



# Office of Mental Health

## Youth Safe Spaces Program Round 2 Questions and Answers

1. Eligible Option 2 applicants' proposed location for expanding services must be in a zip code without an existing OMH Youth Safe Space Program. Ineligible zip codes include: 14513, 11377, 13039, and 12203. We are located in the 12210 zip code do we qualify to apply?

**Answer: Yes, a site in 12210 would be eligible to apply. Since there is already an awardee in Albany County, an applicant in 12210 would be considered under the 5<sup>th</sup> priority (see RFP, page 17)**

2. Are public school districts eligible to apply for this RFP?

**Answer: No, school districts are not eligible to apply. Eligible applicants must be a not-for-profit agency with 501(c)(3) incorporation located and doing business in New York State. Please refer to section 2.5. Public school districts in New York State are generally considered governmental entities (public municipal corporations) rather than private not-for-profit organizations, although they are tax-exempt. They are technically public entities.**

3. I am considering applying for this funding in order to expand an existing youth-serving program. LSSNY would locate the program in our Family Enrichment Center in the Morrisania Neighborhood of the Bronx. It does not share a zip code with the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center. Based on the information on page 6 of the RFP, that suggests that we ARE eligible to apply. However, on page 17 of the RFP, you have shared your priority funding areas.

We are not a rural county, nor are we in Long Island, so our request would only be suitable to the third priority. Third priority: Awards will be made to other EDRs, no more than one per EDR, that do not yet have an OMH Youth Safe Space. Eligible NYS EDRs are: Mid-Hudson, Mohawk Valley, North Country, Southern Tier, and Western New York. The EDR receiving the award from the priorities above will be excluded for the third priority. No more than one award will be made per EDR.

Could you help me interpret this paragraph? We would propose a program expansion in Bronx County. That is in an EDR, but Bronx County does already have the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center. Based on these priorities, would we be non-competitive or ineligible?

**Answer: You are eligible to apply under Option 2 for a program expansion in the Bronx located in NYC EDR.**

- **Eligibility: Your program is eligible because it does not share a ZIP code with an existing OMH Youth Safe Space.**
- **Priority: Because the New York City Economic Development Region already has a Youth Safe Space in Queens, your application would be considered under the fourth priority, not the third (see RFP, page 17).**

**Therefore, you are eligible, but your proposal will be ranked behind applications from the indicated rural counties, Long Island, and EDRs that do not yet have any OMH Youth Safe Space.**

4. I see that Onondaga county received funds in round one of the grant. Does this mean I am ineligible to apply for funds in round 2 (we are also a youth center/safe space in Onondaga county)?

**Answer: You are eligible to apply if your proposed location is not in the same zip code as an existing Youth Safe Spaces Program or OASAS Youth Recovery Clubhouse (see RFP, Table 1, page 6), but your application would fall under the fifth priority (see RFP, page 16). Your proposal would only be considered if funds remain after the first four priorities are exhausted, at which point awards are made based on the highest score regardless of county or region.**

5. Are we eligible if we are a municipality and are not a not-for-profit agency?

**Answer: No, a municipality is not eligible to apply. Eligible applicants must be a not-for-profit agency with 501(c)(3) incorporation located and doing business in New York State. Please refer to section 2.5.**

6. In section 2.5 it states the location must be in a zip code without an existing OMH Youth Safe Space and in section 1.1 it states intention is for there to only be one award per county—There is an existing one in our county but in a different zip code then where we would want to apply for—would we be able to or not?

**Answer: Section 1.1 of the RFP states that the intention is for there to be only one award per county, per Economic Development Region (EDR). In addition, proposed sites should not be in the same zip code as an OASAS Youth Recovery Clubhouse or an existing OMH Youth Safe Space in your county, applicants proposing a site in a different zip code may still apply (see RFP, Table 1, page 6). Such applications may be considered under the fifth priority, which allows awards to be made based on highest score regardless of county or EDR, only if funds**

**remain. Applicants should note that some zip codes span multiple counties, and eligibility will be determined based on the county of the proposed site.**

7. For Option 2 under the Youth Safe Spaces RFP, is it allowable to operate the program across two locations? If so, does each site need to independently meet the requirement of four programming days per week, or can the four days be shared between the two sites?

**Answer: Yes, a multi-site model may be proposed. Each site must independently meet all program requirements, including offering four programming days per week. The total budget request may not exceed \$500,000 for Option 1 or \$250,000 for Option 2, regardless of the number of sites.**

8. The RFP states that “Youth Safe Spaces must serve both minors and young adults (i.e., the entire age range); there need to be clearly defined areas to support developmentally appropriate programming for relevant age groups (e.g., 12–17 and 18–24 year-olds).” Can this requirement be met through separate programming times or days for each age group, or does this require two distinct physical areas dedicated to each age group regardless of programming schedule?

**Answer: Applicants are not required to serve both age groups simultaneously. The requirement may be met through separate programming times or days for each age group, based on community need and the service gaps the Youth Safe Spaces Program is intended to address. Physical separation into distinct areas is not required if programming is structured to ensure developmentally appropriate services to 12-24 year-olds. Minors and young adults should not be in the same space at the same time without clear purpose to ensure age-appropriate engagement**

9. Could you please clarify what constitutes a “significant traumatic community event” for the purposes of this section?

**Answer: For the purposes of this RFP, a “significant traumatic community event” is an incident or series of incidents that has a shared harmful impact on a community’s emotional or social well-being and increases the need for supportive services. Trauma is defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on functioning and well-being.**

**Recent New York State examples include:**

- **The racially motivated mass shooting at the Tops Friendly Markets in Buffalo in May 2022, which was widely recognized as a hate crime and had profound effects on the East Buffalo community.**

- Severe storms, including tornado damage in communities such as Rome and Oneida in 2023, which caused property loss, displacement, and elevated community stress.
- Incidents of violence or threats targeting religious communities, such as antisemitic or other bias-related threats or vandalism to houses of worship that disrupted community safety and cohesion.

**These types of events often lead to increased community distress and are relevant when describing local need or service gaps in your proposal.**

10. For the Program Manager role, may the 0.75 FTE requirement be fulfilled by two existing youth-serving agency positions, or must it be filled by one individual at 0.75 FTE?

**Answer: The Program Manager role must fulfill all responsibilities outlined in the RFP. While it is strongly recommended that one individual serve at 0.75 FTE (for Option 2 applicants) to ensure continuity and accountability, applicants may split the 0.75 FTE across two existing positions if necessary. In such cases, both individuals together must fully cover all Program Manager duties, and the arrangement should be clearly described in the application.**

11. On page 6 of the RFP the exclusion areas for option 1 applicants list Oswego County The SPOT Recovery Youth Clubhouse as being located in the 13126 zip code when it is really located in the 13069 zip code. Can you please clarify which zip code would be excluded in Oswego County for Option 1?

**Answer: According to publicly available information and the funder (OASAS), the SPOT Recovery Youth Clubhouse is located at 9 Fourth Avenue, Oswego, NY 13126. Therefore, the 13126 zip code is excluded for Option 1 applicants in Oswego County. Please refer to Section 2.5 and OASAS Official Clubhouse List at [www.oasas.ny.gov](http://www.oasas.ny.gov)**

12. Could a Youth Safe Space be co-located with an existing clinical mental health services program?

**Answer: Yes. A Youth Safe Space may be co-located with an existing clinical mental health services program, provided that the Youth Safe Space maintains a separate, clearly designated area for youth and young adults, is perceived as a safe and trusted environment by the community, maintains its focus as a non-clinical support and is operated by an agency that meets all eligibility and program requirements outlined in the RFP.**

13. Could a Youth Safe Space be created in a school building?

**Answer: Yes. A Youth Safe Space may be located in a school building, provided the school is recognized as a safe and trusted environment by the community and youth, and the space is operated by an agency that meets the eligibility requirements outlined in the RFP. The Youth Safe Space must also have a clearly**

**designated area that meets RFP requirements separate from other school activities; it cannot simply be a room with a sign.**

14. We are a community-based youth wellbeing initiative serving adolescents and young adults ages 12–24 and are a private mental health practice based in New York. Our work focuses on youth-led, culturally responsive, non-clinical programming that promotes peer connection, resilience, and mental wellness, closely aligning with the goals of the Youth Safe Spaces Program. Based off of this description would we be eligible to apply?

**Answer: Eligible applicants must be a not-for-profit agency with 501(c)(3) incorporation located and doing business in New York State. Please refer to Section 2.5. It is unclear from your description above if you meet this; you will have to determine this by referring to the RFP.**

15. Within the first round, it was shared that “a multi-site model may be proposed as long as all requirements are met at each site and that the budget request does not exceed \$500,000 for Option 1 or \$250,000 for Option 2, regardless of the number of sites.” Is this still the case for round 2, where multiple sites can be established and utilized to serve the required number of youth/young adults? To further clarify, these sites would combine to total the number of youth/young adults served, number of operational days per week, and the number of operational hours per week. (example: Site A operates 2 days per week, for 15 hours total, and serves 200 youth/young adults annually, while site B operates 2 days per week, for 10 hours total, and serves 50 youth/young adults annually)

If a multi-site model is allowed, could a site be operating for a portion of the calendar year rather than operating year-round? (example: Site A operates year-round, and serves 200 youth/young adults, while site B operates during the summer months only, and serves 50 youth/young adults)

**Answer: No. Each site in a multi-site model must independently meet all program requirements, including the minimum number of youth/young adults served, operational days, and hours. Sites cannot combine numbers to meet requirements across locations, as youth cannot rely on traveling between sites when one is closed. While transportation supports may supplement access, programs are expected to operate year-round, and splitting services to meet requirements across multiple sites is not considered allowable.**

16. Regarding 6.5b “Demonstrate a minimum of 5 years of experience serving underserved youth and young adults ages 12-24 in a non-clinical setting. Service experience to the entire age range is required”.

We are a ‘Learning Center’ that is effectively a spin-off entity from an accredited college and an accredited middle and high school, with the mission to provide non-credit learning opportunities to youth, including activities, events, enrichment courses, and

work-skill training. We are affiliated with the above-mentioned college/school, specifically: we are located on the same campus, sharing buildings; our board members and senior administrative staff/teachers are appointed and are also current staff of the college/school. We operate very much like a 'division' of the college/school in terms of our mission and services. However, because we are currently established as a separate legal entity, do we still meet the 5-year agency experience per requirement 6.5?

**Answer: OMH's response is based solely on what is provided in the question. Section 6.5b requires applicants to demonstrate a minimum of five years of experience serving underserved youth and young adults (ages 12–24) in a non-clinical setting, with service to the full age range. In your proposal, you must clearly describe how your organization or its programs meets this requirement. Documentation should reflect experience relevant to the target population and non-clinical services, regardless of the organization's legal structure. An affiliation/partnership with an entity that meets the five years of experience serving underserved youth and young adults (ages 12-14) would not substitute for organizational experience.**

17. If we do not fully meet 6.5b 5-year experience, do we still have a chance to score points (out of the total of 9 points) assigned to 6.5 if we demonstrate meeting requirements for 6.5 a, c, d and e?

**Answer: Failure to meet some or all of the requirements may result in deduction of points.**

18. Regarding 6.3f "Describe how Youth Safe Spaces will ensure consistent access (evenings, weekends, seasonal adjustments, holidays, school breaks..."  
Does this requirement imply that the Youth Safe Space must be open on Major holidays such as New Year's Eve, Christmas eve, Thanksgiving days? Option1 requires 6-day opening and Option 2 requires 4-day opening, will the organization be scored down if one of the closed days falls on a major holiday?

**Answer: This requirement does not mandate that Youth Safe Spaces be open on major holidays. Section 6.3f asks applicants to describe how they will ensure *consistent* access across evenings, weekends, school breaks, and holidays, and to explain any limitations and alternative arrangements when a site cannot remain open (e.g., due to site restrictions).**

19. If the space is open on major holidays, does it imply that we should budget for staff wages on holiday and overtime rates to accommodate holiday openings?

**Answer: Access to the Youth Safe Spaces program does not mandate that Youth Safe Spaces be open on major holidays. If a Youth Safe Space elects to operate on major holidays, staffing and compensation, including any holiday or overtime pay, must be handled in accordance with the agency's established personnel policies. Budgeting decisions related to holiday operations are at the discretion of the**

**applicant, provided they are reasonable, allowable, and aligned with approved agency policies.**

20. For “Option 2,” The RFP states the program must provide a minimum of 25 hours at least 4 days per week..... and provide access to services during school breaks and holidays. Does this mean we must provide services on major holidays, ie. Christmas and Thanksgiving ? or at least 4 days within the week of the holiday?

**Answer: No, access to the Youth Safe Spaces program does not mandate that Youth Safe Spaces be open on major holidays. Holidays are broadly defined and depend on the program and its community. Some may observe federal, religious, or school holidays and others may recognize culturally significant days. It is up to each space to define holidays based on what is meaningful to their specific community.**

21. Do the 25 operating hours have to be set weekly hours or can they be reduced if an activity is programmed off-grounds? Are these hours expected to be “walk-in” hours?

**Answer: As outlined in Table 4, required hours are defined as the program’s operating hours, or the time during which services are made available to youth. Off-site activities may count toward required hours when they are part of approved programming. Programs are encouraged to ensure alternative resources or supports are available for youth who are unable to participate when activities occur off-site.**

22. If operating out of multiple sites, does the main space need to be staffed 25 hours or can the 25 hours be split between sites?

**Answer: Please refer to the response to question 7.**

23. Clarify “clearly defined areas to support age groups (12-17 and 18-24). Do these areas have to be in a separate room or can programming be available for all youth in separate sections of the room? Can programming for age ranges be split into separate hours?

**Answer: Please refer to Question 8. Youth Safe Spaces must ensure physical, emotional, and developmental safety. Programming for ages 12–17 and 18–24 may occur during separate hours or in separate areas. Minors and young adults should not be in the same space at the same time without clear purpose to ensure age-appropriate engagement.**

24. Can FTE’s be split into multiple part time staff, or must they be dedicated full time staff members?

**Answer: Yes, FTEs may be allocated across multiple part-time staff. A Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) represents the total staff effort required to meet program responsibilities, and this effort may be distributed among more than one individual as long as all duties are fully covered.**

**Questions from Bidder's Conference  
(held virtually on January 5, 2026)**

25. Could you please provide details as to how OMH defines food services and transportation (and what this means for this program specifically)?

**Answer: Please review Section 5.2- Food Resources, where multiple examples are provided. An applicant's method of providing food resources should be based on youth input and community need.**

26. For Option 2, when there's reference to adding services and framework to an existing youth-serving space, are there specifics or definitions we can reference, to ensure that our plan meets the option 2 structure?

**Answer: For Option 2, applicants must demonstrate how the existing youth-serving space is considered a safe and known youth-serving space, follow the Youth Safe Spaces framework (see Section 5.1) and how it will be enhanced to offer the required components (see Section 5.2) and function as a Youth Safe Spaces Program.**

27. Third priority: Awards will be made to other EDRs, no more than one per EDR, that do not yet have an OMH Youth Safe Space. The EDR receiving the award from the priorities above will be excluded for the third priority. No more than one award will be made per EDR. Could you help me interpret this paragraph?

We would propose a program expansion in Bronx County. That is in an EDR, but Bronx County does already have the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center. Would a new program be eligible? non-competitive?

**Answer: Please refer to response to question 3. You would be eligible to apply as long as the proposed site is not in a zip code with a Youth Safe Spaces Program or OASAS Youth Recovery Clubhouse (see RFP, Table 1, page 6).**

28. Can option 2 be integrated into a mental health clubhouse for adults to expand services to youth, young adults, and adults? or is the funding only available to integrate into a current youth space?

**Answer: Under Option 2, the funding is intended to enhance an existing youth serving space.**

29. If our programming would be located in the same county as CanTeen, but would not be serving youth in the same zip code, could you please clarify when our application would be considered? (priority number)



**Answer: Refer to the question #6 and the answer.**

30. For Option 1, can the shower and laundry services be offered off site?

**Answer: Please refer to section 5.2. All required activities must be provided on-site.**

31. Will applicants located in a different zip code within the same county of an existing awardee (e.g. Albany) still be eligible ?

**Answer: Refer to the question #6 and the answer.**

32. Can you clarify what it means to "serve" in regards to the volume requirements? Is it counting from a single encounter to an individual with many encounters/visits at the site? If it is voluntary, youth can come and go as they please correct?

**Answer: Yes, Youth Safe Spaces operate as a drop-in model, meaning youth may come and go voluntarily while still following program structure and guidelines. For volume requirements, programs are measured by unduplicated youth served annually, not by total visits. As outlined in Table 4, Option 1 requires serving 500 unduplicated youth annually, and Option 2 requires 250.**

33. If the Youth Safe Space has a staffing ratio requirement, is it expected that there is a daily "capacity" on some type of first come first serve or enrollment maximums?

**Answer: Youth Safe Spaces do not have formal enrollment, and no youth should ever be turned away. Access operates on a first-come, first-served basis, and programs must manage attendance to maintain the required staff-to-youth ratio of 1:10. Daily capacity will depend on available space, staffing, and program design, and applicants are expected to plan creatively to ensure all youth can participate safely and effectively.**

34. Does the space need to be open 25 hrs/4 days a week for all ages?

**Answer: Please refer to question #8 and the answer.**

35. Would an integrated model that combines mentoring, academic support, workforce readiness, self-referrals, and structured recreation within one safe, supervised environment align with OMH's vision for youth mental health prevention if the space has different time blocks after school and during breaks for the appropriate age groups, or should they run simultaneously in different spaces?

**Answer: OMH does not prescribe the specific design of programming. It is up to each organization, in consultation with its community, to determine how to structure services, whether through different time blocks or simultaneous programming in separate spaces, based on capacity, resources, and the needs of the youth served. All programming must ensure safety, age-appropriateness, and alignment with Youth Safe Space goals. Please refer to question #8 and #23, and their answers, which may be helpful references.**

36. 1:10 ratio for 250 students. Does it mean we have to have 25 staff members.

**Answer: No. The 1:10 staff-to-youth ratio applies to youth present at the site at any one time, not the total unduplicated youth served annually. Serving 250 unduplicated youth over the year does not require 25 staff on site simultaneously; staffing should be planned based on typical daily attendance and program activities. 25 Staff are only required if you plan to have 250 youth in a space at one time.**

37. Is it possible to submit an application for Option 1 and one for Option 2?

**Answer: Yes. Applicants may submit separate proposals for both Option 1 and Option 2. Each proposal must be complete and meet all requirements for the respective option.**

38. Are public school districts eligible to apply for this grant opportunity?

**Answer: Please refer to Question #2 and the answer.**

39. 2. What priority would a county like Mount Vernon or New Rochelle fall under?

**Answer: These two cities in Westchester County would fall under the third priority.**

40. Are there specific eligibility requirements for the program manager? Degree and experience-wise?

**Answer: There are no specific degree or experience requirements for the Program Manager. Qualification requirements are up to the organization's discretion given the scope of duties. While having relevant peer experience is recommended, it is not required.**

41. Can you please clarify about the need for laundry on site for Option 1?

**Answer: All required services must be offered on site, please refer to Table 3 (RFP,**

**pages 22-23). On-site services help ensure youth have safe, equitable, and reliable access, consistent with Positive Youth Development principles and trauma-informed care practices.**

42. I am interested in applying for Westchester or the Bronx. How likely will awards be available for the last priority?

**Answer: At this time, we are unable to predict award availability for the final priority, as it will depend on the number and distribution of applications received across priorities 1–4. Please note that a site in Westchester County would fall under Priority 3 and a site in the Bronx would fall under Priority 5.**

43. Regarding the priorities- is it possible that you could make two awards in priority one or will you be doing one per priority 1-4 for the four awards you intend to make. I am confused as to how their can be a 5th priority listed with only 4 awards to be funded.

**Answer: Please refer to Section 4.4 of the RFP. The number of awards available under each priority is specified in that section. Priority 1 and 2 are each eligible for one award, and remaining funds may be allocated to subsequent priorities depending on whether Priority 1 and 2 applicants are funded under Option 1 or Option 2. Final awards will be determined based on available funding, the number of applicants, proposal scores, and the mix of options selected.**

44. Follow-up question for food services and transportation... Does this mean that there are no 'minimum requirements'? Instead, demonstration of effort to provide these services, using the listed options and other ideas we come up with?

**Answer: There are minimum requirements for both food and transportation. Programs must allocate at least 2% of their overall budget to food and 2% to transportation. A number of listed options to meet these requirements are indicated in the RFP (see page 23) but an applicant can be creative in proposing other methods to provide food and transportation assistance to participants. What is offered should reflect community priorities and ensure youth have equitable access to safe, supportive programming.**

45. Can the grant be used for the construction of an area to be used for the programming?

**Answer: Please refer to lists of One Time Start-up costs in Section 5.3 Operating Funds (pages 24-25). Start-up costs relating to space include but are not limited to basic renovations and general space enhancements.**

46. Can the Library Director also serve as the program manager?

**Answer: Yes. The Library Director may serve as the Program Manager, provided all**

**Program Manager duties are fully covered and 0.75% (for Option 2) or 100% (for Option 1) of their working hours are dedicated to the Youth Safe Spaces Program, dedicated to managing program operations and providing oversight and direction to the program. This arrangement must be clearly described in the application. There are no specific degree or experience requirements, though relevant peer experience is recommended.**

47. If all 4 awards fall into the First Priority, does that mean there will be no additional funds to disperse priority 2-5?

**Answer: Only one award will be made in the First Priority. Referring to Question #43 and the answer may be helpful as well.**

48. If we are proposing a youth safe space in Nassau County, can youth from neighboring counties also be permitted to attend?

**Answer: Yes, Youth Safe Spaces Programs are intended to be open to all youth that walk in and seek the support.**

49. Is there additional funding for leasing a facility for the program or does that come out of the \$500,000?

**Answer: No. Any costs associated with leasing a facility must be included within the total Option 1 budget of \$500,000. OMH will not provide additional funding for facility leases.**

50. Is it required under Option 1 to have shower and laundry facilities on site?

**Answer: Yes. All required services must be offered on site, including shower and laundry resources.**

51. Would the local School Counselor be excepted as a Behavioral Health provider?

**Answer: There is insufficient information provided in the question to determine if a local school counselor would qualify as a behavioral health provider. Programs should refer to Section 5.1, Provider Connection, which requires establishing partnerships with licensed behavioral health providers to ensure participating youth and young adults (ages 12-24 years old) have access to appropriate treatment and support services.**

52. If a safe space falls short of serving the number of youth expected will the awardee lose funding the following year? Is there any flexibility in this instance? If so, what is the amount?

**Answer: OMH provides technical assistance, resources, and support to help programs meet all deliverables. Awardees work with their program specialist to address challenges in achieving expected outcomes. For guidance on potential consequences, please refer to Section 4.5, Contract Termination and Reassignment (page 18) of the RFP.**

53. Is the unduplicated youth quota per year, or total over the 5-year period; ie....If "little Amber" attends 16 times this year, and 16 times in year 2, is she counted as 1 member in each year or do we need an entirely different group of youth each year?

**Answer: Option 1 requires 500 unduplicated youth be served annually. "Little Amber" will count once per year.**

54. How can we achieve appropriate staff ratio for 1:10 without having a maximum amount allowed at one time. If we only have funding for 3 staff, how can we plan to serve more than 30 individuals at a time?

**Answer: Programs may maintain the 1:10 staff-to-youth ratio through creative approaches, such as using volunteers, collaborating with other organizations, or integrating staff from existing programming. Staffing should be planned based on typical daily attendance and available resources. These challenges can be discussed with the OMH program specialists. Applicants should consider innovative solutions to meet community needs while ensuring safety and quality programming. Question #24 and the answer may be helpful.**

55. Are you able to be a New York Certified Peer Specialist as a Program Manager?

**Answer: Yes.**

56. the requirement for youth peer advocates present during programs -would Your experience in the education system working with students count as experience to fulfill the youth peer advocate.?

**Answer: Please visit <https://www.ftnys.org/youth-peer-advocate-credential-overview/> to learn more about YPA credentialing requirements, with particular attention to the definition of "lived experience".**

57. WNY is listed as an eligible EDR; however, there were multiple zip codes in Erie County that were awardees. Can you provide clarification on this, and what it would mean for programs that are in Erie County and applying under WNY EDR eligibility?

**Answer: There were no Round 1 Youth Safe Spaces Program awardees in the**

**Western New York (WNY) EDR. Round 1 awards were made in the following EDRs and counties only: New York City (Queens), Capital Region (Albany), Central New York (Onondaga), and Finger Lakes (Wayne).**

**For clarity, the WNY EDR includes the following counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara. The Erie County zip codes referenced in Table 1 (RFP Page 6) are listed as exclusion areas, not award locations.**

**Table 1 (RFP page 6) identifies zip codes that are ineligible for Option 1 applicants due to the presence of an existing OMH Youth Safe Space or an OASAS Youth Recovery Clubhouse. Option 2 applicants must also propose expansion in zip codes without an existing OMH Youth Safe Space Program. Ineligible zip codes include 14513, 11377, 13039, and 12203.**

**Please refer to Section 2.5 (RFP, pages 5-6) and Table 1 (RFP page 6) of the RFP for full eligibility requirements.**

58. Are funds available for capital projects such as installing a shower or laundry on-site?

**Answer: Please refer to Question #45 and the answer.**

59. Are you able to share how many applicants were submitted last round?

**Answer: Over 100 applicants submitted proposals in Round 1.**

60. Could you please define 'existing youth-serving space' as we look at option 2 and our alignment with that option?

**Answer: An existing youth-serving space refers to a physical location that is already providing services, programming, or supports to young people prior to this funding opportunity. This may include spaces operated by the applicant or in partnership with another organization where youth regularly receive services, engage in programming, or access supports.**

**For Option 2 applicants, the intent is to build upon or enhance services within an established youth-serving space, rather than creating a new site. This could include expanding hours, adding new programming, increasing staffing capacity, or deepening the scope of services already being offered in that space.**

61. Is there any relation to the options 1/2 versus the 5 listed priorities? Essentially, would option 1 applicants be more likely to be accepted earlier in the review process?

**Answer: No. The listed priorities are determined by geographic location, not by whether an applicant is applying for Option 1 or Option 2. All proposals are**

reviewed based on the priority of their location and the completeness and quality of their application. Highest scoring proposals will be awarded based on the list of funding priorities (See RFP, Section 4.4, page 16-17) until two awards are made for each Option 1 and 2.

62. Will a recording of this webinar be available online?

**Answer: Yes,** <https://youtu.be/Z6xTqXeeJHs?si=6RqsKCPFiYzCkwRL>

63. Can you specify what you mean by "peer-led"? What role do staff play in preparing activities/etc.?

**Answer: "Peer-led" refers to programs designed, facilitated, and guided by individuals with lived experience, who use their knowledge to support and create space of empowerment for youth and young adults in similar situations. Peer leaders manage daily interactions and activities in a relatable, non-hierarchical environment.**

**Organizational Staff, usually those above the young adult age, provide essential support by training and supervising peers, ensuring safety and compliance with organizational policies, and handling administrative and logistical responsibilities such as staff scheduling, resource management, and oversight of program quality.**

**For more guidance, see: SAMHSA Core Competencies for Peer Workers – outlines skills and knowledge for peer roles.**

**[https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/brss\\_tacs/core-competencies\\_508\\_12\\_13\\_18.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/core-competencies_508_12_13_18.pdf) and New York OMH Peer Support Services**

**Guidance – details staff supervision and integration of peer specialists.**

**[https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/clinic\\_restructuring/part599/mhotrs-peer-support-services-guidance.pdf](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/clinic_restructuring/part599/mhotrs-peer-support-services-guidance.pdf)**

64. Could you please clear up what you mentioned earlier about the award - option 1 \$500,000 - is that broken down as \$500,000 and divided over 5 years or did you mean its \$500,000 each year ...for five years?

**Answer: Option 1 awards are \$500,000 per year for a total of five years, totaling \$2,500,000 over the award period. Four awards will be made annually at either \$250,000 or \$500,000 (i.e., two each), depending on the option selected. Please refer to Section 5.3, Operating Funding, for additional details.**

65. If an organization also serves the re-entry population (young adults with justice system involvement) in the same building, would that pose any safety concerns with an application?

**Answer: Youth with justice system involvement are eligible to participate and deserve access to a safe, supportive space. Any safety considerations should be addressed in the program plan, for all youth, not just those with justice system involvement. Please refer to Section 2.5, Eligible Agency, and Section 5.1, Community and Setting, for guidance on location and creating a safe and inclusive environment.**

66. If our staff are certified peers, would they be recognized as eligible as staff?

**Answer: Yes. Please refer to RFP Section 5.1 Staffing**

67. Do minors need permission from parents to frequent the safe space? Do they need to accompany them to the safe spaces?

**Answer: No, parental consent is not required for participation. Youth Safe Spaces Programs should mitigate barriers to participation in the program.**

68. If the organization already serves youth in afterschool programs, but youth can't just drop in freely, does this still qualify as having the necessary experience with youth programming?

**Answer: Yes. Programs do not need to operate as a drop-in model to demonstrate 5 years of experience serving 12–24-year-olds. Any organization that provides structured youth programming has relevant experience working with youth and young adults.**

69. MUST THE PEER BE YPA OR CAN A CRPA FULFILL THE REQUIREMENT

**Answer: Staff may hold dual credentials. Please refer to Section 5.1, Staffing, for detailed staffing requirements.**

70. Where can we find additional guidance or clarification on questions related to the Youth Safe Spaces RFP?

**Answer: Please refer to the Q&A from Round 1 - [https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/rfp/2025/yssp/youth\\_safe\\_spaces\\_qanda.pdf](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/rfp/2025/yssp/youth_safe_spaces_qanda.pdf)**