State of Alaska
Department of Health and Social Services
Division of Behavioral Health

Request for Proposals
Rural Peer Support
For FY2025 Through FY2027
Grants and Contracts

NOTICE: Proposals will ONLY be accepted through GEMS. Applicants are responsible for reviewing the GEMS homepage at https://gems.dhss.alaska.gov/ for details regarding agency registration and availability of technical assistance. Log into GEMS through myAlaska, https://my.alaska.gov/Welcome.aspx, to begin the application process. Once you are logged into GEMS, guidance and instruction are available in the Documents tab and from the film strip icon. Applicants are responsible for monitoring GEMS or the State Online Public Notices site for any changes or amendments that may be issued regarding this solicitation.

Relay Alaska provides assisted communication services at 711 or 1-800-770-8973 from a TTY phone, and at 1-800-770-8255 from a voice phone.

CONTACT PERSON: Lauren Mallery, Grants Administrator
PHONE: (907)-465-3026
E-MAIL: lauren.mallery@alaska.gov

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: April 1, 2024, 3:59 PM
DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN INQUIRIES: March 22, 2024, 3:59 PM
PROJECT PERIOD BEGINS: July 1, 2024

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Amendments

Amendment 1 Answers to written inquiries **Posted: 3/22/2024**

Explanation

This amendment serves to provide answers to written inquiries.

Additional Information

Amendment 1, issued 3/22/24, serves to provide answers to written inquiries. Please see the document titled Amendment 1 FY25 Rural Peer Support Answers to Written Inquiries in the attachment section of this RFP.

Amendment 2 Answers to written inquiries **Posted: 3/28/2024**

Explanation

This amendment serves to provide answers to written inquiries.

Additional Information

Amendment 2, issued 3/27/24, serves to provide answers to written inquiries. Please see the document titled "Amendment 2 FY25 Rural Peer Support Answers to Written Inquiries" in the attachment of this RFP.

Section 1 Grant Program Information

1.01 Introduction and Program Description

The Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, is requesting proposals from eligible applicants to provide Rural Peer Support services for the State of Alaska in FY2025 through FY2027. Program Services are authorized under 7 AAC 78 Grant Programs. Additional governing statutes are AS 47.30.520-620 The Community Mental Health Services Act, AS 47.30.520-620 Community Mental Health Services Act, and AS 47.376 Uniform Alcoholism and Treatment Act. State of Alaska statutes and regulations are accessible atthe Department of Law Document Library or through the contact person identified on the cover page of this Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Rural Peer Support program is to promote the expansion of peer support services and increase positive outcomes supplied by peer support. Applicants for this proposal can be new, prior funded or established programs. This grant is to be awarded to Community Clinics, Community Behavioral Health Centers, or Peer Run agencies to provide peer support services in remote rural areas. Agencies/clinics are to initiate peer support services in a rural location(s) within their current service area. These programs will help rural communities understand the role of peer support within the continuum of care. Rural peer support will provide services to children and youth experiencing serious emotional disturbance (SED), adults experiencing serious mental illness (SMI) or co-occurring (COD) SMI and substance use disorder (SUD), and/or family members of individuals experiencing SED, SMI, SUD and/or COD. Service areas of the proposed project must be located outside of the Municipality of Anchorage, the City of Fairbanks, and the City and Borough of Juneau.

1.02 Program Goals and Anticipated Outcomes

The proposed project must demonstrate a thorough understanding and support of the grant program goals and outcomes anticipated by the Department.

The intent of the Rural Peer Support program is to promote the expansion of peer support services into behavioral health systems in rural areas, and to provide an increase in positive outcomes supplied by peer support.

Peer support is a type of help provided by someone who has experienced the same or similar problems of being diagnosed with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, or both. Peer support can offer emotional, social, practical, or knowledge-based assistance. Peer support is based on shared humanity and commonalities and can promote connection and hope. This mutuality—often called “peerness”—between a peer support worker and person in or seeking recovery promotes connection and inspires hope. (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2017)

The proposed program is to implement and expand peer support services into existing rural settings. Peer Supports Professionals are individuals who are in recovery from a substance misuse and/or a mental health condition, who assist others in navigating their path to recovery. Peer Support Professionals help peers walk the recovery path by offering hope, self-help education and link people to tools and resources. Additionally, Peer Support Professionals help create a roadmap for peers to work towards their goals. This program would use different evidence-based programs, such as the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), Whole Health Action Management (WHAM), and Intentional Peer Support to assist peers in setting goals and making life changes. Applicants will need to address in the proposals which evidence-based practices will be used in the program.

Specific criteria must be met for Peer Support Professionals. Individuals with specialized training, supervision, and lived experience are hired as Peer Support Professionals. These individuals must have the lived experience in order to qualify as a “peer support professional.” Peer support professionals must be certified or in process of becoming

certified through the Alaska Commission on Behavioral Health Certification. Applicants must describe how peer support professionals will be trained and supported toward certification.

Services are expected to be provided in rural Alaskan community environments. Following outreach, in reach and engagement services, some participants will continue to be served by the Rural Peer Support program long term and others will be offered a warm hand off to other community-based services. Other community-based services to which participants can be connected include community behavioral health centers, employment services, housing services, non-medical recovery such as mutual support and 12 step programs or other educational and natural supports as defined and desired by the participant. Community-based supports should also include assisting participants with resources to meet their basic needs, such as food and clothing banks, utility assistance and public entitlements.

Rural peer supports are expected to assist individuals in remaining in their community and decrease institutional placements, Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) involvement, and/or Office of Children's Services (OCS) involvement. In addition, rural peer support services are expected to increase recovery progress and outcomes as indicated by improvements such as development of recovery/wellness tools, improved independent housing, employment, education, self-reported recovery, and overall satisfaction with the quality of life. Rural peer support programs are expected to implement a recovery philosophy as evidenced by an organizational top-down vision that all individuals can recover and by following the SAMHSA definition of recovery as follows: Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential.

Applicants must demonstrate a thorough understanding and support of the grant program goals and outcomes anticipated by the Department. The goals of the Rural Peer Support Program (RPS) are:

1) To develop and expand peer support in the behavioral health system in rural Alaska;

2) to enhance positive treatment outcomes for clients receiving peer support services in rural Alaska. Peer support services are provided in a deliberate and organized way that maximizes the diversity of consumers;

3) to assist individuals and families in recovery obtain basic needs to enhance the quality of life; and

4) to increase individuals and families receiving support services to maintain living safely in the least restrictive environment.

Outcomes anticipated include:

- Incorporates peer support services into a rural clinic's behavioral health continuum of care.
- Provide linkage to basic resources for individuals.
- Utilization of evidence-based practices.
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Promotion of recovery, resilience, and community integration.

These services must be both supportive and practical. An applicant may propose to have additional program goals beyond the two required but must be clear in the proposal that grant funds will only be used to attain these State-identified goals.

Proposals must meet or exceed anticipated minimum outcomes described in this RFP.

1.03 Program Services/Activities

Applicants must agree to adhere to program requirements and service standards, including those specified in DBH Grant Programs and Service Standards Manual FY23, section 5. Peer and Consumer Support Services (Peers). Applicants agree to comply with all of the following additional program requirements and service standards:

- All peers working within this program must have the 40-hour core training from an approved DBH curriculum on peer support. Approved curriculums can be found in the Training Resources Guide for Peer Support Professionals.
- All peers working within this program must become certified by the second quarter of services. Certification information is at Alaska Commission for Behavioral Health Certification.
- Advocating for people in recovery.
- Building community and relationships.
- Leading recovery groups and individual skill building to peers.
- Mentoring
- Destigmatization
- Inspire hope that people can and do recover.
- Walk with people on their recovery journeys; dispel myths about what it means to have a mental health condition or substance use disorder.
- Provide self-help education and link people to tools and resources.
- Support people in identifying their goals, hopes, and dreams, and creating a roadmap for getting there.
- Serve as an advocate and provide information and peer support for consumers in emergency, outpatient or inpatient settings.
- Maintain frequent in-person or telephonic contact with their peer support group and individuals in order to provide support.
- Perform a wide range of tasks to assist consumers in regaining control over their own lives and over their own recovery process.

Peer Support Professionals will provide these services in conjunction with strategic sharing, strategic understanding, affirmation, and normalization.

Applicants will upload a timeline for the initiation of services and project activities. DBH understands that applicants may be operational; however, a timeline is still required. The timeline should include any trainings and certification plans for the project. It should also include at a minimum: outreach plans, education to the community regarding the available peer support services of the project, data collection procedures, and supervision for peers. The timeline must specify a project start date of July 1, 2024 with service delivery beginning no later than September 1, 2024.

Applicant proposals must describe the ways in which the project aligns with program intent. The submitted project proposal will identify agency resources available to the project; describe project activities; and clearly state the project's anticipated goals, outputs, and outcomes.

Applicants must agree to adhere to program requirements and service standards, including those specified in DBH Grant Programs and Service Standards Manual FY23, section 5. Peer and Consumer Support Services (Peers).

Applicants must agree to follow Behavioral Health Medicaid Service standards adopted per regulation 7 AAC 70 Behavioral Health Services.

Applicants must describe the manner in which they will ensure substantial consumer input into programming for

consumer directed services and program decision making. Applicants must describe a plan for sustainability to include the following;

- Sustainability of vision, mission, purpose and values.
- Sustainability of program activities over a period of no less than 2 years after the initial grant award period.
- Fiscal sustainability that identifies all possible revenue streams with realistic projections of actual income over a period of not less than 2 years after the initial grant award period.
- Plan for increase in other revenues over the 3-year grant period to include annual reporting of progress over the grant award period.

Possible revenue streams may include but are not limited to Medicaid, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Private Foundations, and/or donations.

1.04 Program Evaluation Requirements and Reporting

Results Based Budgeting Framework

Results based budgeting provides a framework in which allocated resources support, and are justified by, a set of outputs and expected results. Within this framework, actual performance and achieved outcomes are measured by objective performance measures.

Projects are required to align with program objectives expressing Department priorities and core services. Projects will use performance measures to evaluate progress toward meaningful outcomes, and to initiate data collection and reporting consistent with Department priorities.

The Department Priorities, Core Services, Objectives, and Performance Measures of Effectiveness and Efficiency for this program are:

Department Priorities

- 1 Health & Wellness Across the Life Span

Department Core Services

- Improve the Health Status of Alaskans

Department Objectives

- 1.1 Protect and Promote the Health of Alaskans
- 1.2 Increase the number of Alaskans with disabilities who are living safely in the least restrictive environment.
- 1.3 Increase the number of Alaskans with behavioral health issues who report improvement in key life domains.

FY 25 RBB Objectives/Performance Measures required:

Measure 1: Percent of participants who access community resources to meet basic needs and/or enhance the

quality of life.

Data Collection: For this measure, the grantee will measure the number of individuals accessing community-based resources.

Collection Method: Agency Count as reflected in DBH Program Reports.

Target: 25% or higher

Measure 2: Cost per participant.

Data Collection: total amount of grant expenditures divided by total number of unduplicated program participants per fiscal year.

Collection Method: Cumulative Fiscal Report and DBH Program Reports.

Grant Reporting

Required reporting will include:

1. Cumulative Fiscal Reports recording overall grant and match expenditures by budget line; and

2. Program Reports in the format prescribed by the program.

Applicants must agree to comply with any reporting needs the Program Manager may have throughout the year.

1.05 Target Population and Service Area

Applicants must clearly describe the population targeted by the project, including the area or communities that will be served. Proposals will be evaluated for compatibility with the program's intended target population identified in this solicitation.

Target Population: The target population for the solicited services is children and youth experiencing SED, adults experiencing SMI or co-ocurring SMI and SUD, and/or family members of individuals experiencing SED, SMI, SUD or COD.

Service Areas and Communities: The solicitation requests proposals for services in rural Alaska only. Service areas must be outside of the Municipality of Anchorage, City of Fairbanks, and the City & Borough of Juneau.

1.06 Program Funding

Funding available for this program is anticipated to total $133,156.38 per fiscal year. Total estimated funding for the three-year duration is $399,469.14 in general funds.

***Match Requirement**: The budget must include matching funds equal to 25.00% of the proposed Department funds. Calculate required match with the following formula.*

Total Requested Grant Award x Required Match Percentage = Required Match

Federal grant funds may not be used to match federal funds awarded through this grant program, and State grant

funds may not be used to match State funds awarded through this grant program.

Eligible sources of matching funds include:

- *Local Cash: local sources, including local tax receipts, municipal revenue sharing, cash donations*
- *Local In-Kind: donated items of value for which the applicant incurs no cost, including volunteer labor and donations of supplies, equipment, and space*
- *Other Sources: government and non-government grant awards, third party receipts, direct receipts such as gaming or sales of goods*
- *Grant Income: earnings anticipated as a result of this project proposal receiving award, and Medicaid reimbursements if award of this grant is required for the applicant to bill Medicaid for awarded services*
- *Medicaid: includes Medicaid which is not Grant Income, as well as other third-party receipts*

Proposed Budget: The applicant must submit a budget proposal for the first fiscal year of the project. The proposed budget detail and narrative, *(including required match)*, will support the program's results-based service delivery and staffing requirements stated in this RFP.

The proposed budget will be fully compliant with the limitations described in this RFP, and those detailed in 7 AAC 78.160 (Costs). Regulations are provided under the GEMS Documents tab.

Resources specific to budgeting are also available under the GEMS Documents tab. The Department's Grant Budget Preparation Guidelines provide information and guidance about budget lines, cost detail groupings, and narrative requirements. Grantee User Manual Part I provides detailed instructions for entering a budget proposal in the chapter "Responding to a Solicitation."

Other Agency Funding: Prior to submitting a proposal, applicants are required to list all other agency funding received and applied for. This task must be completed by an Agency Power User in the Other Funding section of the Agency Administration tab. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.

Indirect Costs: If the proposed budget includes indirect costs, 7 AAC 78.160(p) requires a copy of the agency's current federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. The agreement is to be uploaded in the Agency Administration tab. Lapsed agreements can be used if uploaded with the negotiating federal agency's written approval to continue using the rate until a new agreement is negotiated. If an agency has never entered into a federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or no longer has a federally approved agreement in place, the recently updated Federal Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 now allows that agency to budget the 10% De Minimis.

Payment for Services/Grant Income: If applicable to the services proposed in response to this solicitation, awarded grantees will have a Medicaid Provider Number or apply to obtain one, and will make reasonable effort to bill all eligible services to Medicaid and any other available sources of payment before seeking grant support for delivery of the proposed services. Department funds are the payer of last resort.

In the applicant's proposed budget, anticipated receipts and expenditures for all grant income must be evident in the detail and narrative. Fiscal reports for awarded income generating projects will include the receipts and expenditure of all grant income.

Section 2 Applicant Qualifications

2.01 Agency Experience

Proposal evaluation will include consideration of the applicant's history of compliance with service and grant requirements, and previous experience in providing the same or similar services. Evaluation may include Department site reviews, program audits, and confirmation of the successful resolution of any findings. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.

The applicant must describe previous experience providing services the same or similar to those proposed. The description must clearly identify the time period over which services were provided and the target population served.

2.02 Project Staffing

Project staffing must be sufficient to implement the proposed activities in order to meet program goals and the anticipated outcomes.

Resumes (and/or position descriptions can be provided if you do not have anyone hired for positions of the program) and professional credentials for key project personnel must be uploaded as part of the response. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200. **Please indicate what resume goes with which position within the proposal.**

- The peer support specialists identified for the project will be trained on a 40-hour DBH approved curriculum on peer support within one quarter of start date and provide the certificate of completion to the DBH Program Manager.
- The peer support specialists identified for the project will become certified within 2 quarters of start date. Certificates of certification must be provided to the DBH Program Manager upon completion.
- The peer support specialists identified for the project will receive ongoing supervision.

2.03 Administrative, Management, and Facility Requirements

The applicant must demonstrate the agency's sustainable fiscal and administrative capacity. Executive, administrative, and financial staff must be qualified, as indicated by the resumes of position holders uploaded as an element of the proposal. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.

1. The applicant must ensure procedures are in place to protect client confidentiality compliant with State and federal standards.
2. The applicant must ensure procedures are in place to protect client confidentiality with State and federal standards while in the field working with peers.
3. The applicant must ensure its most recent financial audit was submitted to the appropriate state office (see Audit Requirements below), and any findings identified have been resolved.

Awarded proposers will be required to submit additional agency information if the agency GEMS record is not current.

Audit Requirements:

Federal Requirements: Agencies spending $750,000 or more total Federal Financial Assistance in the agency fiscal year may be required to comply with conditions of the Single Audit Act of 1984, P.L. 98-502, as amended by the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, P.L. 104-156, and as defined in 2 CFR 200.

State Requirements: Agencies spending $750,000 or more total State Financial Assistance in the agency fiscal year

are required to comply with the conditions of 2 AAC 45.010-090. The current regulations may be viewed at the State of Alaska, Department of Law website, Department of Law Document Library, or copies may be obtained from the contact identified on the cover page of the RFP.

Information on State and Federal Single Audit Acts compliance may be obtained from:

State Single Audit Coordinator
Department of Administration
Division of Finance
PO Box 110204
Juneau, AK 99811-0204
Telephone: (907) 465-4666
Fax: (907) 465-2169

Department of Health Program Audit Requirements: All DOH grantees are subject to the requirements of 7 AAC 78.230. If awarded, agencies which are not required to file State Single Audits under 2 AAC 45.010 must ensure a fiscal audit of the agency operations under the grant program is performed by an independent, licensed, certified public accountant at least once every two years and submitted to:

State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
Finance and Management Services
Audit Section
PO Box 110602
Juneau, AK 99811-0602
Telephone: (907) 465-3120

Facility, Service Access, and Safety:

1. The applicant must address potential safety concerns for clients and staff in the management of services proposed in response to this RFP.
2. Please include safety measures for staff and clients while working in the community.
3. The applicant should describe client accessibility to services and the way in which that will enhance project success.
4. All applicants for Department grants should have a written plan for emergency response and recovery that provides for potential safety concerns and the safe evacuation of clients and staff. This plan is mandatory for agencies providing residential and/or critical care services as noted in the State Grant Assurances.
5. All applicants should describe their facility and the safety of the facility for participants.

2.04 Support/Coordination of Services

Applicants must demonstrate the proposed project has the necessary support and coordination for the successful delivery of services. The proposal must address the following:

i. Community support where services are proposed;
ii. Partnerships and collaborations specific to the proposed project; and
iii. Coordination with necessary referring agencies and the role of each described. Applicants will include a description of their referral process into the program.

Demonstration of support and coordination is evidenced through Letters of Support or Memoranda of Agreement from other service agencies in the area. These letters or agreements must be:

- Dated within the last two months.
- Specific to the proposed project.
- Align with the program intent.
- Be signed.

Applicants must include a description of the referral process to be used for the proposed or continuing project.

Section 3 General Instructions for Proposal Submission

3.01 Eligibility

Applicants must be eligible to apply under 7 AAC 78.030 (Eligible Applicants). Eligible applicants are state agencies; political subdivisions of the state such as cities, organized boroughs, and Regional Educational Attendance Areas; nonprofit organizations and consortia of nonprofits; and Alaska Native entities. As follows, eligibility will be verified by Grants and Contracts.

1. Political subdivisions of the state and Regional Educational Attendance Areas will be verified by State records.
2. Eligible nonprofits are listed in the State's database of registered nonprofit entities or the US Internal Revenue Service's register of tax-exempt organizations. Nonprofit subsidiaries of nonprofit corporations must also provide a letter from the parent organization confirming nonprofit status.
3. Alaska Native entities as defined in 7 AAC 78.950(1) must submit, with the application, a legally binding resolution waiving the entity's sovereign immunity to suit through the duration of the program, identified in RFP Subsection 3.05. The resolution must be authorized in compliance with the tribe's constitution, either by the tribal council or by majority vote of the tribal membership. The required template is provided at Subsection 4.02, Other Technical Requirements.

Applicants who have had a contract or grant to help produce this RFP are not eligible to apply and any submitted proposal will not be considered.

3.02 Acceptance of Terms

By submitting a proposal, an applicant accepts all terms and conditions of this RFP including all identified attachments and guidelines, 7 AAC 78, and any other applicable statutes and regulations. Copies of these may be accessed through the contact person identified on the cover page or through the web address(es) identified in this RFP.

If a grant is awarded, this RFP and the applicant’s proposal become part of the grant agreement. The applicant will be bound by the provisions contained in the awarded proposal unless the Department agrees that specific parts of the proposal are not part of the agreement.

Proposals and other materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the State and may be returned only if the State allows. Proposals are public documents and may be inspected or copied by anyone after grants have been awarded.

3.03 Inquiries

Applicants should immediately review this RFP for defects and questionable or confusing content. Questions that

can be answered by directing the applicant to a specific section in the RFP may be answered verbally by the contact person identified on the RFP cover page. Questions that cannot be answered by directing an applicant to a specific section of the RFP may be declared substantive. The applicant will be directed to submit the question in writing to the contact person at the email address on the cover page no later than the Deadline for Written Inquiries, also identified on the cover page. This will allow issuance of any necessary amendments and/or clarifications to all prospective applicants.

Applicants are responsible for monitoring GEMS or the State's Online Public Notices website (Online Public Notices) for any clarifications or amendments that may be issued regarding this solicitation.

Proposals will not be accepted after 3:59 PM prevailing local time on the due date identified on the cover page.

3.04 Proposal Costs and Content

The Department will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by the applicant prior to the authorized grant performance period. All costs of responding to this RFP are the responsibility of the applicant.

The applicant is responsible for the content of the proposal.

3.05 Duration

This RFP is for a three-year period, beginning 7/1/2024 through 6/30/2027. At the discretion of the Department, a project funded under this RFP may be considered for continued funding in subsequent program year(s). The annual decision to continue funding for the subsequent year(s) of the three-year grant cycle is based on the following general conditions:

1. the Department's judgment that there is a continued need for the grant project service;
2. the grantee's satisfactory performance during the previous grant year;
3. the availability of sufficient grant program funds, and whether continuation of the financing is consistent with public health and welfare; and
4. the ability of the grantee and the Department to agree on any adjustments in payments or service.

Applicants will submit a budget proposal for year one of the grant only. Funding in each subsequent year will require submission and approval of documents needed to update service plans, evaluation measures, and budgets. Grants and Contracts will notify grantees of specific submission requirements necessary to qualify for consideration of continued funding.

This RFP is for fiscal year FY2025, 7/1/2024 through 6/30/2027.

3.06 Proposal Review

Following the deadline for receipt of proposals, no revisions will be accepted unless provided in response to a request from the contact person named in this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed as follows:

1. Proposals will be evaluated in a manner that will avoid disclosure of contents before notices of grant award have been issued.
2. Department of Health staff will evaluate each proposal for minimum responsiveness and other technical

requirements and eliminate nonresponsive proposals from consideration.

3. Using the criteria set out in this RFP and 7 AAC 78.100 (Criteria for Review of Proposals), Department staff will evaluate each responsive proposal. **Scores for each criterion will be based solely on the response to the associated question. Points will not be earned if the information was provided in response to another question in Section 4**. Department staff will also review relevant departmental documentation regarding the applicant. Staff recommendations regarding awards and levels of funding will include consideration of the following:
    i. a history of the applicant's compliance with grant requirements, to include records of program performance, on-site program reviews, and prior year audits;
    ii. priorities in applicable State health and social services plans;
    iii. requirements of applicable State and federal statutes; and
    iv. municipal ordinances or regulations applicable to the grant program.

If there are multiple responsive proposals for which there is insufficient money to fully fund, or supplementary expertise is deemed necessary to the review of proposed services, the Department may appoint a Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) as an additional advisory body. PEC members will initially evaluate proposals, independently of other committee members. As a committee the PEC will meet in a **closed session** (7 AAC 78.090 Review of Proposals) to further review proposals and develop recommendations. Scores will be assigned based on the applicant's response to each individual question and the associated criteria. **Applicants will not earn points for a given question based on a response to another question in the RFP**. The PEC review will include discussion of each proposal's merits. PEC recommendations will rank proposals in priority order and include approval or disapproval for award, modifications to the proposed project, and special compliance conditions.

All staff advisory recommendations and, if applicable, those of the PEC, and all review materials will be submitted for consideration by the Division Director, who will make recommendations to the Commissioner of the Department of Health or the Commissioner's designee.

3.07 Final Decision Authority

Recommendations are advisory only, including those from any PEC that may be held. The final decision to approve or disapprove award, the amount of each award, and whether to impose special conditions or modifications rests with the Commissioner or Commissioner's designee.

NOTE: The final decision may include additional considerations, such as a lack or duplication of services in certain locations, or alternative services that may be available; a critical need for services by vulnerable populations; and matters of health, life and safety. The Department has the responsibility to ensure public monies are utilized in a manner that protects the interests of the people of the State and retains the right to make final awards that ensure responsible distribution of grant funds.

3.08 Notification of Grant Award and Appeals

Within fifteen (15) days after the decision regarding grant awards, applicants will be notified of the final funding decisions, and, if awarded, any conditions of award or modifications. Following any necessary negotiations for revisions to the proposed budget and scope of services, successful applicants will be issued a grant agreement. This formal agreement will contain specific performance and reporting requirements consistent with Department policy and procedure and 7 AAC 78.

Per 7 AAC 78.305 (Request for Appeal), an applicant may appeal a final grant award decision. Requests for hearing must be addressed to the Commissioner and received in writing at the address below within 15 days after the applicant receives notification of the decision. The request must contain the reasons for the appeal and must cite the law, regulation, or terms of the grant upon which the appeal is based.

With a copy to the contact identified on the solicitation cover page, send appeal to:

Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner
Department of Health
3601 C Street, Suite 902
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-5923

3.09 Cancellation of the RFP/Termination of Award

Contingent upon funding appropriations and the Governor's approval, the Department may fund proposals from eligible applicants. The Department may withdraw this RFP at any time and reserves the right to refrain from making an award when such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the State. Funds awarded for a grant as a result of this RFP may be withheld and the grant terminated by written notice from the State to the grantee at any time for violation by the grantee of any terms or conditions of the grant award, or when such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

Section 4 Submission Requirements/Evaluation Criteria

4.01 Minimum Responsiveness Criterion per 78.100(2)(A)

Proposals that fail to meet the minimum responsiveness requirements below will be eliminated from consideration per 7 AAC 78.090(b)(2).

1 Applicant is eligible per 7 AAC 78.030.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Applicant is eligible per Alaska Administrative Code 7 AAC 78.030.	☑	

4.02 Other Technical Requirements per 7 AAC 78.060, 78.090(b) and 78.100

Response & Organizational Documentation

1 If applying as a non-profit organization, confirm non-profit status is documented.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The agency is listed as a non-profit in good standing on the State's corporation database, confirmed at State Corporation Database and/or	☑	

b	The agency's current 501(c)(3) status is confirmed on the Exempt Organizations page, accessible at IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search.	☑	
c	If a non-profit subsidiary of a non-profit corporation, a verifying letter from the parent non-profit agency is uploaded to the applicant's agency GEMS record (under General in the Agency Administration tab). The parent corporation must meet criteria a and/or b.	☑	

2 If applying as a Federally recognized tribal entity, upload the signed Resolution for Tribal Entities using the template provided below. Confirm the following criteria are met.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant is a recognized Alaska Native entity as verified by the Federal Register at Federal Register. If a tribal consortium, all members are recognized Alaska Native entities.	☑	
b	A Resolution, completed on the provided form, is uploaded in the space provided. If a tribal consortium, a Resolution from each member tribe is uploaded as a single file.	☑	

3 If applying as a government entity, confirm the following criterion is met.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant is another State Agency, such as the University; a political subdivision such as a city or municipality, verified at Local Boundary Commission ; or an REAA under AS 14.08.031 verified at Department of Education Alaska School Map.	☑	

4 Confirm neither the applicant agency nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from receiving grant assistance from any State or federal department or agency. If an agency or its principals are excluded from receiving grant assistance, the proposal may not be considered.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant agency nor its principals are barred from receiving federal assistance as verified in the federal System for Awards Management at System for Award Management (SAM).	☑	

5 Electronically sign the State Grant Assurances form.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	State Grant Assurances form is signed by an individual authorized to enter into legal agreements on behalf of the applicant agency.	☑	

6 Confirm the following information is provided at the Agency Administration tab. These tasks must be completed by a Power User. If the information is found to be incomplete or not current, there may be delay in execution of any offered award.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The General section contains a current governing board roster. The roster includes terms of each seat and contact information outside the applicant agency for one or more officers.	☑	
b	The Other Funding section contains a record for each source of agency operating funds. The record includes funds applied for under this solicitation. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.	☑	
c	The General section contains a State of Alaska business license number, verified at Alaska Business Licenses Search.	☑	
d	All agency contact records are up to date, including Head of Agency, Primary Contact, and Head of Financial Operations.	☑	
e	The applicant's agency record contains the Agency Fiscal Year Start Date.	☑	
f	The applicant's agency GEMS record contains a current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. If lapsed, the agreement is uploaded with written confirmation from the negotiating agency that the rate is valid until a new agreement is approved.	☑	

4.03 History of Compliance with Grant Requirements per 7 AAC 78.100(2)(B)

1 Previous recipients of grant awards will confirm the following criteria pertaining to past performance and compliance are met. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200. All other applicants will mark Complete without confirming.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Fiscal, narrative, and data reporting in prior years has been complete and timely.	☑	

b	Required State and Federal Single Audits have been submitted, verified at Division of Finance, State Single Audit. Any prior year audit exceptions have been resolved, verified by the Finance and Management Services Audit Section contact identified at Finance and Management Services Audit Contact.	☑	
c	Activities in prior year(s) demonstrate effective delivery of services. The departmental review may include documentation such as performance reports, audit reports, grant records, site visits, etc.	☑	
d	Agency historically maintains required standards. Verification may include, though is not limited to, quality assurance reviews, licensing, and certifications.	☑	

4.04 Questions and Criteria Related to Program Policy, Goals, Outcomes, and Activities

1 Describe the proposed project in the text box below, identifying the ways in which it will achieve the program goals and anticipated outcomes stated in this RFP.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The description demonstrates a thorough understanding of program goals and outcomes, and clearly identifies the ways in which they will be achieved.	☐	80
b	The proposal is in a rural setting.	☐	20
c	Proposal incorporates peer support services into a rural clinic's behavioral health continuum of care.	☐	80
d	Proposal includes using evidence-based interventions outside of peer support, such as WRAP, WHAM, and Intentional Peer Support.	☐	60
e	Proposal outlines peer support services for the project.	☐	60

2 Provide the timeline for the initiation of services and implementation of project activities in the upload field below.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	The timeline proposed for initiation of services and project activities is compatible with program intent and includes a project start date of July 1, 2024 and a service delivery date of September 1, 2024.	☐	120
b	The timeline includes staff obtaining 40-hour DBH approved curriculum on peer support.	☐	40
c	The timeline includes staff becoming peer certified.	☐	40
d	The timeline includes outreach plans, education to the community about available peer support services, staff data collection procedures, and peer supervision at a minimum.	☐	40

3 ***In the text box below, describe the ways in which the project aligns with program intent, requirements and standards, including those in the DBH Grant Program and Services manual. The response will identify project resources, activities, and clearly state the project's anticipated goals, outputs, and outcomes.***

Evaluation/Review Criteria		**Review**	**Points**
a	The described activities are well developed, reasonable and supportive of program intent.	☐	80
b	The response identifies project resources, activities, and clearly states the project's anticipated goals, outputs, and outcomes.	☐	40
c	The duties and responsibilities of the peer support specialists are defined and supervised.	☐	60
d	The applicant agrees to adhere to the program requirements and standards, including those in the DBH Grant Program and Services Standards manual.	☑	
e	The proposal includes a sustainability plan for a period of no less than 2 years after the initial grant award period.	☐	20
f	The sustainability plan identifies all possible revenue streams with realistic projection of actual income over a period of not less than 2 years after the initial grant period.	☐	20

4 In the text box below, describe the project evaluation plan, including indicators and data gathering strategies that will be implemented to address the program's performance measures identified in Subsection 1.04.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The proposed evaluation plan includes indicators and data gathering strategies aligned with the program performance measures identified in Subsection 1.04.	☐	80
b	The organization agrees to comply with any reporting needs the DBH Program Manager may have throughout the year.	☑	0

5 In the text box below, describe the target population and service area(s) of the proposed project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The description clearly identifies the proposed target population and service area and meets the intent of the services solicited.	☐	80

6 Provide the proposed budget for the first year of the project. Include detail and supporting narrative as shown in the provided Grant Budget Preparation Guidelines (Documents tab). Confirm the following criteria are met.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The budget narrative is complete and mutually consistent with the budget detail.	☑	
b	Cost line items are allowable under 7 AAC 78.160 and are compliant with stated program requirements.	☑	
c	Travel costs are consistent with 7 AAC 78.160(h) and (i), and with any program requirements or limitations identified in the solicitation.	☑	
d	Equipment costs and subcontract costs are allowed by the program and consistent with 7 AAC 78.280.	☑	
e	Indirect costs are fully compliant with rates and exemptions of the agency's current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, uploaded in the General section of the Agency Administration tab.	☑	

f	The budget supports the proposed project and program intent, and the project appears achievable with demonstrated resources.	☐	40
g	Costs are reasonable and substantiated in the narrative.	☐	20
h	The proposed budget narrative clearly describes any necessary allocation of resources among target populations or service areas.	☐	20
i	Proposed sources of Required Match are identified in the budget narrative as well as in the Matching Fund Source table located near the beginning of the application. All proposed sources of matching funds are eligible, and the level of match is met.	☑	

4.05 Applicant Qualifications - Criteria Relating to Personnel, Management, and Facilities

1 In the text box below, describe the agency's previous experience in providing services the same as, or similar to, those proposed. Clearly identify the time period over which services were provided and the population served. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's previous experience providing the same or similar services demonstrates the resources and capacity needed to provide the solicited program services. Note: the review by department staff will also include documentation such as prior year performance reports, audit reports, site visits, etc. as noted in Subsection 4.03.	☐	60

2 In the text box below, describe the proposed project's program and administrative staffing needs. Scan the following documents as a single file and upload in the space provided below: 1) Position descriptions for key project positions 2) Resumes and professional credentials for position holders 3) Resumes of administrative staff providing supervision, fiscal, reporting, and management needs. This is part of the pre-award risk assessment required under Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200. PLEASE IDENTIFY WHICH RESUME WILL BE FILLING WHAT JOB DESCRIPTION/POSITION.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Staff providing services are qualified and competent as demonstrated by the uploaded position descriptions, resumes, and professional credentials. Proposals have clearly identified which resumes are for which job position/description.	☐	120

b	Staffing levels are sufficient to support the requirements of the proposed project and compliant with all identified program mandates.	☐	80
c	Position descriptions support the intent of the RFP and the project proposed.	☐	60

3 In the text box below, describe the procedures that will be used to protect client confidentiality.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's description identifies the procedures necessary to protect client confidentiality compliant with State and Federal standards.	☐	100

4 In the text box below, describe the service delivery facilities and locations and the ways in which access to services will enhance project success.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The facilities described are safe and appropriate to the purpose of the program.	☐	60
b	Access to the locations will enhance delivery of services to the targeted populations.	☐	60

4.06 Demonstration of Support/Coordination of Service

1 In the upload field below, provide a single-file scan of documented community support for the proposed project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Appropriate documentation of support is provided from each community in which the applicant proposes to provide services.	☐	60
b	Documentation is dated within the last two months, signed and describes the support of the program.	☐	60

3 In the text box below, describe partnerships or collaborations necessary to the proposed project. In the upload field below, provide a single-file scan documenting existing partnerships and collaborations specific to the proposed project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	Partnerships and collaborations necessary for the effective delivery of services are well described. Evidence specific to the proposed project is provided.	☐	60

4 ***In the text box below, describe the in-place or planned coordination with the State or other providers for referrals necessary to project success. Identify the project staff involved as well as the responsible positions at the referring agencies. Please include how an agency would refer a participant to your program, i.e., phone, meeting at the clinic, is there paperwork that needs to be done for a referral, and who the lead person to contact is.***

Evaluation/Review Criteria		**Review**	**Points**
a	The applicant's description demonstrates a clear understanding of the roles that must be performed by the applicant and by referring agencies for the effective delivery of services to the targeted population.	☐	60
b	Proposals include a description of the referral process to be used for the proposed or continuing project.	☐	60