



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Youth Opportunity (YO) Project

Release Date: February 12, 2025

Pre-Proposal Conference: Thursday, February 20, 2025

Proposals Due: March 21, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Anticipated Award Notification: May 29, 2025

Anticipated Contract Start: July 1, 2025

Issued by:

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.
100 South Charles Street, Tower II, 8th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Table of Contents

| | | |
|------|--|----|
| I. | Overview of the Project..... | 3 |
| | A. Overview of BHSB | 3 |
| | B. Overview of Project | 3 |
| | C. Focus Population | 5 |
| | D. Staffing Requirements | 5 |
| | E. Funding Availability | 6 |
| | F. Quality and Financial Review | 6 |
| | G. Contracting with BHSB | 6 |
| II. | Overview of RFP | 8 |
| | Purpose of RFP | 8 |
| | A. Award of Contract | 10 |
| | B. RFP Postponement/Cancellation | 10 |
| | C. Applicant Appeal Process | 10 |
| III. | Format and Content of Proposal | 11 |
| | A. Proposal Instructions | 11 |
| | B. Proposal Narrative Outline and Rating Criteria | 11 |

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Youth Opportunity (YO) Project

I. Overview of the Project

A. Overview of BHSB

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit organization tasked by Baltimore City to manage the city's public behavioral health system. As such, BHSB serves as the local behavioral health authority for Baltimore City. In this role, BHSB envisions a city where people live and thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness.

BHSB is committed to enhancing the behavioral health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities through:

- The promotion of behavioral health and wellness prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery;
- The creation and leadership of an integrated network of providers that promotes universal access to comprehensive, data-driven services; and
- Advocacy and leadership of behavioral health-related efforts to align resources, programs, and policy.

BHSB is committed to promoting behavioral health equity in Baltimore City by ensuring that the behavioral health provider network is culturally and linguistically responsive to the diverse populations served; reducing behavioral health care access barriers for populations known to experience discrimination and marginalization; and supporting communities directly to develop services that are responsive to their unique strengths and needs.

B. Overview of Project

The Youth Opportunity (YO) Project seeks to provide academic classes, GED prep, job training, access to behavioral health services, and other services for older teens and young adults aged 18 to 24 years of age who are currently not enrolled in school and unemployed. Young people can build on their skills and strengths at the city's West Side Youth Opportunity (YO) Center.

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) seeks one (1) organization to partner with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) to provide behavioral health services to older teens and young adults 18 to 24 years of age served at the Westside Youth Opportunity (YO) Center.

Scope of Service (including deliverables)

The selected applicant will provide behavioral health (mental health and substance use) services to older teens and young adults 18 to 24 years of age at the Westside Youth Opportunity (YO) Center.

- I. Services are to include, but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Serve a minimum of 75 participants.
 - b. Include behavioral health assessments and treatment, group training focused on behavioral health and wellness, and 24/7 crisis phone support to assist participants when on-site support is not available.
 - c. Screen and assess new and existing youth participants in the center for mental health and substance use needs using an industry-recognized mental health assessment tool- the selected Assessment tool(s) must be approved in advance by the assigned BHSB staff.
 - d. Provide behavioral health (mental health and substance use) clinical services, including individual and group interventions as well as substance use prevention services as determined by the needs and the preferences of the participant. Link the participating youth and families to services and support within the behavioral health system according to their needs and preferences.
 - e. Provide information regarding how to access 988, a Crisis Hotline that is accessible to youth twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week, by which participants may receive emergency support at times of personal crisis when on-site support is not immediately attainable.
 - f. Coordinate with YO Center staff to provide services to Center youth that promote their ability to participate in and benefit from the services of the Center.
 - g. Coordinate with Case Advocates to facilitate obtaining Federal/State benefits/entitlements for youth with behavioral health disorders.
 - h. Services should be available from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, consisting of individual and group counseling, substance use prevention services, and monthly mental health/wellness education sessions tailored to the needs identified by the YO leadership and student support teams.

- II. Selected applicant will:
 - a. Employ and supervise a Masters Level Mental Health Professional to provide services on-site at the Westside YO Center in Baltimore City at 1510 W. Lafayette Avenue. Licenses include LMSW, LCSW-C, LGPC, or LCPC.
 - b. Provide consultation and training to center staff on behavioral health disorders and approaches to provide person-centered to center participants.

Project Deliverables

- Year To Date (YTD)
 - number of unduplicated youth screened/assessed (Annual target: 75)
 - number of unduplicated youth provided individual and/or group clinical services (Annual target: 10)
 - number of unduplicated youth linked to community resources or additional behavioral health services (Annual target: 10)
 - number of YO Center staff trainings or consultations (Annual target: 5)
 - number of unduplicated YO Center staff trained (Annual target: 10)
 - Number of community mental health resource events provided (Annual target: 4)
- Quarterly narrative report with content as determined in partnership with Behavioral Health System Baltimore and the Westside YO Baltimore Center (including highlights, challenges, and any other relevant updates)
- Briefly describe any consultations or training conducted for YO Center staff on relevant behavioral health topics and approaches to effectively communicating with and serving participants.

C. Focus Population

Youth Opportunity (YO) Baltimore serves older teens and young adults aged 18 to 24 who are disconnected from school because they are over the traditional school age and under-credited.

D. Staffing Requirements

Applicants must meet all of the criteria outlined below to be considered eligible to be selected through this RFP process:

- Must be able to staff at least one (1) Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) clinician.
- Clinicians hired must be licensed to practice in Maryland. Licensure must be Masters Level clinicians (LMSW, LCSW-C, LGPC, or LCPC)
- All clinicians must comply with MOED board policy on criminal background checks and identification badges. Programs are expected to ensure adequate supervision, especially for new staff.
- A clinical supervisor trained in substance use issues and evidence-based practices and must be available for oversight, as the clinician will be assigned to the YO Baltimore Center for four days a week.

E. Funding Availability

Funding for the project is \$75,000 to support administrative, non-reimbursable services. This award amount includes salary, fringe benefits, supervision, and indirect costs, which cannot exceed 10% of the salary and fringe expenses. Line-item budgets should detail these expenses separately, and the proposed grant award amounts cannot exceed these limits for each proposed clinician FTE. Additional costs are expected to be covered by fee-for-service revenue. All revenue sources should be included in both the budget and budget narrative sections of the submitted proposal.

F. Quality and Financial Review

As part of BHSB's procurement process, internal quality and financial reviews are completed to ensure there are no significant concerns with the organization(s) being selected. Applicants should be sure to provide the most recent available versions of all requested documentation with their RFP application in order to ensure this is a smooth process.

G. Contracting with BHSB

Applicants selected through this process will enter into a contractual agreement with BHSB. Following a notification of selection, BHSB will issue a Letter of Award that provides details about the contract and the process for executing it. The selected applicant will be required to submit a new budget on BHSB's budget forms, which will be reviewed for allowable costs under the grant.

Please note that applicants may be asked to change their budgets and/or details of their proposals even if the proposal was selected for funding. Applicants new to BHSB's contract process are encouraged to review relevant forms available on our website here: <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/forms-for-providers>.

Contract Type and Payment

- Cost Reimbursement – Actual Expenditures
 - Sub-vendor receives payment after costs are incurred and reported. Payment is based on the costs reported for a specific period.

BHSB issues payments once per month. Applicants should note that submitting required documents and reports late can result in delayed payment.

Contract Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Selected applicants will be required to submit regular program and financial reports to BHSB using an electronic contract management system. BHSB will review these reports to monitor progress and contract compliance throughout the contract term.

Program reports include an update on progress toward deliverables (e.g., number of people served, number of services delivered, etc.). Some program reports may also require organizations to attach a data report with additional information (e.g., consumer demographic information, process and/or outcomes data, etc.). BHSB monitors progress on these reports throughout the contract term and may offer technical assistance and support if deliverables are not on track to be met.

Financial reports are required to generate payment and involve submitting actual expenditures or invoices (depending on the contract type) and to monitor spending compared to the budget or award amount. If organizations are spending more or less than expected awarded throughout the contract term, BHSB may offer technical assistance and support to ensure the funding covers the contract term fully, and BHSB may reduce funding if all funds are not likely to be expended by the end of the contract term.

Please note that submitting program or financial reports late can result in delayed payment.

Verification of Services

BHSB audits all contracts to review whether the requirements set forth in the contract were completed as reported and that relevant federal, state, and local regulations were followed. This generally occurs after the conclusion of the contract period. Audits may be conducted remotely through a review of documents submitted to BHSB or on-site at the organization's location. Failure by vendors to comply with the terms of any contract with BHSB may result in denial of future contracts with BHSB.

Applicants should be aware of best practices in documenting both programmatic and financial activities to aid in an efficient audit.

II. Overview of RFP

Purpose of RFP

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) seeks one (1) organization to partner with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) to provide behavioral health services to older teens and young adults 18 to 24 years of age served at the Westside Youth Opportunity (YO) Center.

Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the criteria outlined below to be considered eligible to be selected through this RFP process:

- Licensure and accreditation as an Outpatient Mental Health Center (OMHC) for at least two years and can access reimbursement through the Public Behavioral Health System/ Administrative Service Organization (ASO).
- The organization is expected to demonstrate at least two years of relevant experience and knowledge of the population to be served. This includes being knowledgeable of behavioral health and social determinants of health for young adults.
- Must have experience in evidence-based practices in substance use and prevention services.

Proposal Timeline and Specifications

1. Timeline

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Release Date: | February 12, 2025 |
| Pre-Proposal Conference: | Thursday, February 20, 2024 @11:00 am |
| Proposal Due: | March 21, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. |
| Anticipated Award Notification: | May 29, 2025 |
| Anticipated Contract Start: | July 1, 2025 |
| Anticipated Service Start: | July 1, 2025 |

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2024 @11:00 am

Time: 11:00 am

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting - Join on your computer or mobile app

Click here to join the meeting: [Youth Opportunity \(YO\) Project Pre Proposal Conference](#)

Or call in (audio only): tel:+14438190973,,299525033#

Phone Conference ID: 299 525 033#

Please join five minutes early to leave time to troubleshoot. If you have any problems accessing the meeting, please contact Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Questions related to this RFP will be answered at the Pre-Proposal Conference. Questions posed during the conference and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/funding-opportunities/> by **February 25, 2025**.

Individuals who attended the Pre-Proposal Conference will be notified by email when questions and answers are posted on BHSB's website.

Questions received after this conference cannot be answered.

3. Proposal Due Date, Time, and Location

BHSB uses Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) to manage applications. All proposals must be submitted through this system. Applicants must register with the system ahead of time and submit narrative and supporting documents directly through the system. You are able to save your application and continue working on it before submitting it. BHSB encourages all applicants to test this system well in advance of submitting proposals.

Applicants can access SM Apply here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>

All proposals must be received no later than **5:00 pm EST on March 21, 2025**. All submitted proposals become the property of BHSB. If you are having technical troubles related to submitting your proposal, contact BHSB before the due date/time at Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Proposals submitted after the due date/time cannot be considered.

4. Interviews (if applicable)- N/A

5. Authorized Contact

Applicants are advised that the authorized contact person for all matters concerning this RFP is Ashley Coston & Kisha Winston-Watkins, whose contact information is listed below.

Ashley Coston

Kisha Winston-Watkins, Procurement Lead

Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

6. Anticipated Service Term: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, with options to renew annually pending availability of funding and performance.

A. Award of Contract

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee an award. BHSB is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP. BHSB reserves the right to withdraw an award prior to execution of a contract with a selected applicant in BHSB's sole and absolute discretion.

BHSB will select the most qualified and responsive applicants through this RFP process. BHSB will enter into a contract with selected applicants following the notification of award. All selected applicants must comply with all terms and conditions applicable to contracts executed by BHSB.

B. RFP Postponement/Cancellation

BHSB reserves the right to postpone or cancel this RFP, in whole or in part.

C. Applicant Appeal Process

Applications must be complete and fully responsive to the below Proposal Narrative Outline and must include all required appendices. Applicants may file an appeal within five days of notification of non-selection. BHSB will not review new proposal materials that were not included in the application. BHSB will review the appeal letter and respond to the non-selected applicant within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

III. Format and Content of Proposal

A. Proposal Instructions

- Applicants must submit all required information using Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) accessible here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>. We recommend you start your application early so you know what to expect with the system.

Late proposals will not be considered.

- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are becoming increasingly prevalent. While AI is a helpful administrative tool, it is important to ensure that proposals reflect authentic responses and realistic service delivery plans.
- It is the policy of BHSB to adhere to the rules and regulations in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which require appropriate safeguards to protect the confidentiality, integrity and security of all protected health information. No proposals submitted in response to this RFP should include individually identifiable health information.

For more information, please refer to the Guide to IT Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information: <https://www.healthit.gov/topic/privacy-security-and-hipaa/health-it-privacy-and-security-resources-providers>.

B. Proposal Narrative Outline and Rating Criteria

The outline below shows the information being requested for applications and how points will be awarded during the review. Use SM Apply to submit your responses. See the instructions for more information about how to submit proposals.

1. Organizational Background and Capacity (25 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including how long it has operated as an Outpatient Mental Health Clinic or became licensed as an Outpatient Mental Health Clinic and when it received or expects to receive accreditation.
- b. Describe your organization's ability to access third-party reimbursement, particularly Medicaid, for behavioral health services.
- c. Describe your organization's access to, experience working with, and continued capacity to work with youth and young adults with diverse racial, socio-economic, and marginalized identities
- d. Describe the organization's history and experience, including length of time, delivering behavioral health services to adolescents and young adults population, including evidence-based practices used. Examples but not limited to Botwins Life skills, SBIRT, A-CRA, Project TND, etc.

- e. Describe your organization's history of forming partnerships with youth and young adult serving organizations.

2. Principles and Values (15 points)

- a. Describe your understanding of Social Determinants of Health and what it means for your organization's work. How will your organization address the impact of social determinants of health in this program?
- b. Describe your organization's commitment to racial and social justice and health equity. Include specific examples of what your organization does to illustrate this commitment.
- c. Describe how your organization's current practices ensure services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically competent manner, responsive to the diverse communities served, including individuals for whom English is a second language.

3. Service Delivery (30 points)

- a. Describe your organization's plan to provide all services as outlined in the Scope of Service section of this RFP.
- b. Describe your organization's plan to implement person/family-centered services and treatment planning, to include support of behavioral health needs (mental health/substance use disorder treatment), medical needs and other identified areas of needed support to ensure overall wellbeing.
- c. Describe how your organization will collaborate with The YO Center staff to identify and engage individuals in need of services and ensure that all individuals referred will, with consent, be linked to and/or receive needed services.
- d. Describe other behavioral health services your organization provides and what structure/process you will use to avoid conflicts of interest and inappropriate self-referral.
- e. Describe how the proposed program would handle overdoses, suicide risk, and behavioral health crises when they occur onsite, giving examples of how your organization has managed these in the recent past.
- f. Describe your approach to providing a competent integrated, holistic "whole health" approach to addressing substance use, mental health, and medical health.

4. Staffing Plan (10 points)

- a. Describe your proposed staffing pattern, including supervisors, and how it will fulfill the staffing requirements in this RFP. Include an organizational chart that shows how this program will fit into your organization's overall structure.

- b. Describe your plan to ensure adequate support and clinical supervision for staff, particularly staff who work independently/ off-site.

5. Effectively Serving the Focus Population (10 Points)

- a. Describe how your organization is uniquely qualified and designed to address known disparities experienced by adolescents and young adults.

6. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (5 points)

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, operation, and improvement of program services.

7. Implementation Timeline (5 Points)

- a. Provide a detailed timeline for implementation that includes all of the activities that you have committed to perform in your proposal. Show an outline of all the steps necessary to fully operationalize this project and by when each step would be completed. Contracts are expected to start on 7/1/2025.

8. Appendices

- o Copies of all relevant licenses/certifications. including any licenses issued by the Maryland Department of Health (BHA and OHCQ). BHSB understands there is a delay in processing applications for licensing. If you have not received your most recent license, attach the letter from BHA and a copy of your most recent license
- o Organizational chart
- o Resume or curriculum vitae for individuals/consultants working on this project
- o Line-Item Budget (if requested in above question)

- o Most recent site visit report from the ASO, Accrediting Organization, and/or the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), including any statements of deficiencies and program improvement plans

- o Most recent final Financial Audit package including Findings and Management Letter from an independent auditor (preferred) OR a recent unaudited Income Statement AND Balance Sheet, if an audit is not available.

- o Most recent IRS 990 – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes OR if an IRS 990 form is not required to be filed, the most recent Business Tax Return OR the Schedule C only of the most recent

Personal Tax Return. (Please redact any social security numbers on Schedule C.)

- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (screenshots from the MDAT website will not be accepted) - the certificate must be dated within one year of the RFP submission due date.