

**Request for Proposals
Owners/Developers of Rental Housing to Participate in
HUD Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Program**

INTRODUCTION

Through this Request for Proposals (inclusive of all attachments, this “RFP”), Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from local qualified owners and developers of affordable rental housing, who are interested in providing apartments for homeless and disabled persons receiving rental subsidy through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (“HUD’s”) Section 811 Project Rental Assistance program (the “Program”). The selected owners and developers will be required to meet all applicable fair housing, civil rights, accessibility, environmental, lead paint, and other requirements set forth in the federal regulations governing the Program and other HUD guidelines. The regulations are codified at title 24, part 891 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Program Guidelines are attached as Attachment B.

Rhode Island Housing is seeking units that will be available for occupancy beginning in approximately January 2017. Tenants will be matched with these units through an application process and waiting list to be administered by Rhode Island Housing. Please note that this RFP solicits applications for participation in a federal rental subsidy program, not for project financing.

INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals may not exceed fifteen (15) pages, single-spaced, using normal 1-inch margins and a 12-inch font. One (1) original and three (3) copies of the proposal should be submitted to Rhode Island Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903-1721, Attn: Maryrose Mensah, with an electronic courtesy copy to mmensah@rhodeislandhousing.org. Proposals must be concise and include all attachments and work samples. Proposals must be presented on business letterhead.

Proposals will be received on a rolling basis to maximize the number of units available to fulfill program requirements.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of a contract(s).

SCOPE OF WORK

Please see the Scope of Work provided at Attachment A.

ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL

A. General Firm Information

1. Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Name of the principal(s) of the firm.
 - b. Name, telephone number and email address of a representative of the firm authorized to discuss your proposal.
 - c. Address of all offices of the firm.
 - d. Number of employees of the firm.
2. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services to Rhode Island Housing. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify his or her responsibilities.
3. Provide a detailed list of references (including a contact name and telephone number) for government agencies or social service organizations with whom your firm has collaborated to expand housing opportunity for low-income persons, homeless persons, persons with disabilities, elders, persons transitioning from institutional settings, or other vulnerable populations.
4. Identify any conflict of interests that may arise as a result of business activities or ventures by your firm and associates of your firm, employees, or subcontractors as a result of any individual's status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with Rhode Island Housing.

B. Experience and Resources

1. Discuss your firm's experience and capacity working with low-income, disabled, homeless individuals and families. Please describe your firm's specific experience with rental subsidy programs (state and/or federal). Please describe your firm's capacity to meet HUD leasing, reporting, and other compliance requirements.
2. Provide a schedule of all affordable multifamily rental properties owned by your firm and your firm's affiliates. Indicate the number of apartments that are currently designated for homeless and/or disabled individuals.
3. Include a breakdown of units you are proposing for participation in the Section 811 PRA program, which includes: the number of units available at each development, the number of bedrooms for each of the units, whether each unit is handicapped accessible, the total number of units in the development, and proof of rent reasonableness.

4. Provide details on the surrounding neighborhood for the units proposed for participation in the Program. In particular, please describe community amenities such as jobs, transportation, recreation, retail services, health care, and social services.
5. State the date upon which the proposed units will be available for lease.
6. To the extent applicable, indicate any current rent restrictions (e.g. HOME, Low Income Housing Tax Credit) affecting the property.
7. Discuss any current partnerships that your agency may have with supportive service providers. How long has each partnership been in place? What are the roles of the partners in these efforts? What are some of the tangible benefits that have emerged from the partnerships?

C. Miscellaneous

1. Rhode Island Housing encourages the participation of persons of color, women, persons with disabilities and members of other federally and State-protected classes. Describe your firm's affirmative action program and activities. If your firm is a Minority or Women Owned Business Enterprise, please include a copy of certification from the State of Rhode Island.
2. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to Rhode Island Housing's attention.

D. Certifications

1. Rhode Island Housing insists upon full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors. This law requires State Vendors entering into contracts to provide services to an agency such as Rhode Island Housing, for the aggregate sum of \$5,000 or more, to file an affidavit with the State Board of Elections concerning reportable political contributions. The affidavit must state whether the State Vendor (and any related parties as defined in the law) has, within 24 months preceding the date of the contract, contributed an aggregate amount in excess of \$250 within a calendar year to any general officer, any candidate for general office, or any political party.
2. Does any Rhode Island "Major State Decision-maker," as defined below, or the spouse or dependent child of such person, hold (i) a ten percent or greater equity interest, or (ii) a Five Thousand Dollar or greater cash interest in this business?

For purposes of this question, “Major State Decision-maker” means:

(i) All general officers; and all executive or administrative head or heads of any state executive agency enumerated in § 42-6-1 as well as the executive or administrative head or heads of state quasi-public corporations, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;

(ii) All members of the general assembly and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state legislative agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;

(iii) All members of the state judiciary and all state magistrates and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state judicial agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, chief of staff or state court administrator.

If your answer is “Yes,” please identify the Major State Decision-maker, specify the nature of their ownership interest, and provide a copy of the annual financial disclosure required to be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission pursuant to R.I.G.L. §§36-14-16, 17 and 18.

3. Please include a letter from your President, Chairman or CEO certifying that (i) no member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this Request for Proposals other than in an email or written communication to Maryrose Mensah at mmensah@rhodeislandhousing.org seeking clarification on the Scope of Work set forth in this proposal, from the date of this RFP through the date of your proposal, (ii) no member of your firm will make any such inquiry or contact with regard to this proposal, (iii) all information in your proposal is true and correct to the best of her/his knowledge, (iv) no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to a Rhode Island Housing employee or Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person’s action or judgment will be influenced and (v) your firm is in full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A selection committee consisting of Rhode Island Housing employees (the “Committee”) will review all proposals and make a determination based on the following factors:

- Professional capacity to provide the Scope of Work
- Previous experience serving low-income, disabled, homeless persons and families (or other vulnerable populations)
- Previous experience with federal or state rental subsidy programs
- Extent to which the proposed units (number, size, location, etc.) meet the anticipated demands of the Program
- Previous/current partnerships with Rhode Island Housing and/or other government agencies or social service organizations
- Recommendations by references
- Firm minority status and affirmative action program or activities
- Other pertinent information submitted

Rhode Island Housing may invite one or more finalists to make presentations.

In its sole discretion, Rhode Island Housing may negotiate with one or more firms who have submitted qualifications to submit more detailed proposals on specific projects as they arise.

By this Request for Proposals, Rhode Island Housing has not committed itself to undertake the project set forth. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to rebid the original or amended scope of services and to enter into negotiations with one or more respondents. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. Rhode Island Housing’s decision on these matters is final.

For additional information contact: Maryrose Mensah, Section 811 Program Coordinator, at mmensah@rhodeislandhousing.org.

Attachment A

Scope of Work

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from local qualified owners and developers of affordable rental housing, who are interested in providing apartments for homeless and disabled persons receiving rental subsidy through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (“HUD’s”) Section 811 Project Rental Assistance program (the “Program”). The selected owners and developers will be required to meet all applicable fair housing, civil rights, accessibility, environmental, lead paint, and other requirements set forth in the federal regulations governing the Program and other HUD guidelines. The regulations are codified at title 24, part 891 of the Code of Federal Regulations (the “Program Regulations”). HUD’s Section 811 Program Guidelines are attached hereto as Attachment B. Participating owners will receive rental subsidies for units dedicated to the Program, in accordance with the Program Regulations. Subsidies will be processed and administered by Rhode Island Housing.

Rhode Island Housing is seeking units that will be available for occupancy beginning in approximately January 2017. Tenants will be matched with these units through an application process and waiting list to be administered by Rhode Island Housing.

Background

The Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Program is an initiative of HUD that assists extremely low-income people with disabilities to live independently in the community by providing rental subsidies linked with voluntary supportive services. The Program is operated by state housing agencies in collaboration with state Medicaid and health and human services organizations. In Rhode Island, the Program will be operated by Rhode Island Housing in collaboration with the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH).

In March 2015, Rhode Island Housing received an award of approximately \$5.6 million, which funding is anticipated to provide project-based assistance for 150 units statewide for 5 years. Renewal funding is expected to support rental subsidies for these units for an additional 15 years. This RFP solicits applications from owners and developers of rental housing to provide the units that will be supported by these Program rental subsidies.

General Program Description

Program subsidies are project-based and remain with the housing unit at tenant turnover. Assisted individuals/families contribute 30% of their monthly household income towards rent, in accordance with the Program Regulations and other HUD rules, and the Program subsidy covers the balance.

Tenant Eligibility

- Tenants must be extremely low-income (at or below 30 percent of the median income for the area);
- At least one adult member of the household must have a disability;
- At least one person in the assisted household must be non-elderly (ages 18-61);
- Tenants must have the ability to fulfill the lease requirements with reasonable accommodation (if applicable); and
- The household member with the disability must belong to one of the following target populations:
 - Individuals living in institutional settings who
 - Have been identified by the Nursing Home Transition Program (NHTP), Money Follows the Person (MFP) Program, or Managed Care Organization (MCO) as appropriate for safe transition; or
 - Reside in a mental health or psychiatric rehabilitative residence; or
 - High users of Medicaid services who are also homeless and who have applied for and been placed on Rhode Island's Universal Waitlist.

Services to Tenants

Selected owners and developers will be required to facilitate the provision of services to the tenants participating in the Program, although they will not be required to provide these services directly. Rather, Rhode Island Housing has entered into an agreement with BHDDH and EOHHS to provide services, such as case management, transportation, employment support, support for development independent living skills, mental health services, connection to Medicaid services, and assistance obtaining appropriate medical care. Program participants may choose to participate in these services, but will not be required to do so.

Eligibility Requirements for Developments and Units

The Program provides rental assistance to affordable housing developments financed with federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME funds, or other governmental funding sources. Section 811 rental assistance may be used in a development that already contains some project-based units or other long term operating assistance, but cannot be used for units that already receive a project-based or long-term operating subsidy (or have received any such subsidy within the previous 6 months).

The selected development owners will provide primarily one bedroom and efficiency units for leasing in connection with the Program. Rhode Island Housing will also consider studio and single room occupancy (SRO) units. It is preferable that properties offer some two-bedroom units to accommodate tenants' needs. The final unit mix will be approved by Rhode Island Housing based on demand. It is also preferable that properties provide access

to community amenities such jobs, transportation, recreation, retail services, health care, and social services.

Requirements for Owners

- Owners must sign the following agreements with Rhode Island Housing to participate in the Program:
 - Agreement to Enter into a Section 811 Rental Assistance Contract that commits the owner to participate in the Program with respect to a particular development (for new construction projects only).
 - Rental Assistance Contract (RAC) providing for rental assistance payments for specified units for a period of 20 years. Rhode Island Housing has the ability to modify the number of Program-assisted units in the RAC as the needs of the Program change over time.
 - Use Agreement that restricts a specific number of units for use by extremely low-income persons with disabilities for a minimum of 30 years.
- Rhode Island Housing has the ability to terminate the RAC and/or Use Agreement if Congress does not authorize funding beyond the initial five-year period. Rhode Island Housing does not intend to enforce a RAC or Use Agreement if Congress fails to appropriate funds adequate to meet the financial needs of covered units.
- Owners must use HUD's Section 811 model lease.
- Owners must obtain access to HUD's Secure Systems. HUD requires the use of the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system to verify tenant household income.

Inspections

Owners must permit Program-supported units to undergo periodic physical inspections consistent with Uniform Physical Construction Standards, as required by HUD. To the extent feasible, Rhode Island Housing will align these inspections with those required for other programs.

Tenant Referral

Rhode Island Housing will perform marketing and tenant outreach for the Section 811 Program, and qualify applicants for Program eligibility. Rhode Island Housing will maintain the applicant waiting list and refer applicants to property owners/managers when a vacancy is anticipated. Owners/managers are responsible for screening tenants for occupancy in accordance with their Tenant Selection Plans. Owners/managers are responsible for maintaining a Tenant Selection Plan that complies with the Program Regulations, other applicable HUD requirements, as well as local, state, and federal laws and ordinances.

Environmental Requirements

The Program does not impose additional environmental requirements for properties that are already HUD-assisted or HUD-insured (provided that there are no physical changes beyond routine maintenance and minimal repairs); however, properties that are not already HUD-assisted or HUD-insured must demonstrate that they are free of hazardous materials, contamination, toxic chemicals and gases, and radioactive substances, where a hazard could affect health and safety or conflict with the property's intended use. To satisfy this

requirement, projects must submit the following prior to the execution of a rental assistance contract: Phase I environmental Site Assessment, or certify that the site (i) is not listed on an EPA Superfund National Priorities, CERCLA or equivalent list; (ii) is not located within 3,000 feet of a toxic or solid waste landfill site; (iii) does not have an underground storage tank other than a residential fuel tank; and (iv) is not known or suspected to be contaminated by toxic chemicals or radioactive materials.

Serving Individuals with Disabilities

Owners and property managers must comply with all applicable fair housing and civil rights statutes, regulations and ordinances. Tenant referrals and screening processes must comply with Rhode Island Housing's Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan. Rhode Island Housing, EOHHS, and/or BHDDH can provide coaching, information, and materials to participating property management staff in support of their efforts to improve customer service for persons with disabilities and develop cultural competency.

The Program provides a robust service platform for tenants who wish to participate. Rhode Island Housing, EOHHS and BHDDH are committed to ensuring that service providers are available to individuals and families receiving Section 811 rental assistance. While owners are not required to provide these services directly, they must cooperate with Rhode Island Housing, EOHHS, BHDDH, and their agents to support the delivery of services.

Only upon receipt of a tenant's written permission may a property manager communicate with the tenant's case manager, counselor, or other service provider about the tenant. No Section 811 tenant may be denied admission for choosing not to provide such written permission. If a property manager chooses to develop a form for this purpose, the form must indicate that it is optional.

Unit Damage

Owners may collect a security deposit in the amount of one month of the tenant's portion of the contract rent or \$50, whichever is greater. Program funds may not be used to reimburse owners for unit damages. Owners may collect any charges for unit damage that federal or state law allows. An owner may deduct amounts owed by the family from a security deposit, consistent with local law, but any remaining balance must be refunded to the family or Rhode Island Housing, when applicable

Payment Process

Owners must submit monthly electronic requisitions through HUD's computerized Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System ("TRACS"). Owners must make their electronic submissions into TRACS using standard HUD forms, following all HUD manuals and practice guides. Requisition requests must be entered into TRACS by the 10th day of each month in order to secure payment for the following month. Rhode Island Housing will require owners to participate in direct deposit for the purpose of subsidy payments.

Special Claims

Rhode Island Housing will provide vacancy payments for covered units for owners that have signed RACs, during initial lease-up and thereafter. Special claims for vacancy payments may not exceed 80 percent of the contract rent for up to 60 days of vacancy.

Compliance with HUD Rules and Regulations

Selected owners and developers will be required to comply with the Program Regulations and all applicable HUD rules and guidance with respect to the Program. As a result, the selected owners and developers must have read and have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Program Regulations, the Program Guidelines at Attachment B, and other HUD requirements. By submitting an application responsive to this RFP, an owner or developer certifies that the units proposed to be supported with Program subsidies are eligible under the Program, and meet all applicable affordability, energy, environmental, lead-based paint, labor standards, accessibility, fair housing, and other criteria.

For additional information contact: Maryrose Mensah at mmensah@rhodeislandhousing.org.

Attachment B

Program Guidelines

(Refer to document titled Exhibit 5 of the Cooperative Agreement)