

NYS OPWDD Medicaid Redesign Team Supportive Housing Development Program's Request For New Services (RFNS)

Questions and Answers

Q. Would this initiative include Family Care opportunities?

A: No.

Q. Is the "people transitioning to apartments "from home?"

A. Yes, people may transition from home as long as they fit within one of the four Target Population categories. Target Population information can be found on page 5 of the RFNS.

Q. Could you provide some clarification on how OPWDD would measure such an "ability to develop?" Is this a reference to an applicant having to have two separate capital OPWDD projects being constructed or has in the OPWDD pipeline within the past 24 months?

A. The ability to develop projects does not specifically reference capital OPWDD projects being constructed. As noted in the RFNS, approved funds cannot be used for construction, renovations, or any capital development costs. The review process would first look at all projects (capital construction and other relevant projects) over the past two years to determine if they were completed in a timely fashion and within budget. If not yet completed, time frames, anticipated completion dates would be reviewed. The review process will also look at an agency's history of fiscal standing and viability. The Bureau of Compliance Management (BCM) will provide applicable audit information, and make recommendations to the Regional Offices based on an agency's compliance with fiscal audit standards. (i.e., Is the agency in good standing, early alert status, etc.). Regarding two separate projects within the past 24 months, if an agency has not developed two projects in the past 24 months, the two most recent projects (even if outside the 24 month time frame would be reviewed) and your agency would still be considered.

Q. Our Agency does have awards from other funding sources to renovate 3 group homes and 5 supportive apartments. In essence, does this box us out from participating in the RFNS?

A. No there are no guidelines or restrictions in the RFNS for potential applicants that have either received or applied for funding through other sources. On page 8 of the RFNS in the “Matching Funds” section it is stated that “Leveraging of non-OPWDD funding sources is encouraged.”

Q. Will there be any requirements for the “backfills” for the people who will move to supportive housing?

A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered “Special Populations”, or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.

Q. On page 5 there are four bullets listed under Target Population. Do individuals have to meet all four criteria?

A. No, individuals only have to meet one of the criteria for Target Population.

Q. Requesting an apartment with ISS funding and community habilitation – Does this include individuals under the age of 18 years, i.e., Can a child with developmental disabilities with his mother – living in a shelter be eligible for an ISS under this grant since that would be less restrictive?

A. Under this RFNS, ISS rental subsidies are not available for people under the age of 18 living with family.

Q. Is the application available in a more user friendlier format? The format doesn’t appear to be similar to other submissions we have used in the past. Would we have to type the narrative and attachments and then attach to email and send?

A. Please adhere to the Application and Submission requirements described in Section IV of the RFNS. Directions for the narrative and attachments can be found in this section.

- Q. For proposals where supervised IRA residents are relocated to Supportive IRAs or other apartments, will the provider be permitted to backfill the supervised IRA bed?**
- A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered “Special Populations”, or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.
- Q. Will agencies be allowed to backfill into vacancies created by consumers moving into less restrictive settings? In other words do agencies retain or lose current IRA funding if they participate in the RFNS?**
- A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered “Special Populations”, or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.
- Q. In providing the “timeline for each of the previous three projects that the agency has developed” (page 35) can or should projects still in process be used?**
- A. It is preferred that the timeline applies to projects that have been completed. However, if the agency does not have the requisite number of completed projects, timelines for projects in process can be used. If using a project in progress, please include details regarding both actual and projected adherence to timeline.

Q. Because separate budgets are requested for day vs. residential services (budget form, page 37), for the sake of budgeting should Community Habilitation be considered a “day” or “residential” service?

A. Because of the way the RFNS is written, it would be considered a “residential” service.

Q. In developing this RFNS we believe we can support several people with a combination of Community Habilitation and ISS funding instead of traditional IRA services. Each person has a different amount of support that they will need. Is it preferable to complete separate RFNS applications per person to reflect the difference in the amounts of Community Habilitation and ISS funding needed per person or would one consolidated application be preferable?

A. If there is a limit, then the provider should send in one application supporting several people. However, if there is no limit, it would be preferable to complete one application per individual. In order to track the funding involved, and be clear as to the level of support required, it would be important to make distinct proposals based on each unique housing arrangement, describe each individual in that setting, and the support and amount of support required.

Q. On page 21, Rating Factor 3, Part 1: What is the required reference to “methods of outreach and referral” asking us for? Are you asking what outreach we did to seek individuals interested in participating in the RFNS and how referrals were made?

A. Yes. What were your selection criteria? How did you choose individuals to participate in this RFNS?

Q. On page 22, Rating Factor 3, Part 2: What “project selection criteria” are you looking for? Are you looking to see how we choose individuals to participate in this RFNS?

A. No. What criteria did you use to select the project(s) for which you are requesting funds from this RFNS and how will this/these project(s) be implemented?

Q. On page 22, Rating Factor 4, Part 3: When you are requesting a “detailed description of the financial management system for the rental

subsidies/services program”, what is the scope of the information are you looking for? For example, are you looking at how an agency tracks resources and expenses in individualized budgets (like CSS/FMS)? Are you looking for information on how funding from an ISS contract is allocated to pay approved consumer expenses? Are you looking for more generic tracking of community habilitation units by person and/or program? Are you requesting information on how the agency ensures that billable units have been paid? Please tell me we can limit our description to just the services we are requesting as part of the RFNS and not have to describe financial tracking systems for all of our services (like Supervised, Supportive IRAs, etc.)?

A. The RFNS is looking for an attestation that the agency has current experience managing the type of funding they are requesting in their proposal.

Q. **In regards to Target Population (Pg. 5, Bullet 4) People currently residing with their family would be eligible for an apartment with ISS funding even though they were not coming out of a supervised or supported setting?**

A. Yes.

Q. **Will the agency be able to fill the vacancy created by this opportunity?**

A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered “Special Populations”, or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.

Q. **Will the agency be able to supplement community habilitation needs within their current community habilitation units? In other words, if we discover that the individual is not being adequately supported from the amount of community habilitation resources approved through this opportunity, will we be able to provide supports from community habilitation units that are not**

part of this opportunity and are within our existing (but separate) community habilitation units?

- A. The proposal should support individuals for whom service needs can be met using the identified funding. It is not intended to supplement with funding that should/could be identified to support additional people.
- Q. Could you provide more detail on the bullet on page 9 regarding “the ability to develop a minimum of 2 OPWDD projects with the last 24 months?” Would applying for projects even if not completed be acceptable? Can the projects include expansion, refinements, or adaptations to already existing programs/services, or do they have to be “new”? Would successful conversions, e.g. Res Hab to Community Hab, be considered? Could projects completed within more than the last 24 months be considered if all of the above does not apply?**
- A. The act of simply applying for projects would not meet the criteria. However, if you mean that projects have been approved and are in development then refer to above (A1). If your agency does not have a minimum of 2 projects in the past 24 months, the 2 most recent OPWDD projects of any type submitted by an agency for their relevancy to the proposed project to assess an agency’s performance. Regarding project types (or do they have to be “new”), all projects could be included in the review, but should depend on the relevancy of those projects to the proposed project. Example; Res Hab to Community Hab, but your proposal is for development of site based supportive IRA’s (construction / renovation funds coming from another source). Prior projects (older than 24 months) may still be reviewed by the Regional Offices and BCM. As stated in A1, the two most recent projects would be reviewed in lieu of the past 24 months. It is understood that agencies may not have had two projects completed in the past 24 months, yet are competent agencies to develop less restrictive opportunities. If an agency is on “early alert” status, they would not be considered for the proposal at this time.
- Q. On page 11 it states “Funds under this grant would not be used to supplant Medicaid billings for Supportive IRAs” and yet the grant is to “support people moving from VOIRA 24/7 Supervised IRAs to VOIRA less than 24/7**

Supportive IRAs. My question is what funding should be used if we want to propose opening a supportive apartment (supportive IRA)?

A. The intent is to expand services, not reinvest service dollars.

Q. Is it Medicaid or MRT funding? What is Medicaid to pay and what can MRT funds be used for?

A. Funds were awarded to OPWDD from the Governor's Supportive Housing Development Program. Medicaid will continue to pay for all supports and services that are Medicaid billable. MRT Supportive Housing funding will pay for rental subsidies, including start-up costs and capital.

Q. On Page 32 and 33 you ask for the applicant's current annual rate for a supervised program and a supportive program. I am assuming this is for IRAs and my question is, are you looking for a per person rate or a total for all program types?

A. Usually this is done on a per person basis. The rate is different between supervised and supportive IRAs. The annual rate would be the monthly price per person multiplied by 12.

Q. Can the funding be used to purchase start up supplies and furnishings for the apartments for the individuals? Currently with ISS funding there is also funding for items needed so the person can move into their apartment. Can this funding be used for this and is there a limit?

A. Startup funds are part of current OPWDD methodologies for ISS and supportive apartments.

Q. In the past the application for ISS involved a budget for each individual to be served. Are you asking for an overall budget for everyone together as a part of this RFNS? Do we also need to submit separate budgets for individuals if we are doing ISSs?

A. Yes, OPWDD would be asking for an individual budget for each person. It is not determined, yet, whether the new ICS budget template that is scheduled to be released in December will be the format that is used.

- Q. Can the request for staffing for any ISS be done as a grouping rather than individual as was required in the past submissions? Do the assigned hours follow the person if this is done as a grouping and someone moves on?**
- A.** If the ICS template is used, service dollars would remain in the individual ICS budget.
- Q. As a part of this can a person choose to live with his family as a part of CSS and be given a rent subsidy?**
- A.** A person living with their family may be considered for CSS funding if they live in a separate dwelling i.e. - duplex, separate apartment, etc.
- Q. As part of collaboration can a person who gets services through OMH live with someone in an ISS or CSS?**
- A.** Yes.
- Q. I am assuming that as we move people out of 24/7, that that opportunity will open up for other individuals who need that level of care?**
- A.** The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered "Special Populations", or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.
- Q. The narrative sections of the Request For New Services, requires the applicant to submit a double-spaced, 12 Font document. The question: can the charts and graphs use a smaller Font 9 or more and can the charts be submitted in landscape format?**

A. Font sizes for charts may be reduced in order to ensure they fit on an 8.5" X 11" standard sheet of paper without obstructing the text of the document. Charts may be submitted in landscape format, if necessary. The narrative portion of the RFNS may not exceed 40 single-sided pages.

Q. Moving people out of certified residence towards more individual supports (downsizing) leaves that existing residence void of the RRR dollars...can the vacated spot be back-filled with an aging out individual?

A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered "Special Populations", or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.

Q. If a person's less restrictive housing attempt is not successful; can they move back into their certified or original opportunity?

A. If the person becomes in need of a more restrictive level of care, efforts should be made to provide that care within the identified funding. This may be accomplished through a return to previous setting if still available, or, through the movement of another individual from a 24/7 setting to a less restrictive setting.

Q. What needs to happen if you are looking at individualized support option for someone on your MSC caseload who happens to be in another agency's certified home...would you need to get some agreement from the agency releasing the bed?

A. Collaborations with other agencies are encouraged.

Q. If the RFNS proposal includes moving individuals from VOIRA 24/7 Supervised IRAs to non certified apartments in the community with supports

is the agency able to backfill the vacancies created in the VOIRA 24/7 Supervised IRAs?

- A. The objective of this project is to move targeted individuals into less restrictive settings, and achieve Medicaid savings in doing so. It is the expectation of OPWDD that backfills created by moving individuals into less restrictive settings will be filled in consultation with, and requires the approval of the local Developmental Disability District Office. Agencies may make internal moves within their certified settings in order to accommodate new referrals. It is expected that those individuals considered "Special Populations", or residing in more costly settings will be given priority for these beds. By moving individuals out of more restrictive/costly settings, Medicaid savings can be achieved.
- Q. Does the double spaced, 12 point, Palatino Linotype font requirement for the narrative statements also apply to charts that may be included in the Narrative Response/Program Description?**
- A. Font sizes for charts may be reduced in order to ensure they fit on an 8.5" X 11" standard sheet of paper without obstructing the text of the document.
- Q. The RFNS in Rating Factor 1: Relevant Experience and Capacity uses the word program in a couple of places on page 21 as follows, if the program is an expansion to an existing program please indicate this in the proposal, for all programs please include such information as staffing rations, transportation plan, the location where the service will be provided and the number of week, days, hours per day the program will be in operation. Is the term program being used in the strict sense of a Residential Program in an agency with Supervised and Supportive IRAs or is it to be interpreted less strictly to also include non certified housing options in the community being supported by an agency?**
- A. The terms "program" and "services" can be used interchangeably.
- Q. The RFNS in Rating Factor 1; is asking for staffing rations, transportation plan (if applicable) and location where the services will be provided. What is the expectation as far as specifics in addressing these issues?**

A. In order to demonstrate the applicant's ability, capacity and readiness to undertake the proposed activities, it is expected that these issues would be addressed with detailed specificity.

Q. If one is moving individuals from an supervised IRA to a supportive IRA do the backfills have to be identified?

A. It is optimal to identify an individual(s), approved by the local DD District office, who qualifies for the backfill opportunity (ies). If unable to do so, the agency will need to commit to working with their local district office in identifying an individual(s) with DD District Office approval, prior to proceeding with the actual move.

