

Request for Qualifications
Developer/Owner/Service Provider/Property Management Teams
to Develop and Operate Site-Based Housing First Properties

Schedule

Issue Date: October 11, 2024

Response Submission Deadline: **January 16, 2025 at 5:00PM**

Non-Discrimination Notice:

MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, familial status or receipt of public assistance in the admission or access to or treatment in its programs and activities. In employment, MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability or genetic information. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances: Lauren Bustard, Maine State Housing Authority, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330-4633, Telephone Numbers: 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600 (voice), Maine Relay 711.

Maine State Housing Authority (“MaineHousing”) is an independent quasi-state agency. The mission of MaineHousing is to assist Maine people in obtaining and maintaining quality affordable housing and services suitable to their housing needs. Additional information concerning MaineHousing can be found at www.mainehousing.org

I. Purpose of this Request for Qualifications.

Governor Mills and the Maine State Legislature have provided funding to establish a Housing First Program (the “Program”) to facilitate the delivery of support and stabilization services to residents of properties established or developed to provide permanent housing to address chronic homelessness in the State. The full legislation can be found at 22 M.R.S. § 20-A (2023). The legislation requires MaineHousing to develop Housing First properties and for the Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”) to oversee service providers.

This Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) was established by MaineHousing to select Developer/Owner/Manager/Service Provider Teams (“Housing First Teams” or “Teams”) to develop and operate site-based housing with 24-hour on-site staffing support for people experiencing chronic homelessness (“Housing First”). Any entity wishing to participate in the Program for site-based 24-hour services must respond to this, or a future, RFQ so that MaineHousing can perform the necessary due diligence.

II. General Terms and Conditions

Review and Compliance

It is the responsibility of each Respondent to review this entire document and comply with all requirements of this RFQ. “Respondent” refers to any Team that may, or does, submit a proposal in response to this RFQ.

Contact for Questions

Respondents may pose questions to HousingFirstRFQ@mainehousing.org until **5:00PM on December 12, 2024**. MaineHousing will share responses to questions it deems appropriate on its website. Any responses from MaineHousing will become part of the RFQ. No other contact with MaineHousing employees is allowed.

Response Costs

MaineHousing is not liable for any expenses incurred by the Respondent in the preparation, delivery, or submission of their responses to this RFQ.

The cost of developing and delivering responses to this RFQ is solely at the expense of the Respondent.

Response Materials

All materials submitted, as part of the response, become the property of MaineHousing, whether or not selected.

Rights Reserved by MaineHousing

MaineHousing reserves the right to:

- Adjust the timetable for this RFQ as deemed necessary.

- Waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received.

- Reject and not consider any or all Respondents who do not meet the requirements of the RFQ, including but not limited to incomplete or inaccurate responses and/or non-responsive proposals. MaineHousing may verify the accuracy and completeness of any information in the proposal.

- Reject any and all proposals received and not to select a Team or Teams pursuant to this RFQ, or to cancel or terminate this RFQ process at any time, whether before or after any proposals have been submitted or received, if deemed by MaineHousing to be in its best interest.

- Negotiate any factors included in any proposal submitted to MaineHousing, including without limitation Team composition and project location and size, and in the event MaineHousing is unable to negotiate a mutually satisfactory agreement with one or more successful Respondents under this RFQ, MaineHousing may, in its sole discretion, negotiate with another Respondent or Respondents or cancel this RFQ and not select any Respondent.

Negotiate directly with Respondents if the responses to this RFQ demonstrate a lack of competition.

Correct or amend this RFQ. In no case will this RFQ be amended within seven (7) days of the proposal submission deadline unless the amendment includes an extension of time. MaineHousing will not be liable for any costs incurred as a result of changes to this RFQ.

Reject a Respondent selected under this RFQ if the Respondent does not agree to the terms and conditions of the award.

Other Terms and Conditions

Conflict of Interest. The Respondent, any principal or affiliate of the Respondent, or anyone who will be paid for work on the resulting Housing First project, that has business ties, familial relations, or other close personal relations with a current MaineHousing employee or a commissioner, or anyone who was a MaineHousing employee or a commissioner within the past year must disclose this information.

Confidentiality and Nondisclosure. Respondent shall maintain in trust and confidence and shall not disclose to any third party, except as such disclosure may be authorized in writing in advance by MaineHousing, and shall not use for any unauthorized purpose, any and all information, documents and data received or obtained from or on behalf of MaineHousing. Respondent may use such information, documents and data only to the extent required for the purposes described in this RFQ. Respondent shall adhere to all security, confidentiality and nondisclosure policies and procedures required by MaineHousing for the protection of such information and data from unauthorized use and disclosure from loss.

Maine Freedom of Access Act. Information submitted by a Respondent in any proposal becomes public information and is subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of law, including without limitation the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. Section 401 et seq. (“FOAA”), except as provided therein. Respondent acknowledges that MaineHousing is required to comply with FOAA.

Protest Procedures. Protests of any award made pursuant to this RFQ must be submitted in writing to MaineHousing at 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, ME 04330, to the attention of: Director. To be considered, protests must be received by MaineHousing within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of notification of the award and provide specific reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest.

Women and Minority Owned Businesses. Women and minority owned businesses are encouraged to apply. To subcontract any of the work, Respondent must follow the steps outlined in 2 CRF 200.321.

III. Process

This RFQ is the first step in the process of developing partnerships, properties, and service plans to serve the future residents of these new Housing First projects. MaineHousing will select Housing First Teams from this RFQ as described below. Once selected, if the Developer/Owner is constructing or

rehabilitating a property, the Housing First Teams will have an additional four (4) months to get site control on an appropriate property within the designated geographic area and an additional eight (8) months for design, engineering, and environmental work along with working with MaineHousing to create a financial package to fund the development of the project. It is expected that construction loan closings for the first round of projects will be in the second half of 2025. If the Developer/Owner has an existing property that meets the requirements of the Program and will not result in displacing tenants, it is expected that the timeline will be accelerated. While the Developer/Owner/Management Company members of the Housing First Teams are working with MaineHousing, the Service Provider members of the Housing First Teams identified in this RFQ will be required to contract with DHHS to implement services aligned with DHHS's program requirements.

IV. Qualifications

As noted, this RFQ invites Teams to submit their qualifications, both individually for their respective roles and as a team that will work together, to establish Housing First plans for the development and management of one or more new or repurposed buildings and provision of services in those buildings in specific geographic areas of Maine. Each Team should include four entities: an affordable housing developer; a property owner; a property management company with experience managing properties with homeless residents; and a service provider that is approved by DHHS and is on their Pre-Qualified Vendor List for Housing First service providers. DHHS will have a procurement process for service providers to present qualifications in order to be placed on the Pre-Qualified Vendor List. An organization can assume more than one of these roles, however, the property manager and the service provider must be different entities.

Based upon data related to chronic homelessness, this RFQ seeks to identify the qualifications of Teams proposing to plan and implement Housing First Projects located generally in the areas identified below. In order to efficiently develop projects and provide services to the residents, project size is expected to be between 20 and 30 units. MaineHousing anticipates selecting three to four teams to develop projects through this RFQ and an additional three to four teams through similar RFQs issued over the next two years.

Housing First locations for this RFQ:

Greater Portland (up to 4 projects)

Lewiston/Auburn (up to 1 project)

Augusta/Waterville (up to 2 projects)

Bangor (up to 2 projects)

York County (Biddeford/Saco/Sanford area) (up to 1 project)

Mid-Coast (Brunswick-Rockland) (up to 1 project)

Other (with demonstrated needs data)

Each project will be exclusively used for Housing First and is expected to include 20-30 affordable rental homes, in addition to common areas and facilities appropriate for Housing First and the provision of 24-hour on-site services. Responses should clearly identify the specific geographic area of the planned project, Team members, schedules, and responses to the narrative question below. This RFQ will not evaluate specific projects, (although it will evaluate a specific property that is already owned by a Team member if offered for no acquisition cost); instead it will evaluate the ability of the prospective Teams to develop and operate a site-based Housing First Project.

Maine Housing will review responses to this RFQ and select Teams for subsequent project development. Maine Housing will work closely with selected Teams to identify implementation benchmarks, development approaches, management plans, and funding arrangements.

It is anticipated that annual funding from the State's share of the Real Estate Transfer Tax will be made available for 10 to 12 24-hour on-site supportive service contracts serving a total of 350 to 400 chronically homeless individuals. MaineHousing plans to issue additional, similar RFQs, to select additional teams for the development of additional Housing First projects over the next two years.

V. Selection Criteria.

The following criteria will be used to select Teams:

- Experience and credentials of Housing Developer, including specific personnel assigned to the Team
- Housing Development plan, including any readiness factors and financial factors that will assist in the overall Program, such as donated land, existing appropriate buildings, or other sources of funds
- Urgency of need in the location identified
- Experience of Housing Developer partnering with Property Managers and Service Providers
- Experience and credentials of the Owner
- Experience and credentials of Property Management Company, including specific personnel assigned to this project
- Experience of Property Management Company partnering with Owners and Service Providers
- Partnership with a Service Provider that is on DHHS's Pre-Qualified Vendor List (or will be on the Pre-Qualified Vendor List prior to services being provided on-site) to provide Housing First on-site services.
- Overall experience and approach to working together
- Overall readiness and approach for the project

VI. Response Requirements.

Please provide responses to the following questions, which will be evaluated based on the criteria listed in Section IV.

A. General

1. Please identify the Team members, including organization names and addresses, as well as primary contacts' names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses, of the respondent team. Each Team should include: a party with experience developing affordable housing in Maine (housing developer); an owner of the property; a party with experience providing affordable housing property management services (property management company); and a party with experience providing support services to persons who are chronically homeless and is on or will be on DHHS's Pre-Qualified Vendor List to provide Housing First on-site services (service provider).
2. Please explain how the housing developer, owner, and property manager will work collaboratively on the development and long-term management of this project. Please specifically address the unique challenges and opportunities with the specific population to be housed. Please also describe how the service provider was selected and, with the goal of assuring to the greatest extent possible that residents stay housed permanently, what the most important factors were in the selection. Also, describe any prior experience each Team member has collaborating with one another.
3. *Please identify in which location (from the list in Section III of this RFQ) the respondent Team is seeking a project. If the respondent Team is seeking a project in more than one location, or more than one project in a specific location, please list locations and number of projects, and for all questions in this section with an asterisk (*) please provide a response for each individual location. If any Team member will be different in a different location or project, please respond with a completely separate RFQ response.
4. *If the Team is proposing a project that is not located in the areas identified in Section III, please provide chronically homeless data that justifies the need and viability of the prospective project in that location.
5. *Does the Team have a specific property in mind in the proposed location? Please provide the address and note whether the site is owned, under contract, or is under an option agreement.
6. *If there is a specific proposed property, is it (i) vacant land for new construction, (ii) a vacant multifamily for acquisition and rehabilitation, (iii) an adaptive re-use candidate, (iv) an existing property owned by a Team member in need of rehabilitation, or (v) an existing property owned by a Team member not in need of rehabilitation?
7. *Please identify the anticipated number of residential units in the prospective project.
8. *If the Team is proposing a development larger than 30 residential units or smaller than 20 residential units, please explain why this is necessary.

Respondents with a Team member-owned property must respond to Part B. Respondents undertaking any degree of construction/rehabilitation/adaptive re-use must respond to Part C. All respondents must respond to Parts D, E, and F.

B. Property

(if an existing property is owned by a Team member)

1. Please describe the existing property and existing structure(s), including size, design, construction materials, foundation, condition, estimated age, utilities, historic use(s), accessibility, parking, and observable environmental concerns.
2. How many existing residential units are there and what is the configuration?
3. MaineHousing will not allow displacement or relocation. Please confirm the units are vacant.
4. How much non-residential space is there? Housing First properties need additional spaces to make the program successful – such as a front desk area for staff, additional offices or private rooms to meet and have 24/7 staff, large community spaces with kitchens or for gathering to offer programming, and space for tenants to be seen by clinicians or other health specialists. Describe how this can be accommodated in the existing structure.
5. Is the existing owner requesting any purchase funds or is the property able to be used for Housing First without any acquisition costs (i.e. ownership will remain unchanged)?
6. Is the property turn-key or is there a need for capital funding? (if rehabilitation will be required, please respond to Part C).

C. Developer

(please respond to this section if the project will include new construction, rehabilitation, or adaptive re-use of any part or portion of the proposed property)

1. Please describe the experience of the housing developer including the identification of developments created with LIHTCs, experience developing projects with on-site services, and experience developing projects that serve persons who are homeless.
2. *Please describe the credentials and experience of key development staff who would work on this Housing First development.
3. Please describe the capacity of the housing developer to undertake this project, including how many other projects the housing developer currently has under development and any delays due to staff capacity issues.
4. *Please describe the housing developer's experience working in the prospective geographic area or the approach the housing developer would take to entering a new area where the developer has no previous experience.
5. Please describe the housing developer's experience partnering with other organizations in the development of affordable housing projects.
6. *Please describe any rental assistance resources the housing developer anticipates accessing or providing.
7. *Please describe how the housing developer will select an architect, engineers, general contractors, attorneys, accountants, and investors.
8. *Please describe how the housing developer proposes to select a site, secure local approvals, secure all necessary funds, manage construction, and transition the project to a property management company. If the housing developer has a specific site planned, please provide relevant information including the address.

D. Owner

1. Please describe the experience of the owner as a principal in Low Income Housing Tax Credit ("LIHTC") properties.
2. Please describe the owner's experience partnering with other organizations in the operation of affordable housing projects, including the Team members specifically

identified for this project.

E. Property Manager

1. Please describe the property management company's experience managing developments including those created with LIHTCs; performing tenant income certifications; managing projects with on-site services; and managing projects that serve individuals experiencing homelessness.
2. Please describe the property manager's experience managing properties in the prospective geographic area or the approach the housing developer would take to entering a new area where the developer has no previous experience.
3. Please describe the experience and credentials of key property management staff who would work on this Housing First development.
4. Please describe the property management company's experience working with on-site service providers including 24-hour on-site service providers.
5. Please describe any experience the property management company has managing housing for persons who are chronically homeless.
6. Please describe how the property management company proposes to coordinate their work with the on-site service provider.

F. Service Provider

1. Please confirm the service provider that the partnership will use.
2. Please confirm that this service provider is currently on DHHS's Pre-Qualified Vendor List for Housing First on-site services. If the proposed service provider is not yet on the Pre-Qualified Vendor List, please confirm when placement on the list is anticipated and what work the vendor has undergone to be reviewed to be placed on the list.

VII. Interested Parties Conference and Questions.

There will be an interested parties conference on **Thursday October 24, 2024 at 2:30PM** at MaineHousing's Office at 26 Edison Drive in Augusta.

Questions may be submitted in writing to HousingFirstRFQ@mainehousing.org . Questions must be submitted by **5:00PM on Thursday December 12, 2024**. Responses to questions will be posted periodically on MaineHousing's website and will become part of this RFQ.

Responses must be submitted electronically in PDF format by **5:00PM on Thursday January 16, 2025** to HousingFirstRFQ@mainehousing.org. Any other format will not be accepted or considered. Proposals or changes to proposals after this deadline will not be accepted or considered.