



TEXAS
Health and Human Services

Dr. Courtney N. Phillips, Executive Commissioner

**Request for Applications (RFA)
For**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach

RFA No. HHS0002756

Date of Release: Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Responses Due: Thursday May 2, 2019 by 2:00 PM CT

Class/Item: 952/84 - Supplemental Food Services

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ARTICLE I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, DEFINITIONS, AND AUTHORITY

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) seeks qualified respondents to provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application Assistance. Services shall be provided in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Application (RFA) and in compliance with the **Exhibit G - SNAP Application Assistance Services Contract Requirements**.

To be considered for award, respondents must execute **Exhibit A - Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, v. 1.3** of this solicitation and provide all other required information and documentation as set forth in this solicitation, Article IX, Submission Checklist.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Refer to **Exhibit B - HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant, v 2.15** for additional definitions. Additionally, as used in this Solicitation, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below:

“Addendum” means a written clarification or revision to this Solicitation issued by the HHSC.

“Health & Human Services Commission” or “HHSC” means the administrative agency established under Chapter 531, Texas Government Code or its designee.

“Project” means the work and activities for which grant funding is awarded and information is provided as part of the response to this Solicitation. During the open application period and before selection of grant recipients are made, the Project will be known as the Proposed Project.

“Respondent” means the entity responding to this Solicitation. May also be referred to as “Applicant”

“Solicitation” means this Request for Application including any Exhibits and Addenda, if any and is further defined by the definition “Solicitation or RFA” outlined in Exhibit B, HHSC Uniform Terms and Conditions.

“State” means the State of Texas and its instrumentalities, including HHSC, and any other state agency, its officers, employees, or authorized agents.

“Successful Respondent” means an organization that receives a grant award as a result of this RFA. May also be referred to as "Grantee," "Awarded Applicant," "Sub-recipient" or "Grant Recipient."

1.3 AUTHORITY

HHSC has the authority to conduct SNAP Application Assistance Services, to inform low-income households about the availability, eligibility requirements, application procedures, benefits of SNAP; and to provide application assistance ([Section 11\(e\) \(1\) \(A\) of The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008](#), as amended), by [Texas Human Resources Code Section 33.025](#), Nutrition Education and Outreach for those eligible for SNAP and [7 U.S. Code § 2020 – Administration](#).

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ARTICLE II. SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD

2.1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

HHSC's mission is to improve the health, safety and well-being of Texans with good stewardship of public resources. HHSC anticipates funding an organization that is able to provide the requested services throughout the State.

The successful organization will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Provide comprehensive application assistance with strategies to increase online utilization of self-service tools, resources and the election of electronic notifications;
- B. Develop and disseminate targeted messaging for SNAP;
- C. Develop a comprehensive referral and follow up system to support individuals seeking assistance; and
- D. Develop and implement service delivery innovations (special projects) to increase access to isolated communities.

HHSC's fundamental commitment is to contract for results. HHSC defines a successful result as the generation of defined, measurable, and beneficial outcomes that satisfy the grant requirements and support the HHSC mission and objectives. This RFA describes what is required of the respondents in terms of services, deliverables, and performance requirements.

2.2 GRANT AWARD AND TERM

2.2.1 Available Funding

This contract is contingent upon the availability of sufficient and adequate funds. If funds become unavailable through lack of appropriations, budget cuts, transfer of funds between programs or agencies, amendment of the Texas General Appropriations Act, agency consolidation, or any other disruptions of current funding for this contract, HHSC may restrict, reduce, or terminate funding under this contract. This contract is also subject to immediate cancellation or termination, without penalty to HHSC, if sufficient and adequate funds are not available. Grantee will have no right of action against HHSC if HHSC cannot perform its obligations under this contract as a result of lack of funding for any activities or functions contained within the scope of this contract. In the event of cancellation or termination, HHSC will not be required to give notice and will not be liable for any damages or losses caused or associated with such termination or cancellation.

It is HHSC's intention to make one or multiple award(s), based upon the most qualified respondent(s) to this RFA.

Reimbursement will only be made for those allowable expenses that occur within the term of the grant. No pre-award spending will be allowed. The grant term will include an initial three (3) year term with two (2) additional one (1) year renewal options based upon available funding, ending on September 30, 2024.

2.2.2 Grant Term

It is anticipated that contracts awarded under this Solicitation will begin October 1, 2019, with an initial term of three (3) years, terminating on September 30, 2022. HHSC may exercise its option to extend any contract awarded pursuant to this Solicitation with the option to extend one (1) year for up to two (2) years.

2.3 ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS

Respondents eligible to apply for the grants are public or private agencies and organizations, including non-profit agencies and organizations.

2.4 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

To meet the mission and objectives of the SNAP Application Assistance Program, respondents must be in compliance with the requirements of **Exhibit G - SNAP Application Assistance Services Contract Requirements**.

2.5 SCOPE

The SNAP Application Assistance Program outreaches to low income people. SNAP offers the opportunity for improved nutrition and progress toward economic self-sufficiency for participants who become stronger members of the community. However, some low-income people, especially seniors, working people, and legal immigrants, who are eligible for SNAP do not participate and thus forego assistance that could stretch their food dollars and help improve their nutrition.

The respondents are to address the requirements of the **Exhibit G - SNAP Application Assistance Services Contract Requirements**, which outlines the requirements if a grant is awarded

2.5.1 Contract Monitoring Questionnaire

Successful respondents must comply with all applicable cost principles, audit requirements, and administrative requirements listed under terms and conditions. To ensure compliance with these requirements, HHSC utilizes a risk-based monitoring system. The **Exhibit H - Contract Monitoring Questionnaire (CMQ)**, is part of the risk evaluation process and provides detailed information regarding internal controls and other general processes important to contracting.

The successful respondents shall submit an initial CMQ with the application and thereafter with an Annual Contractor Certification (ACC), no less than, sixty (60) business days prior to the end of each state fiscal year.

2.5.2 Formal Communication

The successful respondents must establish formal communication with HHSC for receipt and response to requests for information, work products, deliverables, updates and other required correspondence related to performance of grant requirements. HHSC will issue State Action Requests (SAR) to the successful respondents following established procedures and timelines. The successful respondents will issue Vendor Action Requests (VAR) to HHSC following established procedures and timelines. The successful respondents' responses should describe how the respondents will establish and manage formal communication with HHSC.

In addition to the requirements stated above, the successful respondents must:

- A. Submit complete and accurate responses to any SAR or VAR response memos no later than ten (10) calendar days after the successful respondent's receipt of the request unless a specific date is specified in the request.
- B. Submit written request for extension of a SAR or VAR response deadline that specifies the estimated date of completion and reasons for the extension no later than three (3) business days after the successful respondents receive the SAR or VAR response.
- C. The successful respondents must provide ad hoc reports and respond to Legislative inquiries and other high priority requests within thirty-six (36) hours from the time of the request or by the date specified by HHSC for data or reports that already exist and are produced.

All correspondence must be sent to the HHSC SNAP I&A SAR VAR email address at SNAP_AA_SAR_VAR@hhsc.state.tx.us.

2.6 KEY PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

HHSC will monitor the performance of grants awarded under this RFA. All services and deliverables under the grant shall be provided at an acceptable quality level and in a manner consistent with acceptable industry standard, custom, and practice. Respondents shall ensure services are provided at least at the level established for SNAP Application Assistance approved minimum goals and outcomes. Respondents shall report on key performance requirements and outcomes in accordance with **Exhibit I, Key Performance Requirements (KPRs)**, and **Exhibit F, Deliverables**.

2.7 CONTRACT RECORDS RETENTION

As indicated in **Exhibit B – HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant, v. 2.15**, the respondents will keep and maintain under the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

(GAAP) or the Governmental Accounting Standards Boards (GASB), as applicable, full, true, and complete records necessary to fully disclose to HHSC, the Texas State Auditor's Office, the United States Government, and their authorized representatives sufficient information to determine compliance with the terms and conditions of this grant and all state and federal rules, regulations, and statutes. Unless otherwise specified in this grant, grantee will maintain legible copies of this grant and all related documents for a minimum of seven (7) years after the termination of the grant period or seven (7) years after the completion of any litigation or dispute involving the grant, whichever is later.

2.8 PROHIBITIONS

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services and activities:

- A. Recruitment activities designed to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP benefits. Prohibited recruitment activities are those designed to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP benefits through the use of persuasive practices. Persuasive practices constitute coercing or pressuring an individual to apply or providing incentives to fill out an application;
- B. Radio, television, and billboard advertisements that promote SNAP benefits and enrollment. This prohibition on using Federal funds does not apply to advertisements for Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP). This prohibition also does not apply to social media, so long as the message is not a recruitment activity designed to persuade people to apply for SNAP benefits;
- C. Any agreements with foreign governments designed to promote SNAP benefits and enrollment;
- D. Determining eligibility of a SNAP applicant. This is a certification activity and is the responsibility of HHSC Eligibility Determination Staff. Certification activities are not included in outreach plans;
- E. Activities related to authorizing retailers for Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT);
- F. Activities that solely benefit programs other than SNAP, including Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid. Activities that benefit multiple programs must be appropriately cost allocated;
- G. Acting as an authorized representative for applying, receiving SNAP benefits at issuance, or food purchasing;
- H. Transportation of clients to or from the local SNAP office or provisions of tokens, vouchers or similar items for transportation of clients to or from the local SNAP office. For example, a transit agency could donate bus vouchers for use by potential SNAP clients to travel back and forth to the local SNAP office at no expense to the State agency;
- I. Compensating staff for application assistance activities based on the number of people who apply for SNAP as a result of that worker's efforts. For example, paying a staff person \$10 for each application they help a client complete; and
- J. Interfering during the certification interview or at other times to campaign on behalf of specific applicants or recipients. However, application assistance workers may be present to provide support or help explain complicated terms.

2.9 STANDARDS

Successful respondents must comply with the requirements applicable to this funding source cited in the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Successful respondents are required to conduct contract activities in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination. Guidance for adhering to non-discrimination requirements can be found on the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Civil Rights Office website at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/your-rights/civil-rights-office>.

Upon request, successful respondents must provide the HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all the successful respondents' civil rights policies and procedures. Successful respondents must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to performance under the grant no more than ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the complaint. A complaint can be filed by using the Client Complaint of Discrimination form. A copy of the notice must be provided to HHSC via the formal communication process and must be directed to:

HHSC Civil Rights Office
701 W. 51st Street, Mail Code W206
Austin, TX 78751
Phone Toll Free (888) 388-6332
Phone: (512) 438-4313
TTY Toll Free (877) 432-7232
Fax: (512) 438-5885

Respondents must ensure that their policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of persons in the respondents' programs, benefits or activities on the basis of national origin, and must take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate languages other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.

Respondents must comply with Executive Order 13279, and its implementing regulations at 45 CFR Part 87 or 7 CFR Part 16, which provide that any organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture or U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services must not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.

2.10 DATA USE AGREEMENT

By entering into an agreement with HHSC as a result of this solicitation, the respondents agree to be bound by the terms of **Exhibit C - Data Use Agreement, v. 8.4**. All

respondents are also required to complete **Exhibit C - HHS Enterprise Data Use Agreement Security and Privacy Initial Inquiry (SPI) Form**. Regardless of the answer for question 1 of the SPI Form, please complete in its entirety.

2.11 NO GUARANTEE OF VOLUME, USAGE OR COMPENSATION

HHSC makes no guarantee of volume, usage, or total compensation to be paid to any successful respondent under any awarded grant, if any, resulting from this solicitation. Any awarded grant is subject to appropriations and the continuing availability of funds.

HHSC reserves the right to cancel, make partial award, or decline to award a grant under this solicitation at any time at its sole discretion.

There should be no expectation of additional or continued funding on the part of the grant recipient. Any additional funding or future funding may require submission of an application through a subsequent RFA.

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ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

3.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE/TIME
Solicitation Release Date	Tuesday, April 2, 2019
Deadline for Submitting Questions	Tuesday, April 16, 2019
Respondent Pre-submittal Conference	Monday, April 22, 2019 @ 10:00 AM, CT
Answers to Questions Posted	Thursday, April 25, 2019
Deadline for submission of Solicitation Responses [NOTE: Responses must be RECEIVED by HHSC by the deadline.]	Thursday, May 2, 2019 at 2:00 PM CT
Anticipated Notice of Award	October 1, 2019
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 1, 2019

Note: These dates are a tentative schedule of events. The System Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at any time upon notice posted to the [HHS Grants website](#) and the [eGrants website](#). Any dates listed after the Solicitation Response deadline will occur at the discretion of the System Agency and may occur earlier or later than scheduled without notification on the [HHS Grants website](#) and the [eGrants website](#).

3.2 CHANGES, AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION TO SOLICITATION

The System Agency reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this Solicitation, or to withdraw this Solicitation, at any time prior to award, if it is in the best interest of the System Agency and will post such on the [ESBD](#), [HHS Grants website](#) and the [eGrants website](#). It is the responsibility of Respondent to periodically check the [ESBD](#), [HHS Grants website](#) and the [eGrants website](#) to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this Solicitation.

3.3 IRREGULARITIES

Any irregularities or lack of clarity in this Solicitation should be brought to the attention of the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** as soon as possible so corrective addenda may be furnished to prospective Respondents.

3.4 INQUIRIES

3.4.1 Point of Contact

All requests, questions or other communication about this solicitation shall be made in writing to the HHSC's Point of Contact addressed to the person listed below. All communications between respondents and other HHSC staff members concerning the solicitation are strictly prohibited, unless noted elsewhere in this RFA. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of respondent's Solicitation Response.**

Name: Valerie Griffin, CTCD, CTCM
Title: Contract Specialist
Address: 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756
Phone: 512.406.2458
Email: Valerie.griffin@hhsc.state.tx.us

3.4.2 Prohibited Communications

All communications between respondents and HHSC staff members concerning the solicitation may not be relied upon and respondents should send all questions or other communications to the point-of contact. This restriction does not preclude discussions between affected parties for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this solicitation. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of respondent's Solicitation Response.**

3.4.3 Questions

HHSC will allow written questions and requests for clarification of this solicitation. Questions must be submitted in writing and sent by U.S. First class mail or email to the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** above. Respondents' names will be removed from questions in any responses released. Questions shall be submitted in the following format. Submissions that deviate from this format may not be accepted:

- A. Identifying Solicitation number,
- B. Section Number,
- C. Paragraph Number,
- D. Page Number,
- E. Text of passage being questioned, and
- F. Question.

Note: Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 3.4.1 above. Please provide entity name, address, phone number; fax number, e-mail address, and name of contact person when submitting questions.

3.4.4 Clarification request made by Respondent

Respondents must notify the Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specifications, omission or other error in the Solicitation in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions.

3.4.5 Responses

Responses to questions or other written requests for clarification will be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). The System Agency reserves the right to amend answers prior to the deadline of Solicitation Responses. Amended answers will be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). It is Respondent's responsibility to check the [HHS Grants website](#). The System Agency also reserves the right to provide a single consolidated response of similar questions at the System Agencies sole discretion.

3.4.6 Respondent Conference

The System Agency will conduct a pre-submittal respondent conference on Monday, April 22, 2109, at 10:00 AM, Central Time.

Respondents may pre-register for the conference at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8764276850414018563>

Webinar ID: 763-780-091

Respondents may call into the conference by dialing 1.877.226.9790, Access Code: 1907126. The respondent conference is **optional**.

3.5 SOLICITATION RESPONSE COMPOSITION

3.5.1 Generally

All Solicitation Responses must be:

- A. Clearly legible;
- B. Sequentially page-numbered and include the respondent's name at the top of each page;
- C. Organized in the sequence outlined in **Article IX** - Submission Checklist;
- D. In Arial or Times New Roman font, size 12 or larger for normal text, no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- E. Blank forms provided in the Attachments must be used (electronic reproduction of the forms is acceptable; however, all forms must be identical to the original form(s) provided); do not change the font used on forms provided;
- F. Correctly identified with the RFA number and submittal deadline;

- G. Responsive to all RFA requirements; and
- H. Signed by an authorized official in each place a signature is needed (copies must be signed but need not bear an original signature).

3.5.2 Submission in Separate Parts

- A. Narrative Proposal;
- B. Required Respondent Information;
- C. Expenditure Proposal; and
- D. Applicable Exhibits and Required Forms.

Paper documents (i.e. the original and all hard copies) must be separated by parts. Electronic submissions must be separated by electronic medium used for submission (i.e. flash drive).

The entire Solicitation Response – all separated paper documents and electronic copies – must then be submitted in one package to HHSC at the address listed in **Section 3.6.3**. The number of copies and directions for submitting an "Original" and "Copies" are outlined in **Article IX**.

3.5.3 Page Limit and Supporting Documentation

The Narrative Proposal should not exceed fifty (50) pages in length, not including appendices or attachments, and should be formatted as follows: 8 ½” x 11” paper; in Arial or Times New Roman font, size 12 or larger for normal text, no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices; and single-sided.

3.6 SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

3.6.1 Deadline

Solicitation Responses must be received at the address in **Section 3.6.3** time-stamped by the System Agency no later than the date and time specified in **Section 3.1**.

3.6.2 Labeling

Solicitation Responses shall be placed in a sealed box and clearly labeled as follows:

<u>SOLICITATION NO.:</u>	HHS0002756
<u>SOLICITATION NAME:</u>	SNAP Outreach RFA
<u>SOLICITATION RESPONSE DEADLINE:</u>	May 2, 2019 by 2:00 PM CT
<u>PURCHASER:</u>	Valerie Griffin
<u>RESPONDENT’S NAME:</u>	_____

HHSC will not be held responsible for any Solicitation Response that is mishandled prior to receipt by HHSC. It is the responsibility of the respondents to mark appropriately and deliver the Solicitation Response to HHSC by the specified date and time.

3.6.3 Delivery

Respondents must deliver Solicitation Responses by one of the methods below to the address noted. Solicitation Responses submitted by any other method (e.g. facsimile, telephone, email) will NOT be considered.

To be delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or hand delivery to:

HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)
Bid Room
Attn: Valerie Griffin, CTCD, CTCM
1100 W. 49th Street, MC 2020
Service Building (Building S)
Austin, Texas 78756

Note: All Solicitation Responses become the property of HHSC after submission and will not be returned to Respondents.

3.6.4 Alterations, Modifications, and Withdrawals

Prior to the solicitation submission deadline, a Respondent may:

- A. withdraw its Solicitation Response by submitting a written request to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**; or
- B. modify its Solicitation Response by submitting a written amendment to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**. HHSC may request Solicitation Response Modifications at any time.

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ARTICLE IV. SOLICITATION RESPONSE EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

4.1 GENERALLY

A three-step selection process will be used:

- A. Eligibility screening;
- B. Evaluation based upon specific selection criteria; and
- C. Final Selection based upon State priorities.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

Solicitation Responses will be reviewed for minimum qualifications and completeness. All complete solicitation responses meeting the minimum qualifications will move to the Evaluation stage.

4.2.1 Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must meet the minimum qualifications listed below. Furthermore, Solicitation Responses that appear unrealistic in terms of technical commitment, that show a lack of technical competence, or that indicate a failure to comprehend the risk and complexity of a potential Contract may be rejected, at the sole discretion of HHSC.

- A. Organizations must reside and provide services within the State of Texas;
- B. Organizations must have a mission/purpose aligning with that of the Community Partner Program;
- C. Organizations must not be included in the following lists:
 - 1. [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts \(CPA\) Debarment List](#);
 - 2. [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts \(CPA\) Franchise Tax Check](#);
 - 3. [Iran, Sudan, & Foreign Terrorist Organizational Check and Boycott Israel](#), prior to award, the purchaser must check the divestment lists in accordance with the Texas Government Code.;
 - 4. The General Services Administration's (GSA), [System of Award Management \(SAM\)](#) for parties excluded from receiving federal contracts, certain subcontracts and from certain types of federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits;
 - 5. The Office of the Inspector General, (OIG), [List of Excluded Individuals/Entities](#);
 - 6. [Adverse Action Record Sharing \(AARS\) Database](#) and
 - 7. HHSC Litigation List (must be absent from list for 5 years)
- D. Organizations must demonstrate their public service work in their community. This can be accomplished by:
 - 1. Inclusion in 2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network (www.211Texas.org)

OR

2. Providing 2-3 professional references from local organizations that are familiar with the candidate's service to the community.
- OR**
3. Be an acceptable entity. The following types of organizations have been predetermined as "acceptable entities" by CPP Program staff and are not subject to this requirement:
 - i. Head Start or Early Head Start programs listed on the [National Head Start Website](#);
 - ii. Texas Independent School Districts listed on the [Texas Education Agency Website](#);
 - iii. Texas Public Libraries listed on the [Texas Public Libraries Website](#);
 - iv. City or County Governments listed on the www.texas.gov website;
 - v. Texas state agencies listed on the [Texas State Library and Archives Commission website](#); and
 - vi. [Native American tribes listed on the National Congress of American Indians website](#).

4.3 EVALUATION

Solicitation Responses will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the factors required by **Exhibit G - SNAP Application Assistance Services Contract Requirements**, and other factors deemed relevant by HHSC.

4.3.1 Specific Selection Criteria

Grant applications shall be evaluated based upon:

- A. The respondent proposal provides a quality approach to delivering SNAP Application Assistance Services- 30%
- B. The respondent proposal provides a quality approach to delivering Targeted Messaging (SNAP Information Dissemination) - 5%.
- C. The respondent proposal provides a quality approach in the development and implementation of a comprehensive referral management system to support individuals seeking application assistance. - 15%
- D. Response demonstrates the respondent's ability to meet all expenditure requirements as outlined in RFA 15%
The respondent proposal provides a quality approach in the development and implementation a service delivery innovation and or special projects to increase access to isolated communities. - 15%; and
- E. Response demonstrates the respondent's ability to meet

4.4 FINAL SELECTION

HHSC intends on making multiple awards. After initial screening for eligibility, response completeness, and initial scoring of the elements listed above in **Section 4.3.1 and Exhibit**

K, Evaluation Tool, a selection committee will look at all eligible responses to determine which should be awarded in order to most effectively accomplish state priorities. The selection committee will recommend grant awards to be made to the HHSC Executive Commissioner, who will make the final award approval.

HHSC will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, geographic distribution across the state, state priorities, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

4.5 NEGOTIATION AND AWARD

The specific dollar amount awarded to each successful respondent will depend upon the merit and scope of the Solicitation Response, the recommendation of the Selection Committee, and the decision of the Executive Commissioner. Not all Respondents who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving an award.

The negotiation phase will involve direct contact between the successful respondent(s) and HHSC representatives in person. During negotiations, the successful respondent(s) may expect:

- A. An in-depth discussion of the submitted response and budget; and
- B. Requests from HHSC for clarification or additional detail regarding submitted Solicitation Response.

The final funding amount(s) and the provisions of the award(s) will be determined at the sole discretion of HHSC staff.

HHSC may announce tentative or apparent grant recipients once the Executive Commissioner has given approval to initiate negotiation and execute awards.

Any exceptions to the requirements, terms, conditions, or certifications in the RFA or attachments, addendums, or revisions to the RFA or General Provisions, sought by the Respondent must be specifically detailed in writing by the Respondent on Exhibit D - Exception Form in this proposal and submitted to HHSC for consideration. HHSC will accept or reject each proposed exception. HHSC will not consider exceptions submitted separately from the Solicitation Response or at a later date.

HHSC will post to the [HHS Grants website](#) and may publicly announce a list of Applicants whose Applications are selected for final award. This posting does not constitute HHSC's agreement with all the terms of any Applicant's proposal and does not bind HHSC to enter into a contract with any Applicant whose award is posted.

4.6 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION BY THE SYSTEM AGENCY

HHSC reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification from any respondent at any time during the procurement process.

ARTICLE V. NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1.1 Executive Summary

Provide a high-level overview of the respondent's approach to meeting the RFA's requirements. The summary must demonstrate an understanding of the goals and objectives of the grant.

5.1.2 Plan of Operation

Respondents will describe the proposed services, processes, and methodologies for meeting all components described in **Article II**, including the approach to meeting the timeline and associated milestones. Respondents should identify all tasks to be performed, including all grant activities, to take place during the grant funding period. Respondents will also include all documents requested including **Article II and Exhibit G, Section 8-15 and 18, Operations Plan**, requirements HHSC's expectations are for respondents to provide clear and concise proposals.

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ARTICLE VI. REQUIRED RESPONDENT INFORMATION

6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY INFORMATION

Respondents must provide satisfactory evidence of the ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation. As a part of the Solicitation Response requested in **Article III**, respondents must provide the information outlined in paragraphs 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 below.

6.2 LITIGATION AND CONTRACT HISTORY

Respondents must include in the Solicitation Responses a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual failures.

In addition, respondents must disclose any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending over the last five (5) years that involves respondent or in which respondent has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify respondent.

Solicitation Response may be rejected based upon respondent's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual obligations.

6.3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Respondents must certify that it does not have any personal or business interests that present a conflict of interest with respect to the RFA and any resulting award. Additionally, if applicable, respondents must disclose all potential conflicts of interest. Respondents must describe the measures it will take to ensure that there will be no actual conflict of interest and that its fairness, independence and objectivity will be maintained. HHSC will determine to what extent, if any, a potential conflict of interest can be mitigated and managed during the term of the award. Failure to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest may result in disqualification of a Solicitation Response or termination of an award.

Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations and individuals who may be assigned to this award, if any.

Additionally, pursuant to [Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code](#), a successful respondent granted an award greater than \$1 million dollars, or that requires an action or vote of the governing body, must submit a disclosure of interested parties to HHSC at the time the business entity submits the signed contract. Rules and filing instructions may be found on the [Texas Ethics Commissions](#) public website and additional instructions will be given by HHSC to successful respondents.

6.4 GRANT APPLICATION DISCLOSURE

In an effort to maximize state resources and reduce duplication of effort, HHSC, at its discretion, may require the Respondent to disclose information regarding the application for or award of state, federal, and/or local grant funding by the Respondent or Community Collaborative member organization within the past two years to provide application assistance.

6.5 AFFIRMATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Respondents must complete and return all of the following listed exhibits.

- A. Exhibit A - Respondent Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance;
- B. Exhibit C - HHS Security and Privacy Initial Inquiry Form;
- C. Exhibit D - Exceptions (if applicable);
- D. Exhibit E - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and Certification Regarding Lobbying;
- E. Exhibit H - Contract Monitoring Questionnaire and any applicable attachments as requested in the form; and
- F. Exhibit L - Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)

6.6 HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES (HUB)

If a successful respondent chooses to contract for goods and services using the funding awarded in this grant, HHSC encourages the respondent to use HUBs to provide those goods and services where possible.

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ARTICLE VII. EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

7.1 EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

Attached **Exhibit J - Expenditure Proposal template** of this RFA includes the template for submitting the Expenditure Proposal. Respondents may complete the expenditure proposal template provided or submit their own expenditure template and place it in a separate, sealed package, clearly marked with the respondent's name, the RFA number, and the RFA submission date. Instructions are outlined in the Expenditure Proposal Instructions.

Respondents must base their Expenditure Proposal on the Scope of Work described in **Article II**. This section should include any business, economic, legal, programmatic, or practical assumptions that underlie the Expenditure Proposal. HHSC reserves the right to accept or reject any assumptions. All assumptions not expressly identified and incorporated into the award resulting from this RFA are deemed rejected by HHSC.

Respondents shall submit the initial Expenditure Proposal as a part of the sealed package for the full term of the agreement, beginning October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2022 for the initial term, with the options to extend for one (1) year for up to two (2) additional years, ending on September 30, 2024.

Upon award execution, the successful respondent(s) shall submit the first expenditure report within thirty (30) business days or by the date specified by HHSC; and annually, thereafter, no less than sixty (60) business days prior to the end of each state fiscal year.

Respondents must demonstrate that project costs outlined in the Expenditure Proposal are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable state and federal grant requirements.

Respondents may utilize the HHSC Expenditure Proposal template provided or their own expenditure template and identify costs to be requested from HHSC and costs to be matched (if applicable). Costs must be broken out to a degree that is sufficient to determine if costs are reasonable, allowable, and necessary for the successful performance of the project, as indicated under Allowable Activities, in the [USDA SNAP State Outreach Plan Guide, Section B](#). The requested budget should include supporting documentation and a justification that describes the following:

- A. Personnel – The actual cost of employee salaries devoted to working on activities directly related to the HHSC funded program. These costs are allowable to the extent that they are identified in the approved budget and conform to [2 CFR Part 200](#) Specify by title or name the positions that will support the Application Assistance Services and indicate how many positions you intend to have with the same title or name, and the percentage of time each position will allocate to each service. Also provide the individual annual salaries, and the cost to the

organization's staff by staff position. Do not include the costs of consultants. The costs of consultants must be included in a separate category, under "Other".

- B. Fringe Benefit – Specify the costs of fringe benefits, including the amount budgeted for Federal Income Contributions Act (FICA), State Unemployment Tax Account (SUTA), health insurance, worker's compensation, retirement, leave, etc. The fringe benefit rate should be based on your organization's actual expenditures. The fringe benefit rate is typically calculated by dividing your organization's total fringe benefit costs by total wage/salary costs. Provide specific calculations that show how these costs were derived.
- C. Travel – The cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses incurred by employees of the organization while performing duties relevant to the services provided. Out-of-State travel is travel outside of the local area to attend conferences and training. Out-of-State travel must have HHSC's prior approval at least 30 days in advance. Other/Local Travel costs are incurred in direct support of SNAP Application Assistance Services and includes items such as traveling to outlying counties at least once per month, tolls, parking fees, etc. Costs related to conference registration fees should be classified under the "Other" cost category. HHSC will only reimburse travel costs up to the maximum travel rates as identified in HHSC Travel Policy and Rates. State of Texas Travel Policies and Procedures are available at: <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/>.

Specify costs of out-of-town travel that will be incurred on official business of the SNAP Application Assistance. Do not enter costs for consultant's travel or local transportation. This information will be included under "Other".

- D. Materials and Supplies – Supplies are defined as consumable items necessary to carry out the services under this HHSC program including office supplies, patient educational supplies, software, and any items of tangible items other than those defined under equipment. Specify general categories of supplies, for example, office supplies, and training supplies, and their costs.
- E. Equipment – Enter the cost of any equipment purchases. Equipment is defined as an article of non-expendable, tangible property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. NOTE: If the item does not meet the \$5,000 threshold, include it in your budget under "Supplies". Items such as maintenance for copiers or postage meters should be included as part of "other" costs.
- F. Sub Grantee – List each known sub grantee, indicating the names of the organizations or individuals, the purposes of the grants, and the estimated dollar amounts of the awards as part of the budget justification. If the name of the sub grantee, exact scope of work, and estimated total costs are not available or have not been negotiated, enter something such as "Sub Grantee A" as the sub grantee's name, include the best estimate of the cost of the work, as well as the best available

description of the nature of the work to be purchased. Any third-party sub grantee that is equal to or exceeds \$100,000 over the life of the grant must obtain prior written approval from HHSC before entering into the agreement.

- G. Other – Specify all other costs. Examples of these costs include: non-contractual fees and travel paid directly to individual consultants; local transportation, which means all travel which does not require per diem; space rentals; utility and telephone expenses; printing and publication costs; training costs, including tuition and stipends; training service costs, including wage payments to individuals and supportive service payments; and staff development costs.
- H. Indirect Costs – Enter the total amount of indirect costs, if any. If no indirect costs are requested, enter "none." The Respondent may request indirect costs if it has a current indirect cost rate agreement and a central service cost allocation plan approved by the Health and Human Services agency or at a rate less than 10% of the direct charges.
- I. Match Costs - All potential match, including both cash and in-kind, should be recorded. To be accepted, matching funds must meet the following:
1. Are documented and verifiable in your records;
 2. Are not included as match contributions for any other Federal or state award (i.e. if you have already used funds to match another federal grant or state contract, they cannot also be applied towards heritage area activities);
 3. Are necessary and reasonable (i.e. do not exceed what a prudent person would do under the circumstances at the time of the decision was made to incur the cost) for accomplishment of a heritage area project or program objective;
 4. Are allowable according to Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart E— Cost Principles (§200.420 - .475);
 5. Are not paid by the Federal or State Government under another Federal or State award, except where Federal or State statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal or State funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal or State programs;
 6. Are provided for in your approved budget;
 7. Be consistent with policies and procedures that apply to both federally-financed and other activities of the organization; and
 8. Be incurred during the performance period of the award.

At the end of the fiscal year, potential match report in the budget, but not actually provided as part of the contract, may not count toward the match requirement of the contract.

Costs will be reviewed for compliance with UGMS and federal grant guidance found in 2 CFR Part 200, as modified by UGMS, with effective date given to whichever provision imposes the more stringent requirement in the event of a conflict.

Costs included in the Expenditure Proposal will be entered into budget tables and supported by narrative descriptions describing the need for the requested cost and a calculation demonstrating how the cost was arrived at.

Matching funds must also be identified in the Expenditure Proposal, including both anticipated matching funds and funds being certified in the proposal. Matching funds may be provided through local philanthropic, private, or city or county funds, pooled or braided funds from Collaborative partner organizations, donated resources, or in-kind contributions committed specifically for the proposed project. State or federal funds may not be used as match.

The value of donated materials, professional services, and volunteer time is to be calculated in accordance with Section .24, Subpart C, of UGMS.

Financial Solvency should be confirmed via a single audit and the annual profit and loss statements from the respondent.

7.2 FINANCIAL CAPACITY

A Respondent must supply evidence sufficient to demonstrate reasonable financial stability and solvency appropriate to the requirements of this solicitation. Respondents must submit a current financial statement plus two (2) years of audited financial reports including all supplements, management discussion and analysis, and actuarial opinions. At a minimum, such financial statements and reports shall include: a balance sheet; a statement of income and expense; a statement of changes in financial position; and cash flows. If the Respondent is a corporation that is required to report to the Securities and Exchange Commission, it must submit its two most recent SEC Forms 10-K and Annual Reports. If any change in ownership is anticipated during the twelve (12) months following the proposal due date, the Respondent must describe the circumstances of such change and indicate when the change is likely to occur.

ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

8.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

8.1.1 Costs Incurred

Respondents understand that issuance of this solicitation in no way constitutes a commitment by HHSC to grant an award or to pay any costs incurred by a respondent in the preparation of a response to this solicitation. HHSC is not liable for any costs incurred by a respondent prior to issuance of or entering into a formal agreement, contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing Solicitation Responses, preparing for or participating in oral presentations and site visits, or any other similar expenses incurred by a respondent are entirely the responsibility of the respondent, and will not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Texas

8.1.2 Grantee Responsibility

HHSC will look solely to the respondent(s) for the performance of all contractual obligations that may result from an award based on this solicitation. Successful respondent(s) shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its sub grantee.

8.1.3 Public Information Act

Solicitation Responses are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Subject to the PIA, certain information may be protected from public release. Respondents who wish to protect portions of the Solicitation Response from public disclosure should familiarize themselves with this law. Information pertaining to the solicitation will be withheld or released only in accordance with the PIA.

8.1.4 News Releases

Prior to final award a respondent may not issue a press release or provide any information for public consumption regarding its participation in the procurement. Requests should be directed to the HHSC Point of Contact Identified in **Section 3.4.1**.

8.1.5 Additional Information

By submitting a proposal, the respondent grants HHSC the right to obtain information from any lawful source regarding the respondent's and its directors', officers', and employees':

- (1) past business history, practices, and conduct;
- (2) ability to supply the goods and services; and
- (3) ability to comply with grant requirements.

By submitting a proposal, a respondent generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing HHSC information about the respondent. HHSC may take such information into consideration in evaluating proposals.

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ARTICLE IX. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for respondent's convenience only and identifies documents that must be submitted with the Solicitation Response in order to be considered responsive. Any Solicitation Response received without these requisite documents may be deemed nonresponsive and may not be considered for award.

Original Solicitation Response Package

The Solicitation Package must include the "Original" Solicitation Response in **hard-copy** consisting of the four parts described in detail below, each under separate cover but packaged together and clearly labeled "Original" on each.

- 1. Narrative Proposal (Section 5.1)**
 - a. Executive Summary (Section 5.1.1) _____
 - b. Operation Plan (Section 5.1.2) _____

- 2. Required Respondent Information**
 - a. Litigation and Contract History (Section 6.2) _____
 - b. Conflicts of Interest (Section 6.3) _____
 - c. Grant Application Disclosure (Section 6.4) _____

- 3. Expenditure Proposal (Article VII)**
 - a. Exhibit J - Expenditure Proposal Template (Section 7.1) _____

- 4. Financial Capacity (Article VII)** (Section 7.2) _____

- 5. Applicable Exhibits (Section 6.5)**
 - a. Exhibit A - Respondent Affirmations and Acceptance _____
 - b. Exhibit C - HHS Security and Privacy Initial Inquiry Form _____
 - c. Exhibit D - Exceptions Form (if applicable) _____
 - d. Exhibit E - Federally Required Affirmations and Certification Regarding Lobbying _____
 - e. Exhibit H - Contract Monitoring Questionnaire (CMQ) and any applicable attachments as requested in the form _____
 - f. Exhibit L - Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) _____
 - g. Addenda (if applicable) _____

Copies of Solicitation Response Package

Respondents will provide the following number of **electronic** copies (all clearly labeled as "copy") in addition to the hard-copy, "Original" Solicitation Response. Electronic copies must be submitted on a USB Drive and separated by folders.

- 1 Electronic copy of **Narrative Proposal**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Required Respondent Information**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Expenditure Proposal**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Applicable Exhibits**

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ARTICLE X EXHIBITS

Applicable Exhibits	
Exhibit A: Respondent Affirmations and Acceptance, Version 1.3	 Exhibit A Affirmations and So
Exhibit B: HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant, Version 2.16	 Exhibit B HHS Uniform Terms and C
Exhibit C: HHS Data Use Agreement, Version 8.4 HHS Security and Privacy Initial Inquiry Form	 Exhibit C - Data-Use Agreemen  Exhibit C - HHS-SPI-w2-1.pdf
Exhibit D: Exceptions Form	 Exhibit D Exceptions.doc
Exhibit E: Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and Certification Regarding Lobbying	 Exhibit E Assurances - Non Cc
Exhibit F: Deliverables	 Exhibit F Deliverables.doc
Exhibit G: SNAP Application Assistance Services Contract Requirements	 Exhibit G SNAP Application Assistan
Exhibit H: Contract Monitoring Questionnaire (CMQ)	 EXHIBIT H Contract Monitoring Questio
Exhibit I: Key Performance Requirements	 EXHIBIT I Key Performance Requir
Exhibit K: Evaluation Tool	 Exhibit K Evaluation Tool.pdf

Exhibit L: FFATA	 Exhibit L FFATA.docx
Budget Expenditure Proposal Forms	
Exhibit J: Expenditure Proposal Template	 EXHIBIT J Expenditure Propos: