Maryland Developmental
Disabilities Council

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Rebuilding DDA Providers throughout Maryland through Technical Assistance: Provider Selection

Proposals Due: May 14, 2021

OVERVIEW

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) seeks proposals by community service providers licensed, certified, or approved by the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). A maximum of five diverse providers will be selected to engage in a demonstration project and receive technical assistance from a subject matter expert selected by the Council. The purpose of the project is to reimagine, refocus, and rebuild provider businesses, and service models during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each of the providers will work with the selected subject matter expert to transform service delivery models and business practices, recover and rebuild as needed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and identify effective strategies that can be replicated.

Preference will be given to providers who have not received a TIP grant from the Council in the past. Those currently receiving a transformational grant from another organization or government agency are not eligible. Providers in a rural setting are encouraged to apply.

The goal of this initiative is to ensure people with developmental disabilities receive services in a seamless, individualized, and sustainable way, whether they are at home, on-site with a provider, or in the community.

BACKGROUND

The Council's mission is to advance the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life. Our 5-Year State Plan, which furthers our mission by identifying our priorities, includes an objective that states: *Increase access to community-based services and supports.* This demonstration project will help to meet that objective and should be approached with that in mind.

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented responses by federal, state, and local governments that impacted the lives of all Marylanders, including people with developmental disabilities and their families. Specifically, the pandemic resulted in statewide requirements to engage in social distancing, self-isolation, and quarantine. As a result, many providers closed day programs, instituted shelter in place rules, and took other actions necessary to protect the health and safety of all people.

Providers have reacted to the challenges of the pandemic in a variety of ways. Some new practices have become industry-standard, but not in all places or for providers of all sizes. The project will help promote the best practices from inside and outside the industry to help providers reimagine, rebuild, and recreate services and supports.

Through targeted, customized technical assistance providers will improve the outcomes of people with developmental disabilities, including those with significant disabilities. This opportunity is intended to support but not supplant other assistance provided by DDA, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), the Maryland Association Community Services (MACS), and others.

SCOPE OF WORK

Applicants for customized technical assistance under this initiative are required to:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to truly transform service delivery models and business practices to recover, rebuild, and reimagine services and supports, including virtual and hybrid models, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Work with the subject matter expert selected by the Council to:
   - Identify and undertake specific activities to achieve the goals.
   - Develop sustainable practices that transform and improve service delivery models in measurable ways.
   - Develop a strategic plan based on identified strategies and models.
   - Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of any changes and strategies.
3. Engage in effective strategies that can be replicated to inform systems change and create more efficient, effective, and individualized services and supports.
4. Meaningfully involve people with developmental disabilities and family members.

Selected providers will receive technical assistance from a subject matter expert and be available for peer-to-peer mentoring, if needed, to address the issues outlined in their proposals, and implement strategies that lead to improved outcomes for people with developmental disabilities.

Selected providers will work with the subject matter expert to make sure the technical assistance meets the needs of the particular provider. Some examples of activities include, but are not limited to:

- Developing or strengthening an agency's commitment to create and implement change that leads to improved outcomes for people with developmental disabilities.
- Developing and implementing service and business model changes that result in efficient, effective, and individualized services throughout Maryland.
- Implementing sustainable practices to build the capacity of the agency so more people with developmental disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, live the lives they want with the support they need.
- Developing and implementing services and supports that ensure people with developmental disabilities live the lives they want with the supports they need whether they are at home, on-site with a provider, or in the community.
- Implementing or strengthening innovative, flexible virtual supports and/or hybrid supports.
- Piloting and implementing other innovative approaches.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Improved services and supports throughout Maryland that are more efficient, effective, flexible, and individualized.

2. An increase in the number of people with developmental disabilities who receive services in a seamless, customizable, and sustainable way, whether they are at home, on-site with a provider, or in the community.
3. Transformed and improved practices that positively impact service delivery.
4. Innovative approaches to business models, and services and supports that can be replicated.

WHAT PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE

To be considered for the technical assistance, providers must submit a proposal that includes the following information:

I. General Information

1. Organization's name, address, and contact information.
2. Number of people currently supported in residential, meaningful day, and/or other services.
3. Number of people currently supported in part-time and full-time work and/or those supported during the day who are not working.
4. Number of people currently supported who receive virtual or hybrid services.

II. Understanding the Commitment of the Agency

In order to better understand your agency's needs, provide the following information about how your agency currently supports people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need.

1. Rate each of the following key stakeholder groups in your organization regarding how ready they are for change: board of directors, executive director/CEO, middle management, direct support staff; individuals supported by your agency, families of individuals supported by your agency.

Rating scale: 1: ready and willing; 2: potentially open to change; 3: resistant; 4: highly opposed
Briefly explain your rating for each group. Since there may be variance within each stakeholder group, choose the rating that best describes the majority of the stakeholders in each group.

Note: Ratings are for the purpose of learning where your agency is in the process and will not negatively affect consideration of your application.

2. How have services and supports changed for the people you support during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What has been the biggest barrier and/or challenge to providing services and supports during the pandemic?
4. What do you think will be the biggest barrier and/or challenge your organization will face post-pandemic?
5. What steps, if any, has your agency taken to respond to the challenges posed by COVID-19 for the people you support?
6. What steps, if any, has your agency taken to ensure people continue to receive services and/or increase the number of people who are supported to have meaningful days of their choice during the pandemic?

III. Transforming and Improving Practices to Improve Outcomes

1. What do you want to change or improve as a result of the technical assistance? Be specific.
2. How many people with developmental disabilities will potentially have measureable improvements in their outcomes?
3. In the course of daily business: How will you ensure that the goals and the objectives, provided by the SME have been met? How will you determine the impact or effect of the project on the people you served?
4. Are you interested in and committed to participating in peer-to-peer conversations?

IV. Supporting Documentation

1. A letter of commitment from the Executive Director/CEO and President/Chairperson of the agency's Board of Directors.
2. Resume of the lead staff person responsible for this initiative and an explanation as to why this person was selected.

V. Proposal

1. Proposals may not exceed 10 pages, not including the supporting documents in Section IV.
2. Number pages, double space, and use only one side of the page.
3. Use font point size 12 or larger.
4. Do not submit cover letters, descriptive material, or any other attachment, except as listed above. They will not be reviewed.

DELIVERABLES

All grant recipients must provide the Council any materials developed as a result of this project, e.g., policies, procedures, and lessons learned.

WHO CAN SUBMIT PROPOSALS

Community service providers licensed, certified, or approved by the Developmental Disabilities Administration to provide services for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland are eligible to submit proposals. A preference will be given to community service providers who were not awarded a TIP grant by the Council previously. Those already receiving transformational funding or technical assistance from the DDA are not eligible.

Applicants from rural areas are encouraged to apply and will be given special consideration if their proposal meets the requirements of this solicitation. For this initiative, rural areas include: Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties in Western Maryland; Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties in Southern Maryland; and, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties in Eastern Maryland.

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE

To be considered, proposals MUST be received by **12pm (noon) on May 14, 2021.**
Email your proposal to the Council at info@md-council.org.

***Important Note:* Receipt of all proposals will be acknowledged by email or phone. If you do not receive confirmation by 2:00pm on May 14, 2021, contact Shawan Pearson at 410-767-6249. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the proposal is received.**

DATE OF AWARD

A grantee will be selected and an award made no later than June 1, 2021. Activities should be completed by September 30, 2022.

HOW PROPOSALS WILL BE EVALUATED

The following criteria, each of which will be measured equally, will be used to select the most qualified applicants. The Council will select the applicant with the most favorable evaluated proposal based on these criteria.

- The proposal is comprehensive, reasonable, and demonstrates an understanding of all aspects of goal and objectives of this project.
- The proposal is likely to achieve the desired outcomes.
- The provider is likely to support the successful achievement of all activities.
- There is a clear and appropriate plan to meaningfully engage people with developmental disabilities and family members in planning and implementation activities.

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