



Office of Mental Health

Youth Safe Spaces Program RFP#MH253033 Questions & Answers

Q1. What are the qualifications for the supervisor of the YPA's? I understand the guidelines but are there any specific qualifications?

A1. There are no additional specific qualifications beyond those outlined in the procurement. Consistent with best practices in peer support, OMH recommends that the YPA supervisor have lived experience and prior peer supervisory experience. If the YPA supervisor does not have prior peer support or lived experience, a consultant must be engaged to provide appropriate peer supervision.

Q2. ZIP Code 14214 was ineligible under the Round 2 procurement, assuming because of an already existing Youth Recovery Clubhouse. Since ZIP Code 14214 is not listed among the excluded ZIP codes in the Round 3 RFP, can OMH confirm that a proposed location within ZIP Code 14214 is eligible under the Round 3 Supplemental Model?

A2. Yes. Under Round 2, ZIP Code 14214 was ineligible only for a Stand-Alone Model (Option 1) award of \$500,000. The Round 3 procurement is for the Supplemental Model (Option 2), with an annual award of \$250,000. Therefore, ZIP Code 14214 is eligible for a Round 3 award.

Q3. The Round 3 RFP states that the Supplemental Model is intended to expand Youth Safe Spaces services within an existing youth-serving community space. Can OMH clarify what documentation or evidence applicants should provide to demonstrate that a proposed site is an "existing youth-serving community space" that is recognized and trusted by the community?

A3. Applicants should refer to Section 6.5, Agency Performance, of the procurement. Applicants should address the applicable questions and provide information demonstrating their qualifications and experience as part of their application. Responses will be evaluated in accordance with the procurement requirements.

Q4. Would a newly established Family Resource Center operated by an eligible nonprofit satisfy this requirement if it is operational and offering youth programming prior to contract implementation or does OMH intend applicants to

demonstrate an established history as a youth-serving community space at the time of application?

A4. Please refer to 6.5. Agency Performance. Dependent on the response and how well it demonstrates five-years of previous experience, technical reviewers will score the question accordingly.

Q5. May an eligible 501(c)(3) applicant operate the Youth Safe Spaces Program in space provided by a library partner, provided the applicant retains responsibility for program implementation, staffing, supervision, financial management, and reporting?

A5. Yes. An eligible applicant may operate the Youth Safe Spaces Program in space provided by a community partner, such as a library, provided the applicant maintains responsibility for program implementation, staffing, supervision, financial management, and reporting. The applicant should have an appropriate written agreement or MOU with the partnering organization documenting the occupancy arrangement and respective organizational roles.

Q6. Can the required five years of experience serving underserved youth and young adults ages 12–24 in a non-clinical setting be demonstrated through multiple programs operated by the applicant, or must one program have served the entire age range continuously for five years?

A6. Demonstrating five years of experience serving underserved youth and young adults ages 12-24 in a non-clinical setting may be through multiple programs the applicant operates. See response to Q4.

Q7. If the applicant is itself a behavioral health provider, can the applicant's internal referral pathways satisfy the behavioral health partnership requirement in Section 6.5(e), or is a separate behavioral health provider, letter of support, and MOU required?

A7. Yes. An eligible applicant that is itself a behavioral health provider may use its internal behavioral health partnership and referral pathways to satisfy this requirement, provided the applicant has the internal MOU and referral protocol required by the procurement and in alignment with the framework.

Q8. Does the requirement for 2.0 FTE Youth Peer Advocates mean that two Youth Peer Advocates must be physically present during all program operating hours, or may the 2.0 FTE be scheduled across operating and non-operating hours as long as the required 1:10 staff-to-youth ratio is maintained?

A8. The required number of Youth Peer Advocates during program hours are 2 FTE.

Q9. When the primary site is a library that is closed on certain holidays or other scheduled days, may the program operate at an identified alternate community location to ensure continued access?

A9. Yes. The program may operate at an identified alternate community location when the primary site is unavailable, provided the alternate location meets applicable program requirements.

Q10. Are stipends or incentives for rotating Peer Advisory Board members and other youth leadership activities allowable program expenses?

A10. Yes, compensation for youth leadership activities are allowable in accordance with the parameters outlined in the Youth Safe Spaces Program Guidance.

Q11. Should the SFS “Bid Amount” reflect the annual award amount of \$250,000 or the five-year total of \$1,250,000?

A11. It should reflect the five-year total.

Q12. May the Year 1 budget have a different distribution of expenses than Years 2–5 to account for allowable start-up costs?

A12. Yes. Applicants may propose a different distribution of expenses in Year 1 to account for allowable start-up costs, provided all proposed expenses are allowable under the procurement and program guidance.

Q13. If we have a Safe Space and Safe Space Expansion funded by OASAS, would serving the same 12 to 17-year-olds be considered a duplication of services?

A13: No. It would not be considered a duplication of services. This procurement requires distinct service components that build upon existing programming. The services supported through OASAS may serve as the foundation or baseline, while this funding is intended to expand and enhance the services provided in accordance with the requirements of this RFP.

Q14. Question: Can youth ages 18 to 24 ever participate with younger youth, such as during Youth Advisory Board meetings or other decision-making activities?

A14. Programs serving both minors and young adults must provide clear structure and developmentally appropriate activities for each age group, such as ages 12 to 14, 15 to 17, and 18 to 24. Minors and young adults should not participate together without a clear programmatic purpose and appropriate safeguards to ensure age-appropriate engagement.

Q15. The RFP requires serving 250 youth annually. Is there a minimum amount of contact required for each youth?

A15. No. Youth Safe Spaces operate as a drop-in model. There is no minimum number of visits

or required amount of contact for an individual youth .

Q16. What is the required age range for Peer Mentor staff?

A16. Peer Mentors must be between the ages of 18 and 30. Applicants should also review the Youth Peer Advocate (YPA) Credential requirements, including the definition of “lived experience,” available at: <https://www.ftnys.org/pathway-to-ypa-provisional-credential/>

Q17. Our organization operated a youth drop-in center for many years but had to close it after funding ended. We currently provide Children’s Health Home Care Management and other family programs but do not currently operate a drop-in center. Are we eligible to apply?

A17. Organizations may apply if they meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section 2.5 of the RFP. Eligibility includes:

- The applicant is a nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status that is incorporated and doing business in New York State.
- The proposed Youth Safe Space Expansion site is located in a ZIP Code that does not currently have an OMH Youth Safe Space. Ineligible ZIP Codes are: 11377, 11798, 12203, 13662, 14456, 14513, and 14850.
- The proposed site is located in an Economic Development Region (EDR) without an existing OMH Youth Safe Space. Ineligible EDRs are: Capital Region, Finger Lakes, Long Island, New York City, North Country, and Southern Tier.

In addition, nonprofit applicants must be prequalified to receive New York State grant funding. Please refer to Sections 2.8 and 2.9 of the RFP for additional information regarding prequalification and disqualification factors.

Q18. How does OMH define an “unduplicated youth” for purposes of meeting the annual target of 250 participants?

A18. An unduplicated youth is an individual who is counted only once toward the annual minimum of 250 participants, regardless of the number of visits or services they receive throughout the reporting year.

Q19. Can a Youth Safe Space operate in a leased facility that is shared with other youth-serving programs, provided there are designated spaces for the required age groups?

A19. Yes. A Youth Safe Space may operate within a shared facility, provided that the space and operating hours designated for Youth Safe Space programming are reserved exclusively for that purpose during program operations. The facility must also meet all applicable requirements outlined in the RFP.

Q20. 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

Round 2-

https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/rfp/2025/yssp2/youth_safe_spaces_round2_qanda.pdf