

# Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI)

## Questions and Answers

### September 2019

1. What level of compliance and reporting is required of the Service Provider(s) and/or Property Management company for ESSHI funded units?

ANSWER. A uniform reporting requirement for ESSHI projects has not yet been established. The assigned State Contracting Agency (SCA) may have specific reporting requirements. There are no reporting requirements specific to property managers, as they are not eligible applicants under ESSHI.

2. If we combine ESSHI populations within one development and therefore utilize multiple service providers, how should the roles and responsibilities take shape as it relates to reporting and administration of the funding? Should this be documented in MOUs and if so, is there a preferred template?

ANSWER. ESSHI does not dictate roles and responsibilities of partnerships. The provider holding the ESSHI contract is responsible for compliance, performance and administration of the funds under the contract. The responsibilities between the partner organizations should be specified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or subcontract. ESSHI has not produced a template agreement for partnerships.

3. Will there be a webinar about the RFP, and/or will the Bidder's Conferences be taped for further viewing?

ANSWER. Please be advised that the scheduled Bidders' Conferences (9/3/19 and 9/5/19) were in-person events. Personal attendance, while not mandatory, is the bidders' only opportunity to learn more about and hear the information to be shared regarding the ESSHI Request for Proposals (RFP) released on 8/16/19.

4. There is a new clause this round in section 1.4, regarding Living Situation at Time of Referral. This states that at the time of referral a person has to be in one of those very limited locations. One of the populations we plan to target is domestic violence survivors. Often, this population doesn't go to shelter but stays with family/friends or is attempting to flee. According to the definition of Homeless in the Glossary of this RFP, that person would be considered eligible. But they wouldn't be eligible based on the new clause in section 1.4. Are there no exceptions to the Living Situations at Time of Referral?

ANSWER. Survivors of domestic violence (DV) is an eligible population. The homeless definition specifically mentions DV. The "living situations at time of referral" list includes sheltered and unsheltered homeless. There are two additional new definitions included in the glossary for those terms that further contemplate DV (residing in housing that is not secure).

Nothing in the RFP should be interpreted to limit or exclude survivors of domestic violence, including individuals fleeing violence that are not being referred from a shelter.

5. Can ESSHI be used to house participants in 2-3 multi-family residences/apartment/boarding in one contract? Would this property have to be purchased or can it be leased? How long of a lease?

ANSWER. This ESSHI RFP is intended to provide services and operating funding, which when combined with separate capital funding, form a housing development project. Leasing of “multi-family residences/apartment/boarding” may be considered scattered-site housing which is not eligible for ESSHI. The acquisition and development of multiple 2-3 multi-family residences for ESSHI units would be considered an eligible (multi-site) housing project. Long-term lease of an entire apartment building would also be eligible. Minimally, such a lease would need to be commensurate with the term of the ESSHI contract.

6. Section 1.4- Living Situations at time of Referral: is a frail elderly person qualified if they are in a nursing home or rehab, ready to be discharged, but can no longer safely return to their prior living situation?

ANSWER. Individuals being referred from a hospital or nursing home must have been homeless when admitted to the hospital or nursing home to be ESSHI-eligible.

7. Will the bidder's conferences be available electronically/remotely or only in person?

ANSWER. Please be advised that the scheduled Bidders' Conferences (9/3/19 and 9/5/19) were in-person events. Personal attendance, while not mandatory, is the bidders' only opportunity to learn more about and hear the information to be shared regarding the ESSHI Request for Proposals (RFP) released on 8/16/19.

8. If an agency has two projects in the same county, may they submit one ESSHI application for the entire county, or does each project require its own application?

ANSWER. A separate application must be submitted for each distinct housing project, regardless of location or common applicant. While multi-site development projects are eligible, they must be developed as a singular capital financing project to be considered a distinct housing project.

9. If the proposed ESSHI project entails the purchase of an existing property, do you know whether HHAP will contract with a private landlord for minor to moderate rehab or only with a Housing Development Corp.

Same question applies to a construction proposal. I suppose the question is...who is an eligible applicant for an HHAP application?

ANSWER. This question applies to the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP). Please refer to the Questions and Answers and concept paper process outlined on the HHAP RFP webpage: <https://otda.ny.gov/contracts/2019/HHAP/> .

10. The eligible target population section of the RFP pages 11-12 list youth/young adults who are homeless and who left foster care within the prior 5 years and who were in foster care at or over age 16. Given the fair housing rules, is it allowable to give preference based on age?

ANSWER. The target population does not give preference based on age, but prior involvement in the foster care system. Projects that proposing an age restriction may be required to receive an exemption by the NYS Division of Human Rights.

11. Award allocations by population categories on page 13 lists the following eligible populations in category one: chronic homelessness, SMI [Serious Mental Illness] and SUD [Substance Use Disorder]

- Given that a minimum of 50% of the funding goes to this category, please confirm that the 25% in the other two categories could be less than 25%, i.e. 20% for example
- If a project has at least half of the units from category one eligible populations, will this project be fully included in the category one calculation?

ANSWER. Each project will be assigned to one of the categories based on the population representing the highest number of units in the proposed project. It is possible that category two and/or three will achieve less than 25% of the awards if there are not sufficient number of passing scores for category two or three projects, once the minimum 50% for category one is achieved.

12. If the Continuum of Care will only provide letters of support for projects that only serve a chronic homeless population despite their and other community documented need for other populations such as SMI, SUD, etc., is the project ineligible for funding? What do you suggest?

ANSWER. The role of the Continuum of Care (CoC) is to document the community need. The purpose of the support letter is to confirm the need for the project. Attempts should be made to acquire a letter from the CoC that explains its position relative to the proposed project. In the alternative, provide documentation of the need (data, etc.) as required in the RFP, and submit a letter(s) from an appropriate local agency in support of the project.

13. The glossary (pg. 33) lists MRT [Medicaid Redesign Team] eligible with a series of “or” items. To clarify, for example, will an individual who is enrolled in Medicaid and is enrolled or is enrolling in a Health Home count as MRT eligible?

ANSWER. Yes

14. On page 12, living situations at time of referral includes “Sheltered homeless”. The glossary (pg. 34) includes individuals who are residing in an “emergency shelter, transitional or other housing that is not permanent or secure, or who would otherwise be homeless”. Does this definition include individuals who are leaving residential treatment who need assistance identifying housing and would otherwise go to homeless shelters?

ANSWER. Yes

15. Question 3j asks “State specifically how the proposal will help accomplish one or more of the elements of Executive Order 190 (see Section 1.11 of the RFP), but there are Section 1.1 and 1.2, and not a Section 1.11. Please provide the language.

ANSWER. Section 1.11 of the RFP, which is between Section 1.10 and 1.12, located on page 16 of the RFP reads:

On November 14, 2018, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 190 (EO 190), entitled “Incorporating Health Across All Policies into State Agency Activities,” which requires that this RFP take into consideration the New York State Prevention Agenda priorities and the World Health Organization’s Eight Domains of Livability to help meet the needs of New York residents by promoting their health, safety, and well-being. For additional details, see <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-190-incorporating-health-across-all-policies-state-agency-activities>. Consistent with EO 190, applicants must state specifically in their responses to this RFP how the proposal will help address one or more of the following:

- Prevent chronic disease;
- Promote a healthy and safe environment;
- Promote healthy women, infants and children;
- Promote well-being and prevent mental health and substance use disorders;
- Prevent communicable diseases.
- Help residents continue to live in their communities in a manner consistent with their abilities and values;
- Approaches that build toward a future in which every New Yorker can enjoy wellness, longevity, and a quality of life in strong, healthy communities;
- Increase consumer access to health care and supportive services.

Please note that the EO 190 requirement will be incorporated into the application questions. Responses will be evaluated and scored as part of the review of all proposals.”

16. Question 5 asks how the amount of ESSHI funding requested per qualifying individual was determined. Section 1.1 states that up to \$25,000 will be available for service an operating funding per qualifying individual. The scoring criteria (pg. 25) awards 25 points for cost effectiveness/budget. Will applicants lose points if they can adequately justify the full 25,000/unit?

ANSWER. Scores will be based upon/dependent on how well the cost per unit is detailed and justified, irrespective of the requested amount.

17. On page 26, cost effectiveness/budget scoring includes whether or not the applicant has additional funds to leverage the state funds being made available through this RFP. Please provide detail on what counts as additional funds, including relevant “in-kind” services.

ANSWER. Any other funding source, including tenant contributions, that may be applied to project expenses may be considered leveraged funds.

18. Is it more advantageous (or a requirement) to have a specific property in mind when applying?

ANSWER. The point value assigned to project readiness was increased from 10 points in 2018 to 15 points in 2019. While identifying a site is not a requirement for funding, included in the questions for readiness are whether a site has been identified and the degree of site control.

19. Do projects (persons served) that are on different properties require separate applications?

ANSWER. Rental units across various apartments or properties, known as scattered-site projects, are not eligible. A multi-site project, such as the acquisition and rehabilitation of multiple properties in a single, distinct housing development project (funded as a single capital financing project), is an eligible project that would only require one ESSHI application.

20. In Section 1.13, the RFP indicates that a Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement (Form #4) will be required to submit to the SCA. Where can we locate Form #4? Where should it be submitted? OR – should it be uploaded into the Grantee Document folder in the Grants Gateway?

ANSWER. Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) forms are not required to be submitted at the time of application. The forms will be provided by the SCA during the contract development stage.

21. Re: Section 1.14. I am not familiar with the procedure regarding “set asides”. Is that process such that if/when we are awarded a contract, that prior to any expenditures utilizing discretionary budgetary items (such as commodities), that we must review the SDVOB website to determine if there are any suitable SDVOB businesses that might meet our needs and if so, pursue further information to determine tier suitability/pricing, etc.? And regardless, there are not set aside percentages of required purchases such as under MWBE regulations?

ANSWER. Once awarded a contract, contractors must demonstrate good-faith efforts in achieving the six-percent participation goal for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB), including the use of the SDVOB registry.

22. If not enough projects are submitted for Category One (chronic homelessness, SMI, SUD), will funds be shifted to Category Two or Three?

ANSWER. A minimum of 50% of the proposals with passing scores which will be awarded a conditional award must be assigned to Category One. Section 2.8 of the RFP indicates that the Interagency Workgroup reserves the right to “make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the goals identified in this RFP, including waiving the allocation minimum or maximums established in Section 1.5.”

23. Will applications without an identified building be considered?

ANSWER. Yes

24. Does ESSHI allow for pre-payment of part (what percentage? Or are only specific expenses allowed pre-payment?) or all of the budgeted expenses that will be vouchered? One example is rent subsidies. Cash flow is an issue that we closely monitor and control.

ANSWER. SCAs differ in the payment approach. Generally, quarterly funding is either advanced or claimed on a quarterly reimbursement basis.

25. If not all of the expenses can be pre-paid by ESSHI, is the expected interest cost from using our lines of credit to carry these expenses till we receive payment, an eligible expense under this program?

ANSWER. Interest cost is would be an eligible expense. However, short-term borrowing should not be necessary to maintain cash flow for an ESSHI project. Any such expense would need to be within the annual ESSHI award.

26. In Section 1.2, there is a discussion of start up costs 3 months prior to move in. Will a 25% start up budget be available?

ANSWER. The RFP indicates that “the five-year contract start date may begin up to three (3) months before the move in date” to cover “start-up” costs. The approach may differ dependent on the SCA. No additional funding above the ESSHI award will be available.

27. Section 1 – For projects funded through OMH, is a separate predevelopment grant necessary to support startup expenses? And are applicants eligible for startup component even if they are not eligible for the construction grant?

ANSWER. Predevelopment is a separate, revolving source of funding through OMH to fund up-front development costs to assist with submitting a competitive application to a permanent capital financing source such as Homes and Community Renewal or HHAP. Program Development Grant (PDG) is a separate grant through OMH to provide funding for start-up costs for ESSHI units serving individuals with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI). Conditional awardees proposing to serve an SMI population are eligible to apply for predevelopment funds. Awardees that advance to a committed funding award (by securing capital financing within 12 months) are eligible for PDG only for the ESSHI units serving an SMI population. Please review the distinction between these programs on page 8 of the RFP.

28. Section 1.6 eligible costs – “Please note, applicants planning to seek capital funding from HCR should request rental subsidies under this RFP in an amount necessary to support underwritten rents of at least 50% AMI (noting that tenants will have significantly lower incomes.” Can you please provide an example of how this will impact the budget – should we use HUD fair market rents?

ANSWER. The RFP states that “The housing developed must be affordable to the homeless population it intends to serve. For most projects, this means that applicants should plan to provide rental subsidies in an amount that ensures full rental payment that does not exceed HUD [U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development] Fair Market Rents [FMR] for the area. In calculating rental subsidies, it is expected that 30% of a tenant household’s adjusted

income (exclusive of rental subsidy payment) will be used.” Projects applying for NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) should set the rents such that an individual or family (dependent on the unit size) earning at least 50% of the AMI would be able to afford the rent (based on 30% of income). ESSHI rent subsidies should cover the difference between those rent levels and the anticipated level of rent from a homeless individual or family (e.g. receiving Public Assistance, SSI, or employment income but earning 30% of AMI).

29. Can you please make materials from and/or a recording of the Bidders’ Conference available?

ANSWER. Please be advised that the scheduled Bidders’ Conferences (9/3/19 and 9/5/19) were in-person events. Personal attendance, while not mandatory, is the bidders’ only opportunity to learn more about and hear the information to be shared regarding the ESSHI Request for Proposals (RFP) released on 8/16/19.

30. We are currently working on a prospective family project in the City of Rochester with a total of 164 units. Of those 164 units, we are setting aside 20 units for Survivors of Domestic Violence and another 20 for people with Mental Health Illness (special needs population). We have partnered with two local organizations, both non-profit organizations, to be the service providers for these special needs units. We will only act as housing developer, not as service provider as we do not have set aside units in this prospective project for individuals with Intellectual or developmental disabilities, who is the population we serve. Based on the ESSHI RFP’s Instructions, it states that:

“It is important to note that although a partnership with a housing developer may exist, the official applicant of this RFP must be the NFP organization that will manage the service and operating contract funds, not the housing development partner. Eligible applicants partnering with a housing developer should identify the capital project team (if known). The ESSHI contract will be between the NFP awardee and SCA responsible for providing oversight of the permanent supportive housing services to the population(s) to be served.

Our question is- does the ESSHI application need to be submitted by us or by the service provider for the set-aside units? We wanted to confirm to make sure we do it correctly.

ANSWER. The service provider should be the applicant and must be the contractor. If there are two, a lead entity could be identified, demonstrating a partnership with the other service provider in the application. However, should the developer be a not-for-profit, assuming both not-for-profits meet the eligibility requirements described in the RFP, either may apply. Applicants must identify the partner not-for-profit and the relationship in the application.

31. Are there any required or recommended attachments in addition to the CoC letter, MRT Questionnaire, and Sexual Harassment Certification (that are pre-loaded in the Pre-Submission uploads folder in the application)?

ANSWER. In addition to the Pre-Submission Uploads, there are questions in the Program Specific Questions that reference attaching documents as well.

32. Are we required to submit any additional uploads and/or performance measures as part of the Work Plan? There are spaces here for uploads and performance measures, but it is unclear what should be uploaded to these spaces.

ANSWER. Uploads are optional in the Work Plan section.

33. How many points can be scored for the Work Plan section?

ANSWER. Points are only allocated to the Program Specific Questions.

34. Do applicants need to document MWBE participation with their submission, or will MWBE documentation be required upon award? If it is required with submission, which forms are required and where should they be uploaded?

ANSWER. MWBE forms are not required at the time of application. The assigned SCA will work with the awardee to provide the appropriate contracting forms once an award moves from conditional to committed (upon the securing of capital financing).

35. Will the ESSHI award cover the cost of rent in the event of a vacancy in the program?

ANSWER. ESSHI funding is provided based on a per unit annual funding amount, not on the month to month occupancy of the project. While SCAs may have additional rules and expectations with regard to minimum occupancy rates, the RFP does not contemplate a funding reduction for typical vacancy rates.

36. Will ESSHI funding be sustainable in the long term, beyond the 5-year contract period?

ANSWER. The 5-year period is a contracting preference for the initial term. The ESSHI contract is renewable in five-year increments. The State has made significant capital and ongoing operating commitments to ESSHI and various earlier initiatives to expand and maintain housing for vulnerable individuals. It should be viewed as equally reliable as these previous long-term commitments.

37. Would we be eligible to place 2 qualified individuals in a 2-bedroom apartment if both individuals are youth aging out of foster care?

ANSWER. Yes

38. Is there a preferred percentage of the award that is allocated to the rental subsidy?

ANSWER. No, however supportive services are integral to ESSHI and should be to the appropriate level of need for the target population(s).

39. Will we be able to add additional sources of referrals after receiving the conditional award? The RFP asks if we "anticipate" a certain source of referrals?

ANSWER. Please be inclusive at the application stage as to the referral sources anticipated. The word “anticipate” was used purposefully to avoid the implication of a commitment. If capital funding through New York City (NYC) Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) funding is anticipated for the project, please be sure to review Section 1.1 of the RFP.

40. With respect to the permanent financing question – is it less desirable with respect to scoring to use only State financing and not include HPD financing?

ANSWER. No

41. Can the units for single adults be rooms (SROs) or do they need to be actual apartments?

ANSWER. An SRO is traditionally a congregate model (shared bathrooms, kitchens, etc.), which is not a permanent supportive housing model that ESSHI intends to expand. If an applicant can demonstrate why an SRO model is a better approach for the target population, the ESSHI workgroup may consider the application. It is incumbent on the applicant to provide compelling reasons supported with research. A typical new mixed-use development would have some combination of efficiencies, one-bedroom and/or two-bedroom units, dependent upon the population(s) served. Note that some SCA's do not allow two unrelated individuals to live in the same unit.

42. Is there a limit to how many units can be requested in 1 project?

ANSWER. No

43. Is this a fully funded contract based program? It does not seem like there will be an opportunity to bill.

ANSWER. Yes, assuming that capital funding is secured and the conditional award advances to a committed award, contracts would be developed as the project nears completion so that funds could be available up to 3 months prior to the opening of the project. The release of funds differs by SCA, but is generally quarterly advances or reimbursement-based.

44. Can we define the geographic boundaries of the area to be served? For instance, can we propose to serve only Manhattan, the Bronx and Brooklyn?

ANSWER. Yes, so long as it does not conflict with the local referral process (e.g. Coordinated Assessment and Placement System).

45. Section 1.3 suggests circumstances might permit full rents at something other than FMR. Our proposed project is located in Oneida County where FMR is \$608. This is quite low. Are we able to consider setting the rental subsidy portion of the ESSHI grant to 110% FMR – this is the HUD PBV standard.

This would result in allocating \$5,000 per unit from the ESSHI grant to rent subsidy. This would allow 80% (\$20,000/per unit) of the ESSHI grant to be dedicated to Supportive Services.

Are we able to submit a Waiver requesting 110% FMR for full rental payment?

ANSWER. The RFP does not strictly require rents be set at FMR. The amount of funding per unit requested, proportion of the funding allocated to services or rent subsidies, and the rationale and computations leading to the funding request should all be presented in the application. Both the rent subsidy portion and the amount set aside for services must be explained and justified. The proportional amount allocated for services should be both defensible and consistent with the staffing plan and services to be provided. A waiver is not necessary.

46. Can ESSHI funded staff provide services to non ESSHI tenants? For example, can on site ESSHI case management staff offer "light touch" case assistance such as help with benefits/entitlements for non ESSHI residents in the building?

ANSWER. Incidental assistance to non-ESSHI tenants is not prohibited. However, ESSHI funding should not be budgeted for services or staff time specifically allocated to non-ESSHI tenants.

47. Is there a minimum scope of services for the targeted population? If not, is there a recommended model?

ANSWER. There is no model of minimum services that has been prepared. As stated in the RFP, the services should be person-centered and tailored to the needs of the population, which vary by population. A component of the scoring is that the applicant demonstrate familiarity with the needs of the population and propose services and a staffing plan that are appropriate to address those needs.

48. If a non-for-profit agency is working with a developer on the project, does the developer need to complete the form titled Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification?

ANSWER. NYS Finance Law Section 139-L is specific to and a requirement of the bidder. "Every bid hereafter made to the state or any public department or agency thereof, where competitive bidding is required by statute, rule or regulation, for work or services performed or to be performed or goods sold or to be sold, shall contain the following statement subscribed by the bidder and affirmed by such bidder as true under the penalty of perjury..."

49. In section ONE of the RFP, there are a list of questions (a-ac) asking if the project will support different groups of people. The project being considered is requesting funding to support individuals with Intellectual and developmental disabilities but if a person has the diagnosis accepted by OPWDD [Office for People With Developmental Disabilities] and does also qualify under several questions, how should that be outlined in the application? For example, if a person has a diagnosis in the DD realm and is also a senior, how would that be indicated on the application?

ANSWER. It is recognized that individuals may fall under multiple eligible populations (e.g. a veteran with a substance use disorder). However, the RFP requires that applicants specify the population that each unit is *set-aside* for. In the example in the question, the units are reserved

for individuals with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability (I/DD). One or more of those individuals may also be a senior or have a serious mental illness, etc., but those individuals would only qualify for the unit on the basis of an I/DD.

If the applicant is only seeking to serve an I/DD population, then the applicant should clearly state this, and be as broad as possible in identifying the service population. If the applicant is seeking to serve multiple populations, and an individual can be served under different categories, then at the time the person is assessed to move into the unit, the best service package to meet the person's needs should be identified. The applicant will be required to demonstrate how they have met the needs of each tenant and must ensure that services provided are not duplicative of another funding mechanism, such as Medicaid.

50. In preparation, the agency has gone on line and tried to start writing the application, but the button Apply for Opportunities is not yet activated. When will it be ready to use?

ANSWER. Please refer to Section 6 of the RFP for application instructions.

51. If the proposed project would include 60% special needs tenants and 40% low-income tenants, do the low-income tenants get the rental subsidy through ESSHI?

- In order to receive the rental subsidy, do the low-income tenants have to be part of the one of the listed target populations?

ANSWER. No. ESSHI subsidies are intended only to support the homeless populations listed in the RFP. Low-income tenants are expected to qualify for the units on the basis of income, and be charged rents accordingly.

52. If the intent is to serve multiple populations, with 50% of the program being SMI, will MRT units be counted separately or as part of the SMI units? Likewise, for other populations that include individuals that may have severe mental illness, such as adults reentering from incarceration?

ANSWER. MRT is not considered a stand-alone population (refer to list of populations in Section 1.4 of the RFP), but a subset that crosses populations. If the project described in the question exceeds 30 units in total (and thus would contain at least 15 ESSHI units), 25% of those units would be required to house individuals that meet the MRT eligibility definition. See Section 1.4.1 and the definition of MRT Eligible Individuals in the Glossary of the RFP.

53. We are including a workforce training center on our project site for our ESSHI eligible populations. Can any of the funding be used to support that program?

ANSWER. Staffing costs that are integral to the project to provide services to the ESSHI tenants are eligible. Services staff that are merely incidental to the project and tenants are not eligible. The workforce training center services and associated staff costs attributable to the ESSHI grant must clearly state in the justification that they are primarily, if not exclusively for the benefit of the ESSHI tenants.

54. What should be used as the starting date for the workplan? Should this be the anticipated award date, the date that is anticipated to receive capital approval, or the date for ramping up to house ESSHI eligible individuals? Or something else?

ANSWER. As the ESSHI grant is used for services and operating funding, the workplan start date should be the anticipated opening date for the housing project.

55. While we can add the required task name for 3.3, the performance measure isn't coming up. Please assist.

ANSWER. Performance measures are limited to 5 in total for the entire workplan. There should only be one performance measure for each of the tasks provided.

56. Our project will consist of two newly constructed buildings that share a courtyard. They will be at two separate addresses in the Bronx (a block apart). The two buildings will function as one project and will contain 85 units of affordable housing and 85 units of supportive housing. Both types of units will be distributed in both buildings. Can we submit a single application for this project even though it is at two addresses?

ANSWER. Yes, this would be considered a single housing project with multiple addresses/sites.

57. Can funding costs to pay for utilities that are in arrears in order to allow the individual to have them turned on be included?

ANSWER. Yes, costs such as these, that are intended to establish and maintain homeless individuals in housing are eligible.

58. Regarding the Living Situation at Time of Referral, would individuals living in a residential program at the time of referral qualify for admittance into the program? If so, would they need to be homeless before entering the residential program? Would the same apply for Part 820 (stabilization/rehabilitation/reintegration) programs?

ANSWER. Not every "residential program" would be an eligible living situation at time of referral. Individuals living in emergency or transitional housing, including an Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) certified residential program such as those under Part 820, would be in an eligible living situation by meeting the "sheltered homeless" definition. Individuals who are residing in permanent housing would not be eligible. However, individuals residing in a nursing home who meet the homeless definition as "inappropriately housed in an institutional facility and can safely live in the community" and who were "homeless prior to admission to the nursing home" are ESSHI-eligible. Individuals residing in an OPWDD-certified Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) program are not considered homeless under the ESSHI RFP.

59. Are people with a diagnosis of IDD able to be connected to traditional supports to assist them with assimilating to their new home and independent lifestyle? For example, can a person with a diagnosis of IDD, that is eligible for DD services, be able to be connected to Supported

Employment or Community Habilitation services, in addition to the supports provided in this RFP?

ANSWER. Waiver services, such as Supported Employment and Community Habilitation, can be provided to people with I/DD residing in ESSHI Units. However, since these services are billable under OPWDD's Medicaid Waiver, or any other Medicaid funding stream, they cannot be paid for through ESSHI service funding.

60. What determines the rate assigned to each person involved in this RFP? Is this decided by the services and associated costs outlined in the RFP, or does it depend upon the category assigned to the eligible population (outlined on page 13 in Section 1.5)?

ANSWER. Applicants must determine the amount requested per qualifying individual. This should be based on factors including, but not limited to: the rent level needed for the project to be viable, as appropriate to the local rent market; the difference between that rent level and the anticipated income of the individuals to be served; the costs of the services and staffing plan proposed; and other applicable program, administrative and project/building costs.

61. In terms of short-term nursing homes, we are seeing an emergence of a homeless population that is not labeled as homeless ending up with no resources that is increasing. More individuals are becoming homeless from discharge and we are struggling to achieve that homeless label prior to discharge. Would these individuals qualify as homeless under the new definition?

ANSWER. Individuals being referred to an ESSHI unit from a nursing home or hospital must have been homeless prior to being admitted to those facilities.

62. Is there a minimum allowable percentage of employees on an ESSHI budget?

ANSWER. None has been established. The staffing plan must be adequate to provide the level services proposed.

63. Is a CoC support letter needed for the I/DD population or can you just describe the OPWDD process?

ANSWER. A letter of support from the CoC or other data source is required as a threshold item for the RFP. Projects seeking to support people with I/DD should request a support letter from the local OPWDD Regional Office and include this letter of support in the ESSHI application. (Section 1: Introduction)

64. OASAS and OMH has pre-development funding and OPWDD does not, why?

ANSWER. OPWDD does not have pre-development funding, however, it does have capital available to support qualifying projects and units. Please see Section 1: Capital Funding Available from OPWDD (page 8) of the application for additional information.

65. If you had two qualifying individuals in one unit, would it be \$25,000 per individual for a total of \$50,000 per unit?

ANSWER. Yes, if having two unrelated adults share a unit is appropriate for the population, and allowable by the assigned State Contracting Agency and capital financing agency. Refer also to Questions 86 and 87.

66. HHAP applications refer to both units and beds, can you have two qualifying individuals in one unit?

ANSWER. Refer to previous answer.

67. If you're asking for rental subsidies, should they be based on local FMR or projected expenses?

ANSWER. Refer to answers to questions 28 and 45.

68. In a project with 64 total units, 16 frail/elderly, do the 16 units have to be both frail/elderly and high Medicaid users?

ANSWER. In this example, assuming the other populations are not subject to the MRT 25% rule (see Section 1.4.1 of the RFP), 25% of the 16 units serving seniors/frail elderly (4 units) would need to be MRT-eligible individuals.

69. Do individuals couch surfing at a relative's house count as homeless?

ANSWER. It depends upon the population. See the glossary which includes a new definition for sheltered homeless, which specifically includes "homeless youth who are "doubled-up", a situation where individuals are unable to maintain their housing situation and are forced to stay with a series of friends and/or extended family members (also referred to as "couch surfing").

70. Will individuals who are residing in OASAS rehabilitation facilities qualify as homeless if they were homeless prior to entry?

ANSWER. Individuals who are referred from a transitional housing program, including an OASAS-certified residential program would be considered homeless under the ESSHI definition. Additionally, those receiving outpatient treatment services and meet the homeless definition ("an undomiciled person . . . who is unable to secure permanent and stable housing without special assistance") are eligible.

71. Category 2 and Category 3 will both be funded at 25%, is there no competitive advantage between the two categories? What is the likelihood that one category will receive a preference over the other?

ANSWER. There is no competitive advantage between the categories two and three. The percentages allocated to each category will be applied to the passing scores in rank order.

72. When looking at the Expenditure Summary, rental subsidies would be put under operating expenses? Then you explain in the summary what these expenses are?

ANSWER. Typically, rent subsidies are indicated under "Other". The operating budget assumptions may be presented in question 4.g. and calculation of how rent subsidies were determined may be inserted in the justification narrative of the "Other" budget category.

73. Where did the attachment B1 go?

ANSWER. The Expenditure Based Budget summary is available in Grants Gateway. A blank sample budget form ("Attachment B1") was posted with the 2018 ESSHI RFP, although it was not a fillable form or a required upload. Both the previous and the current RFP require that the budget be completed in Grants Gateway.

74. Since we are taking in homeless individuals, where does the money for furniture and set-up come from, are these eligible expenses?

ANSWER. Furniture and other expenses such as "start-up kits" for new tenants are eligible expenses under ESSHI. Funding for furniture may also be available through capital sources, or through Program Development Grant (PDG) if the project is serving an SMI population and the contract is administered by OMH.

75. Do we get any up front money?

ANSWER. The RFP states that contracts may be effective up to three (3) months prior to the opening of the project in order to provide for start-up costs. This may vary depending upon the SCA. Also, see previous question.

76. How long does reimbursement take?

ANSWER. Reimbursement is made within 30 days of receipt of a full and correct payment request. The specific reimbursement approach may vary by SCA.

77. What is the basis for funding from OMH? Upfront or quarterly?

ANSWER. For OMH, ESSHI funds are paid on a quarterly advance basis, at the beginning of each quarter. PDG funds would be paid as a one-time "up front" amount.

78. In terms of 50 units, 30 for SMI, would you only get the quarterly advances on the 30 units or the entire project? Do you have multiple state contracting agencies for each population in a project?

ANSWER. A single SCA is assigned for each project, typically based on the which population accounts for the highest proportion of units. Payments would therefore be made for the entire number of ESSHI units in the project from a single SCA, not partial or multiple payments based on population.

79. What's the success rate of working with homeless populations putting them into settled, furnished units? What is the success rate for them staying? What is the length of stay?

ANSWER. If success is defined in part as housing stability, the average length of stay for permanent supportive housing programs is significant and generally increasing over time. For example, the most recent Residential Program Indicators report for OMH housing indicates that supportive housing has an average length of stay of over 3,500 days.

80. Regarding the CoC Letter of Support, does the original also need to be mailed? Is the CoC letter addressed to the ED of the agency or to Carol? Can you use the same letters that were used in our HHAP application?

ANSWER. The letter should be uploaded in Grants Gateway. No materials can be submitted or accepted outside of the Grants Gateway. Therefore, it is not necessary or acceptable to mail an original. The same letter of support used for the HHAP application may be used for ESSHI provided that the letter is dated within the past six (6) months.

81. In MRT populations are CR or CR-SRO homeless and eligible? Does homelessness prior to entry apply to this?

ANSWER. Individuals residing in transitional housing are covered by the homeless definition and the sheltered homeless definition in the glossary and would be eligible.

82. If we receive predevelopment money and do not close within a year, what happens?

ANSWER. This depends on the SCA issuing the predevelopment funding. Terms will be articulated prior to the disbursement of funding.

83. For OMH, is there a formal application process online for predevelopment funding?

ANSWER. Upon issuing of conditional awards, OMH provides a welcome letter to all awardees assigned to OMH as the SCA, which includes information regarding predevelopment and the application. It is not available online.

84. If HPD is funding a project and a NFP developer agrees to only do referrals from the shelter for the target population will that limit your ability to receive an ESSHI conditional award?

ANSWER. No.

85. Does the MRT questionnaire need to be submitted with the ESSHI application?

ANSWER. No, unless the applicant is choosing to target MRT individuals above the 25% requirement described in Section 1.4.1 of the RFP.

86. For OMH, there are often times where you have two separate individuals sharing a 2 bedroom, in that case will they be eligible for the \$25,000 each? If this was an OASAS population, they would not be eligible right?

ANSWER. OMH will accept a limited proportion of units in a project with two unrelated individuals in a unit. OMH's model for single-site permanent supportive housing is generally efficiencies or one-bedrooms.

87. Does OPWDD allow two qualifying individuals to reside in a two bedroom?

ANSWER. OPWDD does not prohibit two qualifying individuals from residing in a two bedroom, however, there is a preference for each person to have their own apartment, as all residents have a choice in roommates, and matchmaking of roommates can be challenging.

88. Is there a minimum in the \$25,000 that needs to be spent on supportive services and a minimum that needs to be spent on rental subsidies?

ANSWER. Refer to Question 38.

89. If 25% is OPWDD, can another 25% be OMH and still comply with Olmstead?

ANSWER. OPWDD limits the number of combined special populations units in a project to 30%. This limit applies to OPWDD units in combination with OMH, OASAS, and some Department of Health (DOH) populations with Medicaid waiver services.

90. If NYC 60% of the population are people with disabilities but not ESSHI, can the other 40% be ESSHI eligible populations that do not fall under Olmstead?

ANSWER. Yes.

91. Do you know the expectations of documenting that someone is unsheltered prior to entering hospitals or nursing homes?

ANSWER. Specific documentation requirements have not been established. The referring nursing home is expected to attest to the prior living situation of the individual referred.

92. For nursing homes, are individuals considered homeless if they can not live at home anymore for needs or do they have to be living in a car or bridge? Most seniors do not come from shelter.

ANSWER. Individuals referred from nursing homes must have been homeless prior to admission to the nursing home. This would include both sheltered homeless and unsheltered homeless, as defined in the RFP.

93. If a project has two different sources of rental subsidies and service dollars with approximately 50 supportive housing units, half is 15/15 for chronically homeless and AMI and the rest are for ESSHI, can we do SMI and still ensure Olmstead compliance? What category would this project fall in?

ANSWER. Olmstead would apply to the entire project, regardless of the operating funding sources.

94. For the living situations the MRT slide notes community residence is an acceptable source of referral, but this is not listed as a source of referral, please clarify.

ANSWER. Community Residences are considered a transitional residence, which is covered in the sheltered homeless definition. Sheltered homeless is an acceptable prior living situation.

95. For seniors that are not disabled and may be referred by health home or Managed Care Organization (MCO), they would have to be homeless, correct? What if they are not coming from a hospital or nursing home and are considered at risk of homelessness? Do they need to be literally homeless?

ANSWER. The living situations at time of referral section contains a requirement that individuals referred from nursing homes must have been homeless upon admission to the nursing home. All seniors that are referred by a health home or MCOs must meet the homeless definition in the RFP to be ESSHI eligible.

96. If you have a passing score, but choose category three, do you get filtered out because you came in later?

ANSWER. The percentages related to categories of populations will be applied to all passing scores in rank order.

97. What if you have multiple populations across categories, what category would you fall in?

ANSWER. The proposal will be assigned to a category based on the population with the highest proportion of units in the project.

98. Is there a requirement for a 24/7 hour front desk?

ANSWER. There is no specific ESSHI requirement for 24/7 front desk coverage. However, the staffing and security measures must be appropriate to meet the needs of the population(s) served.

99. Where is the template for the Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification located?

ANSWER. Both on the OMH website where the RFP is posted and in the Grants Gateway.

100. Some of the MRT eligible individuals are not technically homeless but would qualify as homeless if they qualify as MRT eligible?

ANSWER. MRT-eligibility criteria contain separate considerations than whether an individual meets the homeless definition in the RFP.

101. What if the building or development is more than 30 units, but you are only requesting 30 ESSHI units in that building, would this still qualify as under 31 units with Olmstead OASAS?

ANSWER. If the project is a 30-unit project serving exclusively individuals with a Substance Abuse Disorder (SUD), the project would be considered compliant with Olmstead.

102. For a NYC project with 60% SMI SMI/SUD not ESSHI, 10% different population with ESSHI and SMI/SUD ESSHI, would this trigger Olmstead?

ANSWER. Refer to answer to Question 93.

103. During the first years, are you expected to have rents increase by 2% yearly or stay flat and then increased at the end?

ANSWER. The 2% escalator applies to the value of the grant and the utilization is at the discretion of the program. There is no requirement in the ESSHI RFP for rents to increase annually.

104. Do frail/elderly fall under DOH or OTDA? Would this be MRT?

ANSWER. Projects serving a senior/ frail elderly population would generally be assigned to DOH. Those individuals are not inherently MRT-eligible, unless they meet one or more of the MRT criteria described in the Glossary.

105. Is MRT still a population?

ANSWER. Refer to Question 52.

106. If we are applying to serve SMI population, would we be required to take people coming from institutions or would we be free to identify our own referral sources?

ANSWER. The RFP and application do not limit applicants with respect to referral sources for individuals with SMI. However, OMH would expect providers to work with the local SPOA, Field Office and Local Government Units (LGU), and to make good faith efforts to consider individuals referred from Psychiatric Centers and other OMH-licensed housing. OMH staff typically arrange and/or attend rent-up calls to assist with identifying individuals appropriate for permanent supportive housing.

107. Can you mix referral sources?

ANSWER. Yes. Refer also to Questions 39, 84 and 127, related to projects involving funding from NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

108. Does the new CAPS system qualify as SPOA or CE?

ANSWER. The Coordinated Assessment and Placement System (CAPS) is the title given to the coordinated entry system for homeless individuals and families established in NYC. It is not considered a Single Point of Access (SPOA).

109. Do we have to take individuals who qualify as homeless under ESSHI, but not under HUD?

ANSWER. Applicants propose which eligible population(s) to serve. Chronically homeless is the only population to which a HUD definition applies.

110. Is ESSHI chronic homelessness the HUD definition?

ANSWER. Yes.

111. MRT is not a population yet in the Grants Gateway in project specific questions it asks for MRT, why?

ANSWER. Section 1.4.1 of the RFP outlines the requirement for accepting MRT-eligible individuals. This question asks applicants to identify the number of MRT-eligible individuals the project will serve based on the parameters of Section 1.4.1. Applicants may also choose to serve MRT individuals above the 25% requirement outlined in Section 1.4.1.

112. In a project with 50% SMI chronic homeless out of a 100 unit project, has the MRT requirement been met?

ANSWER. Neither experiencing serious mental illness, nor chronic homelessness in and of themselves qualifies someone as MRT eligible. MRT eligible individuals must meet the criteria outlined in the glossary section under "MRT Eligible Individuals."

113. What happens if the 25% MRT requirement isn't met?

ANSWER. As indicated in the RFP, DOH is available to assist in identifying MRT-eligible individuals during the rent-up process and throughout the contract term. The MRT-eligibility criteria have been expanded to assist in achieving the 25% requirement.

114. Does HPD have a minimum expectation for the rental subsidy portion of the rent?

ANSWER. Questions regarding the expectations of HPD should be directed to HPD.

115. Please elaborate – if there is no other source of operating budget but ESSHI so things like travel and office maintenance are not coming from the developer, how do we fund this?

ANSWER. Travel for services staff (such as accompanying consumers to appointments), and office maintenance would be considered eligible services and operating costs under ESSHI.

116. As a building operating budget and operational expenses associated with service delivery component, can we not submit for office expenses?

ANSWER. Refer to previous question.

117. If an application was submitted to HPD or HHAP that has a set amount for service budget and it is known this will increase, will it be viewed negatively if this does not match dollar for dollar with HHAP or HPD application?

ANSWER. It is recognized that line items in the budget are estimates and may change. However, the Workgroup has held that the amount requested per unit will not be allowed to fluctuate.

118. Lumping everything in rental subsidies – what if the project is in the city and has a small number of project-based units, ESSHI providing services, how do you factor in project-based vouchers with no service dollars?

ANSWER. The RFP contains language that “ESSHI subsidies should principally be used for Personal Services (staff salaries and fringe) and rent subsidies. Any other expenses should be justified.” This is not to suggest that the budget should contain only rent subsidies. Such a proposal would not be eligible. In the example in the question, a project in NYC that is awarded Project-Based Section 8 subsidies could apply for ESSHI to fund services, but could not request rent subsidies from ESSHI.

119. On referral sources, if we select certain referral sources now, would we be able to add additional referral sources later?

ANSWER. Please Refer to Question 39.

120. Does OPWDD have a pre-development funding source?

ANSWER. No. OPWDD does not have pre-development funding, however, it does have capital available to support qualifying projects and units. Please see Section 1: Capital Funding Available from OPWDD (page 8) of the application for additional information.

121. Is there a technical resource number for before the last day?

ANSWER. Technical Assistance for Grants Gateway can be obtained Monday through Friday, 8am-4pm, by calling 518-474-5595, or emailing [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov).

122. In a state funding deal for rent setting, can it be presumed that the minimum rent or the rent should be at least 50% AMI, but may go above that?

ANSWER. The RFP specifies to underwrite to “at least” 50% of AMI, recognizing that it may be necessary to exceed 50% in some instances for the financial viability of the project. However, ESSHI is intended to provide funding for both support services costs as well as rent subsidies for operating costs. The ESSHI funding must balance these two needs to ensure appropriate level of support services can be provided. No maximum AMI has been established, although the approval of the rent structure for the project will also ultimately be subject to approval of the capital funding agency.

123. Just to confirm on the %25,000 per year, the split between 50% AMI rent comes out of that?

ANSWER. The award of up to \$25,000 per unit is intended to cover costs for both rental subsidies and support services. For more detail, please Refer to Question 122.

124. Can you apply for services funding for a project that is already under construction?

ANSWER. Yes, assuming this will be new supportive housing units. ESSHI cannot be used to enhance or supplant existing support service subsidies.

125. Is it required to have 24/7 desk security on the projects? Is this an ESSHI eligible expense?

ANSWER. Refer to Question 98. Building security services are an identified eligible expense.

126. Is there a second look on conditional to permanent in regards to the buckets to ensure the 50%, 25%, 25% is met that means not all conditional awards will be eligible to come to fruition?

ANSWER. The minimum and maximum percentages based on categories of populations referred to in the question will be applied to all passing scores in rank order. The resulting projects will be awarded conditionally. There is not a mechanism to provide additional conditional awards.

127. If an ESSHI project receives a portion of its capital funding from HPD, can it accept referrals of individuals with SMI who are current patients in H + H hospitals who were homeless prior to their hospital admission?

ANSWER. While this would be an eligible referral source for ESSHI, applicants should confer with HPD or other capital funders regarding their referral requirements.

128. What is the name and/or number of the Solicitation to be listed in the first tab of the attached form to be submitted with the ESSHI application? Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative Round Four (4)

ANSWER. The "Grant Opportunity ID" in Grants Gateway is OMH01-ESSHI4-2019

129. Homeless individuals do not have furniture and beds, and the proposed capital funding agency does not provide funding for apartment furniture and beds. Would apartment furniture, including beds, be an ESSHI eligible expense? Refer also to Question 132.

ANSWER. Furniture would be considered an eligible cost. However, since they are not ongoing operating costs, applicants are encouraged to explore other potential sources of funding for these items. Furniture can sometimes be considered under capital costs.

130. When an ESSHI tenant vacates the property is there a timeframe for how long management is required to hold a unit for an ESSHI eligible tenant? What happens if the

applicant is unable to refer another tenant immediately? Please kindly explain how that process would be handled.

ANSWER. Applicants should consult with their state contracting agency and/or capital financing agency for direction on expectations regarding vacancy, eviction, etc.

131. Administration Fees – what can be claimed under admin fees/what should be put under admin fees? For example, should costs such as IT fees, accounting services, and/or auditing be included within admin fees or contractual costs?

ANSWER. Administration expenses are generally considered those expenses which are not directly attributable to a specific program but rather to the overall administration of all agency programs. Therefore, IT services for the particular project could be considered a contractual expense. Accounting services and auditing would likely apply to the agency as a whole, and therefore would be considered administrative costs.

132. Will all Lead agencies provide start-up funding (i.e. start the contract a few months before opening the building to cover salaries, furniture, and other expenses and/or start-up capital for furniture and equipment?

ANSWER. The RFP indicates that “if it’s anticipated that ESSHI eligible expenses will be incurred prior to tenants moving in, such as expenses to ‘start-up’ the program, the five-year contract start date may begin up to three (3) months before the move in date.” Additionally, OMH may provide start-up funding in the form of a Program Development Grant. ESSHI funding can be used for furniture and equipment, if funding for these expenses has not been secured through capital funding or another source.

133. Can ESSHI senior units be filled with agency’s own frail elderly clients living in transitional housing and backfill those beds from shelters?

ANSWER. Individuals residing in transitional housing that is not permanent or secure, who would otherwise be considered homeless, are considered sheltered homeless” for the purposes of this RFP. Sheltered Homeless is an acceptable living situation at the time of referral.

134. Is the MRT questionnaire submitted upon receiving conditional award or as a pre-submission upload with the application?

ANSWER. The MRT Project Questionnaire should be completed at the time that a conditional award is given. DOH is available to assist with completing the MRT Project Questionnaire upon receipt of a conditional award.

135. Who identifies qualified MRT individuals for available ESSHI units? Is there a centralized referral and assignment process?

ANSWER. DOH or the State Contracting Agency can assist in identifying individuals to who meet the MRT eligibility requirements.

136. Question 5c (Budget) - Please confirm that an example of a government audit or review is an annual NYC.gov Performance Evaluation (formerly known as VENDEX rating).

ANSWER. Yes.

137. Does chronic homelessness count as a second qualifier? For example, if someone is currently homeless and has a history of chronic homelessness, do they still need to have one of the included disabilities and/or life challenges?

ANSWER. Individuals and/or families experiencing chronic homelessness is one of the eligible target populations that would need to be identified in the application. Individuals and/or families who meet this eligibility criteria do not need to have a second disabling condition or life challenge.

138. During the bidders' conference, it was encouraged to limit line item budgeting and to separate costs into a personnel category and a rental subsidy budget. In this scenario, we would need to pay for the services operating costs (cell phones, supplies, transportation, etc.) from the rental subsidy budget. Is this acceptable? How should this be reflected in the RFP budget document?

ANSWER. The RFP indicates that "ESSHI subsidies should principally be used for Personal Services (staff salaries and fringe) and rent subsidies. Any other expenses should be justified." Applicants are encouraged to identify rent subsidies under the "Other" category in the budget format. Expenses such as those indicated in the question, while eligible, are not directly associated with the maintenance and operation of the building or Personal Services. These expenses may be indicated elsewhere in the budget in category such as "Travel", "Equipment", or "Other", as appropriate.

139. Which would be the logical applicant for this funding – the non-profit developer (and owner) of the housing complex or another non-profit that will be providing support services to the identified population?

ANSWER. Per section 1.3 of the RFP, the official applicant of this RFP must be the Not-For-Profit organization that will manage the service and operating contract funds.

140. We have an HHAP ID for a project that was awarded ESSHI funds, and has been operational for three years. Is this the number that is needed?

ANSWER. As stated in Section 1.1 of the RFP, ESSHI funding will not be made available to existing projects, which have already secured service and operating funds through other sources, as a means to enhance their existing subsidies; or projects specifically wherein tenants are already residing.

141. Is furniture for staff office an allowable expense?

ANSWER. Yes. Refer to Questions 74, 129 and 132.

142. Is training an allowable expense?

ANSWER. Yes.

143. Are administrative expenses an allowable expense?

ANSWER. Administrative expenses are allowed up to 15% of the amount of the annual ESSHI award.

144. Can a parent and their infant or young child be served in a studio?

ANSWER. This depends on the occupancy requirements of the capital funding source(s) and is subject to approval by the SCA.

145. The RFP states that services should be “tailored and appropriate to the specific population to be served.” If a program proposes serving multiple homeless populations based on vulnerability factors, does the proposal need to quantify the units targeted to individual subpopulations and described individually tailored services for each? Or is it sufficient to describe housing related services that apply to all potential tenants?

ANSWER. If a program proposes serving multiple homeless populations the proposal should quantify the units targeted to individual subpopulations and describe the individually tailored services for each population.

146. Is there available Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) data for each county for MRT subpopulation that demonstrates the number of qualified homeless individuals and families? How can an applicant obtain that information?

ANSWER. It is not necessary to quantify MRT-eligible individuals as part of the documentation of need. MRT is not listed as a separate eligible population. The populations listed in Section 1.4.1 regarding MRT have been determined to be likely high-cost Medicaid users.

147. What does ESSHI require if there are no eligible candidates for a vacancy that occurs in the program after opening? For example, if there are no homeless frail elderly people that qualify for MRT does that project then take referrals from non MRT frail elderly homeless? Or non-homeless frail elderly MRT? Or MRT but not elderly?

ANSWER. Applicants are encouraged to join and work closely with their local Continuum of Care (CoC) or other referring/placement entities in or to assess, prioritize and address locally identified homeless needs. The scoring of ESSHI proposals is based largely on the extent to which the proposal reflects and is responsive to the documented homeless needs in the community to be served. ESSHI contractors should work with their State Contracting Agency to handle vacancies that occur after opening that cannot be filled with eligible candidates per the original ESSHI application. Refer also to Question 135.

148. Are OMH, OASAS, and other transitional housing program tenants eligible for ESSHI programs? Under what circumstances are they considered homeless?

ANSWER. Please see Glossary, page 34, definition for Sheltered Homeless: Individuals who are residing in an emergency shelter, transitional, or other housing that is not permanent or secure, who would otherwise be homeless.

149. With regard to Olmstead compliance – For a scattered site project with multiple sites, can an individual site house more than 50% ESSHI units for an Olmstead population, such as SMI/SUD if the entire project is under or at the 50% threshold?

ANSWER. Applicants are encouraged to adhere to the 50% maximum for a project serving individuals with an SMI (60% in NYC), regardless of whether the project contains a single or multiple sites. Projects serving an SUD population that are less than 31 units are not held to a 50% threshold. The degree of integration is dependent on the details of the project such as project and site size, proximity of other sites, neighborhood, etc.

150. With regard to Olmstead compliance – Are scattered-site projects subject to Olmstead compliance, because by their nature, scattered-site projects provide neighborhood and community integration?

ANSWER. Rental units across various apartments or properties, known as scattered-site projects, are not eligible. A multi-site project, such as the acquisition and rehabilitation of multiple properties in a single, distinct housing development project (funded as a single capital financing project), is an eligible project. The applicant would need to meet Olmstead compliance across the proposed project as a whole.

151. In the event the total number of units of a project is an odd number (for example, 21), for an Olmstead population such as SMI, SUD, can the total number of supportive units requested be one higher than an even split (in this instance 11/21 units would be supportive with an Olmstead population)?

ANSWER. Yes, however applicants are encouraged to engage State Contracting Agencies in such conversations as project particulars will influence the determination. For example, project size, proximity of other sites, neighborhood, etc.

152. Please confirm that vacant units acquired through traditional financing are eligible for ESSHI funds?

ANSWER. Yes, vacant units acquired through traditional financing are eligible for ESSHI funds. The repurposing of vacant units may not involve supplanting of any existing operating funding or subsidizing existing units under contract with a capital funding agency.

153. Are there any regional funding priorities?

ANSWER. Not currently. However, the RFP does state that the Workgroup reserves the right to adjust final awards based on geographic considerations.

154. With regard to Section 1.5 – Award Allocations by Population Categories: does the total number of awards (and number of applications received) in Category One influence the total number of awards for Category Two and Category Three populations?

ANSWER. The total number of fundable applications received for Category One will influence the total number of conditional awards for each Category.

155. With regard to Section 1.5 – Award Allocations by Population Categories: approximately how many awards will be made in each Category?

ANSWER. The number of awards made in each Category will depend on the number of fundable applications received.

156. On page 60 regarding the performance measures – there is reference to the “Performance Measure Data Capture Type” with a drop box with options to select. Can you explain what this means? Is this regarding the way the information will be submitted to the funder?

ANSWER. The “Performance Measure Data Capture Type” is a descriptor used in the Grants Gateway system. This is the area applicants can use to define the performance measure data that will influence the evaluation of the project’s success.

157. Regarding Section 1 – especially 1: p, r, t, u, x, y, z, ab: we expect that all of the referrals will come from the lead agency of the CoC while also recognizing that they may be coming from the shelter, transition residences, hospitals, drop-in centers, outreach teams, Local department of Social Services funneled through the CoC. Should we respond to the other subcategories as “0” since they will come from the CoC while providing the total number to the CoC category?

ANSWER. Yes.

158. Is there a suggested or required percentage rent subsidy per unit (RFP pages 13-14)?

ANSWER. Refer to Question 38.

159. Page 6 of the ESSHI 4 RFP states that “certain agencies, such as OASAS and OPDV do not allow multiple qualifying individuals in the same dwelling unit.” Page 33 of the RFP defines “qualifying individual”. The definition states “[f]or certain populations, a two-bedroom apartment may serve ‘two qualifying individuals’” What is the definition of “certain populations”?

ANSWER. The RFP does not define “certain populations.” It is up to the applicant to describe the proposed living arrangement and justify why that living arrangement model is appropriate for the target population to be served.

160. In Section 1.4, on referrals for the Frail Elderly/Senior population, the RFP states “Eligible persons are referred from a Skilled Nursing Home (SNF), or identified as homeless by a Health Home, hospital, Managed Care Organization (MCO), medical respite, Managed Long-Term Care (MLTC), Performing Provider System (PPS), or shelter.”

For NYC providers, is there an expectation that eligible persons being referred from SNF, hospitals, and other medical facilities have a pre-existing history of homelessness or shelter stay? Could all referrals for this population come from these sources or is there any expectation that providers work with DHS [NYC Department of Homeless Services] first?

ANSWER. Persons referred from a hospital or nursing home must have been homeless prior to placement in hospitals or nursing homes. This requirement is applicable whether the provider is NYC or Rest of State. Referrals from DHS are acceptable.

161. In Section 1.1, the RFP states on projects involving capital from HPD, "Projects located within NYC that will serve the chronically homeless population must use the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of "chronically homeless" for tenant eligibility. Referrals for this population in NYC will come from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS)."

Is chronically homeless the only population for which referrals are required to come strictly from DHS?

ANSWER. Yes.

162. At the bidders' conference, there was a note made that people being referred from nursing homes and/or medical facilities are required to have been homeless prior to their admission. Is this for all populations or specifically for chronically homeless? If this is the case, what kind of documentation would be necessary to prove their prior homelessness?

ANSWER. This requirement is for all persons referred from a hospital or nursing home. Required documentation would be at the discretion of the ESSHI State Contracting Agency but could take the form of documentation from the local Coordinated Entry System or local shelter.

163. Must providers intending to contract out for on-site, one-on-one and group counseling be partnering with organizations that are Article 28 or Article 31 if the population to be served is not specifically SMI or SUD?

ANSWER. No.

164. In order to prevent singling out and stigmatizing previously homeless individuals and other vulnerable populations, some NYC funding opportunities allow providers to provide very light touch social services to project residents who live outside of the grant-funded units. For example, if the grant funds services for 30% of the building, there is flexibility for grant-funded staff to minimally assist the other 70%. Is this a possibility under ESSHI grants?

ANSWER. Incidental assistance to non-ESSHI tenants is not prohibited. However, ESSHI funding should not be budgeted for services or staff time specifically allocated to non-ESSHI tenants.

165. Is a fully completed MRT Questionnaire required to be submitted with the grant application for projects over 30 units? Is it possible to complete the MRT Questionnaire in its entirety at a later date once separate funding for construction is obtained?

ANSWER. Only proposed projects that are applying to specifically serve MRT eligible qualifying individuals are required to fill out and attach Appendix A (MRT Project Questionnaire) at time of application. However, applicants that know their project will meet the MRT 25% provision of the ESSHI RFP are encouraged to do so as well.

166. Are fully completed MWBE participation documents required at the time of application?

ANSWER. MWBE forms are not required at the time of application. The assigned SCA will work with the awardee to provide the appropriate contracting forms once an award moves from conditional to committed (upon the securing of capital financing).

167. Are fully completed Veterans' Business participation documents required at the time of application?

ANSWER. Veterans' Business participation documents are not required at the time of application. The assigned SCA will work with the awardee to provide the appropriate contracting form once an award moves from conditional to committed (upon the securing of capital financing).

168. Are Letters of Support or MOAs for linkages to other community service providers (e.g. mental health services, substance abuse treatment programs, etc.)?

ANSWER. Letters of Support and MOAs for linkage agreements are not required to apply for ESSHI funding. However, application should thoroughly discuss all linkages and MOUS in the application. Failing to thoroughly describe such arrangements will negatively impact the overall competitiveness of the application.

169. Is it permissible to purchase a van to transport residents to outpatient mental health, outpatient substance abuse treatment programs, etc.?

ANSWER. Leasing a vehicle is a permitted expense, provided that such services are not funded through other mechanisms such as Medicaid (see Section 1.6 of the RFP regarding Eligible Costs).

170. Please define what disabling conditions or other life challenges would be counted toward the Olmstead cap of 50%-60% under this RFP.

ANSWER. Integrated settings are required for any homeless population that falls under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), such as individuals with SMI, SUD; intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD); or persons living with HIV or AIDS.

171. Please confirm that an 85-unit project with 51 ESSHI units for individuals with SMI, 13 ESSHI units for frail elderly/senior, as defined in the RFP, and 21 non-ESSHI community units

would be acceptable, as long as the frail elderly/seniors to be served would not also qualify as disabled under Olmstead.

ANSWER. Generally mixed-use projects that integrate affordable housing with supportive housing are considered integrated, provided that no more than 50% of the total units are reserved for individuals with disabilities (60% in New York City). Refer also to Question 10.

172. Would frail elderly/seniors referred by a Health Home, hospital, MCO, medical respite, MLTC or PPS be considered homeless if they are at risk of losing their current housing due to a death of a family member or domestic partner with whom they share an apartment, making the apartment no longer affordable, or due to an inability to continue to meet rent or mortgage obligations due to retirement or loss of employment? Would they, like homeless youth, be considered homeless if they are forced to stay with friends or extended family members after having lost their housing?

ANSWER. No.

173. Section 1.1 Services and Operating Funding Parameters (pg. 10) – Proposed project has 323 units, including 2 units for superintendents. Proposing 162 supportive housing units, which represent 50% of the 323 units, rounded up. Can you confirm whether this would be acceptable under the Olmstead decision, or should it be 161 units? We want to be sure we are properly integrating our housing development as per the Olmstead decision of the Supreme Court while maximizing supportive housing.

ANSWER. Generally mixed-use projects that integrate affordable housing with supportive housing are considered integrated, provided that no more than 50% of the total units are reserved for individuals with disabilities (60% in New York City). As presented the proposed project with 162 supportive units would be acceptable.

174. Section 1.5 Award Allocations by Population Categories: new this year, this round groups eligible populations into three different categories (with Category One designated for chronic homelessness, SMI, SUD; Category Two as Re-entry, HIV, Youth/Young Adult; and Category 3 designative for DV, Military Service, Frail Elderly/Seniors, than 25% to the other two categories. For applicants with a passing score that fall within multiple units, the application will be assigned to the category served by the majority of the units. *The Workgroup and/or State Contracting Agency reserve the right to adjust the number of units awarded between populations.* Please expand on this last sentence and what it entails.

ANSWER. This provides the Workgroup and State Contracting Agencies the necessary flexibility to adjust unit counts moving from conditional award to final award under ESSHI.

175. Section 1.6 Eligible Costs: Can you provide examples of what eligible costs for primary health and behavioral health services would be under this RFP?

ANSWER. Eligible costs include services designed to assist eligible families, individuals and young adults to live independently and remain stably housed. These costs may include services that assist with establishing a relationship with primary health or behavioral health services.

They may include but are not limited to providing linkage and/or direct services which are not funded through other mechanisms, such as Medicaid.

176. Section 1.11 Executive Order Number 190-Incorporating Health Across All Policies into State Agency Activities: Consistent with EO 190, applicants must state specifically in their responses to this RFP how the proposal will help address one or more of the following: Prevent chronic disease; Promote a healthy and safe environment; Promote healthy women, infants and children; Promote well-being and prevent mental health and substance use disorders; Prevent communicable diseases; Help residents continue to live in their communities in a manner consistent with their abilities and values; Approaches that build toward a future in which every New Yorker can enjoy wellness, longevity, and a quality of life in strong, healthy communities; and Increase consumer access to health care and supportive services. *Please note that the EO 190 requirement will be incorporated into the application questions. Responses will be evaluated and scored as part of the review of all proposals.* Please expand on this last sentence and what it entails.

ANSWER. Section 3: Impact, part of the application in Grants Gateway includes a question asking how the proposal will address one or more of the goals of Executive Order 190. This is a question that will be scored and therefore will count toward the overall score of the proposal.

177. Capital expenses: If a provider is awarded ESSHI dollars for a certain identified location and if that location and scope changes, is there an opportunity to modify the awarded amount, or would the provider be asked to reapply in next year's funding cycle?

ANSWER. Modifications to original awarded proposals can be made subject to the approval of the Workgroup.

178. Capital Expenses: If we choose to work with mixed populations, how will the state choose which agency we will use, and how will this impact potential pre-development dollar selection?

ANSWER. The Workgroup will decide which State Contracting Agency each Conditional awardee will work with based on factors such as the number of units proposed for which eligible population. There is the potential for Predevelopment and program Development Grant Funding available from OMH for providers/developers proposing to serve an SMI population and Predevelopment Funding Available from OASAS for providers/developers proposing to serve a SUD population.

179. Locally Specific Needs: on page 4, the application states that 60% of the scoring of this RFP will be assigned on how the proposal addresses locally specific needs. Cost effectiveness and readiness comprise the balance of the elements on which the scoring will be based. Scoring Criteria indicates 30 maximum points for addressing need, another 30 points for addressing project impact (60 points total), with 15 points for readiness and 25 for cost effectiveness/budget (40 points total). Will need and impact answers be weighted equally in that 60%?

ANSWER. Yes.

180. The proposed project is serving I/DD population in an area where a CoC exists. While the while local CoC monitors HUD and other homelessness data, there is no sub-category indicating the number of homeless with I/DD. For an application of this sort, is a letter from the regional DDRO sufficient or is a letter from the CoC required?

ANSWER. Any provider interested in serving individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) under this RFP can obtain information regarding housing demand in the OPWDD service system through reports and data located at the following pages on the OPWDD website:

[https://opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd\\_community\\_connections/housing\\_initiatives/ish/empire-state-supportive-housing-initiative-data-region](https://opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_community_connections/housing_initiatives/ish/empire-state-supportive-housing-initiative-data-region);  
<https://opwdd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Oct-2016-OPWDD-Report-to-Legislature.pdf>;  
[https://opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd\\_resources/agency-data/all](https://opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_resources/agency-data/all).

Additionally, a support letter from an OPWDD Regional Office can be submitted in lieu of a CoC Support Letter if the applicant is intending to serve ESSHI-eligible people with I/DD.

181. Services and Operating Funding Parameters (pg. 9) – “A development project is permitted to occur on multiple properties. For example, construction of infill homes on multiple sites throughout a neighborhood is allowed. However, ESSHI funds may not be utilized for a scattered site apartment housing model owned and operated by a private landlord. For example, an agency leasing several units of housing from an existing apartment complex does not meet the eligibility requirements set forth by ESSHI”.

Our organization, the applicant wants to partner with a private developer who plans to renovate and re-purpose space in 3 buildings to create apartment units. The buildings are clustered together in a neighborhood, most likely on the same street. We plan to designate some of the new units located in these buildings as ESSHI units. We have entered into similar partnerships that have been eligible under ESSHI, but wanted to make sure it would be OK if we included multiple sites as described in our application.

ANSWER. Yes, so long as the renovations generate new units.

182. Question regarding site control (page 26, Readiness section): could you please give us the state's definition of site control?

ANSWER. Site control is the current ownership of the site and the relationship, if any, between the current owner and ESSHI applicant.

183. With the changes in scoring/assessment of readiness, will not specifying a site within the RFP significantly impact the scoring?

ANSWER. Applications failing to specify a site will not be disqualified. In total the readiness section constitutes 15% of the overall score.

184. Can an organization list multiple potential sites within the RFP?

ANSWER. Yes, so long as the documentation of need supports the proposed sites and project.

185. Once a conditional award is received, is there a process that allows an organization to submit a request to change the project site?

ANSWER. Yes, while beneficial to the readiness section, a project site is not a requirement for ESSHI. Applicants receiving a conditional award needing to alter the site would work with the State Contracting Agency. Such requests are then presented and approved by the ESSHI workgroup to ensure the request conforms to the original application, namely the documentation of need (alternate site should be within the same CoC).

186. What OPWDD residential settings qualify as institutional? Are people currently residing in Supervised and/or Supportive IRAs eligible for the ESSHI program?

ANSWER. People currently residing in IRAs (both Supervised and Supportive) are not eligible the target population requirements for the ESSHI program since IRAs are funded under the HCBS waiver. Developmental Centers (DCs) and Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) are currently the only OPWDD certified residential settings that meet the description of "institutional." Young people aging out of Residential Schools with nowhere else to live are also eligible to participate in an ESSHI supported project.

187. We are applying for ESSHI funding for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, but are unsure of which capital funding sources we intend to apply for. Do we need to apply for OPWDD capital funding?

ANSWER. Agencies that proposing to include supportive housing units for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and are applying for LIHTC financing through one of NYS HCR's funding streams (i.e. Unified Funding, Open Window) must submit an Integrated Supportive Housing application to OPWDD and receive a letter of support for their project. Failure to do so may lead to your application to HCR being removed from funding consideration. Other funding sources, such as those through HPD or HHAP do not require OPWDD capital support for the project, but project teams can apply for OPWDD capital.

188. If we are applying for a capital funding source that requires a higher percentage of supportive housing units than are allowable by OPWDD, can we still include units for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities?

Projects requesting multiple funding streams to support capital and/or service and operating costs must meet all requirements or each funding source. Therefore, agencies applying for ESSHI units for people with I/DD must also meet OPWDD's requirements for supportive housing regarding the percentage of supportive housing units and target population. For example, if HPD requires 60% of the units to be supportive housing units, some of the units could have preferred tenancy for people with I/DD and/or people from other service systems using HCBS waiver Medicaid funding, however, the remainder of the units would need to serve people who are not impacted by the HCBS settings rule. It should be noted, that this expectation applies to all funding streams, and other populations may be impacted by different rules, such MRT or Olmstead rule requirements.

189. Can we apply our ESSHI award solely towards services and use OPWDD's rental subsidy (ISS) to cover the operating expenses of our supportive housing units for people with I/DD?

ANSWER. Agencies proposing to serve solely an I/DD population must allot a portion of their ESSHI award towards the operating expenses (i.e. rental subsidies) of the project. The utilization of the Individual Supports and Services (ISS) Housing Subsidy will not be allowed in projects with ESSHI funding.

190. Does OPWDD have any internal regulations regarding unit design and meeting ADA requirements for accessibility and adaptability?

ANSWER. OPWDD utilizes HCR's standards for unit design and ADA requirements in supportive housing projects that it funds. Please review HCR's Capital Programs Manual and Design Handbook for more information on unit design standards. Both documents are available on HCR's website. OPWDD's will not support projects that groups/clusters supportive housing units in one section of a project (having units on the first floor for accessibility purposes is the only exception). Additionally, if the units for people with I/DD will look any different from a non-supportive housing unit, then firm justification is needed by the applicant.

191. If we are not a direct provider of services for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities can we apply for I/DD units through ESSHI?

ANSWER. A non-OPWDD provider can apply for funding through ESSHI for people with I/DD as long as they are able to effectively demonstrate in their ESSHI application that they currently have the linkages within the proposed project site to approved OPWDD service providers. However, it should be noted that only OPWDD approved providers can apply for OPWDD capital. So, if the project requires OPWDD capital (e.g., it is combined with HCR funding), the housing services agency must be an OPWDD approved provider.