



Request for Proposal

Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT)

April 21, 2023

**NORTH SOUND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ORGANIZATION**

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North Sound BH-ASO Request for Proposal

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I. Instructions

Please read the entire Request for Proposals (RFP) packet.

Responses must be clearly written. If you choose to not use the provided version of the RFP Attachments to complete your Application, your responses must restate each question and use the same numbering and lettering sequence as in the RFP. In either case, responses and supporting documentation must be in the same sequence as the RFP.

Please make all written responses clear, specific, and brief. Please try to keep your electronic file under 20MB, if the file exceeds 20MB, please send in separate emails. Quality not quantity counts.

Applicant organizations must complete:

- Letter of Intent (Attachment A)
- Applicant Qualifications Response Form (Attachment B)
- Project Proposal Response Form (Attachment C)
- Budget & Budget Narrative (Attachment D)
 - Available start-up funds for North Sound region (approximate): \$700,000
 - Available annual operating budget for North Sound region (approximate): \$900,000

An optional Bidder Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2023 from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Noel Zak (Noel_Zak@nsbhaso.org) for further information.

Applications should be submitted to deliverables@nsbhaso.org.

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II. Information and Background

History

North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (North Sound BH-ASO)'s History and Structure: The North Sound Regional Support Network (NSRSN) began operations on January 1, 1991 dba as the North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA). On April 1, 2016 NSMHA transitioned into a Behavioral Health Organization to comport with state law and begin contracting for substance use disorders services. On July 1, 2019 the North Sound Behavioral Health Organization, LLC (North Sound BHO) transitioned to an Administrative Services Organization, responsible for Crisis Services and limited behavioral health services for individuals who are ineligible for Medicaid. The North Sound BH-ASO is governed by an Interlocal Operating Agreement between Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties which defines the geographic service area of the North Sound Region. The North Sound BH-ASO contracts with the Washington State Health Care Authority to provide public behavioral health services for these five counties (North Sound Region Service Area).

North Sound BH-ASO is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of elected officials or their designated alternates, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Regional Advisory Board, and representatives of the eight (8) Tribal sovereign nations within the North Sound Region. According to the terms of the Interlocal Agreement, Board of Directors votes are divided as follows:

Snohomish County – 4	Island - 1
Whatcom County - 2	San Juan -1
Skagit County – 1	Tribes – 1 (ex-officio)
North Sound BH-ASO Advisory Board-2 (ex-officio)	

The Five Counties of the North Sound BH-ASO Region

The five counties of Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom represent the geographic, economic, and cultural diversity of Washington State as a whole.

Snohomish County

Covers 2,196 square miles with a population estimated at 847,300 as of 2022, Snohomish County borders Puget Sound on the west and includes the Cascade Range in the east. It includes several suburban communities such as Bothell and Lynwood with easy access to Seattle, as well as highly isolated rural communities such as Darrington and Index. Everett is the largest city in Snohomish County as well as the county seat, and supplies the Boeing Company with tens of thousands of workers. Snohomish County is named for the Snohomish people of the Lushootseed Native American tribe.

Skagit County

To the north of Snohomish County, Skagit County is both smaller in size and less densely populated than its southern neighbor. Skagit County covers 1,920 square miles, much of which is farmland. The broad, fertile valley of the Skagit River runs through the county, which cultivates tulips and strawberries. Mount Vernon is the largest city and county seat. As of 2022 the population of Skagit County was 131,250.

Whatcom County

To the north of Skagit lies Whatcom County, which abuts Canada to the north. The population of Whatcom County was estimated to be 231,650 in 2022, spread among its 2,503 square miles, making it the geographically largest of the five counties. Whatcom is the home to Western Washington

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University, the northernmost university in the contiguous United States. The campus is housed in Bellingham, which is also the largest city and county seat.

Island County

As its name suggests, Island County is comprised entirely of islands. The two largest are Whidbey and Camano. Both the county seat of Coupeville and largest city, Oak Harbor, are on Whidbey, which is accessed by regular ferry service as well as by bridge over Deception Pass. Island County covers 517 square miles and has a population that as of 2022 was estimated at 87,700.

San Juan County

Composed of a population of only 18,150 according to a 2022 estimate, the county's residents are spread over 754 small islands and rocks in the San Juan Island chain. Friday Harbor is the county seat, a logical choice since it is also the only incorporated town in the San Juan Islands. Orcas, San Juan, and Lopez are the largest of the many islands in San Juan County. While San Juan County as a whole has the highest per capita income in the state of Washington, isolated areas such as Waldron Island remain extremely poor, with by one estimate over half of its population living below the poverty line.

The North Sound BH-ASO

An organization of dedicated individuals charged with overseeing publicly funded crisis services and limited behavioral health services in the North Sound Region. Our job is to ensure that services are person centered, recovery oriented and delivered with dignity and respect to each unique individual we serve. To that end, we work to accomplish our mission, be true to our vision and keep our values in the forefront of all our business deliberations and decisions.

Mission:

Empowering individuals and families to improve their health and well-being.

Vision:

A system of care that is shaped by the voices of our communities and people using behavioral health services. The people who work in this system are competent, compassionate, empowering and supportive of personal health and wellness.

Values:

- Integrity: We nurture an environment of transparency, trust and accountability
- Collaboration: We believe every voice matters
- Respect: We accept and appreciate everyone we encounter
- Excellence: We strive to be the best in everything we do
- Innovation: We endeavor to try new things, be forward thinking, learn from mistakes and be adaptable
- Culture: We endeavor to be culturally educated and responsive
- Social Equity: We commit to working to reduce institutionalized racism and reduce disparities in health care

III. Intent

The Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program will provide court mandated Less Restrictive Alternative treatment to high-needs individuals with necessary mental health and substance use treatment without necessitating hospitalization with an aim to better motivate an individual who struggles with voluntary treatment adherence to engage fully with their treatment plan. The methodology embraces the idea that with earlier intervention, a strong impact can be made on the lives of individuals struggling with behavioral health conditions.

By connecting participants to the treatment they need via court order, AOT can be especially helpful to those facing the social and economic consequences of living with an untreated mental health or substance use disorder. The treatment will include psychiatric evaluations, ongoing therapy, peer support, and case management, assistance in attending mandated court appointments, medication support, and more.

The AOT program will serve priority populations for whom standard outpatient services are inefficient to meet their needs, however for whom involuntary inpatient treatment may not prove necessary. It is a mandated funded service through the Management Care Organizations (MCOs) for Medicaid eligible or Medicaid enrolled individuals and North Sound BH-ASO for uninsured or non-Medicaid populations. Individuals qualifying for AOT services have a diagnosed behavioral health disorder; are unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision and are substantially deteriorating, or require intensive treatment in order to prevent a relapse or deterioration that would be likely to result in grave disability or a likelihood of serious harm to themselves or to others; have a history of lack of compliance with treatment for their behavioral health disorders that has caused, at least twice within the last 36 months, hospitalization, emergency medical care treatment, or incarceration, or, at least once in the last 48 months, violent acts; are unable to have their recovery and stability ensured by any treatment less restrictive than AOT; and are believed to benefit from AOT services

For additional information, see Attachment E: *Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Scope of Work*

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IV. Overview and Timeline

All organizations must submit a *Letter of Intent* and an *RFP Application* to be considered. See *below timeline*.

Questions regarding this process or the Request for Proposal (RFP) must be received electronically by North Sound BH-ASO; send questions to North Sound BH-ASO at deliverables@nsbhaso.org. Answers to all questions will be posted on the North Sound BH-ASO website (www.nsbhaso.org). See *below timeline*.

Completed application materials must be submitted to deliverables@nsbhaso.org. Mailed applications will be accepted at 2021 College Way, Suite 101, Mt. Vernon, WA. See *below timeline*.

Applications will be scored by an Evaluation Committee which will make recommendations to the North Sound BH-ASO Executive Director. See *Scoring and Selection* for more information.

North Sound BH-ASO reserves the right to: reject any and all Applications; extend the Application submission date; amend the RFP; and waive any irregularities or informalities in any applications. North Sound BH-ASO shall be the sole judge of the merits of each application. Additionally, the North Sound BH-ASO may, at its discretion, request that applicants submit additional information in order to permit a more informed evaluation.

All applications submitted must contain a statement disclosing or denying any interest, financial or otherwise, that any employee or official of North Sound BH-ASO or the appropriate Advisory Board may have in the proposing agency or proposed project.

Neither applicant nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation.

An oral presentation may be required of those prospective contractors whose applications are under consideration. Prospective contractors may be informed that an oral presentation is desired and will be notified of the date, time and location the oral presentation is to be conducted.

Proposed Timeline – Subject to Change

4/21/2023	Release of RFP
4/26/2023	<i>Optional</i> Informational Meeting (3:00 – 4:00 p.m.)
4/28/2023	Deadline for Question Submittal (submit to deliverables@nsbhaso.org)
5/3/2023	North Sound BH-ASO Question Response Released (posted on the North Sound BH-ASO website)
5/12/2023	Deadline for Letter of Intent Submission (submit to deliverables@nsbhaso.org)
5/31/2023	Deadline for RFP Application Materials Submission (<i>Applicant Qualifications, Project Proposal, Budget & Narrative</i>)
6/2023	Evaluation of Proposals (specific date TBD)
6/8/2023	Interviews, if conducted
6/14/2023	Successful bidder notified (Tentative)
8/2023 – 9/2023	Contract Finalized

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V. Scoring and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated and scored by an Evaluation Committee comprised of North Sound BH-ASO staff. Once an applicant is qualified, a selection committee will be convened to determine which applicant will be chosen. The selection will be based on the unmet needs identified in the region. The Selection Committee will make recommendations to the North Sound BH-ASO Executive Director.

Each Minimum Qualification and each scored item in the Proposal Evaluation Criteria must be addressed. Organize responses in the same order with the correct heading/question as shown in the RFP if not using the provided form.

Each item has either a Scoring Weight or a N/S that means Not Scored. Each item that is scored will receive a score of 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4. This score will be multiplied by the weight for that item to arrive at the total scored points for the item. For example, if an item has a weight of 10 and an evaluator assigns a score of 3, that item for that evaluator will have given a total score of 30 points.

Each evaluator shall independently assign a score to areas based on the written proposals. Scores will then be summed for all members of the Evaluation Team for each section of the Application.

The evaluators will use the following scoring method:

- 0=no experience/capacity
- 1=limited experience/capacity
- 2=partial experience/capacity
- 3=strong experience/capacity
- 4=extensive experience/capacity

Optional Interview

If a selection cannot be made based on the written proposal evaluation and the organization performance rating alone, North Sound BH-ASO shall elect to interview the top two or more Applicants. Interviews will be worth 10 points. If interviews are conducted, the final award would be based upon the total points awarded for the written evaluation, agency performance and the oral interview.

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VI. Appeal Process

Applicants may appeal only deviations from laws, rules, regulations, or procedures. Disagreement with the scoring by evaluators may not be appealed.

The following procedure applies to Applicants who wish to appeal a disqualification of Application or award of contract:

1. All appeals must be in writing and physically received by the North Sound BH-ASO Executive Director no later than 4:00 p.m. on the fifth (5th) working day after the postmarked date of the notice of disqualification or intent to award.

Address appeals to:

Margaret Rojas, Assistant Director
North Sound BH-ASO
2021 E College Way, Ste. 101
Mt Vernon, WA 98273

2. Appeals must specify the grounds for the appeal including the specific citation of law, rule, regulation, or procedure upon which the protest is based. The judgment used in scoring by individual evaluators is not grounds for appeal.
3. Appeals not filed within the time specified in paragraph 1, above, or which fail to cite the specific law, rule, regulation, or procedure upon which the appeal is based shall be dismissed.

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VII. General Procurement Information

RFP Amendments:

- A. North Sound BH-ASO may, at any time before execution of a contract, amend all or any portion of this RFP. North Sound BH-ASO will e-mail any RFP amendments to you. If there is any conflict between amendments or between an amendment and the RFP, whichever document was issued last in time shall be controlling.
- B. Retraction of this RFP
North Sound BH-ASO is not obligated to contract for the services specified in this RFP. North Sound BH-ASO reserves the right to retract this RFP in whole, or in part, and at any time without penalty.
- C. Rejection of All Proposals
This RFP does not obligate North Sound BH-ASO to contract for services specified herein.
- D. Most Favorable Terms
North Sound BH-ASO reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms the applicant can put forward. There will be no best and final offer procedure. North Sound BH-ASO reserves the right to contact a bidder for clarification of its proposal.

The applicant should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from the RFP. Contract negotiations may incorporate some or the entire proposal. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of the official procurement file on this matter without obligation to North Sound BH-ASO.