

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) RFI-HMS-224-17-04-HPO
STATE HOMELESS SHELTER PROGRAM**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)
BENEFIT, EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION (BESSD)
HOMELESS PROGRAMS OFFICE (HPO)**

The State of Hawai'i, through the Department of Human Services (DHS), Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD), Homeless Programs Office (HPO) issues this Request for Information (RFI) to seek information and recommendations from the general public, private sector, and community-based organizations, as well as religious organizations pursuant to Section 104, Public Law 104-193.

The mission of the DHS is to provide quality, efficient and effective services designed to help homeless individuals and families access permanent housing. The DHS seeks to enter into a contract with qualified service providers to assist homeless individuals and families to increase their stability in the health, housing and social areas so that they may be able to obtain and retain permanent housing, attain economic independence and self-sufficiency for the long-term.

Shelter programs funded under this opportunity will use a Housing First (HF) approach to provide safe, appropriate, and immediate temporary low-barrier shelter for people who have no viable alternatives, which serves as a first step to being quickly and permanent re-housed. Shelter services in a HF approach focus on helping people access permanent housing as rapidly as possible by removing barriers to program entry, assisting with quickly locating and accessing housing options, assisting to access income and benefits, and connecting to community services and supports to promote stability and prevent evictions and returns to homelessness. HF shelters use a low barrier approach to admissions and do not have pre-conditions for entry such as sobriety or completions of a treatment program. Shelter staff use assertive engagement strategies and assist people to develop housing plans immediately, obtain needed documents for the housing application process, obtain income through public benefits and employment, identify and locate suitable housing options and provide support through the housing location and application processes. Shelter staff will also help with preparation for housing by teaching tenancy skills and how to meet lease obligations. In HF shelters, additional rules beyond those most renters follow are discouraged and people are discharged only for behaviors that threaten the health and safety of themselves or other shelter residents.

The information and recommendations received through this RFI will assist the DHS in preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure the aforementioned services for the State Homeless Shelter Program.

An orientation meeting will not be held. Responses to this RFI are to be submitted in writing, no later than September 16, 2016, 4:30 PM Hawai'i Standard Time (HST), to:

Department of Human Services
Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division
Homeless Programs Office
820 Mililani Street, Suite 606
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Attn: June Tong, Program Specialist
Phone: (808) 586-7254
JTong@dhs.hawaii.gov

The Department may engage in further informal discussions to gather additional information and recommendations. The Department reserves the right to incorporate in a solicitation, if issued, for such contract, any information and recommendations present and/or submitted in response to this RFI. Neither the Department nor any respondent to the RFI bears any obligation under this RFI.