**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND**

**SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP# 202410184, Mental Health Peer Support Centers Services |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health |
| **INFORMATIONAL MEETING LOCATION and DATE/TIME:** | ZOOM, November 8, 2024, 10:00 a.m., local time |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | November 14, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | November 25, 2024 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | December 20, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | proposals@maine.gov  |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |

**Provided below are questions asked at the Informational Meeting and the Department’s answers.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix J | The unduplicated # of participants linked to services, how should that be broken down, there is not enough room in the box to break it down?  |
| **Answer** |
| The Department will work with the awarded Bidder to ensure all data can be collected. |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, H.2. Page 16 | Governing board. Can the governing board include center/agency staff? |
| **Answer** |
| No. This would be considered as a conflict of interest.  |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix J | The survey is 4 pages, responses could be upwards of 1,000 pages. Can the document be made less than 4 pages? |
| **Answer** |
| Department staff will support awarded Bidders in completing and reporting results of survey. The Department will be providing awarded Bidders with a virtual link to be utilized for the Quarterly Center Participant Survey, and this survey will be voluntary for all Center Participants.  |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A.Page 8 | The RFP reference $3.8 million for this service group. Is that the same amount available as when the last RFP was issued? Have there been any additional or reduction in available funding? |
| **Answer** |
| The allocation for services outlined in this RFP are in alignment with the previous RFP. Funding amounts have not changed. |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | What is the total lump sum of SUD Recovery Center funding available? |
| **Answer** |
| SUD Recovery Center services outside the scope of the RFP.  |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | The scope of the RFP does not appear to address the unhoused community. How does the Department intend for Bidders to address the unhoused community when it comes to the services outline in the RFP? |
| **Answer** |
| The scope of service outline in this RFP are not intended to meet the housing or basic needs of individuals without adequate housing.  |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A.Page 8 | Does the Department intend to distribute the $3.8M allotment evenly across all 5 target areas? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer. |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Definitions Page 6 and Part II, A.2.a.Page 11 | Is this a function the Center should provide or is this an external resource. Is it supposed to be 24/7? It only says staffed by a CIPSS.  |
| **Answer** |
| Part II, A.2.a of the RFP references a Center’s outgoing voicemail message, which must include the number to the existing Peer Support Line, 1-866-771-9276. The Center’s outgoing voicemail message may also include reference to other services, as determined by the awarded Bidder. The Center’s outgoing voicemail message must include the Peer Support Line number 24/7. The Peer Support Line is funded through a separate contract and is not a requirement of this RFP.  |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.Page 12 | Facilitator trainings are needed for WRAP and Maine Can Work. However, Pathways to Recovery includes a self-led Workbook. For Pathways to Recovery, do we need an official training to provide a Pathways to Recovery group or is this not needed due to it being a self-led workbook? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders do not need a separate official training in order to facilitate or co-facilitate a Pathways to Recovery group. Aside from Pathways to Recovery, all other groups indicated in Part II, D. of the RFP require the specific associated facilitator training.  |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Throughout the RFP there are many time Centers are asked to report to the Department, is this the contract manager? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department’s contact will be determined during contract negotiations. |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | The RFP name is now MH Peer Support Centers, previously it was named Peer Run Recovery Center: 1. Is this now the official title of the services?
2. Why did the Department change the service name?
3. Are agencies bound to using this new service name as part of the Center and any applicable outreach?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. This is the title the Department chose for administrative/procurement functions.
2. The Department chose this name to help distinguish between this service and other service groups with similar terms in the title.
3. No.
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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.4.Page 14 | Requires all materials to be no higher than a 6th grade reading level, and if reading level cannot be attained, 8th grade reading level. WRAP, Pathways to Recovery, Alt2Su are not currently at a 6th grade or 8th grade level. 1. Could you explain why this is a requirement?
2. How can the Centers meet this expectation?
3. Where do Centers go to get the materials at the required reading level?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Most Americans read at between 6-8th grade level, making comprehension of higher grade-level written material difficult. To ensure Participants can access materials related to groups offered in this service, the Department is requiring all materials be assessed and amended to meet this requirement.
2. Centers can use easily available free online tools for assessing the grade level of written materials including the Flesch Reading Ease Test and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test. Microsoft 365 also has a function where the Flesch Reading Ease Test and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test can be applied.
3. Centers will be required to update all public written material, including website content, to meet the required reading level. As needed, the Department will be available for consult.
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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.6.Page 15 | In order to understand the expectations of the deliverable, some Centers are standalone while others are under the umbrella of a larger agency. How can a Center comply with this if it is under the umbrella of a larger agency? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders should collaborate with their umbrella agency to ensure they are able to meet the requirements outlined in the RFP. Awarded Bidders will be responsible for compliance with all negotiated contract requirements.  |

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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.5.Page 15 | In reference to translation/interpretation services should that be a budget line item since there would be a cost associated with the services? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Is there an estimate as to when these answers to these questions will be provided. |
| **Answer** |
| By rule, the Department is required to provide responses to all questions in writing no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date. The Department intends for questions to be published as soon as possible. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Curious how long the Portland Peer Center has been paused for and the barriers to putting an RFP out sooner. The need for a center is pretty clear and it seems like it has been a while.  |
| **Answer** |
| As this is outside the scope of the RFP, the Department declines to respond.  |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Chat | The RFP title says Mental Health Centers but in the definition of MH Center is heavily focused on SUD. Is this RFP related to SUD specialized centers only or does it consider Peer Support/mental health in general? |
| **Answer** |
| This RFP is for Mental Health Peer Support Centers, and individuals with co-occurring SUD are welcome at the Centers.  |

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answers**

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.7. Page 15 | If a Center requests a Participant to leave and reports the incident to the Department within 24 hours, how will the Department use this information? |
| **Answer** |
| This information is for purposes of trend analysis across the State across the Mental Health Support Centers and in order to provide guidance, technical assistance, and additional training, as needed.  |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.3. Page 12 | 1. Are Centers required to report every instance when a new volunteer or non-Center staff member completes a Center orientation before engaging with Participants?
2. How does the Department define a “volunteer” or “non-Center staff” for reporting purposes?
3. Specifically, at what point is an individual’s role classified as such, requiring Centers to report their completion of orientation before working with Participants?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. No. However, orientation procedures must be sent to the Department for review within thirty (30) business days of the start of the initial period of performance.
2. Individuals not employed by the awarded Bidder.
3. N/A
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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II. G.1. Page 14 | The requirement to share Participant information is new for Peer Centers. 1. Could the Department clarify what specific types of information they anticipate might be requested and what documentation they expect Peer Centers to maintain?
2. Additionally, does the Department have a standardized release of information form and training materials on privacy rights that Peer Centers should use to meet this requirement?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Part II, G.1. requires that Participant information can only be shared when explicitly requested by the Participant.
2. No.
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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.1.c. Page 12 | Is this cyber-security coverage? The link provided “IT-Service Contract” does not work. |
| **Answer** |
| The link to the IT-Service Contract downloads a Word (.docx) document. **The IT-Service Contract may be obtained in a Word (.docx) format by double clicking on the document icon below.** |

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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.a. Page 11 and Part II, D.3.a. Page 12 | 1. Orientation will be the same for all participants, Volunteers and New Staff?
2. Are all Presenters, Trainers or Facilitators required to have Orientation?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No, various sections of the RFP indicate the required orientations.
2. All Center staff, including volunteers, are required to have an orientation, as indicated in the RFP.
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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, H.1.c.ii. Page 16 | Performance review by participants for staff, are they to be what the agency provides currently to staff, or something written by participants? |
| **Answer** |
| Centers are required to provide opportunities for Participants to actively engage in performance reviews for Center staff. The Department does not dictate the method of this engagement.  |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.1.b. Page 14 | Clarity around Participant that would request sharing information. What would we be asked to share for information? Example please |
| **Answer** |
| This is up to the Participant; an example might be a case management provider that the Participant is currently working with.  |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, G.7. Page 15 | What is the intent behind reporting when a participant is asked to leave for more than 24 hours? Is Data being collected for a particular reason? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 18 of this document. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Term/Acronym Page 7 | Please define what the State views as Successful Linkage greater detail than what is listed in definitions. |
| **Answer** |
| Successful linkages to services are when Participants are effectively referred to the services requested. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2. Page 11 | Please share how a participant would be found to not meet eligibility criteria for services by use of examples. If a person chooses not to self-report that means they don’t meet criteria, are we being asked to inform them they may not participate at all? |
| **Answer** |
| Individuals’ ineligible for services would include someone who chooses not to self-report as having SMI and/or Co-occurring disorder. If a person is ineligible, the Center must inform them of such and refer the individual to other appropriate community resources.  |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2. Page 17 | What training has the Department approved for Restorative Justice Practices? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders are welcome to propose their desired training for Restorative Justice Practices for Department approval.  |

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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, D.Page 10 | Can two different entities/organizations be awarded a Center in the same target area? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |