



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**to**  
**OPERATE a Single Room Occupancy Program,**  
**SRO-Philadelphia**

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Issued by:  
THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA ("City")  
Office of Homeless Services  
on:  
July 10, 2020

**Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis through**  
**5 p.m. on December 31, 2020**  
**Submit by 8/14/20 for first available contract term of 9/1/20**

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

### **Issued by**

The City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Services, in collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS)

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit interest from not-for-profit organizations ("providers") to supply and/or operate a Single Room Occupancy program, SRO-Philadelphia. The program seeks to provide a temporary housing opportunity for individuals ("participants") who are experiencing homelessness and who have health conditions making them susceptible to COVID 19.

The goal of SRO-Philadelphia is to serve up to 250 vulnerable individuals who are experiencing homelessness and to decrease the possibility that they will contract COVID 19 by offering a non-congregate sleeping environment. The program will allow individuals to live independently with support in a single room. RFP respondents are also referred to as the "Operator".

Through this RFP, the City is also seeking to address racial inequities by increasing affordable housing opportunities for people of color, especially black people, who make up 80% of those experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia. The City is actively seeking providers for this program who are minority operators.

### **Key Dates**

Release Date: July 10, 2020

Submission Deadline: The City will accept rolling submissions, at any time through December 31, 2020

Earliest Anticipated Contract Start Date: beginning September 1, 2020. If you are interested in being considered for the 9/1/20 term, please submit your proposal and budget no later than August 15, 2020.

Contract Terms: Contract terms will be in 12-month increments. The earliest anticipated term will be September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021. Annual renewals are depending upon available funding.

### **Background**

The Office of Homeless Services (OHS) is currently providing temporary housing opportunities to high risk individuals at COVID 19 Prevention Spaces, which are hotel rooms that will not be permanently available. The goal of this SRO program is to house single men and women experiencing homelessness who may have behavioral health challenges and are in need of long-term, safe and secure housing in lower congregate settings. These individuals have risk factors for COVID-19 related to their age and underlying health conditions as defined by the CDC. SRO Philadelphia is a temporary housing option.

A Single Room Occupancy (more commonly abbreviated to SRO) is a form of housing that is typically aimed at residents with low or minimal incomes who rent small, furnished single rooms with a bed, chair, and sometimes a small desk. SRO units are typically rented out as permanent residence and/or primary residence to individuals, within a multi-tenant building where tenants share a kitchen, toilets or bathrooms. SRO units range from 80 to 140 square feet. Rooms may have a microwave and mini refrigerator. In this model, SROs will be operated as a temporary housing program, like shelter but allowing for greater privacy and social distancing.

The term SRO refers to the fact that the tenant occupies a single room, as opposed to a full apartment. SRO units may be provided in a house, apartment building, hotel or other suitable building.

A single room occupancy (SRO) unit provides living and sleeping space for the exclusive use of the occupant, but sanitary and/or food preparation is in shared spaces. An SRO unit may not be occupied by more than one person.

### **Concept**

COVID-19 Prevention Space houses participants who are at high risk for COVID-19 by moving them out of denser congregate sites or from the street to a setting with more private space. According to the CDC, participants at high risk for COVID-19 are those who are 65 years old or older, or have a compromised immune system, or have an underlying respiratory condition, or have a chronic illness.

SRO-Philadelphia is a temporary housing solution for men and women who presently reside at the COVID 19 Prevention Space, in other congregate setting or are unsheltered. The City is seeking providers who have ownership of or access to available properties to set up SROs and the ability to manage the program.

Funding will be provided through this RFP through a program-based budget. No funding is provided through this RFP for property renovation.

To achieve the goal of 250 housing units, the City anticipates awarding several rounds of contracts, funding permitted, and will allow for submission of proposals through December 31, 2020.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The goal of SRO-Philadelphia is to help prevent and end homelessness for those individuals who are over 65 and/or have health issues in Philadelphia by providing safer temporary housing options for individuals who are homeless and may be facing behavioral health challenges, especially people of color.

### **Eligibility for SRO – Philadelphia, includes**

- Individuals residing at the COVID Prevention site or have underlying health concerns that make them susceptible to COVID 19, see List Below

### **Responsibilities for Participants living in SROs**

- Participate in program Orientation

- Agree to work with services to address physical and mental health needs

### **Responsibilities of the Operator**

- Accept referrals from the City, exclusively
- Show one SRO unit per participant
- Ensure housing is inspected and is habitable; provide maintenance and repair
- Meet local landlord requirements
- Provide and connect people with support services

### **From the CDC Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:**

- [People 65 years and older](#)
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

### **Proposed Timeline**

August 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. Proposal submission deadline for First Round

September 1, 2020- Earliest contract start date

October 1, 2020- First move in

### **Participant Characteristics:**

- All participants must have a history of homelessness, be 65 years of age, and have risks factors related to COVID 19. They may also have behavioral health challenges, and/or forensic involvement.

### **Roles/Functions of the SRO-Philadelphia Operator**

The SRO Philadelphia units will be selected through this RFP process. There are several possible configurations based on property ownership and provider capacity. Possible examples follow:

1. Applicant owns the property and will operate the program and provide supportive services
2. Applicant has an agreement to master lease the property from another owner and will operate the program and provide supportive services
3. Applicant owns property and will operate the program but will subcontract with an entity skilled in supportive service provision

The responsibilities are two-fold: operations and supportive services administration. The following table delineates the difference in roles, although the proposed project includes both functions:

Operating	Supportive Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Maintaining safety, security and quality of the property; handling repairs</li> <li>✓ Rent</li> <li>✓ Utilities</li> <li>✓ Equipment</li> <li>✓ Food</li> <li>✓ Furnishings</li> <li>✓ Supplies for operating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interviewing participants for intake into the program</li> <li>✓ Entering into program agreements with participants</li> <li>✓ Case management</li> <li>✓ Employment assistance</li> <li>✓ Life skills training</li> <li>✓ Transportation</li> <li>✓ Mental health services</li> <li>✓ Outpatient health services</li> <li>✓ Coordinating services where needed</li> <li>✓ 24/7 on-call capability</li> </ul>

The above table is not an exhaustive list of necessary tasks but should serve as a general guide as to the types of services being sought through this RFP. The Operator will be responsible for facilitating participant service coordination meetings at set intervals (monthly, quarterly, yearly, etc.). The Operator will accept all referrals for these SRO units exclusively from Homeless Services or DBH, and will participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a client level data system. In addition to the skills needed to successfully operate the housing itself, the Operator must embrace the principles of Housing First as well as demonstrate familiarity with (or be willing to be trained on) trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, client-based decision making and mental-health first aid practices.

RFP Response

**Information Requested**

*Responses must be double spaced, minimum font size 12, not to exceed 15 pages, not including attachments.*

1. Organizational Overview: Provide an overview of your organization and any subcontractors that addresses qualifications for successfully carrying out the tasks outlined in this RFP, including:
  - General information:
    - Name and address of agency
    - Name, title, telephone and email of contact person
    - Brief description of agency background and services
  - Agency and Staff Experience (Mission, experience with residential programs, with people experiencing homelessness, with elderly and/or medically vulnerable individuals)
  - Diversity of staff, leadership and Board
  - Capacity to take on this program
  
2. Property Description, ownership, and appropriate zoning/licensing.
  - How many people do you propose to serve?

- Provide address/es of the program, description of the building, photographs of the external and internal building, number of proposed units for sleeping, as well as a description of the shared living spaces.
- Provide a brief description of the neighborhood context and nearby amenities.
- Attach ownership documentation, agreement to master lease if not owned by the applicant, zoning information

3. Proposed Approach: Describe the agency’s proposed approach to the project including

- Philosophy toward assisting vulnerable individuals
- How property maintenance and operations functions will be carried out
- How supportive services will be provided, specifically to connect people to needed benefits and services
- How medical and behavioral health services will be provided (can be staff or community partnerships)
- What partnerships will you bring to the table?
- How the project will address racial inequalities and housing discrimination.
- How the services will be culturally competent.

4. One Year Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative. (See Attachment 1 for Format)

See the table above for eligible costs.

### **Selection Criteria**

The selection of the Operator will be made by a Review Committee comprised of OHS and DBH representatives, including people with lived expertise. Scoring will be based on the following criteria:

1. Agency Qualifications and Relevant Experience – 35 points
2. Proposed Approach – 40 points
3. Capacity and Timeliness - 10 points
4. Program Budget / Price – 15 points

Please note that OHS and DBHIdS may take into consideration additional factors not listed above in selecting the Operator.

### **Questions regarding this proposal**

Please email questions regarding this proposal to Roberta Cancellier at [roberta.cancellier@phila.gov](mailto:roberta.cancellier@phila.gov), or Joyce Sacco, [joyce.sacco@phila.gov](mailto:joyce.sacco@phila.gov).

**Responses will be posted on the Office of Homeless Services website,**

<http://philadelphiaofficeofhomelesservices.org/> on a periodic basis.

### **Final Submission**

Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis. Please submit via email to Roberta Cancellier, [Roberta.cancellier@phila.gov](mailto:Roberta.cancellier@phila.gov), at any time between now and the end of the calendar year, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 31, 2020. Operators interested in being considered for the first phase to begin September 1 at the earliest should submit a proposal by August 14, 2020.