: A detailed narrative description of the expenses noted in the project budget. Identify the quantity, cost, level of effort, qualifications, and reason(s) why a particular position or item is necessary for the project.
2. Additionally, applicants are requested to attach a completed budget using the budget template provided at <http://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#simpleContained3>. This is not counted as part of the two page letter.

C. Rules and Considerations

- The cost of developing and submitting a letter in response to this Request is the responsibility of the applicants and will not be reimbursed through any contracts resulting from this Request process or from any other county funds.
- H3 may issue a Request amendment to provide additional data and/or make changes or corrections. H3 may extend the letter submission date if necessary to allow applicants adequate time to consider such information and submit required data.
- The Request process may be cancelled in writing by H3 prior to award if the H3 Director determines cancellation is in the best interest of the County.
- The Request process and any contract resulting from the process may be cancelled at any time if identified funding becomes unavailable.
- Any contracts awarded as a result of this Request is subject to pending or perfected protests. The award is subject to cancellation or modification by H3 in accordance with the resolution of any such protest.
- Contractor(s) (whether by contract or county) will be required to participate, through the County, in federally mandated data collection efforts, including participation in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Selected contractor(s) must adhere to Contra Costa County's contracting process, providing all information as requested by H3. Selected contractor(s) will also be informed of the County's insurance coverage requirements, where applicable, and the process for contract approval (where applicable) by the Board of Supervisors.

D. Additional Information

This Request and all forms and materials for submitting a Letter are available on the H3 website: <http://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#simpleContained3>

H3 recognizes questions may arise about this Request for Letters of Intent. Questions and answers to questions submitted after the first posting of the LOI are available here: <http://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#simpleContained3>. **In an effort to be fair to all applicants, additional questions must be submitted in writing by 5 pm on Wednesday December 6, 2017.**

Questions and answers will be disseminated via email to all submitters as well as posted electronically to the H3 website on Thursday, December 7, 2017. Questions about this Request should be submitted in writing by email to Jaime Jenett, Continuum of Care Planning and Policy Manager: Jaime.Jenett@hsd.cccounty.us.

All letters will be reviewed promptly and H3's goal is to announce selection(s) or next steps in late December.

II. Introduction

A. About Contra Costa Health, Housing, and Homeless Services Division

The Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless Services Division’s mission is to ensure an integrated system of care from prevention through intervention for homeless individuals and families within our community. We strive to accomplish this through the development of policies and practices, community involvement, advocacy, and the coordination of services that respect human dignity, strengthen partnerships, and maximize resources.

Contra Costa H3 has helped to create a system of care that includes:

- Community Homeless Court Program
- Advocacy
- Outreach services to encampments
- Information and referral services
- Prevention and diversion resources
- Multi-service centers that provide case management and support services
- Housing navigation services
- Emergency shelter
- Transitional housing
- Rapid rehousing
- Permanent supportive housing for adults, youth, and families

B. HUD Definition of Coordinated Entry

In the CoC Program Interim Rule, HUD defines coordinated entry, which is also referred to by HUD as a centralized or coordinated assessment system:

“A centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.”

For additional information on coordinated entry, including the qualities of effective coordinated entry, applicants may review HUD’s Coordinated Entry Resource Page (available at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/responsibilities-and-duties/#coordinated-entry>).

C. Coordinated Entry as a Supporting Strategy of Forging Ahead

Click on the following hyperlink to the Continuum of Care’s 2014 strategic plan update, “Forging Ahead Towards Preventing and Ending Homelessness: An Update to Contra Costa’s 2004 Strategic Plan” (available at <http://cchealth.org/h3/pdf/2014-strategic-plan-update-Final-Draft.pdf>). The Coordinated Entry grants awarded by HUD in 2016 and 2017 address one of the strategies in Forging Ahead (see page 20 of the plan). The strategy states that the CoC will “Implement a coordinated [entry] system to streamline access to housing and services while addressing barriers, getting the right resources to the right people at the right time.” This strategy goes hand in hand with a Housing First approach, as well as the Guiding Principle articulated in the plan: “Homelessness is first a housing issue, and necessary supports

and services are critical to help people remain housed. Our system must be nimble and flexible enough to respond through the shared responsibility, accountability, and transparency of the community.”

In addition, Contra Costa has identified the following key principles for its coordinated entry system:

- **Quality Assurance:** the coordinated entry system must have a mechanism for ongoing, regular quality assurance to ensure consistency in tools, standards, and staff trainings.
- **Access** should be easy, fast, and have immediate engagement.
- **Interdependency:** the coordinated assessment system will promote interdependency
 - **Between programs**, by promoting trust about assessments, referrals, and warm handoffs, and
 - **Between programs and clients**, as clients are connected to the right intervention with choice.
- **Streamline the process** for clients and front line staff by reducing the number of times clients are asked the same questions throughout the system of care.
- **Address Barriers:** promotion of the Housing First approach, connecting the clients with the highest level of acuity to the most intensive housing and service interventions.

The Contra Costa Coordinated Entry and Coordinated Entry Expansion Projects support the full implementation of Contra Costa’s coordinated entry system as a critical strategy to meet both 2014 Strategic Plan Update goals of permanent housing and prevention, as the system will guide access to these interventions for all clients in our system of care.

D. Purpose and Background of the Contra Costa Coordinated Entry System

The Contra Costa Coordinated Entry System for homeless services launched in early 2017. The Contra Costa Continuum of Care, which includes all of the housing and homeless service providers in Contra Costa County, uses the Coordinated Entry System to engage individuals and families in housing and services. Coordinated Entry is a centralized or coordinated process designed to streamline participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. A Coordinated Entry system covers a specific geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.

The purpose of a Coordinated Entry System is to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, and connected to housing and homeless services based on their strengths and needs. It uses standardized tools and practices, incorporates a system-wide Housing First (no barriers to entry) approach, and, in an environment of scarce resources, coordinates housing support so that those with the most severe service needs are prioritized.

Implementing Coordinated Entry is a federal requirement for several federal programs under the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In Contra Costa, we have used it as an opportunity to initiate changes in our homeless response system, shifting from an ad hoc access and assessment process, to a standardized process for all clients with coordinated referrals to prevention, housing, and supportive services.

E. Contra Costa Coordinated Entry Policies & Procedures

The Contra Costa Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures were adopted by the Contra Costa Council on Homelessness on July 6, 2017, and outline important details about the system, including: purpose and

background; key principles; system overview and workflow; roles and responsibilities; access points; prioritization and matching; permanent housing match and referral; data quality and privacy; evaluation and monitoring; fair housing and marketing/advertising; and training.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review these Policies and Procedures (available here: <http://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/CES-P-and-P.pdf>) to inform their operational and service delivery design. Applicants, if selected, will be expected to comply with all outlined Policies and Procedures, including the roles and responsibilities listed for Provider Agencies participating in the Contra Costa Coordinated Entry system.

F. Coordinated Entry Supportive Services to be Provided through this Request

The following supportive services are to be contracted by H3 through this Request.

Supportive Services Category	Budget
<p>Evening CARE Center for Families at Antioch Library</p> <p>CARE Centers are the main entry point in the coordinated entry system for people experiencing homelessness, where clients can access an array of co-located services, assessments, and referrals. This request is for a temporary Evening CARE Center, in partnership with the Contra Costa Library System, to offer overnight seating and connections to basic needs and referrals at the Antioch Library. The Evening CARE Center will serve as a safe place where clients can sit in chairs, rest, stay warm, receive basic services, and receive assessments and referrals to basic needs and connections to crisis services. Placements to the Evening CARE Center will be made by the CORE Teams.</p> <p>Applicants should describe what staffing and services will be offered. Evening hours must be offered from 8 pm to 7 am, 4 days per week (M- Th). The pilot will end April 2018. There will be two weeks that the evening CARE Center will not be open due to the activities of the Friends of the Library. The awarded contractor will be notified of dates once the dates have been decided by the Friends of the Library.</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>

III. Method of Evaluation

A. Initial Screening

Letters of Intent will be screened for compliance, completeness and eligibility as they are received. In order to be reviewed, each letter must meet all of the following criteria. A failure to meet any one of these criteria will cause the letter to be disqualified. DISQUALIFIED SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE FURTHER CONSIDERED FOR THIS CONTRACT.

1. Letter was received by due date.
2. Letter is no longer than two pages.
3. Letter includes project narrative with program description, agency qualifications and budget justification.
4. Submission includes completed budget on budget template provided.

B. Selection Process

All letter submissions that meet the initial screening criteria will be reviewed by H3 and an independent panel based upon the letter’s responsiveness to this Request and the experience and qualifications of the proposed contractor. Letters will be scored in three categories: Program Narrative (30 points), Agency Qualifications (50 points) and Budget Justification (20 points). Applicants may receive follow-up communications by H3 to schedule phone interviews as needed. Selection will be finalized by the H3 Director.

V. Important Dates

Activities	Dates
Request for Letters of Intent – Posted Online	Friday, Dec. 1, 2017
Responses published to questions submitted by applicants (Must be submitted by 5 pm on Wednesday December 6, 2017)	Thursday Dec. 7, 2017
Letters of Intent Due Date	Wednesday December 13, 2017
Awardee Announcement	Late December