

## Section E

# RFA SCOPE OF WORK

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### I. Introduction

The City of Austin (City) seeks applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) from qualified social service providers (Applicants) with demonstrated experience providing services to individuals who engage in substance misuse. Interventions must be aligned with the principles of harm reduction at the outset, with the goal to increase access to substance misuse treatment and harm reduction strategies.

### II. Background & Purpose of Funding

Austin City Council passed the City of Austin Opioid Resolution (No. 20180524-038) on May 24, 2018, which made formal recommendations that the City Manager focus on increasing epidemiological surveillance and monitoring, public education and health promotion, evidence-based prevention and harm reduction activities, criminal justice diversion programs, increased funding for a range of treatment and recovery options, naloxone kits and first-response training, and other best practices identified through interdepartmental and regional collaboration.

On July 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 The Public Safety Committee convened to discuss how to prevent and reduce harm as well as interrupt violence. The discussion highlighted harm reduction strategies and their ability to benefit public health. These strategies in combination with more substance misuse services can reduce cost and burden associated with Austin Police Department calls, incarceration, overdose, homelessness, and housing instability.

The Texas Legislature has recognized chemical dependency to be a public health problem. See, e.g., Health & Safety Code sec. 461A.001. The Texas Legislature has also recognized that opioid antagonists, such as Naloxone, can be part of addressing that public health problem by enacting Health and Safety Code Chapter 483 subchapter E that shields more persons from prosecution and liability for possessing and administering opioid antagonists.

According to Austin/Travis County Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs, Needs Assessment completed in 2019 people whom are most lacking services are people who are uninsured, underinsured, experiencing homelessness, mothers with children, people with language barriers and people who cannot afford services. Those who access services most frequently do so through word of mouth and/or peer referrals. Texas Criminal Justice Coalition reports the lengthiest wait list for Health and Human Service funded substance misuse services are Opioid substitution therapy, adult outpatient and co-occurring psychiatric and substance abuse disorders.

As part of the City of Austin FY 2020-2021 City Council member Casar put forth budget amendment number 6 which provided one-time funding in the amount of \$350,000 and ongoing funding in the amount of \$650,000 to fund the Substance Use Continuum of Care.

“This budget proposal would expand harm reduction services through expanding/ supporting drop-in centers and mobile outreach clinics for individuals in need of substance use treatment and care. Funding can support evening hours at drop-in center(s), substance use treatment for more individuals, and staffing and supplies for more mobile outreach clinics.”

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### III. Funding and Timeline

**Department:** Austin Public Health

**Services Solicited:** Substance Misuse Services

**Available Funding:** \$1,467,120 total

- Applicants may apply for a total of \$350,000 for one-time costs to purchase or retrofit a vehicle implementing substance misuse services in non-clinical settings such as a mobile clinic.
- Applicants may apply for up to \$1,117,120 for ongoing substance misuse services

**Anticipated Number of Awarded Agreements:** Austin Public Health anticipates awarding up to four Agreements.

**Contract Term:** The Agreements will have an effective start date of April 1, 2021, for an initial 12-month period, and three 12-month extension options. All extension options are conditional upon City Council approval of the Budget.

Awarded programs may be structured as a reimbursable-based agreement or a deliverables-based agreement, as defined below:

- Reimbursable Agreement- An Agreement where an agency is reimbursed for expenses incurred and paid through the provision of adequate supporting documentation that verifies the expenses.
- Deliverable Agreement- An Agreement where an agency is reimbursed for a report or product that must be delivered to the City by the grantee (or by the Subgrantee to the Grantee) to satisfy contractual requirements. It can include goods or finished works, documentation of services provided or activities undertaken, and/or other related documentation.

### IV. Services Solicited

The City is intentionally leaving program strategies open beyond the criteria listed in this section, allowing Applicants to propose solutions to meet community needs effectively and successfully.

#### Harm Reduction Strategies

Harm Reduction is an evidence-based model that aims at reducing drug -related harm experienced by individuals and communities. All awarded agencies will be required to describe how harm reduction strategies are applied or will be applied in their program design.

#### Program Services

Applicants must propose to provide at least one or a combination of the following program services:

Note: None of the performance rendered under this Agreement shall involve, and no portion of the funds received by the recipient under this Agreement shall be used for, any sectarian or religious activity

Note: Austin Public Health does not fund primary care medical services, medical detox services, hospital care or other healthcare services for needy or indigent individuals to the extent the City of Austin is prohibited to provide those services by the Texas Constitution and the Tex. Health & Safety Code §§ 281 due to the creation of a countywide hospital district.

\$1,117,120 in ongoing funding can support staff and operations costs for:

- Expanding/supporting non-traditional drop-in center hours in the evening and weekend
- Expanding/supporting mobile outreach clinics for substance misuse treatment and care
- Expanding resources for substance misuse recovery beds
- Expanding substance misuse services

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Up to \$350,000 in one-time funds may also be used to purchase large capital items for start-up of a new program such as:

- Mobile outreach vehicle
  - All capital equipment to outfit mobile outreach vehicle include computer equipment
1. Improve access to substance misuse services through expansion of non-traditional hours of clinic operation  
Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Extended/ Non-traditional hour clinic staffing
    - Developing or expanding technology-based therapeutic tools
    - Extended/ Non-traditional hour of operation outreach staff
  2. Improve access to substance misuse services through mobile outreach clinics  
Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Vehicle/ Capital Purchase
    - Mobile outreach staff
    - Mobile clinic supplies
  3. Expand substance misuse treatment and services  
Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Peer support
    - Treatment beds
    - Needle exchange programming
    - Substance misuse navigators and recovery supports
    - Substance misuse counseling and/or non-traditional types of therapy such as meditation, acupuncture, or EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)

### Best Practices

- Integrated Care
- Outreach
- Harm reduction strategies
- Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Use of Motivational Interviewing or other behavioral and counseling therapies
- Taking a history of drug use
- Quick access to treatment options and recovery and long-term support
- Education programs (including but not limited to health life skills)
- Peer support
- Options for opioid substitution therapies
- Take home Naloxone kits – see section below regarding distributing Naloxone.
- Supply, distribution, and needle recovery programs
- Testing for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B & C, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases as well as teach about ways to reduce risk of illness

### Staffing

- Program may utilize volunteers for services, but there must be paid staff as a part of the program design. *Examples of staff include but are not limited to: case managers, community health workers, outreach workers, nurses, and substance abuse counselors, peer counselors, recovery coaches.*
- It is not required that all staff must be licensed but it is preferred that direct service staff have certifications specializing in substance misuse.

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- Certifications for direct services staff may include but is not limited to: Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW), Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC).
- Peer counselors must be certified as Peer Specialists, enter a certification program upon employment, or maintain their participation in a certification program until completion. Costs for certification may be included in the Application budget.

### City of Austin Client Eligibility Requirements

Residents of the City of Austin or Travis County who are either living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Client eligibility must be documented, and any proposed alternative requirements explained. See Section G – APH Client Eligibility Requirements.

### Naloxone Distribution

The Texas Legislature has recognized chemical dependency to be a public health problem. If an organization will be providing Naloxone under this funding, the non-profit must obtain and maintain a prescription as an organization in a position to assist a person at risk of experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose. Austin Public Health will not reimburse expenses related to storage and distribution the Naloxone. The organization must agree to maintain or obtain any licenses, training or certifications necessary under federal, State of Local Law to allow them to remain in good standing and provide Naloxone.

Licensing and certification requirements to remain in good standing under State law vary by organization type and can include licensing requirements for the entity, facility, and individual employees. Training requirements related to distributing Naloxone also vary. See Texas Pharmacist Naloxone Standing Order Application, available at <https://www.texaspharmacy.org/page/TXPHARMNALOX>.

## V. Application Format and Submission Requirements

The Application must be submitted in Partnergrants: [Partnergrants database](#).

Responses should be included for each question.

Since APH is only accepting applications in Partnergrants, all Applicants must do the following to get registered in Partnergrants:

1. Confirm that their organization is a registered vendor with the City of Austin.
  - To find the City of Austin Vendor Number please visit [Austin Finance Online](#) and search for the organization's legal name.
  - To register to become a potential City of Austin vendor, go to [Austin Finance Online](#) to register.
2. Be a registered user in the Partnergrants system. The applications will be submitted through this web-based system.
  - [To register, visit Partnergrants](#) and click on "Register Here."
  - Note that the organization's City of Austin Vendor number is required to complete registration in Partnergrants.

## VI. Application Evaluation

A total of 100 points may be awarded to the application with an additional ten bonus points available for a potential of 110 total evaluation points. All applications will be evaluated as to how the proposed program aligns with the goals of this RFA and whether each question has been adequately addressed.

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<b>RFA #001 Substance Misuse Services 2021 NPS</b>		
<b>Evaluation</b>		
<b>Section A:</b> Offer Sheet Required	Applicants must print, sign, scan and upload signed forms.	No points, but Applicant must submit Offer Sheet
<b>Section F:</b> RFA Application		
Section I: Fiscal and Administrative Capacity	Questions 1-11	No points awarded, but Applicant must pass threshold defined in Applicant Minimum Qualifications below
Section II: Experience and Cultural Competence	Questions 12 - 20	40 points
Section III: Program Design	Questions 21-28	30 points
Section IV: Data Informed Program Management	Questions 29-33	10 points
Section V: Cost Effectiveness	Question 34-43	20 points
		Total: 100 Points
Section VII: <b>BONUS Healthy Service Delivery</b>	Questions A-D	10 points

**Applicant Minimum Qualifications**

All agencies applying for funding must:

- Be a non-profit organization able to conduct business in the State of Texas
- Have submitted all applicable tax returns to the IRS and the State of Texas (e.g. Form 990 or 900-EZ and state and federal payroll tax filings)
- Be eligible to contract and not debarred from contracting, according to SAM.gov and City Debarment information
- Be current in its payment of Federal and State payroll taxes
- Not owe past due taxes to the City
- Have the ability to meet Austin Public Health’s Social Services Insurance Requirements
- Have an active Board of Directors that meets regularly and reviews program performance, financial performance, and annually approves the agency budget

**VII. Application Format and Submission Requirements**

ALL DOCUMENTS MUST BE UPLOADED INTO PARTNERGRANTS. NO PAPER COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

**Section F. RFA Application Instructions:**

- 1) **Total word limit in Section F. RFA Application is 10,000 words which includes the questions. Applications that exceed 10,000 words will not be considered.**

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- 2) Word automatically counts the number of words in a document and displays it in the status bar at the bottom of the screen. There are about 5400 words in Section F-RFA Application, and this is included in the 10,000 word limit.
- 3) Applicants must use this template for the Application and cannot submit an application that does not include the questions and narrative.
- 4) All questions are boxed and highlighted in green in Section F: RFA Application. Editing is restricted in the document except in the answer boxes. For each question, please provide a response or write N/A for not applicable in the boxes provided. It is preferable to be repetitive rather than to leave sections incomplete.
- 5) If using this document, Applicants must type answers into the section that says “Click or tap here to enter text” after each question or in the required tables.
- 6) If compiling responses in a separate document, Applicants must include all questions and narrative before their answer so the Application appears the same as the provided template.
- 7) If compiling responses in a separate document, clearly label each question and number, use size 11 Calibri font, double-space the document, use 1” margins on 8 ½ x 11” white paper without page scaling.
- 8) The following documents will not count towards the total word count:
  - a. Attachments submitted to answer a question like policies and procedures, staff positions, letters of support, etc.
  - b. Attachments A-Offer Sheet, H. Program Budget and Funding Summary section, J COA Certifications

**Required documents:** The following documents must be submitted in this RFA.

**Note:** For the RFA Application, the following information must be submitted by **12 pm on January 26, 2021:**

<b>Section No.</b>	<b>Item/Document</b>	<b>Instructions</b>	<b>How to Submit</b>
A	Offer Sheet	Review, sign and scan signed document	Upload into PartnerGrants
F	RFA Application	Complete in Word template provided Save as a PDF	Upload into PartnerGrants as well as any Application Attachments
H	Program Budget and Funding Summary	Complete in Word template provided Double click on the Excel charts within document to edit Save as PDF	Upload into PartnerGrants
J	COA Certifications	Review, sign and scan signed document	Upload into PartnerGrants

**VIII. Additional Information**

**Proposal Acceptance Period:** All applications shall remain valid until award, negotiation, and execution of contracts as directed by the Austin City Council.

**Proprietary Information:** All materials submitted to the City become public property and are subject to the Texas Open Records Act upon receipt. If an Applicant does not desire proprietary information in the proposal to be disclosed, each page must be identified and marked proprietary at time of submittal. The City will, to the extent allowed by law, endeavor to protect such information from disclosure. The final decision as to what information must be disclosed, however, lies with the Texas Attorney General. Failure to identify proprietary information will result in all unmarked sections being deemed non-proprietary and available upon public request.

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Exceptions: Be advised that exceptions to any portion of the Solicitation may jeopardize acceptance of the application.

Application Preparation Costs: All costs directly or indirectly related to the preparation of a response to the RFA or any oral presentation required to supplement or clarify an application that may be required by the City shall be the sole responsibility of the Applicant.

Agreement Adjustments: The City of Austin reserves the right to adjust the Agreement amount or scope of work over the contract period based on community needs, Applicant's ability to expend funds in a timely manner or any other factor. When the City determines adjustments need to be made, the City will provide at least a 90-day notice to the Grantee.