

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation Services

issued by

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Date of Issue:

November 5, 2021

**Applications must be received no later than
2:00 P.M. on November 30, 2021**

All questions related to this RFP should be submitted via e-mail

to: Hans Leach at hans.leach@phila.gov

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER – WOMEN,
MINORITY INDIVIDUALS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE
ENCOURAGED TO RESPOND**

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1. Project Overview

1.1. Introduction/Statement of Purpose

Community Behavioral Health (CBH) is currently pursuing the distinction as a Multicultural Health Care (MHC) Managed Care Organization as part of the National Committee Quality Assurance's (NCQA) Accreditation. The NCQA Distinction in MHC identifies organizations that excel in providing Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS). CLAS are services that are respectful and responsive to individual cultural and religious health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy levels, and communication needs. One of the greatest social determinants of health include barriers to health care due to the lack of language resources needed for individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds.

CBH is committed to ensuring that members with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs, and other benefits; and therefore, is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to contract with a qualified organization to provide language interpretation services to our members, who may be children or adults with behavioral health challenges. For the purposes of this RFP, "behavioral health services" will refer to mental health, drug and alcohol, and associated services.

1.2. Project Background

The purpose of this CBH RFP is to ensure the facilitation of behavioral health treatment and services by allowing CBH members and their families to participate in treatment in languages other than English, through the use of in-person face-to-face American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, or video- or tele-interpretation as public safety warrants. All the requirements are specified in the scope of work section (Section 2.2. Services to be Provided/Required Tasks of this RFP).

1.3. Request for Proposals

CBH anticipates selecting multiple vendors to provide all the services specified in this RFP.

1.4. General Disclaimer

This RFP does not commit CBH to award a contract. This RFP and the process it describes are proprietary and are for the sole and exclusive benefit of CBH. No other party, including any Applicant, is intended to be granted any rights hereunder. Any response, including written documents and verbal communication, by any Applicant to this RFP, shall become the property of CBH and may be subject to public disclosure by CBH.

2. Scope of Work

2.1. Project Details

In 2020, 725,558 individuals were eligible for CBH services. The percentage of those eligible members requiring interpretation services was 10.72%, as compared to 10.45% in 2019. CBH Member Services manages requests for ASL Interpretation services and coordinates these among its contracted ASL Interpretation vendors so to, at its discretion, represent the best interests and needs of CBH members. Interpretation services through CBH are supplemental to language access services instituted by each behavioral health provider. In the event a CBH contracted provider cannot provide language access to an individual seeking services, the provider can make a request for interpretation services to CBH Member Services. Once Member Services receives this request, it is then shared via email to all vendors contracted to provide interpretation services. The first vendor to respond with confirmation of interpretation availability is given the assignment. ASL Interpretation assignments might take place in outpatient or inpatient behavioral health facilities, residential facilities, hospitals, the courts, schools, the community, or other settings where therapeutic interventions could occur. Primarily, services take place within the City of Philadelphia, though assignments can also be in the surrounding counties of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The majority of ASL assignments are routine and scheduled in advance, with a minimum of two business days' notice to the ASL vendor. There are also urgent or crisis scenarios that arise regularly, and these require a faster on-site response time both from the treatment provider and the ASL interpreter, sometimes as quick as two hours. However, the average length of an assignment is also the minimum length, two hours.

All selected vendors should be able to convey how their infrastructure, staffing, experience and understanding of these project details would meet these requirements, enhance work processes, and ultimately benefit CBH members' behavioral health experiences.

2.2. Services to be Provided/Required Tasks

Community Behavioral Health is seeking an agency to provide the following services:

- Provide an experienced and qualified on-site ASL interpreter, into which behavioral health services will be interpreted. Methods of handling difficult or long-term assignments should also be discussed in your proposal.
- Work with CBH on a daily basis to fill all requested assignments and communicate in the timeliest manner possible assignments that your agency cannot fill.
- Provide detailed monthly billing for all ASL assignments through use of CBH standard interpretation invoice indicating name of CBH employee who authorized service, name of interpreter, service provider information, service requested, CBH member served and related identifying information, number of hours (or units) on assignment, rate and outcome.
- The selected ASL vendors must have the ability to propose a set hourly rate for routine assignments, non-routine assignments (e.g., urgent or crisis assignments), and special

language assignments for a period of two years beginning January 1, 2022. Beyond this contract, CBH anticipates renegotiating ASL rates for the 2024 contracting year.

2.3. Monitoring

The CBH Member Services Department will be managing the contract. An individual from that unit will be identified as the point person for the work to be conducted under the contract that is developed through this RFP and will monitor those activities for the duration of the contract.

2.4. Reporting Requirements

Data reporting will be required for this contract. ASL interpretation vendors will be expected to supply all data requested by CBH. Examples of this information include but are not limited to reports on cancelations, no-shows, and assignments that the ASL interpretation vendor is unable to fill.

2.5. Compensation/Reimbursement

This contract will be rate-based, depending on the type of assignment, the specific ASL services requested, and the urgency/notice given to the ASL vendor filling the assignment. Applicant rate proposals should be consistent with similar interpretation rates in the Philadelphia market, and proposed rates should be inclusive of **all potential costs**, including but not limited to mileage, parking, tolls, and any other “out-of-pocket” expenses that might be incurred to fulfill an assignment.

Final rates will be negotiated with vendors whose proposals have successfully been awarded this RFP through a consensus review and subsequent selection process.

Payments are contingent upon submission of accurate monthly billing and other required information.

2.6. Organization and Personnel Requirements

CBH is seeking an agency with the requisite skills and abilities to perform the work being sought through this RFP. The selected agency must have at least three (3) years of experience filling interpreter assignments or related work. Applicants should include any credentials from any certifying organization that attest to the capabilities of the organization or of any of the individuals employed by the organization that will be working on the proposed project (e.g., Behavioral Health/ Mental Health Training).

The agency will also ensure that staff providing ASL services possess the appropriate and acceptable education and experience requirements to demonstrate competency in providing these services. All persons providing ASL services under this contract with CBH must have a current certification issued from, or recognized by, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID), which is supported by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). It is also expected that qualified sign language interpreters will abide by the Code of Professional Conduct jointly promulgated by NAD and RID when providing services.

2.7. Technology Capabilities

Applicants must have the technology capabilities required to perform the proposed activities in this RFP, including but not limited to the ability to schedule for video, tele-interpretation, multiple interpreters, accurate billing per the terms agreed upon during contract negotiation, and other related data that CBH and awardee might agree upon. Applicants must also share information regarding record retention policies and data management systems.

3. Proposal Format, Content, and Submission Requirements; Selection Process

3.1. Required Proposal Format

3.1.1. Format Structure

3.1.1.1. Proposal Cover Sheet

The cover sheet (see Attachment A) should be completed with the Applicant's information and included as the first page of the proposal.

3.1.1.2. Table of Contents

A table of contents should be included as the second page of the proposal with each section of the proposal included and with a page number for the first page of each section.

3.1.1.3. Format Requirements

Proposals must be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Applicant's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Each proposal must provide all the information detailed in this RFP using the format described below. The narrative portion of the proposal must be presented in print size of 12, using a Times New Roman font, single spaced on 8.5" by 11" sheets of paper with minimum margins of 1". For each section where it is required, the Applicant must fully answer all of the listed questions in the outline form in which they are presented in the RFP. Answers to each question must be numbered/lettered and correspond to the numbered/lettered questions in this RFP. Failure to number and letter the questions or to respond to all questions may result in the proposal's being considered non-responsive. Each attachment, appendix or addendum must reference the corresponding section or subsection number.

Applicants are required to limit their narrative responses to ten (10) single-spaced pages. This page limit includes sections 3.1.2.1. – 3.1.2.5. below. There are no limitations for the cost proposal and organizational requirements, sections 3.2.1.6 and 3.2.1.7. If you have responded to a requirement in another part of your proposal, make reference to that section and do not repeat your response. Applicants whose narrative exceeds ten (10) single-spaced pages may have their proposals considered non-responsive and be disqualified.

3.1.2. Proposal Content

The proposal should follow the format below. Information should be complete and demonstrate that the consultant can perform the required work in a professional manner.

3.1.2.1. Applicant Profile/Statement of Qualification/Relevant Experience

Provide company contact information, including how long you have been in business, and the specific services you provide. Please provide a brief narrative description of the purpose, corporate status (profit or non-profit), and organizational structure of the company. Organizational charts may be used to support appropriate aspects of this narrative and included as an attachment to your proposal. Identify and briefly describe related work completed in the last three years. Describe only work related to the proposed effort and include any examples of similar work in governmental, non-profit, or human services related organizations. Include evidence of satisfactory and timely completion of similar work performed for past projects.

3.1.2.2. Project Understanding and Proposed Scope of Work

Prepare a brief introduction including a general demonstration of understanding of the scope and complexity of the required work. Provide a description of how the proposed services will be provided. Please include a description of each item identified in the scope of work section (Section 2.2.) and describe creative solutions and alternative approaches where feasible.

3.1.2.3. Personnel

Identify key personnel who will be assigned to this project. Detail their experience in work related to the proposed assignment. Specify the Project Manager who will serve as a contact person. Provide resumes and job descriptions for all individuals proposed to participate in the project. Provide copies of certifications of any individual whose job description requires a certification. Describe your process for assessing interpreters' performance. In this section, also state the intention, if that is the case, to utilize subcontractors to perform any of the work for this project.

3.1.2.4. References

Please include references with contact information from at least three organizations that have used your organization's ASL services in the past three years and have been customers for a minimum of 12 months.

3.1.2.5. Project Plan and Timeline

Provide a timeline of activities that would need to be accomplished before the anticipated January 1, 2022 start date for this contract, when the selected ASL vendors would be expected to be fully operational to meet CBH's and its members' needs.

3.1.2.6. Cost Proposal/Fee Schedules

As discussed in Section 2.5. Compensation/Reimbursement, it is expected that Applicants will put forth a cost-based budget that includes both a budget narrative and a proposed all-inclusive hourly rate structure (i.e., individual rates for routine, urgent/crisis, special difficult-to-staff ASL services, are expected). CBH does not expect to pay for fees or other costs outside of agreed-upon hourly rates.

While CBH may award the right to negotiate a contract based on the initial offer, an Applicant should make its proposed rate offer on the most favorable terms available. Final rates will be determined in negotiations with the qualified Applicant after the proposal submissions have been reviewed and contract negotiations have begun. Although CBH may begin contract negotiations based on the submitted proposal, CBH reserves the right to have discussions with those Applicant(s) falling within a competitive range and to request revised pricing offers from them and to make an award or conduct negotiations thereafter.

3.1.2.7. Operational Documentation and Requirements

Please make sure to include completed and signed (where applicable) attachments with your submission:

- Attachment A: CBH Administrative RFP Response Cover Sheet
- Attachment B: City of Philadelphia Tax and Regulatory Status and Clearance Statement
- Attachment C: City of Philadelphia Disclosure Forms (forms attached separately as a .pdf)
- Attachment D: City of Philadelphia Disclosure of Litigation form
- Attachment E: Acknowledgement of CBH Administrative Procurement Terms and Conditions

Additionally, in this section, please include the following information, either within the section itself or by reference to an attachment to your proposal:

- Tax Identification Number
- Letter attesting that all required federal, state, and local taxes (including payroll taxes) for the past twelve (12) months have been paid
- In the case of for-profit organizations, group or individual practices, disclosure of any person or entity holding any shared ownership or controlling interest of 5% or more.
- MBE/WBE/DSBE Status – For-profit Applicants

3.2. Selection Process

An application review committee will review all responses to this RFP. Based on the criteria detailed below, the committee will make recommendations concerning the submissions that are best able to meet the goals of the RFP.

Submissions will be reviewed based upon the merits of the written response to the RFP.

Specific scoring criteria upon which the review will be based include:

3.2.1. Threshold Requirements

Threshold requirements provide a baseline for all proposals, which means they provide basic information that all Applicants must meet. Failure to meet all of these requirements may disqualify an Applicant from consideration through this RFP. Threshold requirements include timely submission of a complete application with all sections outlined in Section 3.1.2.7. completed. Threshold requirements include having the requisite experience and qualifications to implement the program, and being a vendor in good standing with the City and CBH.

Threshold requirements also include consideration of the Applicant's financial status, including any potential delinquencies to the City and CBH. Proposals may be rejected, if, in CBH's judgment, the Applicant has failed to provide all information required by this RFP; has been delinquent or unfaithful in the performance of any contract with CBH or others; is delinquent, and has not made arrangements satisfactory to CBH with respect to the payment of City taxes or taxes collected by the City, or other indebtedness owed to the City or other taxing authorities; is not in compliance with regulatory codes applicable to Applicant; is financially or technically incapable; or is otherwise not a responsible Applicant.

CBH reserves the right to conduct investigations with respect to financial, technical, and other qualifications, and references without notice to the Applicant.

3.2.2. Scoring by Review Committee

Applicants that do not meet all the threshold requirements may have their proposals disqualified. For Applicants meeting the threshold requirements, the scoring criteria for this RFP upon which the review will be based are as follows:

- Demonstrated qualifications and relevant experience **(25 pts.)**
- Demonstrated understanding of the project as indicated by a description of each item in the scope of work section **(25 pts.)**
- Appropriateness of project approach and effectiveness of proposed project plan and timetable **(25 pts.)**
- Appropriateness of staffing to complete the project **(10 pts.)**
- As stated in the cost proposal section, likelihood that the proposal will provide the best value compared to other submitted proposals **(15 pts.)**

3.2.3. MBE-/WBE-/DSBE-owned and Local Businesses

Special consideration will be given for the following:

- Businesses owned and controlled by minorities, women, and disabled persons
- Philadelphia-based Applicants

4. Proposal Administration

4.1. Procurement Schedule

The anticipated procurement schedule is as follows:

RFP Event	Deadline Date
RFP Issued	November 5, 2021
Deadline to Submit Questions	November 12, 2021
Answers to Questions on Website	November 17, 2021
Application Submission Deadline	November 30, 2021 by 2:00 PM
Applicants Identified for Contract Negotiations	December 8, 2021

CBH reserves the right to modify the schedule as circumstances warrant.

This RFP is issued on **November 5, 2021**. In order to be considered for selection, all applications must be delivered to the e-mail address below **no later than 2:00 PM on November 30, 2021**.

- Application e-mails should be titled “**ASL Services RFP.**” Applications submitted by any means other than submission to the e-mail below will not be accepted.
- Applicants must submit an electronic version of the application prepared as a PDF document – please e-mail to hans.leach@phila.gov.
- Applications submitted after the deadline date and time will be returned.
- The individual Applicant or an official of the submitting agency, authorized to bind the agency to all provisions noted in the application, must sign the cover sheet of the application (See Attachment A).

4.2. Questions Relating to the RFP

All questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing via email to Hans Leach at hans.leach@phila.gov by November 12, 2021. CBH will respond to questions it considers appropriate to the RFP and of interest to all Applicants, but reserves the right, in its discretion, not to respond to any question. Responses will be posted on the CBH website by November 17, 2021. Responses posted on this website become part of the RFP upon posting. CBH reserves the right, in its discretion, to revise responses to questions after posting, by posting the modified response. No oral response to any Applicant question by any CBH employee or agent shall be binding on CBH or in any way considered to be a commitment by CBH. *Contact regarding this RFP with CBH or related staff other than the individual named above, is not permitted and failure to comply with this restriction could result in disqualification.*

4.3. Interviews/Presentations

Applicants may be required to make an oral presentation concerning various aspects of their application to CBH. Such presentations provide an opportunity for Applicants to clarify their application to ensure a thorough and mutual understanding. CBH will schedule such presentations on an as-needed basis.