

**Expanding
Community
Capacities for
Independent
Living Services
for the Older
Blind
Population**

**Request for
Proposals**

Maryland State Department
of Education

**Division of Rehabilitation
Services**

Office for Blindness and
Vision Services
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

**Issue Date:
September 12, 2016**

**Deadline Date to Submit:
October 20, 2016**

This document is available in
alternate formats by calling
410-554-9277

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: Title VII, Chapter 2 – Older Blind

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Division of Rehabilitation Services, Office for Blindness & Vision Services (OBVS) hereby solicits proposals from qualified applicants to provide statewide home *comprehensive* independent living services for seventy-five (75) older (55+) individuals who are blind and visually impaired through formula grant funds awarded to Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services under Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended by the Workforce and Investment Act. The federal regulations listed in 34 C.F.R. Part 367, Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind, and the regulations referenced therein, apply to this proposal and grant award.

Request for Proposal (RFP) packages may be obtained by writing or calling:

Liaison:

Tandra Hunter-Payne, Program Manager
Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: (410) 554-9107 Fax: (410) 554-9197

Completed proposals, including an original, electronic copy in Word format (Tandra.hunter-payne@maryland.gov) and seven (7) copies must be physically in the possession of Division of Rehabilitation Services at the address listed above by 3:00 p.m. on **October 20, 2016**. Offerors mailing proposals must allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt by DORS. Proposals arriving after the closing date ***will not be considered***. No individual extensions will be granted.

This announcement does not commit the Division of Rehabilitation Services to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of proposal. DORS reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, all proposals submitted and/or cancel this announcement. All contracts awarded shall be based upon the highest scored proposal (s) and those most advantageous to serve older individuals who are blind, deaf blind or visually impaired, price and other factors considered. All contracts are subject to availability of funds.

II. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services reserves the right to change these dates.

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|
| A. | Request for Proposal announced. | September 12, 2016 |
| B. | Deadline to receive questions.
All questions must be in writing and submitted to: | October 3, 2016 |

Tandra Hunter-Payne
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Office for Blindness and Vision Services
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218

Fax: (410) 554-9197
Tandra.hunter-payne@maryland.gov

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------------|
| C. | Last day for proposers to submit proposals.
All proposals should be received by 3:00 p.m.
on this date. Proposals received late for any
reason will not be considered. | October 20, 2016 |
| D. | Proposal Review Committee meets. | October 21, 2016 |
| E. | Grantee(s) announced – unsuccessful applicants | October 24, 2016 |
| F. | Proposed start date. | November 1, 2016 |
| G. | Grant end. | September 30, 2017 |

III. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

A proposal review committee comprised of professional DORS staff will review all proposals. Proposers may be requested to communicate by telephone with reviewers to clarify or document certain aspects of the proposal as part of the review process. Therefore, proposers should plan to be available by telephone on the scheduled date for the proposal review. The proposals will be reviewed and evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.

CRITERIA

- A. Need (20 points)
- The needs addressed by the project.
 - How those needs were identified.
 - How the project will meet those needs.
 - The benefits to be gained by meeting those needs.
- B. Plan of Operation (25 points)
- The quality of the plan of operation.
 - How well the objectives relate to the purpose of the project.
 - The effectiveness of the management plan to ensure proper administration of the project.

- Identification of key individuals responsible for implementation of the project's objectives.
 - Use of the applicant's resources and personnel to achieve the objectives.
 - Scope of independent living services and projected number of persons to be served.
 - How the applicant will ensure that project participants who are otherwise eligible to participate are selected without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age (55 and older), or disability.
 - How the applicant will communicate with the local OBVS staff to encourage cross-referrals, information and resource sharing. How will this information be tracked?
- C. Key Personnel (10 points)
- Qualifications of project director.
 - Qualifications of key personnel.
 - Time that each person will commit to the project.
 - Experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project.
 - How the applicant will ensure that its personnel are selected without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or handicapping condition.
- D. Applicant Experience and Resources (20 points)
- Extent of knowledge and background in the field of blindness.
 - Previous experience in operating rehabilitation programs and/or providing independent living services, particularly to older individuals who are blind.
 - Adequacy of resources that the applicant plans to devote to the project including personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies, etc.
 - Previous performances on DORS contracts/grants, if applicable.
- E. Budget and Cost Effectiveness (20 points)
- Costs are reasonable and adequate to carry out the objectives of the project.
 - Administrative cost is low.
 - Services are cost-effective.
 - Cost of attendance at the National Program Manager's Conference or RSA Project Director's Conference (approximately \$1,400) should be budgeted. In the event of conference cancellation, the budgeted funds should be used for approved staff development activities or other permitted services, not personnel expenses.
- F. Evaluation (5 points)
- The quality of the evaluation plan including the extent to which the evaluation methods are appropriate to the project, are objective, and are quantifiable. Evaluations should include quality assurance, consumer input/satisfaction and budgetary oversight. A copy of all evaluation forms to be utilized should be part of the proposal.

IV. SCOPE OF RFP AND GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is a state-federal program that provides services to eligible persons with disabilities in order to assist them in becoming employed or in achieving independent living. The mission of DORS is to provide leadership and support in promoting the employment, economic self-sufficiency and independence of individuals with disabilities.

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services is responsible for the expenditure of Title VII, Chapter 2 formula funds under the federal "Independent Living for Older Individuals Who Are Blind" program under the Rehabilitation Act, as amended in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The purpose of the Chapter 2 program is to provide independent living services and training to blind and visually impaired person age 55 and older. The purpose of the RFP process is to encourage qualified organizations to provide comprehensive independent living services to older individuals who are blind in the state of Maryland. The contract(s) awarded shall be based upon the highest scored proposals most advantageous to DORS as indicated by the evaluation criteria contained in this RFP. Priority will be given to projects that serve traditionally under-represented groups and to those who can provide services in consumer's homes.

The Contractor shall provide independent living/rehabilitation training services as defined herein. Services shall be delivered primarily in the consumer's home; however, alternative sites may be used for services if approved by both the Division and the consumer. These services shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, two or more of the following:

A. Types of services which shall be provided include:

- 1) **Initial Evaluation** - may be authorized by the Division to assess and pinpoint consumer needs in various training components.
- 2) **Activities of Daily Living Training** - shall consist of instruction that provides the consumer with an opportunity to acquire the capability of performing the following daily living skills to the maximum of their potential ability: grooming; shopping for food; food preparation; care of clothing; time telling; telephone usage; personal care; organization techniques; room care/housekeeping; parenting; check writing and balancing a checkbook. Activities of daily living skills training shall also include training in other skills as appropriate for the consumer and as authorized by the Division (such as practical application of reading, writing and arithmetic).
- 3) **Assistive Technology Training** - shall be training that provides an opportunity for the consumer to gain the ability to effectively utilize appropriate assistive technology in accordance with their needs.

4) **Communication Skills Training** - shall be training that provides an opportunity for the consumer to gain the ability to communicate using Braille and as appropriate for each consumer, other communication skills to the maximum of their potential ability. These skills should include, but are not limited to: typing, filing of information for use in home or office, handwriting, and keeping a personal budget.

5) **Community Adjustment** - must provide the consumer with an opportunity to become familiar with and engage in social, recreational, and other activities within the community. The consumer must be provided with the opportunity to learn to become an effective self-advocate. This must also provide the individual with the opportunity to achieve appropriate effective interaction with others in daily living situations.

6) **Adjustment Made Necessary by Blindness or Visual Impairment** - shall provide the consumer with the maximum opportunity to accept their blindness or visual impairment. Such services shall not include any counseling of a general psychological or psychiatric nature where the services of a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist are required. Psychological and psychiatric counseling for the consumer must be approved and arranged by a DORS Counselor.

7) **Mobility Training** - shall include instruction in mobility skills to assist the consumer in moving safely and effectively in the home and community environments. This training should be provided by a licensed and trained orientation and mobility provider.

8) **Diabetes Management** - shall provide training in the process of self-testing and, as needed in injections of insulin, or in the taking of other medication. Staff who provide this service must be a certified doctor, nurse or Diabetes Educator and able to administer and monitor medications.

9) **In-home Safety** – shall provide training on entering & exiting the home safely on a daily basis (key identification, adequate lighting of doorways, steps & stairwells), emergency/disaster preparedness, and proper storage, labeling & identification of household chemicals.

B. Other Individual Services

- 1) Transportation
- 2) Reader and Sighted Guide
- 3) Referral to DORS
- 4) Referral to Other Agencies
- 5) Peer or Facilitated Support Group
- 6) Community Integration

7) Other Individual Services

Estimated Number of Awards Two (2)

Estimated range of Awards: not to exceed \$55,000 per year
(No applicant share or matching funds are required)

Duration of Award: November 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017 (see attached sample of a Memorandum of Understanding)

A. Proposer Requirements

1. Proposers should be established non-profit or education programs or organizations with extensive experience and expertise in the provision of rehabilitation services to the blind, including demonstrated success in providing a broad scope of independent living services to older individuals who are blind or visually impaired. A list of agencies for which similar work has been done shall be provided.
2. Proposer should demonstrate that they have the personnel, resources and the time to conduct proposed services and projects.
3. Proposers must be willing to attend DORS training seminars on grant management and service delivery, and the annual national meeting of Chapter 2 program managers (generally in the D.C. area).
4. Proposers must certify that it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by a Federal department or agency; as per Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 85, for prospective participants in primary covered transactions, as defined at 34 CFR Part 85, Section 85.105 and 85.110.
5. If proposer is an out-of- state entity, they must submit a certificate of authority to do business in Maryland.
6. Proposers must be willing to provide at least one training per grant year to OBVS staff related to ILOB services. Specific topics will be discussed amongst the ILOB Program Managers.

B. Deliverables

The successful applicant will be expected to provide the following:

1. The contractor must submit quarterly progress reports and an Annual report utilizing federal reporting forms (sample attached). The quarterly progress reports and Annual report must include an original, a copy and electronic copy in Word format (berenda.reidl@maryland.gov) and must be sent in by the established due date. These reports must include hours of training in each training area of participation, shall be in sufficient detail and shall be submitted in a format acceptable to the Division.
 2. The contractor shall keep and maintain adequate, legible, genuine, current and complete records of services rendered under the terms of the contract and shall make available all such records to the Division, or its designated representatives, for a period of five (5) calendar years following contract expiration. Contractor shall agree that failure to comply with this provision, including a failure that occurs after the contract expires or is canceled, shall be deemed a material breach of the contract and to repay to the Division all amounts received for any services which are not adequately verified and fully documented by contractor's records.
 3. Copies of any brochures/materials developed by the project.
 4. Verification of all consumers referred to DORS
 5. Audit.
- C. Payment Schedule
Payments will be made on a cost reimbursement basis
- D. Time Frame
November 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

V. INFORMATION REQUIRED IN PROPOSAL(S)

Proposers should submit proposals which meet the stated scope of projects. An original, an electronic copy in Word format (Tandra.hunter-payne@maryland.gov) and (7) copies of a transmittal letter and the proposal must be submitted. DORS reserves the right to photocopy additional copies of any or all parts of the proposal for the evaluation and selection process.

Transmittal Letter

A transmittal letter prepared on the proposer's letterhead should accompany the proposal. The purpose of the letter is to transmit the proposal; therefore, it should be brief. The letter must be signed by the individual who is authorized to bind the proposer's organization/agency to all statements, including services and cost contained in the proposal.

Proposal

The proposal should identify the RFP title (Title VII, Chapter 2 – Older Blind) and be prepared in a clear, concise manner. It should address all criteria of the RFP and be presented using the following format:

- I. Identifying Information
(Proposer's name, address, telephone number, contact person, Federal Identification Number of the organization, printed name and signature of authorized individual to enter into a contract, and date. If other than address listed above, list location of office(s) where services will be performed).
- II. Project Abstract
(A one-page summary of the proposed project).
- III. Budget
(A budget summary, detailed budget and justification, including "applicant share" if applicable)
- IV. Narrative
(A narrative description of the proposed project addressing the selection criteria).
 - A. Need
 - B. Plan of Operation
 - C. Key Personnel
 - D. Applicant Experience and Resources
 - E. Budget and Cost Effectiveness
 - F. Evaluation
- V. Attachments
 - A. Organization Chart
 - B. Board of Directors
 - C. Resumes of personnel who will work on the project(s).
 - D. Job Descriptions of personnel who will work on the project(s).

NOTICE

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR OLDER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is soliciting proposals from qualified applicants to provide comprehensive independent living services to a minimum of 75 older individuals who are blind and visually impaired through formula grant funds awards to Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services under Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The RFP packet may be obtained at the Division of Rehabilitation Services website at www.dors.maryland.gov or by contacting DORS at the following:

Liaison: Tandra Hunter-Payne, Program Manager
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Office for Blindness and Vision Services
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: (410) 554-9107
Fax: (410) 554-9455
Email: Tandra.hunter-payne@maryland.gov