

**2011 Request for Proposals
New York / New York III Permanent Supportive Housing for
Homeless Families
Questions and Answers**

Question 1 Please clarify the client eligibility and placement. On page 3 of the RFP it is stated that “Families living in a Tier II Family Shelter will be the first priority. Families living in other transitional housing settings are also considered to be a priority population” including families exiting an OASAS-certified Intensive Residential. On page 7, it states that eligibility will be determined by HRA and that DHS will be responsible for placing approved applicants. If we have families in programs that meet the eligibility and are the priority population can we directly refer and place them into our proposed NY/NY III Permanent Supportive Housing program? Or will the families need to go back to DHS to be placed?

ANSWER In accord with the NY/NY III Agreement, the first priority for participation in the program are families living in a Tier II Family Homeless Shelter. Those families with the head of household currently residing in an OASAS-certified Intensive Residential program for women and children, who entered that treatment program homeless also have high priority for admission. Women currently residing in OASAS-certified Intensive Residential Program whose discharge plan includes reuniting with their children and who entered the treatment program homeless also have priority for admission.

OASAS intends to use the procedures currently in place for the referral of single adults from Intensive Residential Programs into a NY/NY III apartment – those procedures call for the Residential Program to complete and submit an HRA 2010e form to HRA. HRA will forward the form to DHS, who will then arrange for an assessment interview with the housing providers. DHS will refer three candidates for each open apartment; the provider must choose one. If the provider has other apartments available and the second and/or third candidate is also considered appropriate, the housing provider can accept two or three of those candidates.

Question 2 If we have units vacant in an existing permanent supportive family housing, can we use NY/NY III to help fill these vacancies?

ANSWER Yes, as long as the families meet the admission criteria for the NY/NY III family initiative. It is important to ensure that the unit does not have two sources of rental subsidy.

Question 3 Will reimbursement under this contract be based on a line-item budget, performance-based incentives/disincentives, or some other method?

ANSWER Reimbursement will be based on a line item budget. Carefully read the budget guidelines in the RFP. The operating budget identifies revenue, expenses, and net deficit funding through OASAS State aid.

Question 4 Under Section II.B. Program Components, Support Services, #19, the RFP says that “the provider agency is the lease holder for the apartment(s).” Will OASAS review proposals that use a model in which the client holds the lease rather than the provider agency?

ANSWER OASAS prefers and strongly recommends the provider agency be the lease holder.

Question 5 Could you please clarify: does OASAS expect that organizations using the alternative, two-phase program development approach described in Section I.B. of the RFP will place clients in a congregate setting within two years of the program start?

ANSWER No. OASAS expects the applicant agency to place clients in the congregate setting identified in the application when such site has been approved for occupancy.

Question 6 Is a school-based drug-free prevention program eligible to apply?

ANSWER Yes. Agencies that operate funded not-for-profit drug-free prevention services in NYC (whether certified or not) are eligible to apply for this RFP.

Question 7 On Page 5 of the RFP, Funded Drug Free Prevention Programs shows “N/A” under OASAS Certification Part. Can you explain why?

ANSWER The OASAS certification part is not applicable for Funded Drug Free Prevention Programs. However, as stated in the previous question, such prevention programs are eligible to apply.

Question 8 Can a drug-free prevention program serve as the lead agency in an application being submitted as a partnership arrangement?

ANSWER OASAS will consider applications submitted by two agencies who choose to partner for this RFP. One agency may serve as the service provider; the other agency may serve as the housing provider. The service provider should serve as the lead agency in a partnership arrangement, and drug-free prevention programs may serve as the lead agency.

Question 9 Can a provider who does not have experience in family housing apply?

ANSWER Yes. An applicant does not necessarily have to demonstrate experience in managing/operating housing that is specific to families. Experience in managing/operating housing for singles would be sufficient. However, the applicant must ensure that the application demonstrates experience in providing all appropriate support services to families.

Question 10 Can you clarify #4 on page 13 regarding families staying in the apartment after they complete the program?

ANSWER This situation, known as transitioning in place, or “turnkey”, is more applicable for those agencies who use the Alternative Two-Phase Approach described on pages 2-3 of the RFP. If a family is no longer in need of the program, they may remain in their apartment, without receiving the rental subsidy. The apartment then becomes affordable housing as opposed to supportive housing. In such cases, the provider will have to add another participant in order to meet the contract obligation.

Question 11 Does this RFP lean more toward a congregate setting rather than a scatter site setting?

ANSWER Yes. In accord with the NY/NY III agreement, all of the units for this population are to be in a congregate setting. However, because it is critical to move families from Tier II Family Shelters as soon as possible, OASAS will encourage applicants to use the Two-Phase Approach to program development which is described on pages 2-3 of the RFP.

Question 12 Can a tenant chose to no longer participate in the program, yet remain in the apartment?

ANSWER It is OASAS’ expectation that the program participant sign an Occupancy Agreement, which outlines their responsibilities for participation in the program. In cases where a tenant chooses to no longer participate in the program, their rent can no longer be subsidized through this NY/NY III program. If the tenant refuses to vacate the apartment, the provider will have to add another participant in order to meet the contract obligation. If another unit is not available in the current congregate setting, the provider may rent a scatter-site unit until one becomes available in the congregate building.

Question 13 If a provider develops 10-20 units and has an existing set aside, can they use this as leverage with other capital resources?

ANSWER Yes. Providers may use this program as leverage. OASAS will not micromanage capital resources through this initiative, which is for operating costs only.

Question 14 If an agency has an existing building, how much “leg up” would they have for this RFP?

ANSWER Applicants should demonstrate some site control and capital plan to show that it is feasible to operate this program. Although the two-phase approach allows the program to start out as scatter-site, providers must keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to have the units in a congregate setting.

Question 15 Can the application be submitted as a partnership?

ANSWER Yes, as long as the OASAS agency has experience in serving homeless families.

Question 16 Can a long-term lease (i.e., 20 years) be considered congregate?

ANSWER Yes, as long as the OASAS units are located in one place and it meets the spirit of a congregate site.

Question 17 Does the entire building have to be devoted to this program?

ANSWER No. Providers may use a multi-purpose building for this program, as long as the OASAS units are located in one place and it meets the spirit of a congregate site.

Question 18 Page 16 refers to Letters of Support from DOHMH and NYC DHS. Is there a particular contact person we should reach out to?

ANSWER The Letters of Support can come from the individual you usually work with at these agencies.

Question 19 Do you expect additional funding for NY/NY III single adults?

ANSWER All categories have been awarded for the current NY/NY III initiative.

Question 20 This is a service rich program, please clarify the budget reduction when a provider chooses the Two-Phase Approach. What if the provider has a debt service?

ANSWER If a provider chooses to develop this program using the Two-Phase Approach, only the rental portion of the budget will be reduced by approximately one half when the tenants are moved from scatter-site units to the congregate setting. OASAS will consider cost based documentation by the provider. The funding for the support services will remain at the same level. Debt service is an expense which is counted toward operating costs of the building.

Question 21 If there is a Round Two when will it become available? Will it be the same time next year?

ANSWER If there is a Round Two, an RFP would be released during the fiscal year that the monies are made available. Currently, there is no commitment for a Round Two.

Question 22 Can a provider grow their program incrementally through each round of the RFP?

ANSWER Yes, agencies that are awarded funding during Round One would be eligible if there were subsequent rounds of the RFP.

Question 23 At the time the agency plans to move families into the congregate setting, would OASAS consider maintaining the full contract amount if the agency were willing to add sufficient units to cover the full contract amount?

ANSWER That kind of flexibility may not be available through this funding source.

Question 24 If an agency serves a population with a criminal justice history, will DHS refer only those individuals who have a criminal justice history?

ANSWER Priority may be given to such families, however, all vacancies must be filled in a timely fashion.

Question 25 Can you clarify the funding for staffing on page 15? Are agencies limited to the amount stated for fringe?

ANSWER Providers can pro-rate the amount when calculating the fringe for positions that are less than 1 FTE.

Question 26 When will be funds be available?

ANSWER The money for this initiative is currently in the OASAS state budget. OASAS expects to send award letters by the end of the calendar year.

Question 27 Is there a deadline to fill the units?

ANSWER It is OASAS' expectation that the program will rent the units within six months of receiving the contact.

Question 28 On page 16, under Format and Content of the Proposal, the RFP addresses Agency Experience, but does not address Program Design. Please explain.

ANSWER Questions relative to Program Design can be found beginning on page 10 of the RFP.

Question 29 Would a pregnant woman who does not have any other children be eligible for placement in this housing program?

ANSWER If the woman has substance use issues and is planning to carry the pregnancy to term, she will be eligible for placement, as long as she meets all other admission criteria for this program.

Question 30 Would individuals who anticipate reunification with children who have been placed in kinship or formal foster care be eligible for placement?

ANSWER Yes, as long as the head of household is homeless and meets all other admission criteria for this program.

Question 31 Can clients who are currently enrolled in a NY/NY III program through Category E (chronically homeless single adults with active substance abuse) or Category F (homeless single adults who have completed substance abuse treatment) be transferred to this NY/NY III Family initiative?

ANSWER HRA has recommended that a new application be completed to transition those clients to this housing program.

Question 32 Do we need to have site control of the congregate facility?

ANSWER Applicants should demonstrate some site control and capital commitment for this program.

Question 33 How many units must the congregate facility have?

ANSWER Awards will be issued in blocks of five units, with 10 as the minimum and 20 as the maximum. The congregate facility must be able to accommodate as many units as the applicant is awarded.

Question 34 What if the congregate facility is not ready for occupancy six months after the initial award?

ANSWER If the building is not available for occupancy after six months, the housing agency should use the Two-Phase Development Approach described on pages 2-3 in this RFP.

Question 35 What if clients do not wish to be moved from Phase 1 apartments? Can they continue to live in these apartments?

ANSWER OASAS projects that at least some families living in the Phase 1 scatter-site apartments will have achieved full-time employment, and therefore, will be able to make a higher contribution to their rent. This will allow the provider to continue to rent some of the scatter-site units for those participants who choose not to move to the congregate site.

Question 36 Can the award be used to fund only Phase 1 apartments? What if we cannot fill the congregate facility?

ANSWER No. The units for this initiative **MUST** ultimately be in a congregate setting.

Please Note: As per all OASAS grant awards, applicant agencies must document Proof of Non-Profit status.