



**FY2025**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
Interventions for Highest Promise Youth

## **Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Interventions for Highest Promise Youth**

### **I. Guidelines**

Metropolitan Peace Initiatives (MPI), a division of Metropolitan Family Services (MFS), is pleased to issue this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the selection of qualified community-based organizations (CBOs) to deliver Interventions for Highest Promise Youth. The Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative seeks to engage and support youth, aged 14 to 21, who have been disconnected from the educational system and are at risk of being involved or exposed to gun violence.

The Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative focuses on creating a city-wide infrastructure that supports a tiered and integrated continuum of services (TICS) aimed at re-engaging youth with the education system and providing comprehensive support to ensure their success.

MFS is not obligated to make any awards as a result of this RFQ announcement. Subsequent funding for this RFQ is subject to budget appropriations from the various government agencies and the execution of subgrant agreements between MFS and funded applicants.

MFS and all funded applicants must comply with all applicable provisions of local, state, and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment opportunity, including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), the United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), the Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.), and the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance, s2-160-010 et seq. of the Municipal Code of Chicago, as amended.

All materials and updates to the RFQ are available on MFS' webpage. MFS will have no responsibility or obligation to pay any costs incurred by any applicant in preparing a response to this RFQ or in complying with any subsequent request by MFS for information or participation throughout the evaluation and selection process.

If you have any questions about the RFQ, please e-mail [saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org](mailto:saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org) with subject heading **“Highest Promise Youth RFQ Questions”** no later than May 1, 2025.

## II. Timeline

<b>Request for Qualifications Released</b>	<b>Monday, April 28, 2025</b>
<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Monday, May 12, 2025 by 5:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Rolling Notification Start Date</b>	<b>Monday, May 15, 2025</b>
<b>Training Date</b>	<b>June 2-30, 2025</b>
<b>Expected Launch Date</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 1, 2025</b>

## III. Program Description

Metropolitan Family Services (MFS), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, has been a cornerstone in supporting and strengthening families and communities across Chicago and its surrounding suburbs for over 160 years. The mission of MFS is to mobilize and provide the services needed to strengthen families and communities. Accredited by the Council on Accreditation, MFS continues to lead on critical issues affecting Chicago, building partnerships with diverse stakeholders, organizations, and communities. MFS uses a community-centered service delivery model, concentrating resources in over seventy (70) communities within Chicago, suburban Cook and DuPage counties. MFS brings a family focused approach to service delivery, providing wraparound support that addresses four strategic service areas: Education, Emotional Wellness, Economic Stability, and Empowerment.

Launched in 2017, Metropolitan Peace Initiatives (MPI), a division of MFS, partners with community-based and citywide organizations to help heal Chicago's communities experiencing the highest levels of gun violence. MPI has become a leader in the community violence intervention (CVI) field in its core specialties including education, behavioral health, workforce readiness, legal aid and street outreach supervision and training. MPI is now working on expanding their breadth of services to develop a city-wide infrastructure to better serve youth that are most at risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence.

Youth who are completely disconnected from school are at a significantly higher risk of becoming victims of violence, underscoring the urgent need to implement support systems. These Youth of Highest Promise are also more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system, further disengaging them from opportunities to realize their full potential. Addressing the needs of these youth who have become disconnected from their school communities is a critical and urgent priority.

Financially supported by the Chicago Public School (CPS) Board, Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities (PSPC) and other youth intervention funders, MPI will serve as the Youth Intermediary organization to deliver the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative. MPI will be responsible for developing the program model in partnership with CPS, overseeing implementation, providing training and technical assistance through the Metropolitan Peace Academy (MPA), standardizing and collecting success metrics, and fostering strategic partnerships and advocacy efforts with public and private entities, service providers, youth participants, and community groups.

MPI is seeking to identify qualified youth service providers who can deliver high-quality, evidence-based services to the program's target population. These providers will play a critical role in re-engaging youth, delivering comprehensive services, and contributing to the overall success of the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative. MPI is looking for organizations with a proven track record of working with highest promise youth, the ability to scale their services, and a commitment to collaborating with other stakeholders to achieve the program's objectives. Providers must demonstrate a track record of coordinating with government agencies such as the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) as well as other community partners to implement a solid anti-violence infrastructure in their respective communities. Qualified youth providers will serve as the lead agency to administer all direct service operations within their assigned community. They will leverage support of other community-based organizations, businesses, and other hyperlocal assets in order to engage and serve youth. Qualified youth providers will be the primary point of contact within their assigned community for residents and stakeholders.

***Program Requirements.*** Successful applicants must incorporate the following program requirements and program participant criteria into their programs:

Programs must:

- Ensure fidelity to the B2OF 2.0 model.
- Have the capacity to support Medicaid reimbursement for youth-based VP-CST services, by becoming Medicaid certified or a Medicaid subcontractor of Metropolitan Family Services (MFS).
- Distribute public education materials within the community to provide information and resources on community resources and violent behavior.
- Provide general office and meeting space, space for having confidential conversations with program partners, and access to a telephone for all outreach staff.
- Have ongoing communication with MFS Metropolitan Peace Initiative (MPI) staff who will assist with the following: ensure model fidelity, identify training needs, facilitate coaching and training, problem solve, and monitor sites to identify program strengths and challenges.
- Provide timely (in advance, where possible) notice of press coverage.
- Provide email notice of changes in funded staff, including staff vacancies.
- Alert MFS immediately for life threatening incidents and within 24 hours for serious and/or troubling incidents. Email communication is acceptable, as long as, electronic communications adhere to HIPPA guidelines.
- Alert MFS of any service interruption that requires temporary or permanent changes in service location or staff availability (exceeding 24 hours).
- Notify MFS in writing of suspensions, administrative leaves or terminations of staff paid by this RFP within 48 hours of any employee's change of status.

#### IV. Criteria for Eligible Participants

The Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative targets youth who have been disengaged from school for three or more months. Selected providers will deliver services to individuals meeting the following criteria:

- Aged 14 to 21 years old disengaged from CPS with a dropout code for three or more months or be a direct referral from the juvenile justice or SOAR programs in CPS in order to participate.
- Youth participants should reside in or surrounding the following zip codes or areas:
  - 60621
  - 60623
  - 60624
  - 60644
  - 60628

Additionally, the program includes the following provisions:

- Students requiring additional support after SOAR or incarceration do not need to wait 3 months to access programming
- Chronically absent students will be referred to school resources and SOAR first through the tiered and integrated continuum of services

The program is particularly focused on, though not limited to, youth involved in the juvenile justice system or those experiencing the effects of violence in their communities.

#### V. Expected Service Components

The overall goal of Back to Our Future (“**B2OF**”), an ultra-high needs intervention program, is to re-engage 14-21 year-old youth that have been disconnected from district schools. Providers are expected to engage youth participants in intensive reengagement programming and connection to employment, aiming to help them become less prone to violence and violent activity and reconnect to the educational pathway that best suits the needs of each participant.

A qualified Interventions for Highest Promise Youth provider will have demonstrated either directly or in partnership experience in delivering the following service components for youth:

- Relentless engagement and street outreach with hard-to-reach populations
- Academic support
- Mental health and cognitive behavioral interventions
- Mentoring
- Family support
- Soft skills training
- Case Management

Leveraging their proven experience and deep community connections, selected youth providers are expected to:

- Identify and engage participants who are eligible for the program.
- Assess the needs of eligible youth and map out a clear pathway to the appropriate services within a tiered and integrated continuum of services. This may involve delivering direct services through the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative, referring youth internally to other programs, or coordinating external referrals to partner organizations.
- Provide personalized service delivery and ongoing case management.
- Providers will be required to complete necessary data collection and documentation as identified by MPI and respond to all data requests, including interviews, observations, and surveys of participants and staff; and maintain detailed records.
- Providers will be required to participate in external evaluation efforts with future research partner(s).
- Providers will be required to submit monthly progress reports that will include, at a minimum, the following information to **Monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Examples must include:

Program Objective	Performance Metric
Client Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ # of referrals (referral pathway)</li> <li>▪ # of youth engaged/unengaged</li> <li>▪ # of attempted engagements per youth by engagement outcome</li> <li>▪ # of youth consented to programming</li> <li>▪ % of youth from targeted zip codes</li> </ul>
Program Participation/Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monthly/Quarterly/Yearly Program retention rate</li> <li>▪ # of active, engaged clients</li> <li>▪ # of disengaged clients and reason for disengaging from program</li> <li>▪ # of weeks attended</li> <li>▪ # of hours attended</li> <li>▪ Participation rates by service offering (i.e. academic support, credit recovery, mentoring, soft skill, etc.)</li> </ul>
Service referral and connection to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ # of referrals by type (student or family)</li> <li>▪ # of connection to services</li> <li>▪ Service engagement and completion rates</li> </ul>

School attendance rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ # days students have attended programming</li> </ul>
Re-engagement rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many clients re-engaged (returned to school)?</li> <li>▪ Type of reengagement (i.e. traditional classroom environment, alternative settings, etc.)</li> <li>▪ How many clients enter alternative postsecondary pathways?</li> </ul>

- Recruit and onboard staff who are equipped to deliver program services, possess deep knowledge of their community, and excel in engaging with disengaged youth.
- Ensure 100% attendance rate by staff in learning community sessions, mandatory training sessions, and check-ins.

**VI. Program Design**

A qualified youth provider must adhere to the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth program design that includes the following minimum elements:

- A. Ensure all staff interfacing with students have the ability to pass CPS background checks.
- B. A qualified provider must hire and support a program manager who will work a minimum of 75% on the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth initiative to re-engage youth and provide comprehensive services.
- C. A qualified provider must ensure program staff participating in programmatic, fiscal, and data participate in required MPI training staff in June 2025, and any future mandatory trainings identified.
- D. A qualified provider must identify a data liaison who can attend training, manage the local database and transmit data to MPI.
- E. A qualified provider must identify a fiscal liaison who can attend trainings, complete and share vouchers by monthly deadlines to MPI.
- F. Office, meeting and programming spaces so that multiple activities can occur simultaneously, including space for having confidential conversations with youth, a dedicated mental health space, recreational space and space appropriate for eLearning and soft skills development.

- G. Ensure regular communication with MPI Program Officers who will: ensure model fidelity, identify training needs, facilitate coaching and training, problem solve, and monitor sites to identify program strengths and challenges.
- H. Have the capacity to support Medicaid reimbursement for youth-based VP-CST services, by becoming Medicaid certified or a Medicaid subcontractor of MFS.

## **VII. Minimum Agency Eligibility Requirements**

Applications for this RFQ will be accepted from any legally constituted entities that meet the following minimum eligibility requirements:

- Applicant must be incorporated as a private non-profit corporation in the State of Illinois, must have been granted 501(C) (3) tax exempt status by the United States Internal Revenue Service, and must be GATA approved from the State of Illinois or have an UEI number or SAM Registration from the federal government. The applicant's 501(C) (3) status must be in good standing and must not have been revoked in the previous calendar year, and must not be debarred from receiving federal grants.
- Applicant must have a Federal Tax ID number/employer identification number (EIN).
- Applicant must have a minimum of three (3) years of successful experience providing all the identified service components of Interventions for Highest Promise Youth in Chicago, Illinois.
- Applicant must have an established site or office in the community for which it may be prospectively designated to provide youth services.

## **VIII. Funding Information**

This award is utilizing funds awarded from Chicago Public School (CPS) Board, Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities (PSPC) and other youth intervention funders.

### ***Award period***

Grant awards resulting from this opportunity will have a target period of performance of July 1, 2025 thru May 31, 2028.

### ***Available Funds***

A total of \$2,450,00 in funding is available through this solicitation for 2-4 community youth intervention providers. The minimum amount for each award is \$360,000. The maximum amount of each award is \$612,000.

Agreements that result from this funding opportunity are contingent upon and subject to the availability of funding. MFS, may terminate or suspend any Agreement resulting from this RFP, in whole or in part, without penalty or further payment being required, if (i) sufficient funds are not available to MFS by CPS (ii) CPS or MFS determines that funds will not or may not be available for payment. MFS will provide notice, in writing, to the Grantee of any such funding failure and its election to terminate or



suspend the agreement as soon as practicable. Any suspension or termination pursuant to this Section will be effective upon the date of the written notice unless otherwise indicated.

Applications must include an Implementation Schedule that describes how the program activities will be carried out in the initial year beginning July 1, 2025- June 30, 2026. The Implementation Schedule must include information that will allow MFS to assess grant activity relative to planned project performance.

### ***Funding Restrictions***

(a). Federal Financial Guide. Applicants must follow the current edition of the Department of Justice Grants Financial Guide which details allowable and unallowable costs. The guide can be found at: [https://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/pdfs/DOJ\\_FinancialGuide.pdf](https://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/pdfs/DOJ_FinancialGuide.pdf). Costs may be determined to be unallowable even if not expressly prohibited in the Federal Financial Guide.

(b). Prohibited Uses. The following is a non-exhaustive list of services, activities, goods, and other costs that cannot be supported through this funding:

- land acquisition;
- new construction;
- a renovation, lease, or any other proposed use of a building or facility that will either (a) result in a change in its basic prior use or (b) significantly change its size;
- minor renovation or remodeling of a property either (a) listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or (b) located within a 100-year flood plain; and
- implementation of a new program involving the use of chemicals;
- capital expenditures;
- fundraising activities;
- alcohol costs; and
- lobbying.

(c). Allowable expenses. The following is a non-exhaustive list of services, activities, goods, and other costs that can be supported through this RFQ:

- Salaries and fringe benefits for direct service, supervisory, data management or administrative staff to implement the program
- Transportation expenses
- Trainings costs for staff and program participants
- Technology needs to implement the program
- Client assistance
- Rent and utilities
- Operating expenses

(d). Pre-Award Costs. **No costs incurred before the start date of the grant agreement may be charged to awards resulting from this funding opportunity.**

(e). Pre-approvals. Prior approvals may affect project timelines. In efforts to ensure the reasonableness, necessity and allowability of proposed uses of funds, MFS may require prior approval of the following, among other things:

- Out-of-state travel;
- Certain Requests for Proposals and sub-contracts; and
- Conference, meeting, and training costs for grant recipients.

Submission of materials for MFS approval should be incorporated into the application Implementation Schedules.

(f). State Travel Guidelines. Travel costs charged must conform to State Travel Guidelines, found here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/Employees/travel/Pages/TravelReimbursement.aspx>. Out-of-state hotel rates are based on the General Service Administration (GSA) guidelines found here: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. Applicant agencies with lower cost travel guidelines than the State of Illinois must use those lower rates.

(g). Supplanting. Supplanting does not apply to state funds.

## **IX. Selection Process**

All interested parties must submit a complete application packet by the deadline to be placed on the roster. All completed applications turned in on or before the deadline will be reviewed by MPI staff. To be found eligible to be placed on the Interventions for Highest Promise Youth roster, applicants must:

- Submit a complete proposal, including narrative questions and attachments;
- Demonstrate that they meet the Minimum Agency Eligibility Requirements in Section VII; and
- Demonstrate that they meet the criteria of a qualified Interventions for Highest Promise Youth Provider, as outlined in Section III of the Application Instructions and Materials.

MFS staff will evaluate each proposal for completeness, including addressing all narrative questions and required attachments. Staff will forward recommendations to the MPI Executive Director. Notification of roster eligibility will be sent to the Executive Director of the applicant organization (or similar level agency management staff indicated on the Application Cover Sheet).

Applications not meeting requirements of eligibility or application completeness will be deemed ineligible and will be eliminated from further consideration. MPI reserves the right to seek clarification and accept or waive any non-material irregularities or informalities in determining whether or not an application is eligible.

Eligible and complete applications will be reviewed based on the criteria for providing the required services outlined in the Guidelines and Application materials. MPI reserves the right to contact the primary contact person listed on the agency's completed Application Cover Sheet (Attachment 2) to clarify application contents. MPI also reserves the right to schedule and conduct interviews and/or site visits with some or all applicants prior to forwarding recommendations to the MPI Executive Director.

MPI reserves the right to make a determination without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the application should be submitted on the most favorable terms.

MPI also reserves all rights not expressly stated in the RFQ, including making no selection.

#### **X. Appeal Process**

There is no appeal process.

#### **XI. Additional Requirements**

Must meet background check requirements.



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# APPLICATION

## Instructions and Materials

This Application Instructions and Materials packet contains information and materials for respondents submitting an FY2025 Interventions for Highest Promise Youth Request for Qualifications. The RFQ guidelines is a separate document that outlines the RFQ notification process and provides more details on the service and funding requirements.

Applications must be obtained at <https://www.metropolitanpeaceinitiatives.org> or by emailing [saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org](mailto:saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org). Digital copies will be available to download.

### I. Submission Instructions and Deadline

Completed application packets are due by **5:00 pm (CST) on Monday, May 12, 2025**. Packets must be submitted via e-mail with subject heading “**Highest Promise Youth RFQ**”. No faxed proposals will be accepted.

*Late proposals will not be accepted or reviewed for roster consideration.*

It is advisable to upload application documents 72 hours prior to the deadline in case you encounter an issue with your internet connectivity which impacts your ability to upload documents. MPI is not responsible for ensuring that applications are received by the deadline.

Electronic Submittal: Application packets are to be submitted electronically to [saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org](mailto:saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org). For questions, please email [saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org](mailto:saferchicagoproposal@metrofamily.org) no later than **May 1, 2025** with subject heading “**Highest Promise Youth RFQ Questions**”.

### II. Format Instructions

- A. Applications will be reviewed only on the information requested and outlined in this RFQ including any clarifying information requested by MPI. Do not include a cover letter, brochures, or letters of support. Applications that do not follow the required format may be deemed ineligible and may not be reviewed.
- B. The application should be typed or word processed on single-sided, letter-sized (8 ½ x 11-inch) sheets. Please use one-inch margins, single spacing, and minimum size 11-point font.
- C. The application may not exceed a total of three (3) pages including the narrative section. The requested attachments do not count towards the page limit. Pages which exceed the page limitation will not be included in the review.

- D. Organize your application according to the section headings that follow in Section III. For the narrative questions, please include section titles, and question numbers. You do not need to rewrite the questions for specific elements of each question.

### III. Narrative

Write a narrative response to sections A – B. Answer each section completely according to the questions. Do not exceed a total of 3 pages for sections A – B combined.

<b>NARRATIVE QUESTIONS</b>	
<b>A. EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Describe how undertaking the provision of Interventions for Highest Promise Youth aligns with the mission of your agency.</li><li>2. Describe your agency’s experience providing the youth service components described in Section V (page 5). Please address <u>all</u> the expected components, including examples of your success in:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relentless engagement and street outreach with hard-to-reach populations</li><li>• Academic support</li><li>• Mental health and cognitive behavioral interventions</li><li>• Mentoring</li><li>• Family support</li><li>• Soft skills training</li><li>• Case Management</li></ul></li><li>3. Describe your agency’s experience with rendering and/or billing for Medicaid services.</li><li>4. List the neighborhoods or community areas where you have experience delivering the youth service components mentioned and your history within these neighborhoods or community areas.</li></ol>	
<b>B. PROGRAM STAFFING</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Attach a bio statement for the program manager who will have a significant role in program coordination and service delivery (This attachment does not count toward the 3-page narrative limit). Bio statement should describe the experience of staff person, including experience in priority areas established in Section V (page 5) of this RFQ.</li><li>2. Attach one copy of your current organization chart (This attachment does not count toward the 3 page narrative limit).</li></ol>	

### IV. Completed Application Requirements

To be considered complete, your application packet must include all of the following items or the application will be deemed incomplete:

1. A completed and signed one-page Application Cover Sheet (Attachment 2).
2. A completed Narrative response (see Sections II & III for instructions).

3. Program personnel bio statement.
  4. Completed budget template (find attached)
  5. A current organization chart.
  6. Implementation Schedule that describes how the program activities will be carried out in the initial year (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)
  7. Current verification of non-profit status or evidence of incorporation or status as a legal entity. Your agency must have a federal tax identification number/employer identification number.
  8. If your agency has an approved indirect rate, a copy of proof that the rate is approved by an appropriate federal agency or another entity.
  9. IRS 501(c)(3) Letter
  10. Certificate of Good Standing with the State of IL
  11. Verification of Good Standing with the IRS (export)
  12. Current System for Award Management (SAM) Certificate
  13. Most recent single audit and management letter, if applicable per Single Audit thresholds below:
    - Agency fiscal year ending on or before 09/30/2024, required if \$750k or more in Federal funds are expended during the fiscal year.
    - Agency fiscal year ending on or after 10/01/2024, required if \$1M or more in Federal funds are expended during the fiscal year.
- If Single Audit does not apply:**
- Provide a business letter signed by ED/CEO certifying agency was not required to complete a single audit per the federal spending thresholds
14. Provide most recent year-end audited Financial Statements
  15. MFS also requires a programmatic risk assessment to be submitted prior to the execution of an agreement. This will be sent to successful applicants.
  16. Certificates of insurance will be request from selected grantees.

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Request for Qualifications Application Cover Sheet

1. Applicant agency			
2. Agency Executive Director:			
3. Agency Primary Contact	Name: _____ Title: _____ Address: _____ Email: _____ Phone #: _____		
4. Organization Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit <input type="checkbox"/> Public Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____		
5. Federal Tax ID or EIN:		6. UEI Number:	
8. Proposed Program Name:			
9. Office or site address (if different than above):   			
<p><b>Authorized physical signature of applicant/lead agency</b></p> <p><i>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information in this application is true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant who will comply with all contractual obligations if the applicant is awarded funding.</i></p> <p>Name and Title of Authorized Representative: _____</p> <p>Signature of Authorized Representative: _____ Date: _____</p>			