



Allegheny County
Department of
Human Services

RFP for Residential Programs for Child Welfare-Involved Youth

Information Session

Thursday, November 13, 2025

Allegheny County Department of Human Services



Agenda

Welcome

Aaron Thomas - *Procurement, Office of Administration (OA), DHS*

RFP for Residential Programs for Child Welfare-Involved Youth

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RFP Process, Evaluation and Timeline

Questions

Why issue the RFP?

In child welfare cases requiring home removal, DHS works to ensure that children and youth:

- Are placed in the most appropriate and least-restrictive (most family-like) setting.
- Experience stability in that placement.
- Achieve permanency as quickly as possible.

To achieve these goals for older youth—including those with complex needs—we are seeking:

1) A shelter

- To ensure youth have access to safe placements, immediately.

2) A short-term residential diagnostic program

- To increase the flow of youth from shelters to more appropriate settings.

3) An intensive residential program

- We fill a system gap for youth who require 24/7 supervised care.
- We provide an option for youth who need an interim step down from an RTF or the hospital.

4) Transitional Living Residences (TLR)

- Fill a system gap for youth aged 16-21 who are not ready for the level of independence in existing Independent Living placements.

What are we looking for?

First: A short-term, 24/7 shelter with 4-8 beds (up to 4 girls and 4 boys) for youth aged 13 to 19 in need of placement while DHS determines a longer-term solution.

- We want a shelter so we can provide safe placements, quickly, and meet emergency needs. The need for emergency placement may arise for several reasons, including home removal, a delay in the identification of family members or kin, or a delay in bed availability in an approved residential program. At the time of placement in a shelter, youth are either:
 - 1) Under an Emergency Custody Authorization (ECA) and not yet declared dependent
 - 2) Declared dependent and awaiting longer-term placement.
- In FY 23-24 (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024), an average of 33 youth each month needed an emergency placement, but a shelter placement was unavailable. These youth may have had to travel to an out-of-county facility or even wait in a nonresidential setting (e.g., a respite location) until a placement was available. Our goal is to increase in-County shelter capacity, so these scenarios do not occur.

Length of stay: Shelter stays are intended to be temporary and short (i.e., not exceeding 30 days). Based on our previous experience with this type of service, we estimate that youth will stay at the shelter for as little as one day to a maximum of three months, with an average length of stay of 27 days.

What are we looking for?

Second: A short-term, 6 to 12-bed (up to 6 boys, up to 6 girls) residential diagnostic program for youth aged 13 to 19 that offers multiple types of comprehensive evaluation to inform youth placement and service planning.

- We want a residential diagnostic program to help improve the flow of youth from shelters to more appropriate settings.
- Some teens with complex needs remain in shelter longer than necessary due to a lack of clinical understanding of a youth's mental health and substance use needs and the type of treatment or placement most appropriate for them.
- This difficulty can be compounded when youth have a co-occurring intellectual disability and/or autism diagnosis. A short-term residential diagnostic program can quickly provide a comprehensive clinical picture and treatment recommendations.

Length of stay: 45-90 days, based on the number and type of evaluations completed.

What are we looking for?

Third: A 6 to 12-bed (up to 6 boys, up to 6 girls) intensive residential program for youth aged 13 to 19 that provides access to on-site mobile treatment services to support youth who need a step down from a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) or youth with deep trauma histories and behavioral issues. We hope the program will do the following:

- Fill a system gap for youth who require 24/7 supervised care. When youth have deep trauma histories and behavioral issues, they need an intensive residential placement that provides access to on-site mobile treatment services.
- Provide an option for youth who need an interim step down from an RTF or the hospital. While our goal is to transition youth to a family setting whenever possible, sometimes teens exiting an RTF or hospital setting are not quite ready for that step, or their family (or a Therapeutic Foster family) may not be ready to support the child at home. This intensive residential service will provide access to mobile or community-based treatment services while supporting the long-term goals of the youth.
- Improve the flow of youth from shelters to a more appropriate setting. Some youth with complex needs linger in shelters for too long because an appropriate intensive residential placement bed is not available. In FY 23-24, although the median length of stay was three weeks and the average length of stay was five weeks, 24 stays lasted three or more months. These youth may have been better served in an intensive residential program.

Length of stay: Based on our previous experience with this type of service, we estimate that the length of stay will range from six to nine months.

What are we looking for?

Fourth: Up to four Transitional Living Residences (TLR), a home or living unit for up to four youth per residence, for youth aged 16-21 who can live in a semi-independent living setting with 24/7 supervision but are not yet ready for the level of independence in a Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program. DHS seeks 8-16 beds (up to 8 boys, up to 8 girls) across up to four residences for up to four youth per residence.

- We want a TLR to help fill a system gap for youth aged 16-21 who are not ready for the level of independence in existing Independent Living placements, such as a Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program, because they have complex needs.

Length of stay: Up to 12 months, based on the youth's needs, to allow sufficient time to build the skills youth need to live in a more independent setting.

What are our expected outcomes?

- **The Successful Proposer(s) will design and operate the service(s) to achieve the following outcomes:**
 - 1. Shelter**
 - Maintain a high rate of program acceptance (low rate of denials).
 - Prepare youth for successful longer-term placement or reunification with family and/or—for older youth—living independently.
 - 2. Residential Diagnostic**
 - Maintain a high rate of program acceptance (low rate of denials).
 - Provide a clear clinical profile and related treatment recommendations.
 - Provide placement recommendation, as appropriate.
 - 3. Intensive Residential**
 - Maintain a high rate of program acceptance (low rate of denials).
 - Connect or re-engage youth with mental health and/or substance use treatment. While this intensive residential program will not be a treatment program, one goal of the program is to engage youth in voluntary treatment within three months of admission.
 - Prepare youth for successful reunification with family and/or—for older youth—living independently.
 - Prevent reentry into care within one year of exit.
 - 4. Transitional Living Residence (TLR)**
 - Build independent living skills for youth o Prepare youth for a successful transition to a more independent/less restrictive living setting.
 - Connect or re-engage youth with mental health and/or substance use treatment. While the TLR will not be a treatment program, one goal of the program is to engage youth in voluntary treatment within three months of admission.

RFP Process, Evaluation and Timeline

Responding to a Request for Proposals (RFP)



Read the RFP carefully, noting due dates

1. The RFP and all corresponding documents can be found on our [Active Solicitations Webpage](#) and on our [DHS Bonfire Portal](#).



Complete the Response Form, stay within page limits



Prepare the required documents listed in the RFP:

1. Form for Allegheny County's Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (or MWDBE) program.
2. Forms for Allegheny County's Veteran-Owned Small Business (or VOSB) program.
3. W-9



Create a free account on the [DHS Bonfire Portal](#)

Select **Login/Register** and then **New Vendor Registration**.



Submit your response

1. Under **Submissions**, select **Create Submission**.
2. Upload and submit your completed response form and other required materials by the due date.

Helpful Tips for Responding to an RFP

Check our Active Solicitations Webpage often or create an account on our [DHS Bonfire Portal](#).

All information for this RFP will be communicated through [Bonfire](#) as soon as it's available for the public.

Updates are made on the [Active Solicitations Webpage](#) every Thursday.

A diverse Evaluation Committee will review proposals

Be very detailed and take advantage of page counts.

Follow instructions and answer every part of a question.

Ask questions!

Reach out through Bonfire's Vendor Discussion feature.

You can also email DHSProposals@AlleghenyCounty.US

Contracting with the Successful Proposer(s)

Successful Proposers will receive a Notice of Intent to Award

Any award is contingent on successful negotiation of the budget, final contract terms and the completion of the County's internal Executive Action and MWDBE and VOSB approval processes.

If you are a New Provider, you must complete a New Provider Application

This includes, but is not limited to:

**Board Member Contact Information, if applicable*

**2 years of audited financial statements or other financial documentation*

**3 letters of support*

Contract document collection and negotiation begin

Contracts and Fiscal will reach out to collect required documentation, if necessary.

Program leads will reach out to begin discussing project specifics and negotiate the final budget and contract terms.

RFP Timeline

Event	Date
Info session & slides posted to website	Tuesday, November 25 at 6 p.m. Eastern
Questions deadline	Friday, November 28 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Last website and Q&A update	Thursday, December 4 at 6 p.m. Eastern
Submission deadline	Thursday, December 11 at 3 p.m. Eastern
Estimate award decision/notification	May 2026

Q&A

**Thank you for attending our RFP
information session!**

You may type your questions in the chat
or unmute yourself to ask your question orally.

All answers given orally are preliminary.

Final answers will be posted in writing on our
website.



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