

**RFA 003-Domestic Violence Shelter 2021-NPS
Official Questions and Answers**

**All questions should be directed to the RFA Authorized Contact Person:
Natasha.Ponczek@austintexas.gov or in the Partnergrants database by no later than March 25, 2021
at 9 AM CST.**

Last Update by NPS: March 23, 2021

Questions	Answers
Is there a laundry facility on-site?	Yes, there are 2 commercial washers and 2 commercial dryers located on the first floor. In addition, each floor will have a laundry room with 2-3 guest laundry units.
Is there an outside recreation area?	We are adding an outdoor gathering space area, which will include covered tables and a playscape.
Is there any expectation there will be increased security/gate as part of renovation or does current structure seem sufficient?	We are planning on including a secure area vestibule once you reach the building. Visitors and guests will be let in through security, and are in the building. Security cameras will be added as part of facility – interior and exterior. This will all be part of the security upgrades to the building.
Is the security upgrade part of renovation plan?	Yes this is part of renovation plan, which will be paid for by the City. In addition, there is \$100k allocated in the first year for additional renovations for agency to determine use in the application.
Will there be patrol in parking lot?	The site will be secure – as part of the security upgrades, a perimeter fence with gating and exterior cameras will be added.
Is the \$2 million the renewal amount?	Yes the \$2 million is renewable; the \$100k is one-time.
What is occupancy date of shelter?	At this point, we are in the early stages of design and planning of the renovations and construction. We expect to be ready for occupancy in 18-24 months from now, March 2021. The application includes a question for agencies to address what you will use the first 1-2 years funding for in the event that the facility is not ready to be occupied.
What is final or ideal occupancy?	We are planning for 70 units at end of project. Currently, the building has 75 units, but some of those units will be renovated for common spaces such as the computer and game rooms.
Is the building already wired for WiFi?	Yes, the building is already WiFi enabled.
Will the residents be responsible for cleaning for these rooms?	This is something that the agency will need to work out. The awarded agency will be responsible for the administration and maintenance of the building. The City can provide some services as needed such as addressing structural issues.

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Were there no other facilities available that had fewer required renovations?	The direction provided to City staff was to use a building that the City already owned. In addition, please note that there will always be some sort of delay due to change of occupancy and renovations, regardless of building purchased.
With the commercial kitchen, is there a dining space? What is the capacity of dining space? What is capacity of commercial kitchen?	We are planning for 20 cooking stations in the commercial kitchen, which is capacity for 20 families to cook at the same time. The kitchen will open up to a dining space, integrated into the lobby area. After families have finished cooking, they can eat in the dining area. There will be group and individual seating.
Where is commercial kitchen located?	The commercial kitchen will be located on ground floor with dining/seating area.
Is the funding allocated across categories such as percentages for services, operations, etc?	No, we do not have funding allocations with designated percentages. The program Budget and Narrative form reflects different categories that we have in our normal reimbursement-based contract, which this will be.
Will there be startup funding at outset?	No, there will not be startup funding.
When will the facility be accepting households? The grant start date is May 15.	Unfortunately we are expecting that facility will not be occupied for at least 18 months.
Is there guidance for what should be spending funds on for first 18 months?	There is a number of services listed in application that are eligible for agencies to spend funding on during first year. There is a question in the application regarding plans for funding use if the building cannot be occupied within the first 1-2 years. In writing application, please consider: what does that first year look like for your programs? What alternatives will you provide to families experiencing violence without a brick and mortar facility?
Is that building occupied right now? Will that delay startup?	Yes the building is currently occupied. The 18 months is the timeline for the design, renovation, construction and permitting. Any additional time changing from program to program may extend the amount of time; however it may be possible to some tasks while building is occupied.
Can you explain more about healthy service delivery bonus?	This section includes four components: Tobacco-Free Campus, Mother-Friendly Workplace, Employee Wellness, and Violence Prevention policies. All policies and procedures uploaded need to be official organizational policies.
Do we need to include copies of our Board meeting minutes as part of the threshold	The reference to board minutes is not an actual question. Those are listed below and only the

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<p>process? It is listed in the application but there is nowhere to upload them.</p>	<p>questions that have a yes or no and comments are required. I apologize for the confusion. We are updating the form now.</p>
<p>What is the renewal period for the grant funding? Will it be annually, bi-annually, etc? We know that the grant can be renewed, but how often will we have to re-apply?</p>	<p>All contracts and renewals, and decisions about competitions are determined by APH Leadership and Council so we cannot make any guarantees at this time. However, usually once a contract is in place with built-in renewals, we wouldn't re-compete until the contract is out of renewals, if then. The renewal process is done annually, and during the renewal process any changes needed can be made, and as always the City/Council can decide to end the contract.</p>
<p>What is the shared responsibility of liability for the shelter?</p>	<p>The awarded agency will work with the City of Austin to determine roles and responsibilities for maintenance and operation of the shelter. The City requires all contracted agencies to hold insurance for their programs outlined in the Insurance Requirements.</p>
<p>Will there be a maximum allowed term of shelter service determined by the City, or will the grantee decide how long shelter services can be provided to an individual/family? Is there a maximum term of occupancy?</p>	<p>The shelter is meant to be a short term emergency shelter, and a portion of the shelter must be set up as an emergency shelter. However, agencies may propose different lengths of stay in the Application. The awarded agency will work with City of Austin to negotiate the best configuration of shelter beds.</p>
<p>Will all rooms be renovated to be the same size? Or will room size vary (i.e. will there be the availability of rooms and suites)? Will each floor have its own room type?</p>	<p>There is basically one type of unit layout. Some of the units are slightly larger or smaller, but the difference is not more than 25 sf.</p>
<p>How many rooms will be ADA accessible?</p>	<p>There are 4 ADA rooms.</p>
<p>Will pets be allowed? Will companion and service animals be allowed? Will there be any restrictions?</p>	<p>The awarded agency will work with the City of Austin to determine how to accommodate clients with pets.</p>
<p>Will grantees need to purchase mattresses, pillows, sheets, etc.?</p>	<p>The awarded agency will work with the City of Austin to set up their budget. Agencies will be responsible for the purchase of items for clients, and some larger purchases may be a part of the \$100,000 start up cost.</p>

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<p>The website for the hotel says that Wi-Fi is only available in the lobby area. Will the renovation include providing Wi-Fi in all rooms?</p>	<p>Yes, the plan is to provide WIFI throughout the building.</p>
<p>Domestic violence shelter rules require set aside space for individual meetings with clients, children’s space and groups. Will there be designated spaces for children, private meetings and other service delivery? Will there be an opportunity to strategize with the City in planning set aside space that meets the state requirements operating domestic violence shelters?</p>	<p>At this point there are plans for renovations to include common areas. Once the design team is on board, there will be opportunities to provide input to the design. The shelter will comply with state requirements.</p>
<p>The RFA lists the start date as May 15, 2021. When do you anticipate that notification of funding will take place? If notification is close to the start date, it will impact our planning processes.</p>	<p>We do not have a date set for the notification, but it should be around mid-April.</p>
<p>We understand that there are character count limitations for the entire application. Are there character count limitations in PartnerGrants for each individual question?</p>	<p>Applicants will not be entering answers directly into PartnerGrants, but are required to use the template provided in Word, following the instructions for the word count in the Scope of Work.</p>
<p>When the hotel shelter is operational, will the City pay for electricity and water?</p>	<p>The awarded agency will be responsible for the administration and maintenance of the building and the awarded agency will work with the City of Austin to determine roles and responsibilities.</p>
<p>Many of our position descriptions are multiple pages long, and resumes are commonly 1-3 pages. The application indicates that “applicants may attach up to 5 additional pages that include staff resumes and/or job descriptions as supplemental documentation”. We have about 18 staff we anticipate funding under the grant, many of whom will work directly with clients. Should we be including resumes/position descriptions for all of them? With a restriction of 5 pages, we would only be able to fit ~2 positions.</p>	<p>Applicants may describe their staffing plans in Questions 33-36. For the uploaded staffing information, if the Applicants are not able to fit entire position descriptions or full resumes, they may provide summarized position descriptions up to the 5-page limit.</p>
<p>Updated 3/18/2021</p>	

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<p>The city is adding computer room space – should we include computers for this space in our budget, or is that covered by the city? If the city is providing microwaves and refrigerators – is that a one-time only thing? Do we have to budget in repairs and replacements? Is the city providing staff computers, or should that be budgeted in?</p>	<p>Applicants should include any items that are deemed necessary to open the building and to begin providing services. If costs are one-time, start-up costs they should be included in the \$100,000. Agencies will be responsible for the purchase of ongoing items for clients, maintenance and repair of the building and items in the building in their budget. The awarded agency will work with the City of Austin to set up their budget.</p>
<p>Do we need to children’s services in the first year? Do all the services listed in the solicitation need to be address in the first year, or only once we are in the building?</p>	<p>For the purpose of the application, please propose a budget that will be for an operational shelter.</p>
<p>Since there is no physical property available initially, is it allowable to reserve the \$100,000 set aside for renovations until the hotel property is occupied? If not, can those funds be used to incentivize property managers (scattered site hotels, apartments, etc.) to take short term tenants, to pay pet deposits, and also any repairs and damages that might happen?</p>	<p>The \$100,000 must be allocated in this fiscal year so the funds cannot be reserved or set aside. However, it can be used for other purposes. Agencies are encouraged to propose creative solutions to working with clients while the shelter is being renovated.</p> <p>Landlord incentives are not eligible activities for this solicitation. Eligible housing costs included in the scope of work: rental and utility assistance, as well as alternate placement options when shelter housing is not an option such as hotel stays or rapid rehousing assistance.</p>
<p>How an applicant would staff and operated in year one with scattered sites would be different than once the hotel shelter space is operational. Can you confirm that applicants should answer questions from the perspective of the hotel shelter site being operational with the exception of Q23? Should the budget line items be based on year one (scattered site design or the long term design with the hotel shelter space operational)?</p>	<p>For the purpose of the application, please propose a budget and complete the required budget form for an operational shelter. In Question 23, describe what programming will be proposed prior to the shelter being operational . The awarded agency will work with the Austin Public Health to develop a budget for the shelter prior to its opening.</p>
<p>Should we be addressing the application questions from the perspective of phased shelter, or stick with what we were planning originally.</p>	<p>For the purpose of the application, please propose a budget and program for an operational shelter. As part of the response to question 23, provided any information related to a phased shelter if applicable.</p>
<p>Page 10 of the RFA Scope of Work indicates that the word count for the application is</p>	<p>The word count limit for the application is 12,000 words.</p>

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12,000, but page 1 of the application itself says 11,000. Can you please clarify which is correct?	
Under question 26C, there is a list of what appears to be outcomes to address (a. Exits to safe permanent housing (APH's 1B), b. Percent of individuals increasing employment income (2Aii), and c. Percent of individuals making progress toward their treatment goal plans). Do all of these need to be addressed in the application and reporting, or are they an optional addition to the main key performance metric (social services)?	Please only address the outcomes in the actual boxes in Section A, B, C. Section C. required outcome should be <i>"Outcome Rate: Percent of case-managed households that transition from homelessness into housing"</i> Disregard the list of outcomes that appear after Outcome C.
Updated 3/23/2021 from Site Visit of property	
Will there be an opportunity to negotiate how the rooms will be renovated into living spaces and supportive service spaces? Or outdoor recreation spaces?	Yes. The awarded agency will have input into the renovation process. These issues will be addressed as well as how to satisfy State rules regarding recreational and shelter service requirements for children in domestic violence shelters.
How will the kitchen and dining area be structured? Will families have storage space in the kitchen or will they have to store it in their rooms?	Mari Boren demonstrated where in the facility there would be space renovated into dining area, and how two rooms would be renovated to a kitchen area with 13-14 cooking stations. There will be glass doors between the two areas, which are divided by a hallway, so there is line of sight between them for families. There will be storage and refrigerators in this space, but the details about where the storage will be and how many spaces can be negotiated with the renovation process.
Updated: Can or will there be adjoining rooms?	Updated: There are currently some adjoining rooms, and There are not adjoining rooms in the current plan, but once the design team is on board, this will be incorporated since it is an important element. There will be opportunities to provide input to the design for other items as well.
Updated: Are you planning on having commercial or in-room kitchens at this facility?	Updated: At this point, there are no in-room kitchen options and there will only be a microwave and refrigerator in each room. Both options are being explored. The commercial kitchen will be developed as a communal kitchen with different stations where residents can cook.

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	Another option is that each residential unit will have opportunity for a cooking range, vent hood and cooking area. This might not be an option depending on Fire Marshall.
What spaces are available for agency staff for maintenance supplies and room for repairs?	Mari Boren showed the group a number of rooms that are used for housekeeping, storage and these rooms may be used for maintenance and computer servers.
What spaces are designated as ADA compliant?	There are at least four units already existing on the first floor that are compliant for people with roll-in showers, doorbells with adaptations for hearing impaired, etc.
Update: Will awarded applicant be responsible for furnishing all rooms? Can we get details on what will be available, like the size of the beds and the age of the beds?	<p>Update: No, the City is planning on providing furnishings as much as possible. Each unit will have furniture that is currently in the rooms. The City is not planning on purchasing any additional room furnishings. The furniture in the common areas will be purchased by the City, but the City will not be purchasing computers for the computer lab.</p> <p>The awarded agency will be responsible for purchasing additional beds to serve families and any additional furnishings that may be required. At the site visit, agencies present took pictures of the units. This cost can be included in the \$100,000 start up costs. If there are more costs than the \$100,000 will allow, the awarded agency can negotiate that upon contract development.</p> <p>Mari Boren will be sending a floor plan document which lists the size of beds in each room. It doesn't address the year the beds were purchased.</p>
Update: Is there a laundry facility on-site?	<p>Update: At the site visit Mari Boren showed agencies where the laundry facilities would be on each floor, and discussed moving one of the laundry rooms for the first floor to the other side of the building to allow for more room for storage.</p> <p>Yes, there are 2 commercial washers and 2 commercial dryers located on the first floor. In addition, each floor will have a laundry room with 2-3 guest laundry units.</p>
Update: Will there be large spaces such as conference rooms?	Yes, on first floor, we are planning on a computer room for residents and a lounge area. Second and

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	<p>third floors will have a community game room/TV room.</p> <p>Awarded agencies can have input on how those communal areas are designed?</p>
<p>Will there be only the one green space where the swimming pool currently is located? Can there be work to minimize highway noise in these greenspaces?</p>	<p>There may be an opportunity to build more green space on both sides of the building. The designers will work with the awarded agencies to develop spaces. There may be some flexibility with parking spaces. There will be consideration for age-specific outdoor spaces. The security fencing and landscaping may be developed to help reduce highway noise.</p>

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Domestic Violence Shelter RFA – Site Visit to site of new domestic violence shelter

March 23, 2021 10:30 AM – 12 PM

NOTES

Attendees

Survive to Thrive staff: Yvonne Shiloh, Dorothy Reno, Anna McCoy, Anthony Fuller, Stephanie Gabler

SAFE staff: Patty Carvajal, Yvette Rouen, Hosie Washington, Qunisha Simmons, Julie Spann

Others: Rebecca Chaney, Integral Care; Mari Boren, COA Public Works

COA APH: Greg McCormack, Lucio Meza, Akeshia Johnson Smothers, Natasha Ponczek Shoemake

Greg McCormack and Lucio Meza brought the group through the facility to show the rooms and common areas and answered questions about the current set up. Mari Boren answered questions about the plans for renovation. Natasha Ponczek Shoemake took notes and included all new questions and answers in the Question and Answer document.