



COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Kathleen Torella, Director

**Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health
(Administrative Services Organization), SCR BH (ASO)**

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Youth Behavioral Health Text-Line Engagement Pilot Program

Effective May 5, 2021, an RFP is being released to provide Mental health Block Grant (MHBG) and Dedicated Marijuana Account (DMA) funded services for middle and high school age youth in the six (6) county Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA) through a pilot program dedicated to providing Behavioral Health Screening, Brief Intervention, and referral services via a youth text/call line beginning no later than July 1, 2021. The Spokane RSA is comprised of six (6) counties; Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens counties, (five (5) of these counties are considered frontier rural communities that have unique geographical and technological challenges).

Background: Behavioral Health treatment needs amongst youth and adolescents is on the rise, with a marked increase in substance use involvement, youth suicide, and crisis system engagement, as well as involvement in high acuity services (inpatient psychiatric visits, emergency room visits, etc.). The heightened need for Behavioral Health outreach and engagement services for youth living at or below the two hundred twenty percent (220%) of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) without Medicaid insurance coverage, and youth who are seeking services independent of their parent/guardian was identified in 2020, in part due to impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and remains a need today. A Contractor will be solicited to provide youth Behavioral Health text/call line services that are staffed with a full-time Behavioral Health intervention specialist and certified youth peers. They will provide engagement, outreach, and brief intervention services, along with referrals to Spokane RSA behavioral health providers. This pilot program is meant to enhance existing text/call line platforms, and not to develop an entirely new entity with all the necessary technical capabilities and platforms to satisfy the pilot project requirements from the ground up.

Funding:

This pilot project will be funded by the SCR BH (ASO) through the combination of Designated Marijuana Account (DMA) and Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) funds. By incorporating MHBG and DMA funds together, the pilot project seeks to ensure an integrated behavioral health response to address both the substance use needs, and the identified mental health needs of youth accessing the service. Recognizing co-occurring issues account for



approximately 60-70% of all reported youth behavioral health needs (Turner, Muck, Muck, Stephens, & Sukumar, 2004), this allows for a more holistic and therapeutic approach in addressing the whole needs of youth, without being limited to a specific treatment scope.

Although the primary purpose of the funding will be used for the hiring and training of staff to ensure the provision of services; funds may be used for the development, implementation, maintenance, and program evaluation to support intervention and treatment/recovery support services for middle-school and high-school aged students. As a pilot project, the focus of the project should include the development and implementation of practices that are cost effective and produce objectively measurable results. Service provision and outcome data will be collected and utilized to determine future funding provision and more accurately reflect the regional needs of youth.

The contract award's targeted start date is July 1, 2021. The pilot program will operate for one State Fiscal Year, then be evaluated for renewal on an annual basis thereafter.

Scope of Services:

Scope of services include daily behavioral health youth text/call line services for a minimum of eight (8) hours a day, five (5) days a week during hours that are best suited for youth engagement, with message services during non-covered hours. Behavioral health text/call line services will include substance use and mental health engagement, suicide prevention, peer support services, and treatment referral services to community behavioral health providers.

Services will be provided by a minimum of one (1) full-time Behavioral Health Intervention Specialist and two (2) or more Certified Youth Peers depending on call volume. The Behavioral Health Intervention Specialist will be, at minimum, SUD credentialed and must have a Mental Health Professional (MHP) designation. Both the Interventionist and Youth Peers will have history and lived experience in the Spokane RSA and preferably reside in the Spokane RSA. Youth Peers will have lived behavioral health experience, with lived experience in frontier rural communities preferred.

These services will include outreach and engagement services following the Evidence Based (EB) treatment model of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) to Spokane RSA behavioral health providers. Providers will implement a uniform SBIRT self-assessment screening tool to be made available in a platform accessible to youth and sufficient to identify the youth's behavioral health needs and potential safety risks. The screening tool must be in a language understandable to youth, screen for mental health and substance use needs, and identify areas of strength and supports. The "Check Yourself" screening tool developed by Seattle Children's Hospital and the University of Washington with Tickit Health will be used as model for this implementation.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) Tip 60 protocols will be utilized as a guidance for the implementation of technology based therapeutic tools, in conjunction with SBIRT evidence-based practice modalities. Raintree reporting data and monthly narrative reports will be objectively measured and utilized for ongoing improvement. The text/call line will be actively promoted on social media, websites, through partnerships with local schools, community organizations where youth frequent, behavioral health providers, medical facilities, local clinics, youth crisis/resource centers, youth/family homeless shelters, Family, Youth, System Partners Round Table (FYSPRT), and any other avenue appropriate to reach target youth.

Reporting Requirements:

The provider will be required to submit service and encounter data into the SCRBH (ASO) data tracking system, Raintree. Reporting will include:

1. Demographic and Engagement data (to provide ability to count unique individuals served, the length of time the client is served (from and through dates), and the types of referrals)
2. Service Encounter data (identifies the type of service provided, and allow the capture of minutes of service if applicable, allowing for obtaining service metrics)

In addition to demographic and service encounter data submitted via the Raintree system, the provider will also provide a monthly narrative (due the 15th of the following month) describing the efforts to outreach youth & community stakeholders in the Spokane RSA, challenges faced, efforts to overcome challenges, and accomplishments.

Provider Eligibility: Applicants will be considered if they meet the following requirements:

1. The provider must be currently licensed with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) as a Behavioral Health Agency (BHA) able to provide SUD and mental health services;
2. The target population for this program is middle and high school age youth (ages 13 to 18), with self-reporting substance use issues or concerns. The applicant must have a history of providing outreach services, with preference for those with experience providing SBIRT for the focus population.
3. The provider must be able to fill the BH clinician and certified peer support positions and provide the necessary supervision and oversight to ensure a successful program;
4. The provider must be able to meet all pilot project requirements of an awarded contract with SCRBH (ASO), including the reporting requirements.
5. Proposals must follow all guidelines and be received no later than **June 4th, 2021**.

Proposal Content Requirements: Items in the Proposal Content Requirement section below marked "Mandatory" must be included as part of the proposal to be considered responsive. These items are reviewed by select members of SCRBH (ASO) Administration and Finance

leadership and/or staff. Items marked “Scored” are those that are awarded points as part of an evaluative review conducted by a scoring panel of SCRBH (ASO) staff and community stakeholders who have signed a “No Conflict of Interest” statement. Failure to answer each requirement may cause the proposal to be deemed non-responsive and be disqualified from further consideration.

Required Attachments (Mandatory):

1. Declaration Form (ATTACHMENT A);
2. Budget Worksheet (ATTACHMENT B); and
3. Narrative Response (ATTACHMENT C).

Narrative Response (Scored): Interested agencies are asked to provide a narrative proposal that responds to the following requests (use ATTACHMENT C):

1. Describe your agency’s current SUD outreach experience and expertise in connecting with middle and high school age youth at or below the Two-Hundred and Twenty percent (220%) FPL, including any developed partnerships or collaborations with organizations in the Spokane RSA that serve this population in some capacity.
2. Detail your agency’s capability to hire staff for each position prior to July 1, 2021.
3. Outline your organizational experience in the implementation of evidence-based and evidence supported practices for the priority population and describe your current capacity to track and report outcomes to evaluate this work.
4. Describe how your agency will incorporate cultural competency approaches, inclusion and transition age youth culture which address youth/young adult choice and are person-centered.
5. Explain your agency’s experience managing call center services. Include average answer time and abandonment rates.
6. How will your agency identify Non-Medicaid youth and assist eligible youth to apply for Apple Health Plan Medicaid benefits?
7. Describe how your agency will meet the contract’s reporting requirements and your agency’s prior experience in submitting reports and data electronically to a contract funder?
8. Describe how your agency has incorporated Peer Support Services into your service delivery model. Please identify successes, barriers, and/or any other challenges that your agency has identified.
9. Provide a budget proposal, utilizing the attached budget worksheet (ATTACHMENT B), outlining how funds will be allocated in order to support the program as well as to ensure funding is allocated to only cover expenses incurred specifically for the program.

Scoring Details: The Narrative Response Scoring Worksheet is utilized by the scoring panel and provided as an attachment with this RFI for informational purposes.

General Information and Application Requirements.

Contact Information: All inquiries shall be directed to the Solicitation Coordinator via email by 4:30 pm (PST) on **May 19, 2021**. All questions and answers will be posted on the SCRBH (ASO) website at the following link: <https://www.spokanecounty.org/4811/RFPRFIRFLI>.

Solicitation Coordinator:

SCRBH (ASO) Contracts Department
Spokane County Community Services, Housing, and
Community Development Department
1116 W. Broadway Avenue
Spokane, WA 99260
Email: SCRBHContracts@SpokaneCounty.org

Instructions, Forms, and Other Documents: The application instructions, forms, and other documents are in a combination of Microsoft Word and Excel formats and can be printed from the website. If you are unable to open and/or print any of these documents, you may contact the Solicitation Coordinator listed above under *Contact Information* to make arrangements to receive paper copies of these documents.

Amendments to Solicitation: The SCRBH (ASO) reserves the right to issue amendments to this Solicitation for clarification, substitution, addition or deletion. Applicants are strongly advised to check the website periodically to see if amendments have been posted.

Cancellation: This RFI does not convey a commitment to award a contract. Spokane County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or to cancel this Solicitation at any time if the cancellation is deemed to be in Spokane County's best interest. In no event, shall Spokane County have any liability for the cancellation of this Solicitation, or for any expenses incurred by any bidder in connection with the selection process.

Proposal Revisions and Review: The SCRBH (ASO) may find it necessary to seek clarification from applicants regarding any of the responses submitted. The SCRBH (ASO) may, at its discretion, request that applicants submit additional information in order to permit a more informed evaluation of the application. Oral presentations may be required of those prospective contractors whose proposals are under consideration. If so, prospective contractors may be informed that an oral presentation is desired and will be notified of the date, time and location of the oral presentation. In addition, the SCRBH (ASO) may require site visits to assess physical space for programming, fund accountability, contract compliance and program performance.

Solicitation Awards: All applicants will be notified by both postal mail and email regarding the status of their proposal, whether it is accepted or denied. Selection and ranking does not constitute a contract and does not guarantee or obligate SCRBH (ASO) to negotiate with all applicants that are selected and ranked as "most advantageous." In the event that SCRBH (ASO) elects to pursue contract negotiations with an applicant but finds that the

negotiations are not in the best interest of the County, SCR BH (ASO) may suspend or terminate such negotiations. At SCR BH (ASO)'s sole option and in no specified order, it may enter into negotiations with any of the other applicants. In addition, SCR BH (ASO) may elect to negotiate solely with the applicant ranked in first position, or alternatively, the SCR BH (ASO) may elect to negotiate with more than one applicant.

Property of Spokane County: Any application submitted becomes the property of the SCR BH (ASO) and will not be returned to the applicant.

Public Information Requests: The SCR BH (ASO) is a division under the Spokane County Community Services, Housing, and Community Development (CSHCD) Department, and CSHCD is a department within Spokane County. Spokane County, as a governmental entity, is required by law to respond to all requests for public records. Any bidder to this RFI is on notice that the following documents may be released in the event of a Public Records Request (PRR) surrounding this RFI: Original RFI documents prepared by a contractor, scoring results, questions submitted to the SCR BH (ASO), email communication and/or any executed contracts.

Dispute Resolution: The SCR BH (ASO) encourages the use of informal resolution to address complaints or disputes arising over any actions in implementing the provision of this RFI. Written complaints should be addressed to Justin D. Johnson, Assistant Director, 1116 W. Broadway Avenue, Spokane, WA 99260.

Beneficial Interest Disclosure Statement: In accordance with RCW 42.23, all bidders must disclose any and all personal relatives, or any relatives of the bidder's employees or subcontractors, who are presently employed by Spokane County, or who stand to realize any financial gain or beneficial interest, if this contract is awarded to the bidder or any Subcontractor of the bidder for the work.

Debarment: The bidder certifies that it is not presently debarred, suspended, ineligible for, or otherwise excluded from participation in Federal Assistance programs under Executive Order 12549, Title 31 U.S. Code 6101 Note, Executive Order 12689, Title 48 CFR 9.404 "Debarment and Suspension." Furthermore, the bidder certifies that the agency will not contract with a Subcontractor that is likewise debarred, suspended, ineligible for, or otherwise excluded, as referenced in the foregoing Executive Orders, USC, and CFR's.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL:

- Use 12-point font, black, double-spaced narratives with one-inch margins;
- Include your organization's name as a header on all pages of the application response;
- Insert page numbers at the bottom of each page;
- There is no minimum or maximum number of pages for the entire response;

- Unnecessarily elaborate responses beyond that sufficient to present a complete and effective response are not desired;
- Proposal applications that are incomplete or do not follow the guidelines described in the “Proposal Content Requirements” section will not be considered;
- All questions must be answered;
- All required attachments must be included (please see page 4); and
- Submit the proposal electronically to the email provided below.

Delivery of the Proposal: The proposal must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. (PST) on Friday, June 4th, 2021. Direct the proposal to:

Justin D. Johnson, Assistant Director
Spokane County Community Services, Housing,
and Community Development Department
1116 W. Broadway Avenue
Spokane, WA 99260

Submit all proposals electronically to jdjohnson@spokanecounty.org.

Proposals received after 4:30 p.m. (PST) on Friday, June 4th, 2021 will be disqualified from consideration under this Solicitation.