



Shelter Acquisition Program RFP

Frequently Asked Questions

Please review the sections below for information regarding the Request for Proposal, application process, and program design. Any further questions can be directed to shelteracquisition@cityofchicago.org.

RFP and Application Information

How does an organization submit an application for this RFP?

All RFP applications must be completed using the Submittable platform. You can access the application here: <https://cocdpd.submittable.com/submit/237628/request-for-proposals-non-congregate-shelter-acquisition-program-department-of>

Will the Bidder's Conference presentation be available afterwards? Will a PDF file of the slides be available after the webinar?

Yes, this presentation is being recorded, and both the recording and slide deck PDF will be posted to the RFP website: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/doh/supp_info/non-congregate-shelter-acquisition-program.html

Will a transcript of the Bidder's Conference webinar be available?

We will upload a recording of this webinar within a few days, and an FAQ by the end of the week. We don't currently plan to upload a transcript but please let us know if you have an accessibility-related need for a written transcript. You can reach out to request a transcript at: shelteracquisition@cityofchicago.org

What is the timeline for this award?

The RFP solicitation will be open until October 17th at 11:59pm. Once the solicitation closes, DOH will work to evaluate and select grantee finalists for the first round. Grantee finalists will work in partnership with DOH and DFSS to determine final site selection, establish a purchase and sale agreement with the seller, and quickly move to sale closing. Funding will be awarded to the grant recipient once the grant agreement is reached. DOH plans to reach grant agreements with RFP finalists by the end of 2022, with sale closings following quickly as long as acquisition process and closing checklist tasks don't face delays.

Applicant Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

This is a competitive process open to non-profit entities which currently operate one or more emergency or transitional homeless shelters within the City of Chicago. Shelter operators may own, rent, or otherwise legally occupy the shelter's present location. For more information, please see the RFP solicitation.

Is DOH selecting awardees based on organization's current location?

We are not choosing awardees based on organizations' current locations, but on the criteria that is set out in the RFP – (1) mission alignment and shelter operations experience, (2) need for new shelter space, and (3) readiness and capacity to own. Please review the RFP solicitation for more information.

Can newer organizations apply for this round?

We have no minimum time that an organization need be established to be eligible for this RFP. With that said, this RFP provides no operating funding, so applicants will need to provide information regarding financing for sustaining shelter operations. Additionally, the goal for this RFP is to transition existing shelter beds into non-congregate setting. RFP applications will be evaluated against this criterion.

Would an organization be eligible to apply if they have a current lease with an option to buy?

Yes, however, DOH may reach out to applicants to better understand the need and context of a situation of this nature to better assess if the proposal meets DOH selection criteria.

Can organizations apply for funding for multiple motels; can the sites then be used for separate purposes, for example, use one as shelter and the other as Permanent Supportive Housing?

The RFP is focused on transitioning shelter beds from congregate shelter to non-congregate shelter. For this first RFP we are only funding site acquisitions for use as shelter.

Does the shelter have to be within the City of Chicago?

Yes, the acquired shelter facility must be within the limits of City of Chicago.

Is there a minimum number of beds that operators must be providing to apply to this RFP?

There is no minimum number of shelter beds to apply.

Is this open to overnight shelters, emergency shelters, or interim shelters?

All shelter operators are welcome to apply. This RFP is open to shelter operators generally. Shelter is defined as "a place that provides a short-term place to stay for those experiencing homelessness and provides support to households in moving toward appropriate and stable permanent housing".

If an organization currently operates non-congregate shelter in a rented space that not ideal for clients (i.e., not handicap accessible, in need of great repair, etc.), can the organization apply to purchase space?

DOH expects to only select awardees in this first round with critical/emergency need for new space due to conditions at the existing shelter that DOH deems cannot readily be resolved. Need may be demonstrated by physical attributes (e.g., state of disrepair), financial attributes (e.g., cost to occupy current space), or changing conditions (e.g., upcoming expiry of lease without option to renew).

Non-Congregate Shelter Requirements

How flexible is the requirement for fully non-congregate shelter (private rooms and bath)?

While non-congregate facilities are the ideal outcome from this program, this funding opportunity may fund acquisition of buildings that provide substantial improvement over existing shelter conditions without fully meeting the definition of non-congregate (individual room and bathroom for each household).

Therefore, there is some flexibility in this definition. A building acquired through this program isn't required to meet the strict definition if it provides substantial improvement over existing conditions and works within realities of maintaining bed count in shelter system and existing buildings.

Is the overall goal for DFSS to move away from congregate settings and only fund non-congregate shelters in the future?

DFSS is utilizing available CRP funds to transition as many current congregate shelter beds to non-congregate settings as possible. However, DFSS funding for shelter operations will not be limited to non-congregate shelters.

Can we use funds to convert our current shelter into a non-congregate shelter?

This RFP is for new facility acquisitions, only. DFSS will be releasing an RFQ this year to fund existing shelters in need of renovations, and non-congregate unit conversions are a funding priority.

Potential Site Information

How does site selection work?

DOH in partnership with DFSS has been working to identify properties that align with current shelter needs. Selected finalists will be able to choose one of these pre scoped properties or

may propose a facility already identified that addresses the goals of this RFP. If an organization has a property in mind, they should include that in section VI of the RFP. RFP evaluations will not preference either route.

Will a list of identified properties be shared with applicants?

We have a list of potential properties but will not be revealing identified properties until finalists are selected. We are working with DFSS to identify properties that might meet current shelter needs.

Is preference given to RFP responses that use the pre-scoped spaces?

Proposals will be evaluated and selected based on the applicant’s critical need for new shelter space; their readiness and capacity to acquire, perform limited building rehabilitation, own in good standing, and manage the property in question; and their shelter operations experience and mission alignment with the goals of this program. The responses will not be evaluated based on site preferences – final site selection will be determined separately with the selected grantee finalists.

Where can an organization provide information about a separate building proposal?

Applicants can provide narrative information and upload supporting files on proposed buildings in Section VI, Need for Non-Congregate Space. The responses will not be evaluated based on site preferences – final site selection will be determined separately with the selected grantee finalists.

Can an organization acquire vacant land to build new non-congregate facilities?

The first round will focus on existing buildings, as the initial goal of this program is to quickly transition existing shelters into non-congregate space. Building an entirely new space would take significantly longer, therefore that option will not be considered in this round of the RFP. Please look out for modifications to this solicitation in future rounds beginning in 2023.

Application Process

What evidence of funding must organizations provide?

There does not need to be evidence of financing to cover the total acquisition cost, as that is the purpose of the grant funding. However, the RFP application should include information about organizational funding available for shelter operations and general funding to prove readiness for ownership and operations. We ask that organizations provide evidence of operating funding, or anything else that could help us understand the organization’s capacity to own and operate.

The application only allows for 3 current shelter operations to be mentioned. If we have more than 3 shelters operating, should we leave out any that aren't fully non congregate?

Applicants need to provide at least one current shelter operation experience in the RFP submission. Applicants are allowed to provide up to three shelter operations experiences – if an organization operates more than three shelter spaces, please include the operations most in need of transition to non-congregate settings.

How should our organization complete Section VIII, the Case Study?

The purpose of the case study is for applicants to show reasonable understanding of the process and repairs required for site acquisition, turnover, and rehabilitation. All respondents should utilize the case study file to respond to this section, found here:

[https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/doh/rfps/NCS Case Study File.pdf](https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/doh/rfps/NCS_Case_Study_File.pdf)

DOH will evaluate case study responses based on the rationale and thought processes presented in the narrative and budget responses for the turnover, accessibility, and general repairs sections of the Section VIII. Precision and accuracy in the budgeted totals will be assessed at a lower priority. DOH does not expect organizations to contract or partner with any new entities or construction experts to complete Section VIII of the RFP solicitation.

Selection, Funding, and Implementation Process

Is there a limit on the amount of funding available for a selected project?

There is no specific number attached to RFP for awards. We will work with selected grantee to determine final costs based on site acquisition costs and turnover, accessibility, and rehabilitation repairs needed.

Will bridge financing be required for this, how will financing happen?

No, DOH will be able to grant funds directly into the closing of the property. The only financial information necessary is for ongoing shelter operations.

Will an environmental study be done on properties that DOH is pursuing and possible options?

Yes, DOH will work in partnership with AIS to complete any environmental studies needed to ensure safety of sites.

Is there set aside in funding for future repairs?

For the first round of this RFP there are not planned set asides for future repairs as part of the funding package. There may be future funding through other sources (DFSS infrastructure, etc.). Through this grant, both acquisition and rehab are eligible costs. The goal with this program is that a grantee is funded sufficiently to purchase and repair a building up to full operational status. Future repairs that come up for the building will be the responsibility of the operator to fund.

Is there a limit on how much of the granted funds may be used for rehab of space as compared to acquisition? If a partner will acquire the site, can all funds be used for rehab of the space?

There is no set limit on how much of funds need be used for rehab versus acquisition. However, there are stipulations when city supports construction, including prevailing wage, MBE/WBE so DOH would work with grantee determine the final grant amount.

Is it possible that the project could be fully funded (for both acquisition and renovation) or would additional funds need to be secured by the applicant?

It is not a requirement that shelter operators bring other funding to the table to assist with acquisition nor renovation costs. With that said, if you have additional financing available, please list it in the appropriate section of your proposal.

Are there specifications for vendor selection for the construction work?

Vendor selection for any necessary rehab work will need to comply with the relevant city requirements if city funding is used for those expenses. This would include MBE/WBE requirements, city residency requirements, and prevailing wage requirements.

Additional Funding Opportunities

Do agencies have to apply for acquisition to receive renovation grants?

DFSS will be releasing a separate funding opportunity for renovation of existing shelter facilities that will be independent of this funding opportunity. Whether an agency applies for this RFP for acquisition will not affect consideration for renovation funding through the DFSS funding opportunity.

Can an organization apply for DOH's shelter acquisition program, DFSS shelter renovation program, and CDPH's stabilization housing program?

Yes! Each of these programs will have separate solicitation processes. Eligibility for each program will be different, so you may not qualify for every program, but you are not prevented from applying to one if you apply to any other.

If you have any further questions that have not been addressed in this FAQ, the bidder's conference recording, or the RFP solicitation, please reach out to shelteracquisition@cityofchicago.org. Any substantial additional questions will be addressed in an addendum to the FAQ by Friday, October 14th.