



# NC DHHS Notice of Funding Availability

## Reporting Form

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**DHHS Division/Office issuing this notice:** Division of Services for the Blind (NCDSB)

**Date of this notice:** February 15, 2024

**Program Name:** Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) Supported Employment Extended Services Program (SEES)

### **Purpose:**

There are significant numbers of individuals who need specialized evaluation, training and supports to reach their full potential. According to The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022), the employment-population ratio for persons with a disability was 21.3 percent, which was up from 19.1 percent in 2021. The ratio for persons without a disability, at 65.4 percent, which was up from 63.7 percent the prior year. Additionally, according to the American Community Survey (2019), 46.2% of working-age people with blindness or low vision were employed (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020a) Some of these individuals will require substantial individualized assistance in job development, training and long term follow up to ensure that they are able to maintain their employment.

The goal of potential contracts is to provide Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) Supported Employment Extended Services Program (SEES) to eligible individuals after they have reached their goal of employment but will need that long term follow up to remain successful in their employment. Eligibility for SEES for the NC Division of Services for the Blind is based on the individual being visually impaired with employment related limitations. These limitations would fall under the category of their being most significantly disabled.

CRPs are integral partners in the network of services designed to provide people with disabilities with equal opportunities in achieving their highest level of economic and social independence. The service model is for SEES which will include long term follow up and extended support by trained staff.

### **Description:**

The objective of this Request for Applications for Community Rehabilitation Partnership (RACRP) is to identify qualified CRPs that can provide services in the area of SEES which are inclusive of long-term follow-up supports after the individual has obtained a status of stabilized employment. The Contractor will provide SEES through contacts made on the schedule as

listed below. The Contractor will bill the Division for these contacts and shall follow the phases of the Division's SEES plan as follows:

Phase 1: These long-term follow-ups will consist of a minimum of at least two (2) monthly contacts with the individual and one (1) with the employer for the first 6 months, unless there is a provision in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with the Division for off-site monitoring.

Phase 2: At the end of six (6) months, the Contractor, Division client and employer shall make a determination as to the client's stabilization on the job. If the client is well stabilized, an offer shall be made by the Division to the Division client and employer that continued monitoring could be made once a month for six months. Monthly monitoring visits will include contact with both the client and employer. If this phase is agreed upon by the Division, Division client and the employer, the Contractor may continue to monitor in this phase for up to 24 months. The Division will evaluate every six months during Phase 2 to determine if continued monthly monitoring is needed or if the client may enter into phase 3.

Phase 3: Once the Division client has successfully completed Phase 2, the Contractor shall cease regular monitoring. If they enter into Phase 3, the client is placed on an inactive list and monitoring would only be at the Division, Division client, or employer's request. If the Contractor is contacted by either the Division, the client or employer, the Contractor will make an on-site visit to determine what services are needed to re-stabilize the client's job. If the Contractor determines that more than minimal services are needed, then the Division client should be referred back to the Division's Vocational Rehabilitation Program by the Contractor for possible case activation. If the Contractor determines that the issues can be resolved with short term interventions this service shall be provided to the Division client and/or employer.

### **Contractor Assurances:**

The Contractor gives the following assurances that are documented by written policy and administrative records which are available for review by the Division staff as designated by the Division Director:

1. The Contractor is committed to the Division client's involvement and their right to self-determination; therefore, it has policies and follows procedures designed to promote and document client input in program development and each client's involvement in planning their own program.
2. The Contractor is committed to improving the quality and efficiency of its total operation and, therefore, has established a program evaluation and reporting system which is used to measure its effectiveness and efficiency in order to help monitor the effects of the contract.
3. In the interest of personal and civil rights as well as affirmative action, the Contractor has personnel policies and documented employee practices that promote full

program accessibility for each client and which promotes the recruitment of people with disabilities as staff and volunteers (where volunteers are used) as board members.

4. The Contractor is committed to achieving and maintaining architectural accessibility and has a written policy that outlines its intent to be in compliance with the North Carolina State Building Code and which sets forth timetables for initiating and documenting any actions(s) necessary for achieving such compliance.
5. In recognition of its obligation as a public contractor serving People with Disabilities, the contractor has safety policies and a documented safety program that employees are aware of and use additional precautions indicated because of the limitations imposed by disabilities on clients, staff or visitors.
6. In recognition of every individual's dignity and right to respect and privacy, the Contractor will maintain the confidentiality of all medical, psychological, and other consumer information shared with it by the Division.
7. In recognition of the individual's right to fair and equitable compensation for work performed, the Contractor has documentation that it is in full compliance with the Wage and Hour requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act and will maintain this compliance as the requirements change.
8. The Contractor will ensure program flexibility and staff mobility within its SEES to promote maximum efficiency in meeting with Division clients as needed.

### **Funding Availability:**

The total anticipated amount to be awarded is \$68,063.00. The maximum amount of any single award is dictated by the volume of service need within the local community and the availability of funding. The hourly rate for this service is \$52.48 per hour.

### **Eligibility:**

- Applicants are public and private profit or non-profit CRPs.
- Applicants shall be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the Council on Accreditation (COA) or the Council on Quality Leadership (COL).
- A copy of the accreditation shall be submitted to the Division.
- Each CRP shall comply with the accessibility and nondiscrimination standards set forth in federal and state law.
- The agency may deny funding to and refuse to contract with any CRP which fails to comply with such provisions.

In addition, to the above requirements, ONE of the following two conditions must be true:

- A CRP shall have a minimum of three years of experience as a service provider in the area of service delivery for which they are seeking approval.
- Key staff providing direct consumer services for the CRP (such as the coordinator of the program) must have a minimum of three years of experience providing services in the area for which the CRP is applying to become approved under contract.

Approved CRP vendors shall maintain applicable accreditation throughout the term of the award.

**How to Apply:** Qualified CRP providers may complete and submit a [Supported Employment Extended Services \(SEES\) Vendor Application \(New-Renewal\)](#) by the deadline indicated for a possible July 1, 2024 contract award.

Note: Final approval will be determined only after a completed application packet is received and approved, a satisfactory on-site review has been conducted, and funds have been identified for a contractual agreement.

**Deadline for Submission:**

Applications will be received until 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2024. Applications received by the deadline above will be in consideration for a July 1, 2024 award. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2024 will be considered for a future award date. Applications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

**How to Obtain Further Information** and/or a sample Scope of Work that further outlines what may be required of a CRP contracting with NCDSB for Supported Employment Extended Services (SEES):

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