

REQUEST OF PROPOSAL (RFP) GUIDANCE

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES
HIV/STD PREVENTION AND CARE BRANCH

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS (HOPWA)
PROJECT PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 1, 2023-AUGUST 31, 2028
INITIAL CONTRACT PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 1, 2023- AUGUST 31, 2024

HOUSTON REGIONAL HIV/AIDS RESOURCE GROUP, INC.
3700 BUFFALO SPEEDWAY, SUITE 250
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77098
PHONE: (713) 526-1016
FAX: (713) 526-2369

LETTERS OF INTENT ARE REQUIRED

(SEE NEXT PAGE FOR GUIDELINES)

DUE DATE: THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2023

5:00 P.M., CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

**NO PROPOSALS WILL BE REVIEWED WITHOUT
A CORRESPONDING LETTER OF INTENT!**

RFP APPLICATION DUE DATE

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2023

5:00 P.M., CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

3700 BUFFALO SPEEDWAY SUITE 250

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77098

**SUBMIT ONE (1) PRINTED ORIGINAL AND FIVE (5) PRINTED COPIES
AND ONE (1) ELECTRONIC COPY
ON OR BEFORE INDICATED DUE DATE**

LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit a letter of intent addressed to Tiffany Shepherd, MPH, Executive Director, which includes the following information:

1. Applicant's name
2. HSDA To Be Served
3. Service(s) that applicant will incorporate in its proposal. Only include service(s) that you propose in your budget.
3. List the dollar amount (\$) the applicant will apply for in each service.
4. Authorized signature

DUE DATE: Thursday, June 15, 2023

5:00 P.M., Central Standard Time

NO EXCEPTIONS! NO EXCEPTIONS! NO EXCEPTIONS!

Letters of intent can be emailed to Tiffany Shepherd at tshepherd@hivtrg.org or mailed to The Resource Group main office. It is **YOUR** responsibility to ensure receipt of the letter.

REMINDER: If you do **NOT** submit your letter of intent, your proposal(s) will **NOT** be reviewed.

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HOUSTON REGIONAL HIV/AIDS RESOURCE GROUP
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES
HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS (HOPWA)

I. INTRODUCTION

Applications are requested for five HIV Service Delivery Areas (HSDAs): Paris/Texarkana, Tyler/Longview, Lufkin/Nacogdoches, Beaumont/Port Arthur, and Houston/Galveston. Specific counties covered under each HSDA are listed in **Appendix A** (Service Area and Projected Allocations). *Service may only be provided to clients who reside within the counties listed in Appendix A.*

Applicants must designate which HSDA they are proposing to serve (Form A, Item 7). If applicants are proposing to serve multiple HSDAs, they must submit a separate application for each HSDA. Failure to submit separate applications for each HSDA to be served will result in disqualification of the applicant.

The DSHS HOPWA program is administered by DSHS, which receives annual formula grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). DSHS contracts with administrative agencies to serve the HSDAs covered under this program. The Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group is the administrative agency for the five HSDAs of this Request for Proposal (RFP) and will be administering the 2023-2024 Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Housing Opportunities for People with HIV (HOPWA) Grants (hereafter referred to as DSHS HOPWA).

Any and all requirements contained in this RFP are subject to change pending any changes issued by the Department of State Health Services and its HIV/STD Prevention and Care Branch.

II. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The AIDS Opportunity Act of 1990 established the purpose, general authority, and authorization of appropriations for the Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program. The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program, managed by HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, was established to provide housing assistance and related supportive services for low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for this program are governmental, public and private non-profit entities located within the five HSDAs. Eligible entities may include but are not limited to: city and/or county health departments or districts; non-profit community based organizations; and public or private non-profit hospitals. **For-profit entities may be funded if such entities are the ONLY available provider in the area. Individuals are not eligible to apply. No funded agency may refuse service to any eligible client who resides in the HSDA.**

IV. PURPOSE OF DSHS HOPWA GRANTS

The goals of the DSHS HOPWA Program are to help low-income PLWH and their households

establish or maintain affordable and stable housing, reduce their risk of homelessness, and improve their access to health care and supportive services.

V. AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES

The Resource Group (TRG) authorizes the following activities (see Appendix B):

1. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
2. Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility (STRMU)
3. Facility-Based Housing Assistance (FBHA)
 - a. Short-Term Supportive Housing (STSH)
 - b. Transitional Supportive Housing (TSH)
 - c. Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)
4. Housing Case Management (HCM)
5. Project Sponsor Administration

VI. AVAILABLE FUNDS

This RFP announces funding for the grants for the following five HSDAs: Paris/Texarkana, Tyler/Longview, Lufkin/Nacogdoches, Beaumont/Port Arthur, and Houston/Galveston (See **Appendix A** (Service Area and Projected Allocations).

- DSHS HOPWA 9/1/2023 – 8/31/2024

The Department of State Health Services has NOT yet made funding awards for these grants. The allocations contained in this RFP are based on level funding. Once the DSHS makes the final funding awards for these grants, the amount allocated for each service may be increased or decreased.

VII. DESCRIPTION/FUNDING OF SERVICE COMPONENTS

The Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, Inc. is issuing a single RFP for ALL HSDAs funded under DSHS HOPWA program. All contracts resulting from this RFP will be for twelve (12) month period as follows:

- DSHS HOPWA 9/1/2023 – 8/31/2024

Appendix B (Fundable HOPWA Services) contains a listing and description of those services that are allowed to be funded by DSHS HOPWA funds. Funds awarded through this RFP will ONLY fund services contained in **Appendix B**.

Applicants may apply for more than one service area (HSDA) contained in this RFP. However, applicants must submit a **separate** application for each service area proposed for funding. When applying in multiple HSDAs, applicants must submit an application for each HSDA in which they are applying. **If an applicant is applying for multiple HSDA allocations, a separate application must be submitted for each allocation.**

VIII. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

A. USE OF FUNDS

1. Allowable Use of Funds
DSHS funds may be used for costs directly related to providing housing assistance services for individuals living with HIV within the HSDA. All costs are subject to

negotiation with The Resource Group and DSHS.

2. Administrative Costs

The Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) funding mandates a 7% aggregate cap on administrative costs. This cap applies to the total award to the HSDA, not specifically to individual applicants. However, to meet this requirement for the HSDA, each applicant will be expected to stay within the 7% administrative cost limit.

Administrative activities include:

- Usual and recognized overhead although The Resource Group does not accept usage of an established indirect cost rate. Usual and recognized overhead includes items such as rent, utility, telephone, and other expenses related to administrative staff; expenses such as liability insurance and building-related costs (e.g., janitorial).
- Management and oversight of specific programs funded under this RFP. This includes salaries, fringe benefits, and travel expenses of administrative staff, including financial management staff. This includes direct supervision of program staff. If an administrator also directly supervises program staff, the actual portion of time devoted to that supervision is excluded. *This includes salaries and fringe benefits of staff solely devoted to TCT data entry or management.*

Applicants must manage HOPWA funds for delivery of HOPWA program services by establishing policies and procedures as required by federal regulations including, but not limited to:

- Management of grant funds: Attention must be given to assuring that HOPWA funds are available throughout the project year and are not expended prematurely. Having knowledge of current caseloads and expenditures by client, waiting lists, and past program experience can be used to effectively plan services.
- Applicants for DSHS HOPWA funds are expected to stay within the HOPWA-mandated 7% administrative cap requirement of HOPWA providers.
- Budgeting grant funds: It is recommended that Project Sponsors budget 1/12 of their annual HOPWA budget per month after the TBRA commitment is determined. In this way, if a Project Sponsor underspends or overspends in any particular month, program staff will be able to determine the balance of funds available for the coming months.
- Charging to appropriate contracts: Costs incurred in one contract year cannot be paid with funds from a different contract year.

Applicants are required to adhere to Federal principles for determining allowable costs. Such costs are determined in accordance with the cost principles applicable to the organization incurring the costs. The kinds of organizations and the applicable cost principles are set out in The Resource Group and/or DSHS HOPWA Manual (2022); HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions (7/22), and the Grant Technical Assistance Guide (2/18).

If the applicant expends \$750,000 or more in total federal financial assistance during their fiscal year, arrangements must be made for agency-wide financial and compliance audits. Audits must be done by an independent certified public accountant and must be in accordance with the Title 45 Public Welfare, Part 75 Uniform Administrative

Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements for HHS Awards (known as the Uniform Guidance), Subpart F Audit Requirements (available upon request). Costs of this audit can be charged to this budget according to the agency's standard cost allocation plan. If the applicant is not required to have a Single Audit, The Resource Group and the DSHS will provide the Applicant with written audit requirements if a limited scope audit will be required.

3. Ineligible Use of Funds

Program funds may not be used for the following:

- A. To make cash payments to intended recipients of services;
- B. For acquisition of real property, building construction, alterations, renovations, or other capital improvements;
- C. To duplicate services already available to the target group;
- D. To supplant other funding for services already in place;
- E. For charges which are billable to third party payers, e.g., private health insurance, prepaid health plans, Medicaid, and Medicare;

B. REQUIREMENTS TO FILE IRS FORM 1099 FOR PAYMENTS

Applicants are required under IRS regulations to report payments made to owners of housing projects (Revenue Rule 88-53) for TBRA, STRMU, FBHA and PHP. Payments in excess of \$600 to a person in any calendar year must be reported to the IRS on form 1099-MISC, Box 1, "Rents" (Revenue Rule 88-53).

In order to comply with this requirement, Applicants must obtain the taxpayer identification number (TIN), social security number (SSN), or employer identification number (EIN) from all entities to which it will make housing assistance payments. To accomplish this, Applicants should issue a W-9 form to all property. Form W-9 must be completed and returned to the Project Sponsor before any rent payments are made. Form 1099-MISC must be completed and issued to each "person" who has been paid \$600.00 or more in rent every calendar year. Persons include individuals and partnerships. The form is not required to be issued to corporations or utility vendors. The form must be issued to the property owner by January 31st and submitted to IRS no later than February 28th. Copies of IRS form W-9 and 1099-Misc as well as detailed instructions on their completion can be obtained from the IRS website, www.IRS.gov.

C. DETERMINATION OF CLIENT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TBRA, FBHA-TSH RENT

Each person receiving TBRA, FBHA-TSH or must pay a calculated rent payment, including utilities. Each HOPWA client must pay the higher of:

- 30 percent of the family's monthly-adjusted income (adjustment factors include the age of the individual, medical expenses, size of household and childcare expenses and are described in 24 CFR §5.611)
- 10 percent of the family's monthly gross income
- If the household is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of the payments, adjusted in accordance with the household's actual housing costs, is specifically designated by the agency to meet the household's housing costs, the portion of the payment that is designated for housing costs.

- Applicants must pay the balance of the rent up to the lesser of the contract rent or the most current Fair Market Rent (FMR) value or reasonable rent for comparable units in the area. Any documentation used to determine assistance must be documented in the client's file. HOPWA funds must not be given directly to a client. Link to current Fair Market Rent table [Income Limits | HUD USER](#) (also on DSHS website).

D. DETERMINING INCOME

All Applicants must use the current HUD table when assessing income:

- *Fair Market Rent (FMR) Table*: sets maximum amounts to be used in computing rent standard <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr.html> or see the DSHS website: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/hivstd/hopwa/default.shtm>)
- *Income Limits Table*: shows income limits according to family size and is used to assess income eligibility for HOPWA assistance. <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html> (or see the DSHS website link above).

E. ESTABLISHING ANNUAL STRMU/STSH CAPS

Applicants may choose to implement annual STRMU/STSH caps per client as needed based on availability of HOPWA funds, clients' needs, and waitlists. AAs are required to establish a written policy to ensure that Project Sponsors apply the annual STRMU/STSH Cap in a uniform, consistent, and non-discriminatory manner. If caps are established, they must be in concurrence or approval with the AA and comply with the established DSHS annual cap formula:

- Annual STRMU Cap formula (no less than one month of the rent standard for the unit size per the household's county of residence and no more than the Project Sponsor's budgeted STRMU funds per household per year).
- Annual six-month STSH Cap formula (no less than one month of the rent standard for the unit size per the household's county of residence and no more than the Project Sponsor's budgeted STSH funds per household per year).

Applicants must propose any annual caps as part of this application. A Narrative Justification (no more than 2 pages) must accompany any proposed annual caps.

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Applicants are required to follow *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements* for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200); the Texas Grant Management Standards (TXGMS) (previously the *Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS)*), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding. The Uniform Guidance can be reviewed at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl and the TXGMS can be found at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/grant-management/> Technical assistance in the application of these procedures is available from the Finance Department of TRG upon award of grant.

Applicants will develop, implement, and maintain financial management and control systems that meet or exceed the requirements of TXGMS. Those requirements include at a minimum:

1. Financial planning including the development of budgets that adequately reflect all functions and resources necessary to conduct authorized activities and the adequate determination of costs;
2. Financial management system including accurate, correct, and complete payroll, accounting, and financial reporting records; cost source documentation, effective internal and budgetary controls; determination of reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of costs; and timely and appropriate audits and resolution of any findings; and,
3. Billing and collection policies including a charge schedule, a system for discounting or adjusting charges based on a person's income and family size, and a mechanism capable of billing and making reasonable efforts to collect from patients and third parties.

IX. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of all records is required. Project Sponsors are required to have a written confidentiality policy and assure confidentiality of client name, information, and records. All information obtained in connection with the examination, care, or services provided to any client shall not be disclosed without the client's signed consent. There may be exceptions to client disclosure as required by law. Particular care must be taken to assure confidentiality by having the Project Sponsor's correspondence, envelopes, and checks to landlords, utilities, etc., not reveal that the client is receiving assistance due to HIV/AIDS. This can be accomplished by establishing a checking account for the provision of HOPWA assistance using a neutral account name such as "Housing Fund" or "Assistance Fund." Confidentiality requirements are set forth under the HUD regulations, 24 CFR 574.440.

All release of confidential information forms must be in compliance with The Resource Group's policy on Exchange/Release of Information (available upon request). Prior to exchanging information with any other agency or entity, Applicants must first secure a release of information from the client. Consent must be completed and signed by the client identifying specific individuals or organizations to which confidential information may be disclosed and **must be signed annually**. In the absence of specific written authorization, no information identifying an individual's HIV status may be disclosed by the Applicant to ANY individual or organization.

The "Health and Safety Code" of the State of Texas provides for both civil and criminal penalties against anyone who violates the confidentiality of persons protected under the law. All employees, volunteers and members of the Board of Directors of applicant agencies are required to sign statements of confidentiality assuring compliance with applicable laws.

B. DSHS HOPWA PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

The HOPWA program rules in 24 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 574 provide general standards for eligible housing activities such as client eligibility, housing quality standards, and standards regarding resident rent payments as provided under the United States Housing Act of 1937. Standards for shared housing are referenced in 24 CFR Part 882, Subpart C. Other applicable CFRs are:

- Lead-based paint poisoning notification requirements, 24 CFR Part 35, Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. 4821-4846) and 24 CFR Part 574 Subpart G Section 574.635;
- Smoke alarm requirements, Section 31 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974; and
- Record keeping requirements, 24 CFR 574 Subpart F Section 574.530.
- HOPWA Program Manual, (9/2022 or most recent revision)

DSHS has issued the DSHS HOPWA Program Manual (9/2022 or most recent revision) which outlines specific program requirements including but not limited to:

- Ensuring Access to the HOPWA Program
- Fair Housing, Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity
- Collaboration with other affordable housing programs
- Failure to Accept Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Housing
- Rent Reasonableness/Fair Market Rent
- Program Eligibility
- Program Activities
- Violence Against Women Act Requirements
- Project Sponsor Administration
- Termination of Assistance

Additionally, TRG has outlined specific program requirements for FBHA-STSH and TSH.

- Target Population: Individuals recently released from incarceration/correctional facilities.
- Eligibility: Households must meet the definition of recently released.
 - Definition of Recently Released (Post Incarceration): Individuals re-entering society from Federal, State and/or County incarceration/correctional facilities, that were incarcerated for more than 6 months and have been released for less than 60 days.
- Applicant must have capacity for scatter-site housing.

C. ASSURANCES & CERTIFICATIONS

Applicants must submit current, signed, and annually dated assurances adhering to the following (a copy of these forms is included in the Narrative Forms Document):

- Nonprofit Board Member and Executive Officers Assurance
- HIV Contractor Assurances

D. OTHER REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

ALL applicants must submit the following CURRENT documents:

- Board of Directors List
- Board of Director's Bylaws
- Articles of Incorporation
- IRS Non-Profit Determination Letter
- Current Financial Audit in accordance with the OMB Circular A-133 or most recent financial audit.

Copies of ALL *Assurances, Certifications, and Required Documents* MUST be kept on file at the applicant’s business office for review by Resource Group staff at annual on-site reviews. Required documents should be sent to The Resource Group when revised and/or altered.

Non-compliance with all *Assurances, Certifications, and Required Documents* could result in the suspension or termination of funding; therefore, it is imperative that the applicant read, understand, and comply with these documents.

E. POLICIES OF THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

All applicants must agree to abide by all applicable policies adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. These policies are available on the DSHS website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/hivstd/policy/policies.shtm>.

G. PROGRAM REPORTING

1. QUALITY MANAGEMENT REPORTING

In an effort to evaluate the quality of services being provided, funded agencies will be required to collect and report information in accordance with the established outcome measures for each HSDA. Quarterly updates on quality management activities are reported as part of the Unified Quarterly Report.

2. UNIFIED QUARTERLY REPORT

Funded agencies will be required to collect and maintain relevant data documenting the progress toward the contract goals and objectives as well as any other data requested by The Resource Group. Such data is reported in the Unified Quarterly Report. This report consists of narrative updates on various requirements and expectations conducted during the period. Funded agencies will need to respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to each question of the report, as applicable. This report is required to be submitted quarterly according to the schedule below:

Quarter	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Period Covered	Jan-March	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec
Due Date	April 20 th	July 20 th	October 20 th	January 20 th

Failure to comply with the deadlines and content requirements will result in an interruption of monthly reimbursements.

3. CLIENT -LEVEL DATA REPORTING

The Resource Group requires that funded agencies submit the required client-level data (CLD) through the approved CLD system to support its monthly reimbursements. CLD includes, but is not limited to, PLWH served per provider/service, basic demographic information, relevant medical markers and co-morbidities, and service encounters. The approved CLD system for the DSHS State Service and Ryan White Part B funding is the Take Charge Texas (TCT) system. Applicants will be required to obtain access to TCT within thirty (30) days of the contract start date and maintain access through the term on

the contract. CLD should be entered/updated within five (5) days of service encounter unless otherwise instructed in less time according to the Agency Protocol. On a monthly basis, applicants will be required to submit a TCT Statistical Analysis Report (STAR) with its monthly expense reports.

4. DATA IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Resource Group requires that all funded agencies submit a Data Improvement Plan that outlines how they will ensure that the client-level and service utilization data being entered is complete and accurate. The plan will identify specific data elements and areas of improvement to be addressed in each quarter and establish quantifiable benchmarks for achieving improvement. The plan will be monitored as part of the Unified Quarterly Report review. The Unified Quarterly Report is due by the 20th of the month after each quarter.

5. SEMI-ANNUAL HOPWA REPORTS

DSHS requires that The Resource Group and all its HOPWA funded agencies submit the required HOPWA Semi-Annual Reports that includes de-identified client level data reporting for clients served per provider, basic client demographics, program expenditures, and types of services provided. This report is required to be submitted according to the schedule below:

HOPWA Semi-Annual Reports	
Reporting Periods	Due Dates
September-February (6 months)	March 31
September-August (12 months cumulative) *	October 15

*(this report is also the 12-month cumulative final program year-end report)

H. FINANCIAL REPORTING

1. MONTHLY EXPENSE REPORTS

Monthly Expense Reports are required no later than 10 days after the end of each month. Monthly Expense Reports submitted late will be paid on the last business day of the following month. The Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group will provide contractors with forms to use for this report. These reports are to be mailed or delivered to the Finance Department, Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, 3700 Buffalo Speedway, Suite 250, Houston, Texas 77098. A Monthly Expense Report must be submitted, whether program funds have been expended during the month or not.

2. MONTHLY BUDGETS VERSUS ACTUAL REPORTS

Each agency is required to submit a budget (approved) versus actual (expense incurred) report each quarter. These reports are required no later than 10 days after the end of each quarter. Failure to submit these reports can result in a hold placed on monthly reimbursement. The Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group will provide contractors with forms to use for this report. These reports are to be mailed or delivered to the Finance Department, Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, 3700 Buffalo Speedway, Suite 250, Houston, Texas 77098.

3. VARIANCE REPORTS

The Finance Director will issue a variance report to any applicant that is ten (10%) percent below or above the targeted spending level for each funded service category after six, nine and eleven months. A response to the report is required no later than 10 days after receipt of the report. Failure to submit these reports can result in a hold placed on monthly reimbursement. The Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group will provide contractors with forms to use for this report. These reports are to be mailed, emailed or delivered to the Finance Director, Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, 3700 Buffalo Speedway, Suite 250, Houston, Texas 77098.

4. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORTS (FSR 269A)

Quarterly financial reports are required no later than 30 days after the end of each grant quarter for agencies. The report will show actual agency expenses for the quarter, number of units of service provided, and program income, if any. The purpose of the report is to determine whether the reimbursement rate is in excess of the agency's actual unit cost. Agencies are not permitted to make a profit with grant funds.

5. FINAL REPORT

A final financial report is required within 30 days after the end of the budget period if all allowable costs have not been recovered or if a refund needs to be made of excess monies if costs incurred were less than funds received. No expenses will be considered for reimbursement unless submitted by this deadline. A check for excess monies received must accompany the final financial report.

I. PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

Applicants applying for funding must agree to participate in all applicable Community Planning processes mandated by DSHS, including, but not limited to the following:

- a. Coordinate community input procedures as needed, including publicizing relevant meetings, establishing stakeholder panels, etc.
- b. Participate in meetings to establish and update service category priorities for the allocation of funds based on data collected by the Administrative Agencies and through planning activities;
- c. Participate in the establishment and/or updating of allocation plans for each service category based on data collected by the Administrative Agencies and through planning activities;
- d. Participate in meetings and correspondences to develop and update a regional comprehensive service delivery plan that coordinates and integrates HIV health and support services for people infected with or at risk for HIV and families affected by HIV;
- e. Collaborate with The Resource Group in planning for and implementing a comprehensive assessment of HIV/AIDS service needs for the planning area every three years and supplemental needs assessment activities in the interim years;
- f. Collaborate with The Resource Group in conducting needs assessment activities in each HSDA in accordance with requirements of DSHS and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

J. MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Applicant applying for funding must agree to encourage consumer participation, including, but not limited to the following:

- a. Develop and maintain a Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) of at least three consumers who can provide feedback on a quarterly basis.
- b. Document and report all consumer activities (i.e., duties, opportunities, trainings, workshops, and consumer meetings) including but not limited to Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) meetings and focus groups.
- c. Actively involve consumers in the development, implementation and evaluation of Ryan White-funded programs.
- d. Document and provide information on any client problems or complaints that arise and how they are addressed. Develop and maintain evidence and documentation of identified issues, barriers, and topics related to service delivery changes and the improvements made to systems based on this information.
- e. Actively involve consumers as partners in their care and treatment planning.

K. CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES (CLAS)

Applicants receiving funding must take steps to ensure that people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) can meaningfully access health and social services. A program of language assistance should provide for effective communication between the service provider and the person with LEP to facilitate participation in, and meaningful access to, services. The obligations of recipients are explained on the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) website at <https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/special-topics/limited-english-proficiency/index.html>. Additionally, obligations of Applicants are explained on the OCR website at <http://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/index.html>.

Applicants will provide services in accordance with the principles outlined in the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care (<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/>).

L. GRANTS MONITORING

All funds issued must be monitored to ensure stewardship and compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local requirements. Monitoring is accomplished through various mechanisms such as monthly expenditure reporting and required supporting documentation, fiscal reporting, data reporting, progress reports (i.e., Unified Quarterly report), and quality compliance review (QCR) visits. QCR visits are conducted at a minimum annually (and more often, if necessary) and are designed to verify observance of applicable rules and regulations for the funded service(s). QCRs focus on issues of administrative, clinical (if applicable), consumer involvement, data management, fiscal, HOPWA (if applicable), staff and consumer interviews, programmatic and quality management.

TRG has moved to virtual monitoring to reduce the potential spread of the disease. This transition to virtual monitoring will continue beyond the current health crisis. Virtual

monitoring reduces the burden of monitoring on the Applicant and TRG. Therefore, the Applicant should establish policies and/or procedures that allow for virtual monitoring to the greatest extent possible.

Applicant must comply with all monitoring systems and ensure funded services delivered in a manner consistent with monitoring standards. TRG monitoring tools are available upon request (email plmartin@hivtrg.org for electronic copies).

X. GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

This section contains instructions for writing your application. Forms specified have been included in the Forms Section of this announcement and should be inserted in the application as noted. **Omission of any or all forms may be cause to reject your proposal in its entirety.** Your completed application must follow this outline with the required information provided in the ORDER shown. **All proposals are to be submitted in two separate sections.**

- **Section I contains Forms A-G.**
- **Section II contains The Assurance, Disclosures, required attachments and Other Required Documents.**
- **There must be one (1) printed original, five (5) printed copies and one (1) electronic copy submitted, or the proposal will not be reviewed.**

All proposals must be in English. All proposals must be submitted using standard size **black** Times New Roman font no smaller or larger than 12-point (colored print is **not** allowed) on 8 1/2" by 11" paper. Text must be double-spaced (*only forms may be single spaced*) and have margins of one inch on all sides. **All pages must include page numbers on ALL pages** (including all forms, title pages, and all appendices); and printed only on one side of each page. Brochures, pamphlets, booklets, etc. included in Appendices are not bound by these restrictions but must be identified by a single page number on the cover of that item and that entire item is considered as a single page. Section dividers or title pages included in the proposal must also have a consecutive page number. Proposals must be received on time.

Proposals without the required number of copies and/or not received on time will not be reviewed. Do not submit double-sided copies. Do not use photo-reduction.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

All Narrative Section (Form E) must be submitted using standard size **black** Times New Roman font no smaller or larger than 12-point (colored print is **not** allowed) on 8 1/2" by 11" paper. Text must be double-spaced (*only forms/charts may be single spaced*) and have margins of one inch on all sides. **All pages must include page numbers on ALL pages** (including all forms, title pages, and all appendices); and printed only on one side of each page. Brochures, pamphlets, booklets, etc. included in Appendices are not bound by these restrictions but must be identified by a single page number on the cover of that item and that entire item is considered as a single page. **Please repeat each question and answer each question separately in order.**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Technical Assistance Questions

ALL technical assistance questions MUST be submitted via email to: Tiffany Shepherd, MPH at tshepherd@hivtrg.org

All technical assistance questions received by **12:00 noon on June 1, June 8, June 15, June 22, June 29** will be answered and posted on the TRG website (www.hivtrg.org) by **12:00 noon on Friday June 2, June 9, June 16, June 23, June 30.**

B. Technical Assistance Webinar

The Resource Group will host a Technical Assistance Webinar from **Thursday, June 8, 2023, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. CT.** Applicants may participate in the webinar using the link below. For questions, please email sjohnson@hivtrg.org and tshepherd@hivtrg.org.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 226 731 754 826

Passcode: sM36tR

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The **one (1) printed original, five (5) printed copies and one (1) electronic copy** of the Application Packet must be received by the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, Inc. on or before **Thursday, July 6, 2023, by 5:00 P.M., Central Standard Time.** NOTE: The electronic copy may be submitted via USB Flash drive or emailed (tshepherd@hivtrg.org). **NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

APPENDIX A: SERVICE AREAS AND PROJECTED ALLOCATIONS

HSDA: BEAUMONT/PORT ARTHUR	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$394,419
HSDA: HOUSTON/GALVESTON	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Fort Bend, Matagorda, Colorado, Walker, or Wharton	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$75,000
HSDA: HOUSTON (ONLY)	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Harris	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility-Based Housing Assistance (STSH, TSH) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$482,365
HSDA: LUFKIN/NACOGDOCHES	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Nacogdoches, San Augustine, Angelina, Newton, Jasper, Trinity, Polk, Sabine, Shelby, Houston and Tyler	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Housing Case Management 	\$126,358
HSDA: TYLER/LONGVIEW	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wood	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$565,000
HSDA: TYLER (ONLY)	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wood	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$340,000

HSDA: TEXARKANA/PARIS	
COUNTIES TO BE SERVED: Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood	
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (APPLICANT MUST APPLY FOR ALL SERVICES IN HSDA)	PROJECT ALLOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) • Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU) • Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) • Housing Case Management 	\$151,084

Reminder: If an applicant is applying for multiple HSDA allocations, a separate application must be submitted for each allocation.

APPENDIX B: FUNDABLE HOPWA SERVICES

The services listed below are allowed to be supported by HOPWA funds. No other services are permitted to be proposed under this Request for Proposals.

- A. **Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities (STRMU) Assistance Program** (formerly known as Emergency Assistance): STRMU provides short-term, stabilizing interventions to households experiencing a financial crisis related to their HIV health condition or a change in their economic circumstances. STRMU is designed to prevent households from becoming homeless by helping them remain in their own dwellings, and when utilized together with other efforts, including access to health care services, case management, benefits counseling, and employment or vocational services, works to stabilize assisted households. Short-term assistance for a period not to exceed 21-weeks of assistance in any 52-week period.
- B. **Facility-Based Housing Assistance (FBHA)** Services encompasses all expenditures for or associated with supportive housing facilities including community residences, single-room occupancy (SRO) dwellings, short-term facilities, project-based rental assistance units, master leased units, and other housing facilities approved by HUD. FBHA is separated into two supportive housing categories for populations with special needs:
 - a. **Short-Term Supportive Housing (STSH)**- STSH facilities provide temporary shelters to households that are homeless as a bridge to permanent housing. STSH assistance is limited to 60-night period during any 6-month period.
 - b. **Transitional Supportive Housing (TSH)**- TSH facilities allow households an opportunity to prepare for permanent housing and develop individualized housing plans that guide their linkage to permanent housing. TSH provides up to 24 cumulative months of facility-based rental assistance to households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including assistance for shared housing arrangements. Unlike TBRA, the rental assistance subsidy is attached to a specific facility-based unit and is not otherwise portable or transferrable. (See page 10 for additional requirements)
- C. **Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program** (similar to Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP): TBRA is a rental subsidy used to help households obtain or maintain permanent housing, including assistance for shared housing arrangements, in the private rental housing market until they can enroll in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) or other affordable housing programs, for income-eligible households with at least member living with HIV/AIDS and their beneficiaries.
- D. **Supportive Services Program:** Provides financial assistance for HOPWA case management, basic telephone service, and provision of smoke detectors. Supportive Services may be provided in conjunction with HOPWA housing assistance or as a stand-alone service (Supportive Services Only).
- E. **Permanent Housing Placement Services (PHP):** PHP services may be used to help households access and establish permanent residence in which continued occupancy is expected. PHP can be used as a standalone service or in conjunction with other HOPWA or non-HOPWA housing assistance services. Eligible PHP housing assistance costs include: Application fees, administrative fees, first and/or last month's rent or prorated rent (when required for occupancy and no ongoing housing subsidy, whether via HOPWA or another program, is expected) security deposit and other initial move-in costs related to credit, rental, and criminal background checks. Assistance cannot exceed the value of two months' rent for the new unit.

APPENDIX C: EXTERNAL REVIEWERS SUMMARY SCORE SHEET
HOUSTON REGIONAL HIV/AIDS RESOURCE GROUP, INC.
DSHS FY23-24 HOPWA Funding

AGENCY SUBMITTING PROPOSAL: _____

SERVICE TO BE PROVIDED: _____

Assign points to each section of the application based on the Evaluation Criteria.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND EXPERIENCE:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstration of organizational capacity to successfully implement HOPWA-funded programs (e.g., staffing, infrastructure, financial management systems). [Score: 0-5] 2. Experience in providing services related to housing assistance, support services, and healthcare for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. [Score: 0-5] 3. Past performance and successful outcomes achieved in similar projects or programs. [Score: 0-5] 4. Documentation of any relevant certifications, accreditations, or licensures. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			
Reason for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	20	Points Awarded	
PROGRAM DESIGN AND APPROACH:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarity and alignment of the proposed program design with the goals, objectives, and strategies of the HOPWA program. [Score: 0-5] 2. Comprehensive and evidence-based approach to addressing the specific needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS in housing and support service provision. [Score: 0-5] 3. Ability to effectively collaborate and coordinate with key stakeholders, including community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and housing agencies. [Score: 0-5] 4. Incorporation of strategies to address housing instability, homelessness, and barriers to housing for individuals with HIV/AIDS. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			

Reason for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	20	Points Awarded	
BUDGET AND COST EFFECTIVENESS:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonableness and cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget, including a breakdown of expenses related to housing assistance, support services, and administrative costs (on required budget template). [Score: 0-5] Adequate allocation of resources to achieve the proposed outcomes and objectives. [Score: 0-5] Demonstration of strategies to leverage additional funding sources or partnerships to maximize program impact. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			
Reasons for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	15	Points Awarded	
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for data collection, analysis, and reporting to measure progress and evaluate program effectiveness. [Score: 0-5] Utilization of evidence-based practices or approaches to enhance program performance and ensure continuous quality improvement. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			
Reasons for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	10	Points Awarded	

EQUITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment to providing services that are equitable, inclusive, and free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. [Score: 0-5] 2. Demonstrated cultural competence and sensitivity in addressing the unique needs of diverse populations living with HIV/AIDS. [Score: 0-5] 3. Strategies to engage and empower marginalized communities disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			
Reasons for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	15	Points Awarded	
SUSTAINABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstration of long-term sustainability of proposed services beyond the funding period. [Score: 0-5] 2. Commitment to maintaining uninterrupted services to individuals receiving housing assistance and support. [Score: 0-5] 			
Strengths:			
Reason for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	10	Points Awarded	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR APPLICATION		(Out of 100):	
COMPLETION OF REQUIRED FORMS:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of required forms including face page, checklist, PS data sheet, assurances and disclosures, and other forms. [Score: 0-10] 			

Strengths:			
Reason for deducting points:			
Maximum Points	10	Points Awarded	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR APPLICATION		(Out of 100):	