

RFA: 2022 Integrated Supportive Housing

OVERVIEW

On June 1st, the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) released a Request for Applications (RFA) for the 2022 Integrated Supportive Housing (ISH) program. The ISH program encourages and supports the development of new housing opportunities for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) who can benefit from an independent, non-certified community-integrated residential setting.

OPWDD will provide up to \$15 million in capital funding for housing units that offer preference in tenant selection to individuals with an I/DD diagnosis, in addition to rental subsidies and non-housing support services to the residents of these units. Programs must be linked to a housing development project that will create new housing units through new construction, the adaptive reuse of non-residential space, or the repurposing of vacant residential units.

This year, applicants may choose to request solely ongoing rental subsidies (without capital funding) to support a capital project funded by other governmental capital programs. As such, funding awarded through this RFA will support either:

- Solely rental subsidies and supportive services once in operation; or
- Rental subsidies and capital funding

The RFA is available [here](#). Applications are due on July 11th.

FUNDING

OPWDD will provide capital funding for up to 50 percent of the total development cost of ISH projects, prorated by the percentage of units for which a preference in tenant selection is provided to individuals with an I/DD diagnosis. OPWDD's conditional support of a project automatically includes the required housing subsidy based on rent levels set at the 50 percent Area Median Income (AMI) level.

Applicants can apply for funding for up to 25 percent of the total number of units in the development. If the development will also include other special population units requested for other Medicaid recipients, such as individuals with serious mental illness or substance use disorder, the combined number of special population units is limited to 30 percent of the total number of units. Aside from this threshold, there is no minimum or maximum number of units.

Funding will be provided to eligible projects that obtain Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) support under the Open Window Request for Proposals (RFP) or the Multifamily Finance 9% RFP, as well as projects that receive support from other funding streams not managed by HCR, such as the NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) or Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP). OPWDD may choose to support any projects that apply for funding through this RFA by providing a conditional support letter outlining its level of support (e.g., rental subsidy only or specific capital letter, as applicable) that may be included in the project's application to HCR or other funder.

Funding allocated through this RFA will typically be transferred to the Housing Trust Fund, or another government payment mechanism, and will only be provided at the time of conversion from construction funding to permanent financing. The earliest a transfer of funding for projects that receive OPWDD support under this RFA will be April 1, 2024. However, OPWDD may provide funding through debt service or another mechanism if needed. OPWDD funding is protected by the terms and conditions of the regulatory agreement. The regulatory period is typically at least 30 years.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for funding through this RFA are OPWDD providers who are in good standing. Applicants are required to partner with an experienced developer or have an affiliate or related entity that has experience in developing supportive housing. Projects may be submitted by the OPWDD provider or in partnership with a private or not-for-profit housing developer; however, the official applicant must be the not-for-profit organization that will serve as the housing Support Agency (SA) for the project and may not be the housing development partner.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Provider agencies who are applying to serve as the housing SA for the ISH program will be responsible for the following:

- Developing and maintaining a strong relationship with the developer throughout the entire process (i.e., from the initial application through the end of the regulatory period);
- Working with its respective OPWDD Developmental Disability Regional Office to identify individuals who can be appropriately served in an ISH residential setting, which can include individuals served by the SA for their non-housing supports and services or by other OPWDD approved providers or Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs); and
- Assisting with the process of transferring rental subsidies (OPWDD, HUD, etc.) to the appropriate authority and working in collaboration with the landlord/property manager to resolve any tenancy issues.

ISH units are expected to be non-certified housing environments and will therefore not be certified at the time of initial occupancy by a resident. However, on a case-by-case basis, OPWDD will consider certifications of a unit if the resident requires a higher level of care to remain in their current living arrangement. Such ISH units may only be certified at a less than 24/7 level (i.e., as a Supportive IRA) and will once again become uncertified if the individual moves out of the unit.

Otherwise, residents of the ISH units are not required to receive OPWDD non-housing supports and services from the SA. The individual may receive housing supports from the SA and still choose to receive other supports and services from any other qualified OPWDD provider or self-direct their services, without jeopardizing their tenancy.

TARGET POPULATION

The target population for ISH projects funded through this RFA includes individuals over 18 years old who are determined eligible for services by OPWDD. Applicants may not dedicate ISH projects to a sub-population eligible for OPWDD services, such as only individuals on the Autism Spectrum or those with Down Syndrome.

APPLICATION

Applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Applicant Experience (35 points)
- Project Features (30 points)
- Project Budget (10 points)
- Services Provided, Integration, and Individual Choice (25 points)

Award determinations will be based on the overall score of the proposal, funding availability, and regional priorities. OPWDD will also consider the applicant's past and current performance in state programs and contracts when reviewing and ranking applications.

Timeline

Applications must be submitted by July 11th. Awards are expected to be announced on August 26th.

Questions may be submitted to housing.initiatives@opwdd.ny.gov with a reference to the RFA section to which the question refers through June 15th. Answers to questions will be distributed by June 27th.

Each project team will be required to have a Technical Assistance session with the OPWDD Office of Home and Community Living staff before submitting an application. During this session, OPWDD staff will review a one-page overview of the project and provide comments on aspects that need to be revised prior to formal application submission. The session may be scheduled by emailing the address above or calling (518) 473-1973.