



The City of Worcester

Department of Health and Human Services

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) WINTER EMERGENCY SHELTER OPERATIONS

The City of Worcester, through the Division of Homelessness within the Department of Health & Human Services, is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to identify qualified nonprofit organizations interested in operating a low-barrier winter emergency shelter program. The purpose of this RFI is to identify an organization with the demonstrated experience, operational capacity, and facility readiness necessary to provide safe, accessible, and compliant emergency shelter services for individuals experiencing homelessness during the 2026–2027 winter season.

Organizations that submit a responsive RFI and are determined to meet the City's minimum qualifications may be invited to submit a full proposal should funding become available.

Funding Availability

This solicitation is contingent upon the availability of state, local, or other funding sources. Issuance of this RFI does not constitute a commitment by the City to award funding, execute a contract, or proceed with a subsequent procurement.

Any future contract award shall be subject to:

- Availability and receipt of funding;
- Appropriation of funds where applicable;
- Approval by the City Manager and any other required municipal approvals;
- Successful negotiation of a final scope of services and budget; and
- Execution of a written agreement between the city and the selected organization.

The City reserves the right to modify, suspend, postpone, or cancel this RFI or any subsequent procurement process at any time if funding is unavailable or if doing so is determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Program Overview

The city seeks an organization capable of operating a low-barrier emergency shelter during the winter season. Organizations responding to this RFI must have an identified facility that is currently available, or reasonably capable of being made available, for shelter operations. This winter emergency shelter program will operate for 120 days between November 15, 2026, and March 30, 2027.

The proposed facility must meet all applicable buildings, fire, health, zoning, occupancy, accessibility, and life safety requirements.

The proposed shelter location must:

- Be equipped to operate as an emergency shelter;
- Conform to all applicable building and zoning requirements;
- Be compliant with fire and life safety regulations;
- Be accessible to individuals with disabilities; and
- Accommodate a minimum operational capacity of **sixty (60) beds**.

The city strongly encourages partnerships among healthcare providers, behavioral health organizations, housing providers, and community-based organizations to strengthen service delivery.

Request for Information Requirements

Interested organizations shall submit a Request for Information on organizational letterhead including:

1. Organization name and contact information.
2. Organizational history and experience operating emergency shelter, housing stabilization, outreach, behavioral health, or related human service programs.
3. Description of the proposed facility, including:
 - Facility address;
 - Responsibility or site availability;
 - Current use;
 - Regulatory compliance;
 - Proposed bed capacity;
 - Sleeping accommodations, hygiene facilities, showers, accessibility features, dining/common areas, and security measures.
4. Description of operational capacity including:
 - 24/7 staffing model;
 - Security plan;
 - Case management and housing navigation;
 - Healthcare and behavioral health coordination;
 - Experience serving individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, behavioral health conditions, and substance use disorders.
5. Description of the proposed service model, including:

- Intake procedures;
 - Low-barrier practices;
 - Client engagement and stabilization;
 - Coordination with municipal, regional, and state homelessness response systems.
6. Description of financial and administrative capacity, including public grant management experience, reporting capabilities, trauma-informed care practices, harm reduction approaches, and CORI compliance.
 7. Identification of subcontractors or community partners.
 8. Most recent audited or CPA-reviewed financial statements.
 9. Current organizational budget and recent statement of revenues and expenses.
 10. Current Board of Directors roster or organizational leadership structure.

Reservation of Rights

Submission of an RFI does not guarantee selection, funding, contract award, or endorsement by the City. The City reserves the right to request additional information, conduct interviews or site visits, evaluate organizational readiness, negotiate scope and budget, or determine that no award will be made.

Submission Deadline

Letters of Interest must be submitted electronically no later than **September 30, 2026**

Submission Information

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