



Request for Proposals: Coordinated Entry Anchor Agency

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I. Introduction

A. Request for Proposals Overview

Union Mission, the Coordinated Entry Lead Agency (“CE Lead Agency”) for the Western PA Continuum of Care (“the CoC,”) is seeking a new Anchor Agency for each region of the coordinated entry system. The current Coordinated Entry System (“CES”) is undergoing significant updates with an anticipated *fully launched* date of April 1, 2024. The focus of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to identify a new Anchor Agency that will support implementation and coordination of the CoC’s coordinated entry system regionally.

The CE Lead Agency is administering this RFP, and will identify any necessary additional selection members which will, through the process defined in this RFP, identify an entity for the Anchor Agency role.

Selected Anchor Agencies will be expected to serve in that role for a minimum of three (3) years, at which point the Lead Agency intends to re-issue and RFP, at which point selected organizations may re-bid.

Proposals must be submitted no later than 5 PM on Friday, December 1, 2023.

B. CoC and Coordinated Entry Overview

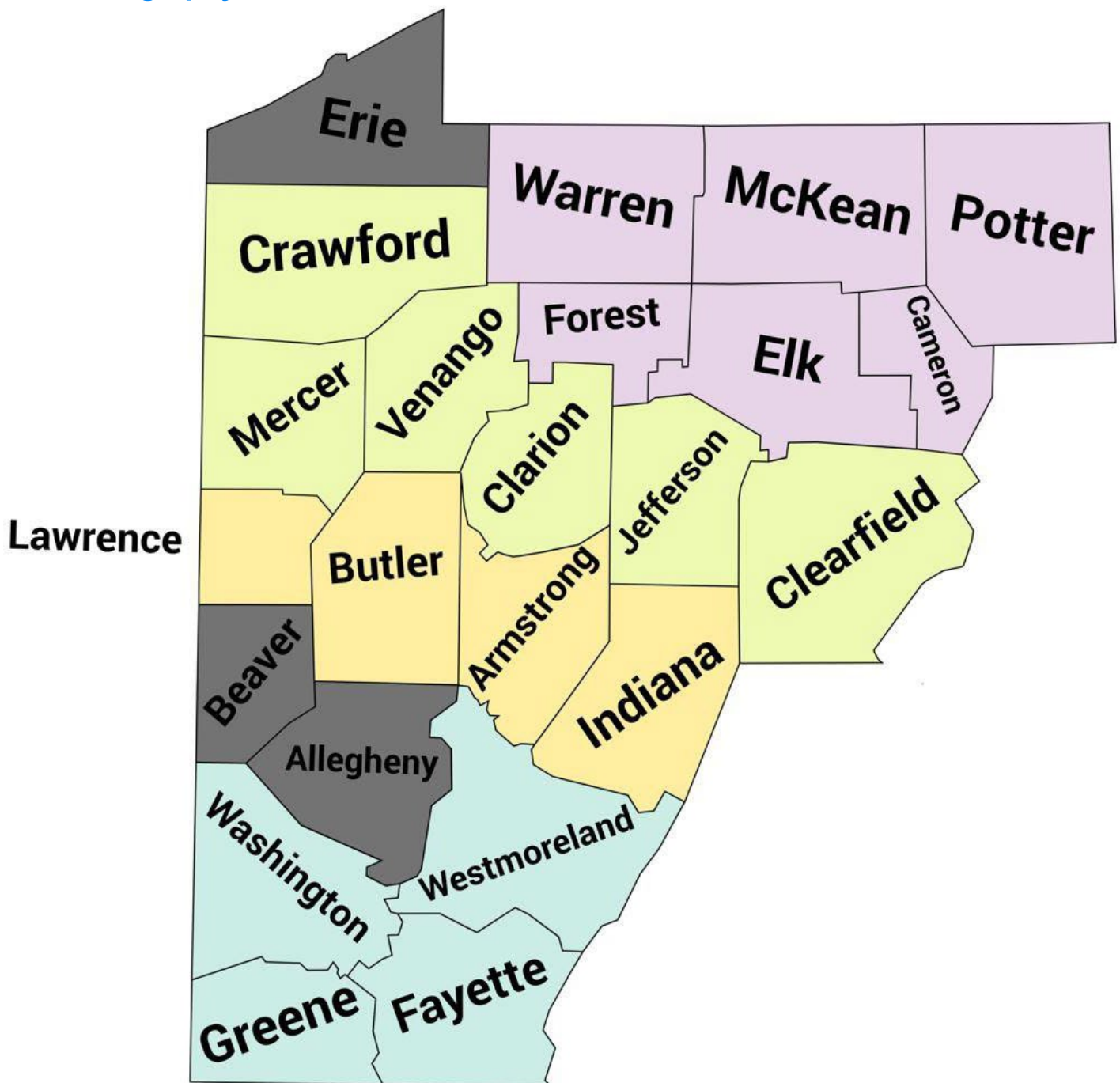
The Western Pennsylvania Continuum of Care is the Federally recognized homeless services coalition dedicated to serving 20 counties in western Pennsylvania. The CoC’s Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Western PA Continuum of Care, aligned with the Federal strategic plan to end homelessness, outlines an ambitious set of steps towards the CoC’s ultimate goal, to end homelessness in its 20-county geography.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires every CoC to have a coordinated entry system to ensure that people experiencing homelessness have clear, open access to a network of housing and supportive services designed to help them achieve safe, stable housing.

The Western PA CoC’s network includes but is not limited to street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing activities supported by HUD, other Federal agencies, and a combination of state, local, and private funding. Housing and supportive services are accessed via intake, triage, assessment, prioritization, and referral processes that are structured at the CoC level, adapted to local needs, and implemented by individual service providers.

The CoC initially implemented its coordinated entry system in 2018. Beginning in mid-2022, the CoC has been in the process of assessing and redesigning its coordinated entry system to better meet the needs of both service providers and people experiencing homelessness. The CoC expects to begin implementing elements of the coordinated entry system redesign in Q2 2023, fully adopting all recommended changes by April 1, 2024. The Anchor Agency identified through this RFP will significantly impact the success of that implementation.

C. CoC Geography¹



II. Coordinated Entry Roles and Responsibilities

A. Roles and Responsibilities Overview

The CES provides intake, emergency services, housing problem-solving, assessment, prioritization, and project referral for people experiencing homelessness. The CES's primary structure, management, and oversight are CoC-wide, while certain aspects of its implementation are determined at a regional level. The operations of the CES are defined by the CoC's Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures ("CES P&Ps"). CES contributors can be grouped into four general categories:

- Oversight is provided by the CoC's Board and its coordinated entry committee
- CoC-wide management is provided by the coordinated entry lead agency
- **Regional coordination is provided by a single anchor agency in each region**
- CES activities are provided by homeless services projects called access points, which are

funded by sources including but not limited to the CoC Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, and private dollars

B. Anchor Agency Specific Roles and Responsibilities

The Anchor Agency is tasked with the following roles and responsibilities:

- Serving as the designated region's primary CES activity coordinator, which includes but is not limited to the activities enumerated below
- Serving as a sub-recipient of the CoC's CoC Program-funded SSO-CES grant, which includes fulfilling all the responsibilities designated to the anchor agency via the sub-recipient contract
- Coordinating with access points to ensure that the CES provides coverage to the region's full geographic area, including, insofar as funding is available, street outreach into those areas least likely to receive services
- Coordinating with access points to ensure that the region provides 24/7 access to the CES, which must, at minimum, include:
 - A method for requesting services 'after hours' that will be fulfilled once operating hours resume
 - A method for connecting people experiencing homelessness to emergency shelter and emergency health services both during and after access point operating hours
- Reporting to the coordinated entry lead agency and the coordinated entry committee
- In partnership with the coordinated entry lead agency:
 - Developing and implementing, either directly or indirectly through third parties, a marketing plan for the CES to ensure people experiencing homelessness are aware of and can access services
 - Recruiting CES services providers, including emergency shelters, street outreach providers, organizations that offer housing subsidies and supportive services to people experiencing homelessness, and housing owners
 - Providing peer technical support on CES roles and responsibilities to access points, including support for homeless services staff who are responsible for delivering, coordinating, or managing one or more phases or core activities of the CES
 - At the direction of the coordinated entry lead agency: investigating to confirm that specific elements of the CES are being carried out as specified by the CoC
- Supporting the development of the region's CES policies and procedures, which must, at minimum, incorporate the anchor agency and region's processes for fulfilling the requirements listed above

C. Applicability of Other Requirements

The Anchor Agency for each region are bound by any other requirements specified by the CoC's coordinated entry policies and procedures.

As a sub-recipient of the CoC's HUD-funded coordinated entry system grant, an Anchor Agency is contractually bound by specific requirements that are enumerated within the grant contract, within 24 CFR § 578 (also called the CoC Program interim rule); and any other Federal statute, regulation, or policy included by reference in the CoC Program interim rule or the grant contract.

The Anchor Agency is further bound by any other applicable state or local laws, regulations, or requirements that apply to the activities required to carry out as part of that role.

III. Application Process

A. Timeline and Submission

Date	Event
November 10, 2023	Coordinated Entry Lead Agency RFP Released
November 16, 2023 @ 5PM	Intent to Apply notification requested
Ongoing	Questions & Answers will be posted to the RFP Website
December 1, 2023 @ 5PM	RFP Deadline

Intent to Apply: Organizations intending to respond to this RFP are asked to notify the Lead Agency by 5 PM Eastern Time on Thursday, November 16, 2023. Notifications should be emailed to admin@theunionmission.org with a subject line referencing the RFP. Organizations not submitting an intent to apply **can still respond to this RFP.**

Proposal Deadline: All proposals must be received no later than 5 PM on Friday, December 1, 2023.

Proposals must be submitted using one of the following methods:

- As single **PDF** emailed to admin@theunionmission.org (***strongly preferred method of submission***)
- One original document mailed to:
Union Mission
ATTN: ANCHOR
PO Box 271
Latrobe, PA 15650.

Selection Process: The CE Lead Agency and other assigned selection members will review all submissions. During the December 4, 2023 regional conversations, each responding organization will be responsible for making a presentation of their proposal to representatives in their Region. Afterward, the CE Lead Agency and any other selection members will solicit feedback (endorsements, concerns, etc.) from other regional partners. This feedback will be incorporated into the selection process.

Approval Process: After the review period and final selection, the CE Lead Agency will announce the determination and proceed with the onboarding and contracting process for each selected Anchor Agency.

B. Proposal Review and Scoring

The CE Lead Agency and other appointed selection members will review applications. These additional members will be identified in consultation with the CoC Governing Board, the Coordinated Entry Committee, the collaborative applicant, the HMIS Lead organization, and other key leaders at the discretion of the CE Lead Agency.

Selection members who have a conflict of interest (such as organizations applying under this RFP or intended subcontractors of an applicant) will not participate in the scoring or discussion of applications to which the conflict of interest applies.

The evaluation process includes a scored response of six components on a 100-point scale. Responses should address the following questions in their narrative:

- **Capacity, including Experience and Expertise: 35 points**
 - Provide a brief overview of the agency's history, mission, and experience in ending homelessness. Describe the agency's background and present activity, as well as, the philosophy of providing services to end homelessness and its coordination of homeless responses at both the administrative level and the direct service level.
 - Describe the agency's understanding of CES core principles and best practices, and the agency's purpose in offering this service to the proposed region.
 - Describe how operating as a CE Anchor Agency aligns to the agency's mission and vision.

- **Management and Staffing Plan, including Resource Allocation: 15 points**
 - Describe the agency's proposed staffing structure that will be implemented if selected as an Anchor Agency (e.g. Number of staff, direct support, administrative, etc.).
 - Please review the following two scenarios and provide a response to the agency's management and staffing plan to fulfill the responsibilities of the Anchor Agency under each of these scenarios:
 - If provided \$15,000 to support CE Activities.
 - If provided the funding to support a FTE staff person. Please also indicate if you'd prefer to hire direct, or have a FTE staff person hired and managed by the CE Lead Agency, but embedded within the agency.
 - Describe the agency's demonstrated ability to achieve the responsibilities of an Anchor Agency.
 - Describe the agency's knowledge, experience and ability to navigate, allocate and leverage resource allocations.
 - Describe the methods the agency would employ to provide peer support to access points and homeless services staff.
 - Outline the agency's plan to assist in identifying key areas needed as part of a marketing strategy to increase awareness of CES services for people experiencing homelessness in the region.

- **Partnership and Collaboration: 15 points**
 - Describe the agency's capacity to collaborate with the CE Lead Agency and other stakeholders within the CoC.
 - Describe the agency's knowledge of and commitment to aligning with regional and CoC-wide goals and strategies.
 - Describe the agency's ability to assist in recruiting CES access sites in the region you're applying for (where needed), and what criteria would you use to evaluate their suitability.
 - Describe relationships with other existing programs or initiatives that the agency could leverage in an effort to enhance the CE system.
 - Describe the strategies the agency would employ to achieve 24/7 access to CES services in the region. How would you work with access points to enhance coverage in areas least likely to receive services within the region?

- **Legal and Compliance, including Financial Management: 15 points**
 - Describe the agency's experience in effectively utilizing Federal funds and performing activities similar to those in this RFP within the last 5 years. (Please attach the Management Letter for the agency's most recently completed audit.)
 - Describe any current or pending legal matters.
 - Describe any conflicts of interest the agency would have as an Anchor Agency.

- **Fidelity and Quality: 10 points**
 - o Ability to provide input on the fidelity and quality of CES implementation
 - o Describe how the agency has incorporated diversity, equity, and inclusion into the agency and its operations, including authentic partnership with people with lived experience of homelessness and/or survivors of domestic violence.
 - o Describe the ways in which the agency would contribute to future system improvements if selected as the CE Anchor Agency. How does the agency define “system success”?
 - o Describe how the agency would assist in identifying quality assurance concerns regarding CES implementation in the region.

- **Completeness and Clarity: 10 points**

- **Match and Leverage (Bonus): 5 points**
 - o Describe any capacity you would have to leverage or provide in-kind or cash match to strengthen or support the CE System.

C. Proposal Required Components

1. Overview and Format

Proposals must be submitted in the form of a PDF (electronic) or printed packet of documents (postal mail). Applicants may format proposals at their discretion; however, applicants are encouraged to use fonts at least 10 points in size; to ensure their proposals are accessible to people with color vision deficiency; and to include attachments as requested and appropriate. Submissions should not exceed fifteen (15) pages total, including any cover letter pages, the proposal narrative, the budget, and all attachments.

2. Basic Information

Proposals should include a cover sheet with the following basic information:

- Applicant agency name
- Primary contact name, title, phone number, and email address
- Region

3. Narrative Responses and Attachments

Proposals should address each of the listed elements specified in Section III.B. Other than the proposal page limit specified in Section III.C.1., there is no length restriction on proposal narratives; however, applicants are encouraged to be clear and succinct. Applicants may include charts, other visuals, or attachments as appropriate.

D. Questions

Questions about this RFP must be submitted to the CE Lead Agency at admin@theunionmission.org with a subject line referencing the RFP.

The CE Lead Agency will respond directly to inquiries. In addition, the CE Lead Agency will post all responses online at: <https://tinyurl.com/rfp-ce-anchor>