Addendum to

Contra Costa County's 2022 Request for Proposal:

RFP #2111-522

AB 109 Evidence-Based Reentry Housing & Employment Programs

Response to Questions Received

1. Page 30-31 of the RFP provides a list of fiscal attachments for non-profit proposals (items i-vii). Are these items only required if the proposer does not have audited financials, or are they required for all non-profit respondents in addition to audited financials?

    Items i-vii are required only for those non-profit agencies that do not have a recent audit or audited financial statement. They are not required if the respondent submits audited financials.

2. Pages 26-27 of the RFP indicate that the Performance Measures and Deliverables section of the narrative has a maximum score of 30 points and the Budget Narratives have a maximum score of 10 points. However, the Criteria and Scoring table on pages 32-33 of the RFP indicates that the Performance Measures and Deliverables section of the narrative has a maximum score of 25 points and the Budget Narratives have a maximum score of 5 points. Can you please clarify which is correct?

    The correct score(s) are on the Scoring Sheet.

3. Part 1E on page 25 of the RFP instructs respondents to "Describe the data collection infrastructure, tools, systems and/or processes that will be utilized to support collecting and monitoring your program's implementation and outcome data." Parts 3A on page 26 asks respondents to "Describe how your organization plans to manage, track, and collect data related to monitoring progress toward process and program outcomes as detailed in your proposed logic model." Additionally, the Results First Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form asks, "How will you evaluate whether the outcome measures expected are achieved?" Can you please describe any differentiation in the information the County is seeking across these three prompts?

    These data collection and management related questions are overlapping and any differentiation in the expected responses would be related to the context of the section within the Instructions. For example, Part 1E of the Service Description is oriented towards systems and processes while Part 3A speaks to performance measures and how they will be monitored and tracked. For example, all of our partner agencies will be required to utilize our SAFE database for referrals between agencies. This database contains some information related to services, but not all data related to services. Some measure tracking could be conducted via SAFE or with minor modifications to SAFE (we are open to supporting that effort) or tracking of measures could be conducted in a completely different data system that the agency uses.

    As it relates to the Results First Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form, we are looking for how will you determine whether your performance measures meet the outcomes you expected. If you expected that there will be a change in behavior as one of your outcomes, how will you determine that change? This question is less

about the system the data is held in and more about the measures that will be required to assess the change or outcome.

Again, these are all inter-related questions, but they each have a specific focus, pending the context in which they are asked.

4. How do we reconcile the apparent inconsistency in the Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form's identified rating system (model, promising, innovative) with the different rating system used in the clearinghouse (five color-based system)?

   The Clearinghouse has a "standard" rating system and also presents a rating system provided by agencies that have conducted the evaluations. As such, there can be some inconsistencies in the language.

   *For purposes of the Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary Form, **Model programs are those identified in the Clearinghouse as Effective with the most rigorous evidence.** These programs are identified in the Clearinghouse with a green rating color. **Promising programs are identified in the Clearinghouse as having a positive impact, based on high quality evidence, but not the most rigorous evidence**. These programs are identified in the Clearinghouse with a yellow rating color. For purposes of this RFP, we are not seeking programs that are innovative, have mixed effects, or insufficient evidence.*

5. Other than being in the declarative versus the interrogative format, the second and third questions at the bottom of the Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form seem to be directly duplicative of Part 2B as described on page 26 of the RFP. Is the intent that we simply reference the form's information in the narrative where appropriate (since the entire form is included here according to Part 2E), or that we actually replicate the information so it appears in both places?

   The intent of the Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form is to have a summary page/document for the convenience and ease of use by the review panelists. Given this, we prefer that you do not refer to previous pages in the program narrative as it defeats the purpose of a summary. Further, a replication of what is found in the narrative is not likely to meet the response limits. The expectations are that you will summarize the details, as requested. Bullet points are completely acceptable in this section. The review panelists can refer back to the narrative as they need.

6. What is meant by the word "evaluate" in the first question at the bottom of the Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form? Given the fact that this is not a research-based project and as practitioners we rarely have the capacity to simultaneously implement and evaluate a project (let alone the skillset), how much does the expectation of service providers to "evaluate … the outcome measures" align with the definition of "Outcome Evaluation" provided on page 38 of the RFP?

The term "evaluate" as used at the bottom of the Clearinghouse Rating & Summary form means: how will you know whether the outcomes you are expecting are achieved? This speaks to what your program outcome measures are, how will you keep track of those outcome measures, if there is a change or improvement in a measure that is an outcome, how will you determine that change or improvement? All of these questions speak to evaluation.

The ORJ does recognize that our community-based partners are not research practitioners. For this reason, we provided a series of trainings last fall to speak to the new direction that our Reentry Services are moving in. While we do not expect partners to conduct vigorous research evaluations, we do expect that there is a willingness to collaborate and partner with us to determine whether or not a funded program is deemed effective. This is important information for both the ORJ and partner agencies. We have every intention of working with and supporting every partner, on an individual agency level, to fine tune and negotiate the measures and outcomes for program evaluation and to ensure that each partner has the best opportunity to succeed possible. That said, it is highly recommended that an individual within each partner agency be identified as responsible for data collection and management as not all outcome measures will be available in SAFE. Further, there will be on-going monitoring of outcome measures by the ORJ and having an individual identified to support the review of the outcomes and measures will be necessary.

Please also review the 3 Training session presentations that are available on our website for further details surrounding what we mean by evaluation and what the expectations are as the ORJ moves in this new Evidence-Based Programming and Data Driven Decision Making direction.

7. What does "evidence … that confirms the effectiveness" mean in Part 2A on page 26 of the RFP? Does the label "promising" or "innovative," as used in the RFP, confirm this desired type of effectiveness? How do we assess the broader "research base," as used here, for effectiveness, and what is the intended threshold of confirmation? Finally, does the use of the conjunction "and" indicate that we should be referencing both the "level of evidence" and "research base," as those terms are used here, in our narrative response?

When the RFP speaks to "evidence that confirms the effectiveness" of the program we are looking for whether or not the program, as identified in the Results First Clearinghouse, is found to be effective or promising as shown in the specific Clearinghouse. It is not expected that specific details surrounding the research on the effectiveness be provided. Only that you understand that the specific program has been shown to be effective and by whom.

The label of promising indicates that there is some evidence that the program is effective. However, that evidence is not the most rigorous. With this RFP, we are looking for programs that are shown to be either effective or promising.

The label of "innovative" does not confirm the type of program effectiveness that this RFP is seeking. The Housing and Employment programs are Core Services for the AB 109 Reentry population. Further, there exist a number of highly effective programs in these arenas. With this RFP we are looking to ensure that these core services are provided at the highest level of effectiveness, at this time. As our population changes, there may be other opportunities for more "innovative" programs.

Assessing the broader research base is not likely practical for most agencies outside of drawing on the Results First Clearinghouse. That said, if there is other evidence of a high quality that has shown a program to be effective and NOT found in the Clearinghouse (this could be an evaluation conducted by a credible outside organization that shows results and outcomes that are aligned with this RFP), then the review panel would consider that evidence. In this case, I would suggest that a full evaluation report be presented as an Appendix to the proposal. Examples of a credible outside organization would include: RDA, RAND, PPIC, Impact Justice, etc.

The intended threshold of evidence confirmation is the Clearinghouse (i.e., an effective or promising program), or in this case, a formal report from a credible agency that speaks specifically to results and outcomes that are aligned with the objectives of this RFP. The use of the conjunction "and" does indicate that respondents should be referencing both the "level of evidence" (i.e., effective or promising) and the "research base" (source of that level of evidence—the Clearinghouse or independent evaluation).

8. What does "low risk adaptation" mean as utilized in the parenthetical of Part 2B on page 26 of the RFP? What is the test for determining when an adaptation exceeds low risk (presumably risk that are either moderate or high)? Finally, what is it that an adaptation would be at risk of producing (i.e., negative outcomes, reduced fidelity, or something else)?

The term "low risk adaptation" is vague and can be interpreted in a number of ways. For our purposes, a "low risk adaptation" would be something like translation of the materials into Spanish or Vietnamese. Given that we are still operating under COVID related health orders, we will also consider programs that can only operate virtually to be a "low risk adaptation" for purposes of this procurement. A moderate or high-risk adaptation would speak to the content of the evidence-based program or the dosage of the program. For example, if a 12-week program has been found to be effective, modifying that program to a 4- or 6-week program might be considered a moderate to high-risk adaptation by the review panel. There is no definitive "test" for what is determined a low, moderate, or high-risk adaptation.

This RFP is calling for evidence-based programs that are identified in the research literature as effective or promising. However, that is impossible to achieve given that none of the programs evaluated have been operating in the context of COVID. What we are looking for is the most minimal adaptations to the evidence-based program as possible while also recognizing that we are in extremely extenuating circumstances. The idea is also

that any low, moderate or high-risk adaptations would be thoroughly justified so that the review panel can make their own determination.

As discussed in the EBP Training sessions, ANY adaptations to an evidence-based program runs the risk of being ineffective as the program will not be implemented to the original fidelity. Limiting the magnitude of any adaptations mitigates the risk that the program (with modifications) will be found ineffective. Our objective with this RFP is to procure programs that have been deemed effective or promising in other contexts while simultaneously assessing whether the program as implemented in the Contra Costa County context is found to be as effective as the evidence.

9. Does the limiting of the requested description to "current level of staff capacity" in Part 2C on page 26 of the RFP signal that only organizations who have presently have staff fully trained in an evidence-based practice are eligible to receive all the points available in this section? Especially since there is no allotment of points to be derived from describing an agency's plan or intentions to develop staff capacity in this area?

The limiting of the requested description to "current level of staff capacity" in Part 2C on page 26 of the RFP does NOT signal that only organizations who presently have staff fully trained in an evidence-based practice are eligible to receive all the points available in this section. It is expected that if current/new staff need to be fully trained in evidence based practices that a plan and timeline would be presented in the proposal so that the review panel can assess whether the staffing levels are sufficient and timely enough to support the program upon implementation.

While there are no scoring points allotted specifically to the agencies plans/intentions to develop staff capacity, it is expected that this would be addressed in the logic model as it relates to "what is needed" to conduct the program.

10. Within the sample logic model template, what is the significance of the "Key Questions" row? Is this just to guide the development, or should it be part of what is submitted?

The key questions identified in the logic model template are intended to guide applicants in their development of their program's measures. This element of the logic model is required.

11. Under the Housing Services (Service Area), is it permissible to use housing for the target population that is located outside of Contra Costa County (e.g. Alameda County)?

Housing services under this RFP should be evidence-based, client-centered and allow for proximity to other critical resources participants will likely access and utilize. Therefore, exceptions can be made for housing placement outside of the county, however, this approach should be applied on an individual case basis, and any ancillary resources included in the housing service must be accounted for in an out of county placement. Additionally, housing services under this RFP are intended for individuals currently

residing in the county, returning to the county after incarceration, and/or are currently under community supervision for Contra Costa County.

12. In addition to the training materials provided during the Reentry Services & Evidence-Based Programming (EBP) training series, where do you suggest to find more detailed information about logic models to meet the requirements of this proposal (specifically concerning Key Questions and Data Indicators)?

    The logic model components that speak to key questions and data indicators are not traditional aspects of a logic model and thus, there are no specific training materials that address them. These components have been added to the logic model as a guide to support respondents in their understanding of the critical linkages between each step in the logic model and how these steps correspond to specific data that will be used to measure program implementation and success. By asking yourself how you will know that this step has been met or is successful, data indicators can be identified as tools to assess whether or not the step in the logic model has achieved its objective. Further, the key questions and data indicators are intended to support respondents as they consider the data they will need to collect in order to examine whether the program being proposed is not only implemented with fidelity but is achieving the expected outcomes. Thus, these components of the logic model are key aspects in the monitoring and evaluation of the program. Final data measures for monitoring and evaluation of the program's implementation and success will be negotiated in collaboration with the ORJ.

    For example, in the EBP Training, Day 2, one of the key questions in the program investments step of the logic model program found on slide 30 asks: Is there a trained program facilitator? And, are staff trained in other necessary practices? These are logical questions given that the program under discussion requires trained facilitators. The data indicators of these questions, found on slide 31 speak to: the number and % of program facilitators trained and certified; and the # (%) of staff trained in other necessary practices? (e.g. Motivational Interviewing, trauma informed care).

    Please see the EBP Training presentations for other examples. These training documents can be found with the RFPs supplemental materials.

13. How many contracts do you intend to award for the workforce development funding stream? And do you plan on breaking out the total funding for each stream by county area (East, Central, West)?

    The number of awards per this RFP will be determined by the Review Panel. Respondents have the flexibility to propose programming per region or countywide and should detail the total number of participants to be served (this information should also be included in the program logic model). Total funding will not be broken down per region. Respondents should devise their budgets based on what is needed to implement their proposed program.

14. Is there an average award size and/or minimum/maximum budget requests?

There are no average award sizes or minimum/maximum budget request for this RFP. The estimated funding allocations for each service area is detailed on page 34 of the RFP. Funding should be budgeted and aligned with the proposed evidence-based program.

15. For the "Results First Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating and Summary Table," is there an expectation or requirement for the number of EBPs to cite for this table?

At a minimum, (1) table is required.

16. Our assumption is that we need to complete one table per evidence-based program. Thus, if we are citing two EBPs from the Clearinghouse, we would need to create two tables. Can you confirm?

Yes. Each evidence-based program (EBP) citation will need to be detailed in separate Results First Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating and Summary Tables if your agency cites more than one EBP.

17. On page 26, in Section II, subsection 4, "Multi-Disciplinary Collaborations," for information sharing, can you clarify "whom" you are asking us to share information with?

All awarded Respondents under this RFP will be required to utilize the county's shared data system, administered by the ORJ, known as SAFE. Information shared through this system is only accessed by contracted providers to support service coordination and ongoing communication. The county issues a Release of Information, which includes a listing of contracted agencies granted access to shared information through the SAFE data system.

18. Do you have a current provider of these services? Names of those current providers please? Thank you.

Yes. The current employment provider is Rubicon Programs. The current housing providers are Shelter, Inc. and LAO Family Community Development.

19. Are you able to provide the powerpoint from the Bidders Conference for reference?

Yes.

20. The clearinghouse has many studies…which one do we use?

In order to narrow and focus your search and selection of programs within the Clearinghouse, it is best to identify one or more that is most aligned with the type of program you are seeking to implement. Search options are available on the website to

assist you. For example, by searching "reentry housing" or "reentry services", an array of program options and ratings will appear. A summary of each program's elements will be found on "program profiles" in the Clearinghouse. These profiles will help you determine which program is most aligned with what your agency is planning to design based on elements such as target population, program settings, and performance measures.

While the program profile is a quick snapshot to assist in identifying which program best fits with what your agency is planning to propose, the needs of the clientele you intend to serve, and/or is in alignment with your organization and its existing services, you will also want to review program specifications to determine implementation feasibility.

We recommend reviewing our EBP Training Series materials which provides a step-by-step process on how to use the Clearinghouse database. These materials can be found on ORJ's website under the posting for this RFP: https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7631/Contract-Opportunities.

21. 1Bb on page 25 of the RFP speaks to total dosage as "total direct hours of evidence-based services". Is this specific to dosage exclusively to recidivism reduction or does it include other "evidence-based service" – like those shown to improve the likelihood or quality of employment placements?

    Yes to the latter. Total dosage should align with the recommended dosage in the EBP.

22. Based on the target population for Employment & Workforce/Job Placement Services in Appendix A (page 34 of RFP), is it the intent that no services will be provided to returning residents who are "low risk" but still experiencing barriers to employment?

    The intention is to target services, as feasibly possible, to individuals at moderate or high risk levels, while also prioritizing individuals who may have lower risks but are experiencing high to moderate needs in this service area.

23. What can you share with us about the review panel composition? Will there be a single panel for both service areas? Any characteristics you are looking to include with panel members?

    Contingent on the number of responses to this RFP, separate Review Panels will be convened for each service area. Panel members may include representatives from county agencies, local or out of county community-based organizations, and/or subject matter experts in program implementation for reentry and justice system initiatives.

24. Regarding housing services, on slide 7 of the Bidders Conference presentation: There were only 35 unhoused individuals who were on AB109 probation in Contra Costa County last year. The grant would like providers to serve 50 participants a year. Is the County expecting

the number of unhoused participants to go up? Can you speak to the client base and need for housing services for this population in Contra Costa County?

The data point referenced on homeless individuals on AB 109 probation does not equate with the number of individuals in need of or who accessed housing services in the previous year. Therefore, this stat should not be your gauge for the number of unhoused individuals to be served. Instead, it is better to assume that the majority of the 278 new cases were either in need of or accessed some form of housing service. It is worth noting here that during the fiscal year 2020-21, approximately 30 percent of AB 109 probationers (or 220 individuals) were referred for housing services. Of those, 81 individuals received services provided by an AB 109 housing provider.

Additionally, the County does allow for services to be accessed by other eligible "non-AB 109" justice-involved individuals based on a tiered system of priority status. These priority status groups are: (1) AB 109 Sentence; (2) Formal Felony Probation; (3) Released from a Correctional Facility in the Past Three Years; (4) Pretrial; (5) Informal Felony Probation; (6) Specialty Courts; (7) Parole. Broadly, there is a significant overlap between individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability and having some involvement with the criminal justice system. Therefore, 50 participants per year is a reasonable account and starting place for addressing the housing needs of this population.

25. Programs in the Clearinghouse site are not working under COVID landscape and virtually. Are you allowing for flexibility in program designs to provide services under current conditions?

    Yes. Per page 26, Section II., subsection 2.B. and in the Results First Clearinghouse Evidence-Based Program Rating & Summary form, you will be expected to provide details on any adaptations to the proposed evidence-based program.

    Also, see response to question #8 for further details.

26. Is there an opportunity to provide multiple proposals (1 for employment and 1 for housing)?

    Yes.

27. Is there an accommodation regarding the audit requirements for smaller organizations?

    See response to #1 for more details.

28. Expectations of number served in employment contract significantly decreased from last grant cycle from 300 to 125 people, can you talk about the rationale for serving less people this grant cycle?

    The reduction in the number of individuals to be served corresponds with the EBPs that

have been reviewed involving employment services for the target population. By lowering the number of those expected to be served, we took into consideration possible EBP(s) to be selected and the number of the target individuals that would be identified through the Clearinghouse. We also focused more on high and moderate risk individuals rather than inclusion of low-risk individuals. If your EBP is able to serve more than 125 high to moderate risk individuals, and/or individuals with moderate to high needs within this specific service area, you are permitted and encourage to do so.

29. Who are the current service providers that offer family reunification services?

    Centerforce is the sole service provider for family reunification services. However, this service area is not considered under this RFP. RFP# 2111-521 addresses all requirements for agencies interested in providing Family Reunification Services.

30. Can you tell us what exactly you mean by "performance based" contracts? Are we using the cost reimbursement contracts or something different?

    Performance-based contracts are formal agreements executed with established clear goals, objectives, and indicators to track and monitor progress toward those stated goals and objectives. Most of this information will come from the proposed program logic model. All contracts will remain cost reimbursable.

31. Does your end notes/bibliography count towards the page limit?

    No. Reference pages can be added to the proposal submission packet as additional supporting documentation, prior to Form #3, and will not count toward any page limits.

    Surrounding citation of references, the numeric style should be used. With this style of citation, a number that corresponds to a source on your references page is indicated in the text of your document in parentheses, brackets, or superscript. The first source cited receives the number 1, the second number 2, and so on. If a reference to a source is repeated later in the text, it retains its original number—thus, all references to source number 4 receive a 4 after them whether in parentheses or brackets, or superscript. The appropriate punctuation is included after the source number.

    For example:

    Previous research has described the differences between outcomes and outputs and has provided methods to analyze them separately (1, 2).

    or,

Previous research has described the differences between outcomes and outputs and has provided methods to analyze them separately[1,2].

32. In instance where similar info is requested in multiple sections of the narrative, is it ok to refer to other sections of the narrative rather than reiterating content? (given space limits)

Please keep in mind that while similar information across sections may be requested and that many of the questions would appear to be the same, they are actually inter-related questions and each has a specific focus, pending the context in which they are asked.

Please see response to Question # 3 for more details.