



# **Request for Information (RFI)**

## **Behavioral Health Master's Level Training Program**

**Applications due by 5:00 p.m. August 9, 2022**



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## 1 RFI Summary

The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), serves California Counties and Cities as an independent administrative and fiscal intergovernmental structure for jointly developing, funding, and implementing mental health services and educational programs at the state, regional, and local levels. (*See Gov. Code §6500 et seq.*)

In response to the ongoing workforce shortage the public mental health system in California is experiencing CalMHSA is seeking applicants prepared to provide an expanded master's degree Program to prepare students for State licensure as Marriage Family Therapist (MFT), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) professionals. Currently, twenty percent (20%) of County behavioral health budgeted master's level staff positions are vacant. This workforce shortage is exacerbated by an increase in demand for mental health services stemming from stressors related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued for the purpose of soliciting responses from interested educational entities with the experience and ability to provide an in-person and/or online master's degree Program that prepares students for State licensure as an MFT, LCSW or LPCC, CalMHSA is seeking to collaborate with the selected institution to ensure the curriculum is focused upon preparing individuals to work in the public mental health system. This program will involve CalMHSA pooling county resources and purchasing master's degree level slots from the selected educational institution (s). Counties and the selected program(s) will work together to vet program candidates for admission. Students who are selected to participate in the program will commit to at least four (4) years of service in California's public mental health system. Counties who participate in this program will also work with the selected educational institution to provide practicums and internships.

This request does not commit CalMHSA to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. In addition, respondents are advised that CalMHSA will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFI, if any is issued.

## 2 Project Scope of Work

The selected Respondent will have the expertise and ability to offer a program focused on the following:

1. Respondent must have the expertise and ability to offer Master's level degree(s) program(s) that prepare students for licensure within the State of California as an MFT, LCSW or LPCC.
2. The program will have an emphasis on preparing individuals to be ready to effectively work in the public mental health system.
3. Respondents must be an accredited institution.

4. Respondent must provide the number slots anticipated to be available to CalMHSA and the associated rates per slot.
5. Respondent must demonstrate their experience in providing a Master's Degree level program and certification.
6. Respondent must demonstrate their plan for curriculum specific to public mental health, including emphasis on services utilizing best practices to engage underserved and rural communities as well as serving individuals with co-occurring (mental health and substance abuse) disorders.
7. Respondent must demonstrate their plan for curriculum specific to training English speaking students to appropriately provide clinical services to individuals whose language spoken at home is other than English, e.g., Spanish.
8. Respondent understands that CalMHSA will administer the funding and slots on behalf of California's Counties.
9. Respondent understands that CalMHSA will collaborate with the institution in the development of the curriculum on behalf of California's Counties.
10. Respondent understands that CalMHSA may administer a separate Student Practicum/Internship Program Agreement with the institution on behalf of California's Counties.
11. Respondent understands CalMHSA will measure program outcomes to determine possible extension of the program.

### 3 Requested Information

The following response components are required for each Scope of Work. CalMHSA is not responsible for costs associated with the development of responses nor shipping or delivery of the same.

Please submit the following components as part of your response (5 Pages Maximum):

1. Background of organization including experience providing master's level education programs.
2. Background of the current curriculum and how it meets the business needs of the public mental health system, including a description of the clinical courses and training on engaging underserved and rural populations, as well as individuals with co-occurring disorders.
3. A timeline for implementing the program and the proposed number of students the program has the capacity to train each academic year. A proposed fee schedule per student.

### 4 Minimum Requirements

Respondent must meet the requirements below otherwise they may be considered non-responsive, and the proposal may be rejected at CalMHSA's sole discretion.

1. Respondent(s) must have a minimum of ten (10) years of experience in providing master's degree /accredited educational programs as requested in the Scope of Work.
2. Respondent must not currently have a Settlement Agreement or Claim against them with any of CalMHSA's member counties or any state agency. If there are current claims against the Respondent in excess of \$10,000 within the last Five (5) years, Respondent must disclose claims information as part of their response submittal.
3. Financial Information: Respondent is required to submit copies of Respondent's most recent audited or unaudited financial statements.

## 5 CalMHSA Rights and Responsibilities

1. CalMHSA is not responsible for representations made by any of its officers or employees prior to the execution of the Agreement unless such understanding or representation is included in this RFI or any written addenda to this RFI.
2. CalMHSA has the right to amend the RFI by written addendum. CalMHSA is responsible only for that which is expressly stated in the solicitation document and any authorized written addendum thereto. Such addendum shall be made available to each person or organization which CalMHSA records indicate has received this RFI. Should such addendum require additional information not previously requested, failure to address the requirements of such addendum may result in the Proposal Package not being considered, as determined in the sole discretion of CalMHSA. CalMHSA is not responsible for and shall not be bound by any representations otherwise made by any individual acting or purporting to act on its behalf.

## 6 CalMHSA Option to Reject Proposal Packages

CalMHSA, at its sole discretion, may reject any or all Proposal Packages submitted in response to this solicitation. CalMHSA shall not be liable for any cost incurred by a Respondent in connection with preparation and submittal of any Proposal Package.

## 7 Truth and Accuracy of Representatives

False, misleading, incomplete, or deceptively unresponsive statements in connection with a Proposal Package shall be sufficient cause for rejection of the Proposal Package. The evaluation and determination in this area shall be at CalMHSA's sole judgment and its judgment shall be final.

## 8 Submission Instructions and Requirements

### Proposal Timeline

EVENT	Key Dates
RFI Issued:	July 8, 2022
RFI Questions Due:	July 15, 2022
RFI Respondent's Conference (Questions Answered):	July 19, 2022
Deadline for Responses to be Submitted:	August 9, 2022
Application Review:	August 10-15, 2022

### Submittal Address

All Submissions must be submitted electronically using CalMHSA's e-Procurement Portal, Bonfire:

<https://calmhsa.bonfirehub.com/>.

### RFI Questions and Clarifications

All questions and requests must be submitted through CalMHSA's e-Procurement Portal at: <https://calmhsa.bonfirehub.com/>. The deadline to submit questions for this RFI is July 15, 2022. The Respondent Conference is scheduled as indicated above, with FAQ responding to the questions will be posted on **July 20, 2022, at** <https://calmhsa.bonfirehub.com/> and on the CalMHSA website.

To ensure all parties have access to the same information at the same time, except as stated below, CalMHSA will NOT respond to questions as they are received and will not accept telephonic questions.

It is the sole responsibility of the Respondent to refer to the FAQs, which will be posted on CalMHSA's e-Procurement Portal at <https://calmhsa.bonfirehub.com/>.

If a Respondent is unable to submit questions via the Bonfire e-Procurement Portal, the Respondent must provide CalMHSA with an email justification at [info@calmhsa.org](mailto:info@calmhsa.org) outlining why the Respondent is unable to do so.

If a question relates to a proprietary/trade secrets aspect of a proposal and the question would expose proprietary information if disclosed to competitors, the Respondent must mark the question as "CONFIDENTIAL." With the question, the Respondent must submit a statement explaining why the question is sensitive. If CalMHSA concurs that the disclosure of the question or answer would expose proprietary information, the question will be answered by email reply, and both the question and answer will be kept confidential. If CalMHSA does not concur regarding the proprietary nature of the question, the question will not be answered in this manner and the vendor will be notified and asked whether the vendor would like the question to receive a public response or no response at all.

## **Withdraw**

A Respondent may withdraw or amend its proposal, but only before the Application Submittal Deadline, directly on CalMHSA's e-Procurement Portal at <https://calmhsa.bonfirehub.com/>.

## **Review of Applications**

CalMHSA will receive all applications and review for completeness and adherence to the RFI rules stated in this document. Following the initial review, all qualified applications will be reviewed and scored by a review panel. The evaluation panel will conduct a fair and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFI.

The review panel is comprised of individuals with varied backgrounds, to include professional expertise, lived experience, personal knowledge, etc. Panelists' information will not be disclosed as a matter of confidentiality. CalMHSA is committed to ensuring the RFI review panel is representative of California's racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

Selection will not be based exclusively on price or highest score. CalMHSA reserves the right to negotiate with Respondents who, in the opinion of the review panel, have submitted the best proposal in an attempt to reach an agreement. If no agreement is reached, CalMHSA may negotiate with other Respondents or may choose to extend the proposal period. CalMHSA also reserves the right to meet with vendors to gather additional information. Additional information may include, but is not limited to, a demonstration of skills described in the proposal.

## **Protest Procedures**

Protests must be received no later than Five (5) business days after the Notice of Intent to Award is posted on the CalMHSA website. The sole bases for protest are that the award was (1) in violation of law, (2) in violation of the provisions of this RFI, or (3) in violation of CalMHSA's procurement process. All protests must be in writing and (1) state in detail each and every ground asserted for the protest, citing to the law, RFI provision, or particular provision of the procurement policy on which the protest is based; (2) explain

why the error prevented the aggrieved organization from being awarded the contract; and (3) identify the remedy sought.

Written protests can be sent to the following:

Via Email:

[info@calmhsa.org](mailto:info@calmhsa.org)

Via Certified Mail:

CalMHSA  
Attn: Chief Administrative Officer  
PO Box 22967  
Sacramento, CA 95822

Within 14 days of receipt of any protest, CalMHSA's Executive Director will provide a written decision which shall be final upon transmission to the protesting party. If the Executive Director determines that the error identified by the protesting party has deprived that party from receiving the contract, the Executive Director may act to rectify the error, including but not limited to: cancellation of the RFI or proposed contract, correction or other revision of the awarded contract, termination of an improperly awarded contract, or affirmation of an existing contract if the discovered defect is immaterial or the Executive Director determines that affirmation is in the best interest of CalMHSA.

### **Notice Regarding Public Records Act Request**

CalMHSA is subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act and the California Public Records Act. All proposals received for this RFI are ultimately subject to public review; however, during the competitive bid process, all proposals will be kept confidential. Upon award and execution of the contract by awardee(s), all proposals and supplemental information will be subject to public review, with the exception of those elements of a proposal which contain elements that are clearly marked as confidential or trade secrets. Any such designation should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the reason the information is non-public and protected from disclosure under California law. CalMHSA reserves the right to disregard such designations if they have been applied indiscriminately to non-protected information, and in no event shall CalMHSA, its agents, representatives, consultants, Directors, or Officers be liable to a responding party for the intentional or inadvertent disclosure of all or a portion of a proposal submitted under this RFI, regardless of whether it was marked as confidential or trade secret.

Although the California Public Records Act allows certain confidential or trade secret information to be protected from disclosure, CalMHSA may not be in a position to establish that the information submitted is protected. If CalMHSA receives a request for public disclosure of all or any portion of a proposal that has been designated as exempt from disclosure, CalMHSA will use reasonable efforts to notify the responding party of the request and give such party an opportunity to assert, at its own expense, a claimed exception under the California Public Records Act or other applicable law within the time period specified in the notice issued by CalMHSA and allowed under the California Public Records Act.





## Format of Proposal

Proposals must be submitted through CalMHSA's e-Procurement Portal at: <https://CalMHSA.bonfirehub.com/>. Submissions by other methods will not be accepted. Internet Explorer 11, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, or Mozilla Firefox. JavaScript must be enabled.

Browser cookies must be enabled. Respondents should contact Bonfire at [Support@GoBonfire.com](mailto:Support@GoBonfire.com) for technical questions related to submissions or visit Bonfire's help forum at: <https://bonfirehub.zendesk.com/hc>.

Submission materials should be prepared in the file formats listed under Requested Information for this opportunity in the Bonfire Portal. All PDFs documents must be formatted in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double spaced, unless otherwise indicated in the Requested Information. The maximum upload file size is 1000 MB. Documents should not be embedded within uploaded files, as the embedded files will not be accessible or evaluated.