

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR

**Parent Pathways: Models for Single Parents Pursuing Postsecondary Training &
Education**

ISSUING OFFICE

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services
Office of Administration
Bureau of Procurement & Contract Management
Room 832 Health and Welfare Building
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

RFA NUMBER

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REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR

Parent Pathways: Models for Single Parents Pursuing Postsecondary Education & Training

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Commonwealth will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

| Activity | Responsibility | Date |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Deadline to submit questions via email to RA-pwrfaquestions@pa.gov | Potential Applicants | February 21, 2020 12:00 PM EST |
| Pre-Application Webinar: Register at the following link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1805080738683286541 | Potential Applicants/DHS | February 20, 2020 2:00 PM EST |
| Answers to Potential Applicant questions posted to the DGS website (http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/) no later than this date. | DHS | March 4, 2020 |
| Please monitor website for all communications regarding the RFA. | Potential Applicants | Ongoing |
| Sealed application must be received by the Issuing Office at: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Bureau of Procurement & Contract Management Room 832, Health and Welfare Building Harrisburg, PA 17120 | Applicants | March 23, 2020 12:00 PM EST |

PART I

GENERAL INFORMATION

- I-1. Purpose.** This Request for Applications (“RFA”) provides to those interested in submitting applications for the subject procurement (“Applicants”) sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit applications for the Department of Human Service’s (“Department” or “DHS”) consideration on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (“Commonwealth”). Through this procurement, the Department is seeking qualified entities to establish community-based comprehensive models to support access to, and success in, postsecondary education and training for single parents. In Phase 1 of the procurement, the Department intends to provide technical assistance to selected Applicants for the development of a model implementation plan. At its option, DHS will potentially award start-up funding to some or all of the selected Applicants for the implementation of proposed models as **Parent Pathways Models** (“Project”).
- I-2. Issuing Office.** The Department's Office of Administration, Bureau of Procurement & Contract Management (“Issuing Office”) has issued this RFA on behalf of DHS’s Office of Secretary. The sole point of contact in the Commonwealth for this RFA shall be Ross Bowman, RA-pwrfaquestions@pa.gov, the Issuing Officer for this RFA. Please refer all inquiries to the Issuing Officer.
- I-3. Scope.** This RFA contains instructions governing the requested applications, including the requirements for the information and material to be included; a description of the service to be provided; requirements that Applicants must meet to be eligible for consideration; general evaluation criteria; and other requirements specific to this RFA.
- I-4. Problem Statement.** The Department, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (“PDE”), developed the Parent Pathways initiative to increase economic independence through postsecondary education, leading to family sustaining careers and improved quality of life for both parents and children. Specifically, the Parent Pathways’ objective is to increase access to and success in postsecondary education for single parents by reducing barriers and utilizing a two-generational programming approach to improve family outcomes related to education, financial security, health, and well-being.

The Department is seeking to invest in holistic models that address the needs of parents and children and successfully leverage partnerships to offer sustainable solutions to the barriers often facing families experiencing economic challenges. The Department is seeking Applicants for Parent Pathways Models who will provide or partner with a minimum of three (3) major community resources that deliver the core components of the Parent Pathways Model. Specifically, these core components are: 1) postsecondary training and education, 2) housing support, and 3) two-generational programming. The Department intends to select up to seven (7) awardees to receive technical assistance and the opportunity to participate in a learning network to support the development of

selected Applicants' implementation plan. DHS then will review the selected Applicants' implementation plans and, at its option and in its sole discretion, will award funding for the implementation of those plans that best meet the objectives of the Parent Pathways initiative. In making the determination, DHS may use the tentative considerations listed in **Appendix C**. Through the technical assistance that is provided by the Department and in its sole discretion, the Department may modify and adjust these considerations.

In **Appendix B**, the Department identifies the five (5) geographical areas ("Service Regions") in which the Department seeks to establish at least one Parent Pathways Model.

- I-5. Method of Award.** Applicants may apply for one or multiple Service Regions. Applicants must submit a separate Application (Technical only) for each Service Region for which it seeks to apply. The Department will separately evaluate each Application, and will award agreements as described in **Part III, Section III-6**.
- I-6. Type of Agreement.** The Department intends to award multiple grants as a result of this RFA. If the Department enters into agreements as a result of this RFA, the agreements will be Grant Agreements (a draft agreement is attached to this RFA as **Appendix F**), and will include the Standard Grant Terms and Conditions (Rider 4) and the DHS Addendum, including the applicable Audit Clause (Rider 5). Rider 2 Work Statement will consist of Part IV of this RFA and the selected application.

The Department has structured the grant into two phases. In Phase 1, selected Applicants shall participate in technical assistance provided by DHS and are required to develop and submit to DHS an implementation plan for a Parent Pathways Model. During Phase 1, the Department will provide funding for travel costs for in-person meetings in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as scheduled by the Department. In Phase 2, the Department has the option of selecting some, none or all of the developed plans for start-up funding for the actual implementation of the proposed model.

DHS, in its sole discretion, may undertake negotiations with successful Applicants whose applications, in the judgment of DHS, show them to be qualified, responsible and capable of performing the Project.

- I-7. Rejection of Applications.** The Department may, in its sole and complete discretion, reject any application received as a result of this RFA.
- I-8. Incurring Costs.** The Department is not liable for any costs incurred by an Applicant in the preparation and submission of its application, in participating in the RFA process or in anticipation of award of the agreement.
- I-9. Pre-Application Webinar.** DHS will hold a pre-application webinar as specified in the Calendar of Events. The purpose of this webinar is to provide an opportunity for clarification of the RFA. Applicants should forward all questions to the Issuing Officer in accordance with Part I, Section I-10 to afford adequate time for analysis before DHS

provides an answer. Applicants may also ask questions during the webinar. The pre-application webinar is for information only. Any answers furnished during the webinar will not be official until they have been verified, in writing, by DHS. **Participation in the pre-application webinar is optional, but strongly encouraged.**

- I-10. Questions and Answers.** If an Applicant has any questions regarding this RFA, the Applicant must submit the questions via email (**with the subject line “RFA 14-19 Question”**) to the RFA Issuing Officer named in **Part I, Section I-2** of the RFA. If the Applicant has questions, they must be submitted via email **no later than** the date indicated on the Calendar of Events. The Applicant shall not attempt to contact the RFA Issuing Officer by any other means. The Department will post the answers to the questions on the Department of General Services (“DGS”) website by the date stated on the Calendar of Events.

An Applicant who submits a question *after* the deadline date for receipt of questions indicated on the Calendar of Events risks that its application will not be responsive or competitive because the Department is not able to respond before the application receipt date or in sufficient time for the Applicant to prepare a responsive or competitive application. When questions are submitted after the deadline date indicated on the Calendar of Events, the Issuing Officer *may* respond to questions of an administrative nature by directing the questioning Applicant to specific provisions in the RFA. To the extent that DHS decides to respond to a non-administrative question *after* the deadline date for receipt of questions indicated on the Calendar of Events, the answer will be provided to all Applicants through an addendum.

All questions and responses as posted on the DGS website are considered an addendum to, and part of, this RFA in accordance with RFA **Part I, Section I-11** of this RFA. The Department shall not be bound by any verbal information nor shall it be bound by any written information that is either contained within the RFA or formally issued as an addendum.

- I-11. Addenda to the RFA.** If the Department deems it necessary to revise any part of this RFA before the application response date, the Department will post an addendum to the DGS website at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/Search.aspx>. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to periodically check the website for any new information or addenda to the RFA.

- I-12. Response Date.** To be considered for selection, hard copies of applications must arrive at the Issuing Office **on or before** the time and date specified in the RFA Calendar of Events. The Department will **not** accept applications via email or facsimile transmission. Applicants who send applications by mail or other delivery service should allow sufficient delivery time to provide for timely receipt of their applications. If, due to inclement weather, natural disaster, or any other cause, the Commonwealth office location to which applications are to be returned is closed on the application response date, the deadline for submission will be automatically extended until the next Commonwealth business day on which the office is open, unless the Issuing Office

otherwise notifies Applicants. The hour for submission of applications shall remain the same. The Department will reject unopened, any late applications.

I-13. Applications. Applicants must submit a separate application for each Service Region for which it is applying. To be considered, Applicants must submit a complete response to this RFA to the Issuing Office using the format provided in **Part II**, providing **one (1) original and eight (8) paper copies of the Technical Submittal**. In addition to the paper copies of the application, Applicants shall submit **two complete and exact** copies of the entire application (Technical, along with all requested documents; excluding financial capability) on CD-ROM or Flash Drive in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format. The electronic copy must be a mirror image of the paper copy and any spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel. Additionally, on the CD-ROM or Flash Drive, include separate folders which contain a complete and exact copy of the entire Technical Submittal in a searchable PDF (portable device format). To the extent that the Applicant designates information as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected in accordance with **Part I, Section I-18** of this RFA, the Applicant must also include one (1) redacted version of the Technical Submittal, excluding financial capability on CD-ROM or Flash Drive in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format. Applicants may not lock or protect any cells or tabs. The CD-ROM or Flash Drive should clearly identify the Applicant and include the name and version number of the virus scanning software that was used to scan the CD-ROM or Flash Drive before it was submitted. Applicants should ensure that no cost information is in the Technical Submittal. The Applicant shall make no other distribution of its application to any other Applicant or Commonwealth official or Commonwealth consultant. Each application page should be numbered for ease of reference. An official authorized to bind the Applicant to its provisions must sign the application. If the official signs the Application Cover Sheet (**Appendix A**) and the Application Cover Sheet is attached to the Applicant's application, the requirement will be met. For this RFA, the application must remain valid for **120** days or until an agreement is fully executed. If the Department selects the Applicant's application for award, the contents of the selected Applicant's application will become, except to the extent the contents are changed through negotiations, grant obligations.

Each Applicant submitting an application specifically waives any right to withdraw or modify it, except that the Applicant may withdraw its application by written notice received at the Department's address for application delivery prior to the exact hour and date specified for application receipt. An Applicant or its authorized representative may withdraw its application in person prior to the exact hour and date set for application receipt, provided the withdrawing person provides appropriate identification and signs a receipt for the application. An Applicant may modify its submitted application prior to the exact hour and date set for application receipt only by submitting a new sealed application or sealed modification that complies with the RFA requirements

I-14. Economy of Preparation. Applicants should prepare applications simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Applicant's ability to meet the requirements of the RFA.

- I-15. Alternate Applications.** The Department has identified the basic approach to meeting its requirements, allowing Applicants to be creative and propose their best solution to meeting these requirements. The Department will not accept alternate applications, including alternate additional applications by an Applicant for the same Service Region.
- I-16. Discussions for Clarification.** Applicants may be required to make an oral or written clarification of their Applications to the Department to ensure thorough mutual understanding and Applicant responsiveness to the solicitation requirements. The Department will initiate requests for clarification. Clarifications may occur at any stage of the evaluation and selection process, prior to the award of an agreement.
- I-17. Prime Grantee Responsibilities.** The grant will require the selected Applicant to assume responsibility for all services offered in its Application whether it provides them itself directly or indirectly. The Department will consider the selected Applicant to be the sole point of contact regarding all agreement matters.
- I-18. Application Contents.**
- A. Confidential Information.** The Commonwealth is not requesting, and does not require, confidential proprietary information or trade secrets to be included as part of Applicants' submissions in order to evaluate applications. Accordingly, except as provided, Applicants should not label applications as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected. Any Applicant who determines that it must divulge such information as part of its application must submit the signed written statement described in Subsection C below and must additionally provide a redacted version of its application in accordance with **Part I, Section I-13** of this RFA, which removes only the confidential proprietary information and trade secrets, for required public disclosure purposes.
 - B. Commonwealth Use.** All material submitted with the application shall be considered the property of the Commonwealth and may be returned only at the Department's option. The Commonwealth has the right to use any or all ideas not protected by intellectual property rights that are presented in any application regardless of whether the application becomes part of a grant. Notwithstanding any Applicant copyright designations contained on applications, the Commonwealth shall have the right to make copies and distribute applications internally and to comply with public record or other disclosure requirements under the provisions of any Commonwealth or United States statute or regulation, or rule or order of any court of competent jurisdiction.
 - C. Public Disclosure.** After the award of a grant, all applications are subject to disclosure in response to a request for public records made under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know-Law, 65 P.S. § 67.101, et seq. If an application contains confidential proprietary information or trade secrets, a signed written statement to this effect must be provided with the submission in accordance with 65 P.S. § 67.707(b) for the information to be considered exempt under 65 P.S. § 67.708(b)(11) from public records requests. Refer to **Appendix E** of the RFA for a Trade Secret Confidential

Proprietary Information Notice Form that may be utilized as the signed written statement, if applicable.

- I-19. News Releases.** Applicants shall not issue news releases, Internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of DHS, and then only in coordination with DHS.
- I-20. Restriction of Contact.** From the issue date of this RFA until DHS selects applications for award, the Issuing Officer is the sole point of contact concerning this RFA. Any violation of this condition may be cause for DHS to reject the offending Applicant's application. If DHS later discovers that the Applicant has engaged in any violations of this condition, DHS may reject the offending Applicant's application or rescind its grant award. An Applicant who shares information contained in its application with other Commonwealth personnel, competing Applicants or third parties may be disqualified.
- I-21. DHS Participation.** Throughout the Project, the Department, its designee or both will coordinate participation in the learning network and will facilitate technical assistance as needed to develop the implementation plan. Technical assistance may include access to Parent Pathways model templates for development of an implementation plan, one-on-one development assistance, access to subject matter experts and other selected Applicants, and information sharing. The selected Applicants also will have access to a Project Manager throughout Phase One and Phase Two of the Project. The Project Manager will monitor all Grantee reporting and invoicing resulting from this RFA.

If selected for implementation of a Parent Pathways Model, an Applicant shall provide all services, supplies, facilities, and other support necessary to complete the implementation plan.

- I-22. Term of Agreement.** The term of the agreement will commence on the Effective Date and will be for a period of one (1) year. The DHS may extend a Grant Agreement on the same terms and conditions for up to four (4) additional one (1) year periods. DHS will fix the Effective Date after the grant has been fully executed by the selected Applicant and by the Commonwealth and all approvals required by Commonwealth grant procedures have been obtained. The selected Applicant shall not start the performance of any work prior to the Effective Date of the Agreement and the Commonwealth shall not be liable to pay the selected Applicant for any service or work performed or expenses incurred before the Effective Date of the agreement.
- I-23. Applicant's Representations and Authorizations.** By submitting its application, each Applicant understands, represents, and acknowledges that:
 - A.** Applicant's information and representations in the application are material and important, and DHS will rely upon the contents of the application in awarding the agreement. The Commonwealth may treat any misstatement, omission, or misrepresentation as fraudulent concealment of the true facts relating to the application, submission, punishable pursuant to 18 Pa. C.S. § 4905.

- B.** The Applicant has arrived at the price(s) and amounts in its application independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Applicant or potential Applicant.
- C.** The Applicant has not disclosed the price(s), the amount of the application, nor the approximate price(s) or amount(s) of its application to any other firm or person who is an Applicant or potential Applicant for this RFA, and the Applicant shall not disclose any of these items on or before the application submission deadline.
- D.** The Applicant has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting an application on this grant, or to submit an application higher than this application, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive application or other form of complementary application.
- E.** The Applicant makes its application in good faith and not pursuant to any agreement or discussion with, or inducement from, any firm or person to submit a complementary or other noncompetitive application.
- F.** To the best knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant, the Applicant, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not in the last **four (4)** years been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Applicant has disclosed in its application.
- G.** To the best of the knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant and except as the Applicant has otherwise disclosed in its application, the Applicant has no outstanding, delinquent obligations to the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, any state tax liability not being contested on appeal or other obligation of the Applicant that is owed to the Commonwealth.
- H.** The Applicant is not currently under suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth, any other state or the federal government, and if the Applicant cannot so certify, it shall submit along with its application a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.
- I.** The Applicant has not made, under separate contract or agreement with DHS, any recommendations to DHS concerning the need for the services described in its application or the specifications for the services described in the application.
- J.** Each Applicant, by submitting its application, authorizes Commonwealth agencies to release to the Commonwealth information concerning the Applicant's Pennsylvania taxes, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation liabilities.

K. Until the selected Applicant receives a fully executed and approved written agreement from DHS, no legal and valid agreement, in law or in equity, exists and the Applicant shall not begin to perform.

L. The Applicant is not currently engaged and will not during the duration of the agreement engage, in a boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction which the Commonwealth is prohibited by Congressional statute from engaging in trade or commerce.

I-24. Notification of Selection. The Department will notify all Applicants in writing of the selected Applicants after DHS has determined, taking into consideration all the evaluation factors, the applications that are the most advantageous and able to meet the Department's intended goals and outcomes for this initiative. Applicants whose applications are not selected will be notified when the Department has received the final agreements signed by the selected Applicants.

I-25. Use of Electronic Versions of this RFA. This RFA is being made available by electronic means. If an Applicant electronically accepts the RFA, the Applicant accepts full responsibility to ensure that no changes are made to the RFA. In the event of a conflict between a version of the RFA in the Applicant's possession and DHS's version of the RFA, the Department's version shall govern.

PART II

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- II-1. Applicant Eligibility.** Applicants must have experience, qualifications, and proven success in providing, supporting, or coordinating one or more of the three core components of the Parent Pathways initiative: 1) postsecondary education and training, 2) housing support, and 3) two-generational programming.

Applicants may be but are not limited to the following types of entities:

- A. Postsecondary education institutions, including:
 - 1. Private or public colleges or universities
 - 2. Community colleges
 - 3. Career or technical schools
 - 4. Apprenticeship or certificate programs
- B. Nonprofit organizations or Community-based organizations
- C. Public housing authorities or nonprofit housing providers
- D. Local workforce development boards
- E. Community action agencies

- II-2. Applicant Checklist.** Applicants must submit their Application in the format outlined below and must submit a separate application for each Service Region for which they are applying. Use a standard Arial 12-point font and single spacing. Each application shall consist of the following one sealed submittal.

- A. Technical Submittal, which consists of the following tabs:
 - 1. Completed Application Cover Sheet (Appendix A)
 - 2. Statement of the Project, in response to Part IV-3
 - 3. Applicant Qualifications in response to Part IV-4
 - 4. Personnel in response to Part IV-5
 - 5. Financial Capability, in response to Part IV-6
 - 6. Work Statement, in response to Part IV-7
 - 7. Reporting and Other Grant Requirements, in response to Part IV-8
 - 8. Partnerships and Letters of Intent, in response to Part IV-9
 - 9. Letters of Recommendation, in response to Part IV-10

The Department may request additional information or may make investigations that, in its opinion, are necessary to determine the Applicant's ability to perform the Project, and the Applicant shall furnish to the Department all requested information and data. DHS may reject any application if the evidence submitted or investigation fails to satisfy DHS that the Applicant is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFA and to complete the Project as specified.

- II-3. Application Cover Page.** Applicants must complete the Application Cover Sheet (Appendix A). For each application being submitted, the Applicant must identify on the

Application Cover Page, the Service Region where services will be provided if selected for a Parent Pathways Model grant. See Appendix B for the Service Regions.

PART III

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

III-1. Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements. To be eligible for selection, an Application must:

- A. Be timely received from an Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-12**); and
- B. Be properly signed by the Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-13**).

III-2. Technical Nonconforming Applications. The two (2) Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements set forth in **Section III-1** above are the only RFA requirements that the Commonwealth will consider to be *non-waivable*. The Department may in its sole discretion, (1) waive any other technical or immaterial nonconformities in an Applicant's application, (2) allow the Applicant to cure the nonconformity, or (3) consider the nonconformity in the scoring of the Applicant's application.

III-3. Evaluation. DHS has selected a committee of qualified personnel to review and evaluate timely submitted Applications. The Department will separately evaluate applications by Services Region. DHS will notify in writing of its selection for grant award those responsible Applicants whose applications are determined to be the most advantageous to the Commonwealth as determined by DHS after taking into consideration all the evaluation factors.

III-4. Evaluation Criteria. The following criteria will be used in evaluating each application:

- A. **Technical:** The Department has established the weight for the Technical criterion for this RFA as **one hundred percent (100%)** of the total points. In evaluating the Technical Submittal, DHS will include the following considerations:
 - **Understanding of the Project.** This includes the Applicant's understanding of the needs that generated the RFA, the conditions in their local community necessitating a Parent Pathways Model, and the nature and scope of the work involved.
 - **Soundness of Approach.** This includes the Applicant's approach for completion of all requirements and services defined in this RFA, whether the application is responsive to all requirements of the RFA and if it meets the Project's objectives.
 - **Applicant Qualifications.** This includes the ability of the Applicant to satisfy the requirements and terms of the RFA including its ability to undertake a project of the scope and size of the Project and the quality, relevancy, recentness and results of previous projects and activities.
 - **Personnel Qualifications.** This includes the competence of professional personnel who would be assigned to the Project by the Applicant. Qualification of professional personnel will be measured by experience and education with reference to experience with services similar to those described in the RFA.

The final Technical scores for each Service Region are determined by giving the maximum number of technical points available to the application with the highest raw technical score for each Service Region. The remaining applications for each Service Region are rated by applying the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Raw Technical Score of Application Being Scored}}{\text{Highest Raw Technical Score}} \times A = \text{Final Technical Score}$$

A = Maximum number of Technical Points for technical criterion.

III-5. Applicant Responsibility. To be responsible, an Applicant must submit a responsive application and possess the capability to fully perform the agreement requirements in all respects and the integrity and reliability for the good faith performance of the agreement.

In order for an Applicant to be considered responsible for this RFA and selection for agreement negotiations:

- The total raw score for the technical submittal of the Applicant's application must be greater than or equal to 75% of the available raw technical points; and
- The Applicant's financial information must demonstrate that the Applicant possesses the financial capability to ensure good faith performance of the agreement. The Commonwealth will review the Applicant's previous three (3) financial statements, any additional information received from the Applicant, and any other publicly available financial information concerning the Applicant and assess each Applicant's financial capability based on calculating and analyzing various financial ratios, and comparison with industry standards and trends.

The Department will award an agreement only to an Applicant determined to be responsible in accordance with the most current version of Commonwealth Management Directive 215.9, Contractor Responsibility Program.

III-6. Final Ranking and Award.

- A. Depending on the availability of funding, the Department intends to award grants for Phase 1 services for up to seven (7) responsible Applicants.
- B. Based on the scoring method described in Section III-3, the Department will score all applications submitted by responsible Applicants and select the highest scoring application for each Service Region, potentially resulting in the selection of five applications. After the initial applications are selected, the Department will, in its sole discretion, rescore the remaining applications for all Services Regions using the scoring method described in Section III-3 and may select additional applications. The Department will not select more than one additional application for the same Service Region.

- C.** If the Department determines that no responsible Applicant exists for a specific Service Region, the Department will not award a Phase 1 grant for that Service Region and may either issue a new procurement for that Service Region or award a Phase 1 grant to another Service Region based on the rescoring of applications described in this section.
- D.** The Department has the discretion to reject all Applications or cancel the RFA, at any time prior to the time an agreement is fully executed, when it is in the best interests of the Commonwealth. The reasons for the rejection or cancellation shall be made part of the RFA file.

PART IV

TECHNICAL SUBMITTAL

IV-1. Nature and Scope. Governor Wolf’s Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget includes \$2.5 million for the Parent Pathways initiative, led by the Department in collaboration with PDE. Through the Parent Pathways initiative, the Department is seeking to foster the establishment of community-based comprehensive models to support access to, and success in, postsecondary education and training for single parents. In addition to engaging Applicants capable of providing the required grant services, the Department is seeking Applicants capable of developing model projects that become self-sustaining, providing for the continuation of services beyond the term of the grant. The Department is interested in projects that can lay the groundwork for systemic, long-term improvements in the accessibility of services.

The Parent Pathways initiative is a whole-family approach to providing wraparound support to low-income, single parents pursuing college or other postsecondary education or training options. As part of this initiative, the Department is seeking Applicants capable of bringing the following three (3) core components together in a Parent Pathways Model:

| COMPONENT | RATIONALE |
|---|--|
| <p>Postsecondary education and training</p> <p>A Parent Pathways Model must include support and connections for single parents to postsecondary options leading to economic self-sufficiency. Postsecondary options may include community colleges, four-year universities, career and technical schools, apprenticeships, or other programs for career skill development. One or multiple postsecondary options may be part of a model.</p> | <p>Postsecondary credentials are noted as an important factor contributing to the increased likelihood of reaching family-sustaining wages. The Institute for Women’s Policy Research has found that “with each additional level of education, single mothers experience a roughly 32 percent average decline in the likelihood of living with poverty.” Most good paying jobs will need education or training after high school; postsecondary education and training are the most promising paths toward economic stability.</p> |
| <p>Housing supports</p> <p>Housing and housing support address one of the major barriers faced by families in poverty and create a stable environment. A Parent Pathways Model must have an ability to directly provide housing, or a comprehensive plan to address housing needs and connect people to stable housing. One or multiple housing resources may be part of the model.</p> | <p>A stable living arrangement is vital to healthy child development and to the success of the parent at home, school and work. According to the American Community Survey, nearly 60 percent of Pennsylvania children under the age of five live in economically at-risk families. Families with low incomes are 50 percent more likely to have moved in the past year and nearly three times as likely to rent, rather than own a home.</p> |

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|---|---|
| <p>Two-generational programming</p> <p>A Parent Pathways model must include two-generational programming. Two-generational approaches design and deliver services that intentionally strengthen the whole family, so that all generations within the family experience improved economic, housing, and educational outcomes. Examples of two-generational programming include program such as early childhood education, family literacy, home visiting, family health initiatives, and psychosocial supports. Additional information can be found at: https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/what-is-2gen/. <u>One or multiple resources may be a part of the model.</u></p> | <p>The development of children and parents is inextricably linked; parents gain motivation to succeed from their children, and vice versa. Children who are encouraged and supported through high-quality early care and education programs demonstrate significant progress in acquiring early learning skills. These children are also more likely to graduate from high school, to attend postsecondary education or quality job training programs, and be valuable members of the workforce</p> |
|---|---|

Through this RFA, DHS will support selected Applicants and their partners in the development and possible implementation of Parent Pathways Models that integrate the three components to increase opportunities for families and improve conditions in their communities. A list of tentative considerations to be used by the Department in selecting an implementation plan for implementation funding is included in **Appendix C**. Additional information regarding the development of the Parent Pathways initiative can be found at this website: <https://padlet.com/eita/ParentPathways>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the information provided.

IV-2. Technical Assistance and Funding Opportunity. The Project includes two (2) phases:

A. Phase 1 - Technical Assistance and Implementation Plan Development. The Department anticipates that Phase 1 will last approximately four (4) months from the Effective Date. During this phase, the Department directly or indirectly through a Contractor will provide technical assistance to selected Applicants.

Along with other selected Applicants, the selected Applicants must participate in a learning network composed of subject matter experts. Throughout Phase 1, selected Applicants and their partners shall refine their model design and develop a detailed implementation plan. The Department (or its designees) will provide various types of technical assistance to selected Applicants, and selected Applicants must participate in all technical assistance activities provided by the Department and its Contractor. These activities may consist of the following

1. An in-person kick-off meeting;
2. Webinar presentations by subject matter experts in the fields of postsecondary education, housing support, and two-generational programming;

3. Facilitated conference calls with state agencies, subject matter experts, and other existing programs with similar goals to discuss progress of implementation plan development and information sharing;
4. Access to templates for model and implementation design and development to provide for consistent format;
5. One-on-one technical assistance on model design and development, including regular conference calls and at least one (1) site visit per selected Applicant; and
6. Facilitated planning meetings with community partners and subject matter experts.

A tentative 12-week schedule starting from the Effective Date of the grant agreement for Phase 1 is provided below,

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Week one: | In-person kick-off meeting with learning network |
| Weeks four-seven: | Model development and in-person site visits |
| Week ten: | Draft implementation plan submission |
| Week eleven: | Implementation plan feedback |
| Week twelve: | Implementation plan submission |

Selected Applicants must submit a draft implementation plan to the Department within ten (10) weeks of the Effective Date of the Grant Agreement. The Department will review and provide feedback. At the conclusion of Phase 1, the selected Applicants will submit a detailed implementation plan to establish a designated Parent Pathways Model in their community. The Department will review the submitted plans. In its sole and complete discretion and based on its review, the Department may select some, all or none of the selected Applicants for Phase 2 implementation funding. In making the determination, DHS may use the tentative considerations listed in **Appendix C**. In its sole discretion, the Department may modify and adjust these considerations.

- B. Phase 2 - Funding Award and Implementation.** If the Department selects an implementation plan for Phase 2 funding, DHS will award funding of up to \$500,000 for each selected implementation plan. The amount awarded for implementation funding will be dependent on the number of selected Applicants whose plans are approved for Phase 2 funding, and the associated budget request accompanying the implementation plan.

If selected for implementation funding, the selected Applicant must complete their plan and provide services to participants in accordance with its approved implementation plan as may be modified by Applicant and the Department no later than January 2021. The approved implementation plan will become part of the selected Applicant's Grant Agreement. The Applicants selected for Phase 2 funding also must continue to participate in the learning network facilitated by the Department through the implementation period.

- III-3. Statement of the Project.** State in succinct terms your understanding of the Project and the services required by this RFA. The Applicant's response must demonstrate that the Applicant fully understands the scope and objectives of the services to be provided, the

Applicant's responsibilities, and how the Applicant will effectively manage the agreement.

In addition, Applicants must describe the challenges in their community that will be addressed by a Parent Pathways Model, including:

1. The geographic area within the Service Region where services will be delivered, including counties served.
2. Workforce and economic conditions, including labor market information, educational attainment data, and demographic information, to support the need for a Parent Pathways Model.
3. Gaps in services and resources that the Parent Pathways Model will address.

IV-4. Applicant Qualifications. Applicants should describe their experience, qualifications, and results in providing, supporting, or coordinating one or more of the three core components of the Parent Pathways initiative, including:

- A. The Applicant's organization, history and its mission.
- B. The Applicant's role in the community, its collaborative relationships with community groups and how long it has been serving the community.
- C. Any prior experience with related target populations and similar types of projects.
- D. The main role the Applicant anticipates performing in the Parent Pathways, initiative.

IV-5. Personnel. For Phase 1, include the number of executive and professional personnel, analysts, researchers, programmers, consultants, and staff, who will be engaged in the work. For key personnel, include the employee's name and, through a resume or similar document, the Project personnel's education and experience in similar in size and scope projects. Indicate the responsibilities each individual will have in the Project and how long each has been with your company. For Phase 1, key personnel include a Project Lead and other key personnel named by the Applicant.

IV-6. Financial Capability. Describe your company's financial stability and economic capability to perform the agreement. Provide your company's financial statements (audited, if available) for the past three (3) fiscal years. Financial statements must include the company's Balance Sheet and income Statement or Profit/Loss Statements. Also include a Dun & Bradstreet comprehensive report, if available. If your company is a publicly traded company, please provide a link to your financial records on your company website in lieu of providing hardcopies. The Commonwealth may request additional information to evaluate an Applicant's financial capability.

IV-7. Work Statement. The Work Statement must include a complete response to the following items. Applicants shall describe:

- A. Any work that has already been started in the community or steps the Applicant or their proposed Project partners have taken, that will be beneficial in the Parent Pathways plan development.

- B. An initial Project summary that will be used as a basis for the development of a detailed implementation plan and which includes the three (3) core components of the initiative.
- C. Funding sources that will contribute to the financial sustainability of the model.
- D. A list and description of any other partnerships or resources in the community that will be part of successful implementation.
- E. The topics and activities that would be beneficial during the technical assistance phase, and how the Applicant sees this phase supporting the development of the model.
- F. How the Applicant plans to engage individuals and families who will receive services through the model during the development phase.
- G. An initial list of the outcomes the Applicant would like to achieve, how the Applicant might collect data, and a plan for reporting.

IV-8. Reporting and Other Grant Requirements. If selected Applicants are awarded implementation funding for Phase 2, selected Applicants must:

- A. Participate in all monitoring activities of the Department, its representatives, and other state and federal agencies as well as participate in meetings, and site visits.
- B. Submit a monthly report of progress, issues, activities, and data elements within the scope of the implementation plan criteria to the Department no later than the 15th of every month. The report shall identify if activities are proceeding according to the implementation plan and timeline and explain any deviations from the plan. The selected Applicants shall participate in monthly conference calls with the Department to review the report.
- C. Submit an annual summary report of progress, issues, activities, and data elements within the scope of the implementation plan criteria to the Department no later than 30 days after each anniversary of the Agreement's Effective Date.
- D. Present, in-person, a description of the status of the project's implementation to state staff and other grantees, as required by the Department.
- E. Inform the Department in writing prior to any changes in key personnel or timeline.

IV-9. Partnerships and Letters of Intent. For Phase 1, Applicant should identify its partners who will be participating in developing an implementation plan. For each proposed partner who will be participating in the implementation of services, Applicants must provide the organization's name and individual name and the role and proposed responsibilities for the partner.

At a minimum, the Applicant must have proposed partners for each core component of the model, for which the Applicant will not be directly providing services. Applicant may also include other partners whose services will be integral to model development.

If the Applicant will not directly provide the three (3) core components of the Parent Pathways Model, the Applicant must submit a letter of intent with at least one (1) organization for each core component for which Applicant is not directly providing services. For example, if the Applicant is an educational institution that plans to be the primary provider of postsecondary education, the Applicant must provide a letter of

intent with at least one (1) organization that will directly provide the housing support component and at least one (1) organization that will directly provide the two-generational programming component. The letter of commitment must describe the nature of the partnership and the service and resources that each partner will provide, including how oversight and monitoring of each partner will occur. The letter must be signed by an official of the partner organization with capacity and authority to allocate resources to the Project.

A list of potential types of community partners can be found on **Appendix D**.

IV-10. Letters of Recommendation. Applicants must submit at least three (3) letters of recommendation with its application. The letters must be from organizations with knowledge of Applicant's ability to undertake a project of the size and scope of the Parent Pathways Model and include contact information of an individual within the organization who may provide information to the Department. The Department may contact the individuals submitting the letters of recommendation.