

## RFP: Transforming Lives Through Supported Employment

### OVERVIEW

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Transforming Lives Through Supported Employment program. Through this initiative, over \$5.7 million in total funding will be awarded to eligible organizations who refine, implement, and sustain evidence-based supported employment programs (SEP) and compatible and mutually supportive evidence-based practices, such as supported education or assertive community outreach. Programs should aim to improve competitive employment outcomes for transition-aged youth/young adults (ages 16-25) with serious emotional disturbance (SED), and adults with serious mental illness (SMI) or co-occurring mental and substance use disorders (COD).

The full RFP is available [here](#). Applications are due on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### FUNDING

Up to \$800,000 will be awarded annually through this RFP to 7 organizations. No more than 15 percent of the award may be used for data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment, including incentives for participating in the required data collection follow-up.

Awarded organizations are expected to utilize third party and other revenue realized from the provision of services to the extent possible and use grant funds only for services to individuals who are not covered by public or commercial health insurance, individuals for whom coverage has been formally determined to be otherwise unavailable, or for services that are not sufficiently covered by an individual's health insurance plan.

Contracts are expected to last for up to five years beginning on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In order to qualify for funding under this RFP, applicants must be domestic public or private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) entities, including community-based organizations. Organizations must hire a Project Director who will require prior approval from SAMHSA.

### PROGRAM SERVICES

Awarded organizations must use program funding allocated through this RFP for the following required activities:

- Identify and implement supported employment evidence-based services, practices, and strategies and mutually supportive practices/strategies that are responsive to the target population(s). Comprehensive mental health services must be provided in conjunction with vocational services;
- Identify and implement SEP workforce development strategies and training for individuals who work with the target population(s), including mental health providers and employment/vocational specialists;

- Provide pre-employment services and counseling as necessary with the goal of identifying appropriate employment opportunities;
- Establish linkages and coordination with labor and vocational rehabilitation departments, local representatives, service providers, businesses, and educational institutions that serve the target population(s);
- Establish relationships with local employers to provide employment opportunities for program participants; and
- Engage in sustainability planning and create a plan that identifies sustainable funding approaches.

Awarded organizations may also choose to provide the following allowable activities:

- Link to and collaborate with the Social Security Administration’s Supported Employment Demonstration Program;
- Integrate compatible and mutually supportive programs/services, such as supported housing or family psychoeducation, to facilitate the goal of individuals securing competitive employment; and
- Develop and implement tobacco cessation programs, activities, and/or strategies.

In addition, successful applicants will be expected to develop a behavioral health disparities impact statement no later than 60 days after the issuance of the award. SAMHSA encourages applicants to address the behavioral health needs of returning veterans in designing and developing their programs and to consider prioritizing this population and their families for services as appropriate. If an evidence-based practice (EBP) exists for the types of problems or disorders being addressed in the program, the expectation is that the EBP(s) will be utilized.

## APPLICATION

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Population of Focus and Statement of Need (20 points)
- Proposed Implementation Approach (30 points)
- Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice (25 points)
- Staff and Organizational Experience (15 points)
- Data Collection and Performance Measurement (10 points)

Awards will be distributed based on the above criteria, the availability of funds, and an equitable distribution of funding by geographic area, population need, and program size.

## Timeline

Proposals must be submitted by May 17<sup>th</sup>. Questions should be submitted to Mary Blake at [Mary.Blake@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:Mary.Blake@samhsa.hhs.gov) or Rachel Steidl at [Rachel.Steidl@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:Rachel.Steidl@samhsa.hhs.gov) for program issues, and to Eileen Bermudez at [FOACSAT@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:FOACSAT@samhsa.hhs.gov) for grants management and budget issues.