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Applicant Conference

Request for Applications No. HHS0015435
Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP)
Outreach and Training Services
April 15, 2025, at 10:00 AM CT

Agenda



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1. Introductions
2. Housekeeping Items
3. Project Overview & Scope
4. Funding Stream Updates & Tracking
5. Grant Term
6. Program Requirements & Allowable Activities
7. Prohibitions
8. Closing Comments

Introductions

Speakers

- **Julia Solis**, Grant Specialist
Sole Point of Contact for RFA
Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)
Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)
- **Lisa Herbert**, Contract Administration Manager, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- **Alicia Veit**, STAP Contract Specialist, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services



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Procurement Roles

Procurement Team

- Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) is responsible for all procurement and solicitation activities.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) is responsible for contract management activities throughout the life of the Grant Agreements including, contract development, execution, and monitoring.
- DHHS is responsible for project scope, requirements, performance, results, and monitoring.



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Schedule of Events

Deadline for Submitting Questions

April 16, 2025, by 5:00PM

Any questions arising prior to the question deadline must be submitted in writing to Julia.Solis@hhs.texas.gov



Tentative Date Answers to Questions Posted

Estimated: April 23, 2025



Deadline for Submission of Solicitation Applications

May 6, 2025, by 10:30 AM



Anticipated Grant Agreements Start Date

September 1, 2025



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Solicitation Access

HHSC will post all official communication regarding this RFA on the following website, including the notice of award:

- The HHS Grants website is located at <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/pcs/rfa.cfm>

HHSC reserves the right to cancel this RFA, or to make no award if it determines such action is in the best interest of the State.

HHSC may, in its discretion, reject any and all applications or portions thereof.



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Sole Point of Contact

- All communications relating to this RFA must be directed in writing to Julia Solis, Sole Point of Contact at Julia.Solis@hhs.texas.gov.
- All communications between applicants and HHSC staff members, or any other HHS staff members, concerning this RFA are **strictly prohibited**.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may result in application disqualification.



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Executive Summary of Program

- The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) seeks to establish contracts with organizations to provide Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) Outreach and Training services statewide or in HHSC region(s). STAP is a voucher program for Texas residents with disabilities, that allows these residents to purchase specialized telecommunications devices and services for access to the telephone networks.
- A Contract award provides financial assistance that enables an organization that specializes in outreach to provide training, consultation, and information about the STAP program, to qualified Texans from all disability groups, community members, certifiers, and vendors of basic specialized telecommunications equipment and services.



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Available Funding

- The total amount of state funding available for the STAP Outreach and Training Services grant program is **\$1,700,000** for the entire Project Period. It is the System Agency's intention to make multiple awards or one award to applicants or one applicant that successfully demonstrate(s) the purpose and objectives of grant program.
- Applicants are strongly cautioned to only apply for the amount of grant funding they can responsibly expend during the Project Period to avoid lapsed funding at the end of the grant term. Successful Applications may not be funded to the full extent of Applicant's requested budgets in order to ensure grant funds are available for the broadest possible array of communities and programs.



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Payment Method

- Grant Agreement(s) awarded under this RFA will be funded on a cost reimbursement basis for reasonable, allowable and allocable Grant Project direct costs. Under the cost reimbursement payment method, Grantee is required to finance operations and will only be reimbursed for actual, allowable, and allocable costs incurred on a monthly basis and supported by adequate documentation. No additional payments will be rendered unless an advanced payment is approved.



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Grant Term

- Anticipated Project Start Date: September 1, 2025
- Project End Date: August 31, 2030



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Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply for a STAP Outreach and Training Services Grant, Applicant must be an entity that:

- Is currently providing training, technical assistance, and outreach for non-profit services.
- Has experience with working with people with disabilities, across multiple types of disabilities.
- Has a demonstrated history of successful community engagement, including experience working directly with local populations, partnering with community organizations, and implementing outreach or service initiatives that have successfully impacted the community.
- Has a Texas address and conducts business at a physical location in Texas prior to the start of the Grant Term.

Registered vendors of specialized telecommunications devices or services are not eligible to apply for a STAP Outreach and Training Services Grant



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Allowable Services

- The primary focus of the RFA is to provide information, advice, assistance and training about the STAP program, devices, and services, including STAP application and certifying processes to potential applicants, active and potential certifiers, and active and potential vendors; make referrals to community resources; and follow up with STAP applicants to assess quality of services provided.
- Primary services are outreach and training and may include, but are not limited to:
 - Training
 - Case management
 - Client support services
 - Outreach and information sharing
 - Technical assistance
 - Recruitment of certifiers



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Prohibitions

- Pursuant to the General Appropriations Act, Article IX, Section 4.03, none of the funds appropriated by the General Appropriations Act may be granted to or expended by any entity which performs political polling. This prohibition does not apply to a poll conducted by an academic institution as part of the institution's academic mission that is not conducted for the benefit of a particular candidate or party. By submitting a response to this RFA, Applicant certifies that it is not ineligible for a Grant Agreement pursuant to this prohibition.



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Submission of Forms

Applicants must complete and submit Forms A through E in accordance with the RFA, Section XIII, Submission Checklist.



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Evaluation Process

A three-step selection process will be used:

1. Eligibility screening based upon Section 3.3, Grant Award Eligibility, and Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements
2. Evaluation based upon Section 9.4, Evaluation Criteria
3. Final Selection is based upon Section 10.1, Final Selection.



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Specific Selection Criteria

All eligible applications will be evaluated based upon:

- a. Ability to serve the target population
- b. Proposed project plan
- c. Cost proposal



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Submission of Documentation, Forms, and Exhibits

Applicants must complete and submit documentation, forms, and exhibits in accordance with the RFA, Section XIII, Submission Checklist.



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Delivery for Submission Option

Applicant must correctly deliver Solicitation Responses by using one of the approved methods below:

- **Submission Option #1:** Applicant shall submit the application through the HHS Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures identified in Exhibit F, HHS Online Bid Room Instructions.
- **Submission Option #2:** Applicants shall submit the application on USB drives to the correct mailing address, which is dependent upon mailing method identified in this section (see mailing address options in the RFA, Section 8.3, Required Submission Method).



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Questions and Answers

All questions **must** be submitted in writing to the Sole Point of Contact using the formatting below from the RFA, Section 7.3, RFA Questions and Requests for Clarification:

- A. RFA number;
- B. Section number;
- C. Page number;
- D. Exhibit or other Attachment number;
- E. Page number of the Exhibit or Attachment;
- F. Language, Topic, Section Heading being questioned; and
- G. Question

Submit via email to: Julia.Solis@hhs.texas.gov **by 5:00PM on April 16, 2025.**



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Question Deadline

- Questions are due by **5:00PM on Wednesday, April 16, 2025.**
- Questions received after this deadline cannot be responded to.
- An addendum will be posted to the HHS Grants Website with the answers to questions **on or after April 23, 2025.**



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Closing Comments

- Applicants are responsible for meeting the RFA requirements, including any addendums.
- All Addendums must be signed and submitted with the original application.
- Applicants must check the HHS Grants website frequently for any addendums that may have been added to this solicitation.



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HHS Grants Website

The link is: <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/PCS/HHS0015435/>



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Thank you!

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**Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program
(STAP) Outreach and Training Services**