RFA# 20422
SFS #: DCF2025

New York State Department of Health

Office of Aging and Long-Term Care
Center for Regulatory and Policy Initiatives

Request for Applications

Direct Caregiver Flexibility

To apply for this RFA, eligible applicants must be prequalified in the New York State Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt and must submit an application via SFS. Multiple regions can be applied for, but each region will require a separate application.

Release Date:	**December 3, 2024**
Questions Due:	**December 17, 2024, by 4:00 PM**
Questions, Answers and Updates Posted (on or about):	**January 7, 2025, by 4:00 PM**
Applications Due:	**January 21, 2025, by 4:00 PM**
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I. Introduction

The Office of Aging and Long-Term Care ("OALTC") within the Department of Health ("DOH"), is responsible for the development and implementation of programs that address the community and facility-based long-term service and support needs of New Yorkers. Long term care services and supports are heavily dependent upon the availability of a health care workforce, especially the direct care workers – Personal Care Aides ("PCAs"), Home Health Aides ("HHAs"), and Certified Nursing Assistants ("CNAs"), sometimes referred to as "direct care workers" who provide care to people of all ages as well as those living with disabilities. New York is projected to have 5.3 million residents over age 60 by 2030, and seventy percent (70%) of individuals over age 65 are likely to need some form of long-term care over the course of their lifetimes, placing direct care workers in high demand, and challenging the State to make these jobs as attractive as possible.

In addition to increasing the direct care workforce to meet current and anticipated demand, the State understands the need to support efforts to offer better training and job opportunities to attract people into the field. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for flexibility for long term care workers to move across care settings and titles to ensure that providers could identify and deploy trained workers in a timely and efficient manner.

The intent of this Request for Applications ("RFA") is to fund up to $19,000,000 per year for five (5) years for Direct Caregiver Training Centers along with the Direct Caregiver Support Hub component to support the training program.

A. Background/Intent

Individuals starting an entry level job in healthcare often encounter obstacles that impact their ability to thrive in a healthcare career. Attaining training and certification needed for jobs in long term and/or community-based care such as a Personal Care Aide ("PCA"), Home Health Aide ("HHA"), and Certified Nurse Aide ("CNA") is fragmented. PCA and HHA training programs are usually separate from CNA training programs. Training programs are offered by providers licensed by the Department of Health ("DOH") as well as those approved by the State Education Department ("SED") which are offered in secondary, post-secondary and adult education settings. Currently, there is no universal, easy way to access a list of all training programs in NYS, which makes it difficult for individuals to find available training opportunities in any region of the State. The costs and time commitments for these programs vary, and it can be difficult for trainees to move easily between training programs.

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to create a more uniform and centralized "training and support system" for direct care workers in the ten (10) Economic Development Regions ("EDR") as defined in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Economic Development Regions		
1	Capital Region	Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington
2	Central New York	Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego

3	Finger Lakes	Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
4	Long Island	Nassau, Suffolk
5	Mid-Hudson	Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
6	New York City	Bronx, Kings, Manhattan, Queens, Richmond
7	Mohawk Valley	Fulton, Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Montgomery, Schoharie
8	North Country	Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence,
9	Southern Tier	Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins
10	Western New York	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara

Direct Caregiver Flexibility Training Centers

The Department is seeking the establishment of at least one (1) Direct Care Training Center. (hereinafter, "Training Center") in each of the ten (10) Economic Development Regions ("EDR") of the State as listed in Table 1. At the time of application, applicants must be an approved DOH or SED training program, provide a copy of training certificate approval letter from DOH or SED (Attachment 8, see Bid factor 1d), and may provide a mix of in-person and distance education trainings if already approved to do so as is the case with approved hybrid home care training programs. Applicants can apply for more than one region, **but each region applied for will require a separate application**. Applicants can submit no more than one application per region.

Direct Caregiver Training Centers are intended to concentrate the direct caregiver training opportunities into a regional Center to increase the pipeline of individuals trained and able to work in direct care jobs. Applicants that do not currently offer all three trainings (PCA, HHA, CNA) may be able to accomplish this through subcontracts with approved training programs that can supplement the Center's training so that all three titles can be included.

In addition, Training Centers are expected to be able to provide or make available the Alternative Competency Demonstration ("ACD") for those who can demonstrate prior experience as in the case of Personal Care Aides or Home Health Aides whose certification has lapsed due to not working a skilled case in the prior 24 months. Providing ACD can be done through a contract with a provider approved for ACD.

Direct Caregiver Training Centers must:

- Engage in community outreach to identify potential trainees;
- Provide **free** training to all trainees in any of the three training types (PCA, HHA, CNA);
- Provide a stipend to trainees for the time the individual is in training;
- Provide reimbursement to trainees for the cost of travel to and from the Training Center for the period of training;
- Provide trainees with information about all direct caregiver titles (PCA, HHA, and CNA) including, but not limited to: Job Duties, Salary ranges, Training opportunities, and Training requirements;
- Provide trainees the opportunity to select and complete training for any of the provided titles (PCA, HHA, and CNA);
- Provide trainees with a list of employers and employment opportunities for each direct caregiver

title;
- Ensure that the trainees have the appropriate certificates to allow employment once they have successfully completed the training and related tests;

Direct Caregiver Training Centers cannot require an employment agreement between a specific organization and a trainee as a condition of providing free training.

Direct Caregiver Support Hubs

Direct Caregiver Support Hubs (hereinafter, "Support Hub") are intended to function as the workforce development branch to the Direct Caregiver Training Centers, assisting with the outreach and providing the case management needed to motivate and encourage individuals to connect to training, successfully complete the training, envision a future in long-term and community-based care, and be able to address work-life challenges that can serve as barriers to employment.

The Support Hub will assist in providing the essential foundation that many individuals need to commit to the time needed for training, and to interview for and begin employment.

The Support Hub will receive referrals from the Direct Caregiver Training Center to provide remediation, mentoring, and support for potential trainees before, during and after training as needed.

Support Hubs must provide and address the following but are not limited to the following:
- Assessment of individual's needs,
- Career development,
- Mentorship and Supervision, and
- Language and Cultural Barriers

The overall goal of a Support Hubs is to offer support to both potential trainees referred by the Direct Caregiver Training Centers and existing certified PCA, HHA and CNAs in hopes that it may lead to improved job satisfaction, better patient care, and a more efficient healthcare system.

B. Available Funding

Up to $18,775,000 in funding (Years 1-2) and $19,000,000 in funding (Years 3-5) is available to support programs the Direct Caregiver Flexibility Training Centers and the Direct Caregiver Support Hub branch of the programs funding this RFA. The funding is broken down per region as listed in Table 2 below:

Table 2

Economic Development Regions			Maximum Number of Awards	Years 1-2: Maximum Award Annually (per award)	Years 3-5: Maximum Award Annually (per award)
1	Capital Region	Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington	2	$816,304	$826,087

2	Central New York	Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego	2	$816,304	$826,087
3	Finger Lakes	Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates	2	$816,304	$826,087
4	Long Island	Nassau, Suffolk	2 (1 per county)	$816,304	$826,087
5	Mid-Hudson	Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester	2	$816,304	$826,087
6	New York City	Bronx, Kings, Manhattan, Queens, Richmond	5 (1 per county)	$816,304	$826,087
7	Mohawk Valley	Fulton, Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Montgomery, Schoharie	2	$816,304	$826,087
8	North Country	Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence	2	$816,304	$826,087
9	Southern Tier	Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins	2	$816,304	$826,087
10	Western New York	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara	2	$816,304	$826,087

II. Who May Apply

Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicant must be prequalified in the New York State Statewide Financial System (SFS), if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the "Key Dates" set forth on the Cover Page of this RFA.
- Applicant must be:
    - New York State Department of Health licensed Article 28 facility approved CNA training program; or
    - New York State Department of Health licensed Article 36 organization approved PCA and HHA training program; or
    - State Education Department (SED) approved PCA, HHA or CNA training program.

III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes

A. Direct Care Training Centers

Funded Applicants (Grantees) who provide training programs selected as Direct Care Training Centers are required to:

- Conduct in-person free training programs in a single or various locations throughout the region to ensure adequate access to training throughout the EDR.
    - Trainings must be offered for completion and certification for PCA, HHA or CNA.
    - Scrubs, approved textbooks, and other learning materials must be provided free of charge to trainees.

    - Training schedules must be posted on the training center's website (but not limited to) and adhered to.
    - Training Centers must use approved instructors recognized by the state agency that granted the approval (i.e., Department of Health, State Education Department).
    - Offer the opportunity to complete the Alternative Competency Demonstration ("ACD") to exempt qualified individuals from required basic training for Personal Care Aide. ACD for Home Health Aides whose certification has lapsed must be made available if requested by a trainee. ACD must be offered directly, or the Direct Caregiver Training Center may partner with an approved training program that agrees to provide ACD to students.
    - Provide stipends to trainees for time in class (minimum wage x classroom hours).
    - Provide trainees reimbursement for travel to and from trainings for mileage or fares (i.e., bus/train/subway). Must follow the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates.
- Provide trainees with a list of PCA, HHA and CNA job openings in the EDR, updated for the duration of the contract.
    - This list must be kept current (updated monthly).
    - Must be listed on the contractor's website*.
      *Note, the list may include the agency or facility that operates the training center, however, the applicant cannot require a student to work for an employer associated with the Training Center
- Students must be made aware of and provided the full range of job choices within a given region commensurate with the level of training achieved.
- Provide community outreach to potential trainees, notifying them of the training opportunities.
- Develop a career map outlining possible/potential career paths including time commitment, certification, license and educational requirements, and potential payrates/salary.
- Develop policies and practices to encourage students' completion, inclusive of referral for remediation or, if necessary, provision of job readiness and benefits counseling needed to complete training programs which can be addressed through the Direct Caregiver Support Hub.

PCA and HHA Training Programs:

- Provide information about CNA Training Programs in the EDR and the benefits of additional training programs.
- Connect individuals who would like the option of working in a nursing home or hospital setting to CNA approved Training Programs within the EDR to receive the additional training.
- Ensure Prometric testing if they are not currently approved to offer CNA training.
- Must partner with at least two nursing homes with approved CNA training programs that agree to enter students into CNA training and provide the stipends for time in training and travel as well as the scrubs, textbooks, learning materials, and supplies.

CNA Training Programs:

- CNA Training programs must have partnered with at least one additional nursing home that agrees to enter students into CNA training in the event the nursing home's CNA Training program is temporarily suspended.
- Provide information about PCA/HHA Training Programs in the EDR and the benefits and flexibility of additional training programs.
- Connect individuals who would like the option of working in home care to approved PCA/HHA

Training Programs within the EDR to receive the additional training required. This training must be free to the student and accompanied by the stipend for time in class, the travel stipend and the scrubs, textbook, learning materials and supplies.

Outreach potential individuals entering or reentering the workforce:

- Identify target communities and organizations and market the presence and services of the Direct Caregiver Training Center
    - Develop a list of communities identified for outreach within the EDR.
    - Create a marketing plan, including description of approach (e.g., social media), message and materials.
    - Develop informational material to be posted on your website, emails, social media, etc.
    - List organizations that will be contacted to promote the services of the Direct Caregiver Training Center.
- Ongoing outreach with target communities and organizations to encourage career development in healthcare (i.e., individuals returning to work, displaced workers and/or disconnected youth), notifying them of training opportunities as a PCA, HHA or CNA.
- Ongoing outreach with target communities and organizations to make them aware of the opportunity for free training, a job in long-term care, and a career path.
  Network with schools and social service organizations that intersect with individuals who want and need to work.

Mentorship, Supervision, and Support

- Pair new aides with experienced mentors for guidance and support. This may include mentorship programs and professional development workshops.
- Conduct check-ins to provide feedback and address concerns.
- Support career advancement by creating/providing a clear career pathway with opportunities for advancement.
- Offer support for further education and training required for higher-level positions.
- Schedule meetings (virtual and in person) to provide updates on upcoming trainings and personal development sessions to keep individuals informed.

Monthly Direct Care Training Center Reporting

Awarded Direct Care Training Centers are required to submit monthly narrative and quantitative reports to DOH and to Empire State Development. All numbers provided must include numbers for the reporting period and cumulative numbers for the current contract year.

Program Details:

1. Describe any delays, challenges, or barriers/obstacles impacting program success.
2. Describe plans to address identified problems.
3. Number of stipends distributed and value per stipend per trainee.
4. Number of travel reimbursements distributed and value of reimbursement per trainee.
5. Number of trainees referred for support services which may include but are not limited to: case management, English as a Second Language (“ESL”) training, resume preparation, legal services, childcare referral, employment supports, remediation or other transitional services

through the Support Hub. If support services are provided directly by the Training Center, identify number of trainees receiving supports through this component of the program.

Participant Details:

1. Number of individuals enrolled/registered in the program by direct care training type (PCA, HHA, CNA)
2. Number of individuals that completed the program by type of certification.
3. Number of individuals who have secured employment since completing the program and certification in desired direct caregiver title (i.e., PCA, HHA, CNA).
    a. If no individuals have been placed into employment, explain why.
4. Number of individuals to date known to have advanced in their careers since completing the program (ex. received promotions, wage increases, etc.).
5. Demographic information on the OSOS Intake Form (i.e., age, race, gender, educational attainment) on the population served as willingly provided by the trainee.

One Stop Operating System (OSOS) Intake Form:

Awardees must provide the State with completed OSOS Intake Form (**Attachment 2**) for all trainees/participants. This form includes the trainee's name, address, DOB, SSN, citizenship, gender and email address for **all** trainees. This form includes a series of questions that the Awardee is required to ask but the participant is not required to answer. This includes Demographic Data (ethnic heritage, race) Education, Employment Status and Veterans Status. The form must be signed by the participant.

Empire State Development ("ESD") Trainee Information Form:

Awardees must provide the State with completed Empire State Development Trainee Information Forms (**Attachment 3**) for all trainees/participants. This form requires the following information to be completed:

- Training Information: duration of training, completion, credential earned.
- Placement Information: employment after training, where hired, FT or PT, hourly wage, and updates as to whether the person is hired within 6 months, and if not, barriers preventing placement.
- Wage and Retention Data: whether the individual trainee is employed at 3 months, 6 months, 12 months and after 12 months, plus wage at the 12-month point.

B. Direct Caregiver Support Hubs

Direct Care Support Hubs, a branch of the Direct Caregiver Training Centers, are designed to address the needs of individuals wishing to enter the long-term care workforce who may need case management, educational remediation or mentoring to ensure completion of the training and readiness for employment.

Direct Caregiver Support Hubs are intended to function as the workforce development branch of the Direct Caregiver Training Centers, assisting with the outreach and providing the case management needed to motivate and encourage individuals to connect to training, provide remediation for successful completion of the training, envision a future in long-term care, and be able to address work-life

challenges that can serve as barriers to employment.

The Awarded Direct Caregiver Support Hub will provide the essential foundation that many individuals need to commit the time needed for training, and to interview for and begin employment. This includes but is not limited to the following:

Assessment of individual needs:

- Offer case management services including:
    - Assessment tools for educational remediation
    - Referrals to additional education for skills and/or language (e.g., English as a Second Language training)
    - Assessment tools for support services, including public benefits (e.g., WIC, SNAP)
    - Provide referrals to public and other benefits (e.g., childcare)
- Emotional and Mental Health Support:
    - Offer, provide and/or refer individuals to counseling services and mental health resources as needed.
    - Encourage aides to provide feedback on their working conditions and support needs.
- Financial and Legal Support:
    - Aid individuals with referral as needed for legal and financial issues related to employment.
    - Address financial constraints individuals may face associated with the cost of additional training, certification exams, for aides looking to advance.
    - Offer knowledge of and support in obtaining insurances (health care, unemployment), WIC, disability and other benefits not offered by employers for these positions.

Career development:

- Develop information to assist clients in choosing training and career path, inclusive of amount of time needed to complete the training, testing required and settings in which the training and certification are needed for employment. These materials must provide information to assist clients in the identification of a career path in healthcare.
- Counsel potential trainees to access additional free trainings within the region, inclusive of opportunities close to their residence.
- Assist individuals to access free trainings, develop an understanding of the types of trainings, and about the healthcare entities that hire direct care workers.
- Help individuals navigate training and education requirements such as completing a formal training programs, passing a competency exam, and completing a certain number of supervised clinical hours.
- Provide professional development resources and activities for workforce development such as offering ongoing professional and career development opportunities past initial training programs, including but not limited to ongoing education opportunities.
- Assist individuals with resume preparation.

Address Language and Cultural Barriers

For non-native speakers or individuals from different cultural backgrounds, language proficiency and

cultural adaptation can be hurdles.

- Develop a program to assist these individuals overcome these hurdles, including referrals to English as a Second Language ("ESL") training in the area.

Monthly Support Hub Component Reporting

Support Hubs are required to submit monthly narrative reports to DOH describing progress with:

The reports must include:

- Number of individuals referred and assisted;
- Number of individuals connected to public benefits;
- Number of individuals for whom educational remediation was provided;
- Number of individuals referred to ESL training;
- Number of individuals in direct caregiver jobs who received support services; and
- Types of support services provided and indicate whether provided directly or through referral.

A Training Center Applicant may subcontract components of the Caregiver Support Hub Work Plan to be performed by the Applicant pursuant to the terms of its Application. If known, the Applicant is expected to state in their Application the specific components to be performed through subcontracts as well as the names of the subcontractors. Grantees will need to name subcontractors prior to reimbursement. Applicants should note that the lead organization (that is, the successful Applicant, as Contractor) will have overall responsibility for all Contract activities, including those performed by subcontractors and will be the primary contact for the NYSDOH. All subcontractors and subcontracts will be required to be approved by the Department of Health.

IV. Administrative Requirements

A. Issuing Agency

This RFA is issued by the New York State Department of Health (hereinafter referred to as NYSDOH, or the Department), Office of Aging and Long-Term Care. The Department is responsible for the requirements specified herein and for the evaluation of all Applications. *See,* Section V.C. (Review and Award Process).

B. Question and Answer Phase

All substantive questions by Applicants with respect to any aspect of the RFA must be submitted in writing to Carol Rodat, NYSDOH, Office of Aging and Long-Term Care, at the following email address: DCF.Grant@health.ny.gov. This includes Minority and Woman Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Requirements questions and related forms. *See,* Section IV. K (Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements). Questions of a technical nature related to formatting or other minor details related to preparation of an Application may also be addressed in writing to the email address noted above. Questions are of a technical nature if they are limited to how to prepare your Application (e.g., formatting) rather than relating to the substance of the Application.

To the degree possible, each question submitted by a potential Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted

until the date posted on the Cover Page of this RFA.

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below. Questions regarding specific opportunities or Applications should be directed to the NYSDOH contact listed on the cover of this RFA.

- On-Demand Statewide Financial System Training Videos: On-demand training focused on using the new grants management features in SFS is available by logging in to the SFS Vendor Portal and clicking the SFS Coach icon available on the homepage. Additional questions? Contact the SFS Help Desk listed below:

- Statewide Financial System Technical Support Help Desk
  Phone: 1-877-737-4185 toll-free / 518-457-7737
  Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 8pm
  Email: helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov
  (Application Completion & Policy)

- Grants Management Team Email: grantsmanagement@its.ny.gov
  Phone: 518-474-5595
  Hours: Monday thru Friday 8am to 4pm
  (Registration questions)

Prospective Applicants must submit all requests for clarifications of, or exceptions or changes to, the terms, conditions or provisions of this RFA or the Master Contract for Grants during the Question and Answer Phase, which will end on the "Questions Due" date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. An Applicant must clearly indicate the clarification, exception or change in the RFA or the Master Contract for Grants the Applicant is requesting. All questions, answers, and requests for clarification, exception or change will be published by the Department at SFS Public Portal Homepage to ensure equal access and knowledge by all prospective Applicants, on or about the date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

This RFA has been posted on the NYS Statewide Financial System website at: SFS Public Portal Homepage and additionally, via a link provided on the Department's public website at: https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/.

Questions and answers, as well as any updates, addendums to, and/or other modifications of this RFA, will be posted on these websites. All such questions and answers, updates, addendums to, and other modifications to this RFA will be posted by the date identified on the Cover Page of this RFA under "Key Dates".

All Questions must be received by the date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA, under "Key Dates", opposite the heading "Questions Due".

All questions submitted by email should state the RFA Title and Number set forth on the Cover Page (RFA# 20422 - Direct Caregiver Flexibility) in the subject line of the email.

C. Letter of Interest

A Letter of Interest is not requested for this project.

D. Applicant Conference

An Applicant Conference will not be held for this project.

E. How to file an Application

Applications must be submitted online via the Statewide Financial System by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this RFA under the heading "Key Dates".

Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying to funding opportunities on the NYS Statewide Financial System. Please visit the Statewide Financial System website at the following web address: SFS Public Portal Homepage and click the "Search for Grant Opportunities" tile. There is also a more detailed "Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide" available in the documents section under Training & Guidance; For Grant Applicants located in SFS Coach. Training webinars are also provided by the Grants Management Team. Dates and times for webinar instruction can be located at the following web address: Live Webinars | Grants Management (ny.gov)

To submit an Application an Applicant must:

1. Log into the Statewide Financial System Vendor Portal .
2. Click the Grant Management Tile. Next, Click the Bid Event Search tile.
3. Enter the applicable search criteria in the Search Criteria Fields. Locate an opportunity; search by Funding Agency (DOH01) or enter the Grant Opportunity name into the Search by Grant Opportunity field: **Direct Caregiver Flexibility.** You can also filter search by Status such as "available" which filters to include only the bid events that are published and open for potential bid response.
4. Click on "Search" button to initiate the search.
5. Click on Event ID link to initiate a bid response.
6. Please review the Grantee User Manual found in SFS Coach for additional steps on how to respond to various types of Bid Events.

Once the Application is complete, a prospective Applicant is **strongly encouraged** to submit their Application at least **48 hours prior to the** Application's due date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA. This will allow sufficient opportunity for the Applicant to obtain assistance and take corrective action should there be a technical issue with the submission process. **Failure to leave adequate time to address issues identified during this process may jeopardize an Applicant's ability to submit their Application.** Both NYSDOH, SFS, and Grants Management staff are available to answer an Applicant's technical questions and provide technical assistance prior to the Application due date and time. Contact information for the Grants Management Staff and SFS is available under Section IV.B. (Question and Answer Phase) of this RFA.

PLEASE NOTE: Although NYSDOH and the Grants Management staff will do their best to address concerns that are identified less than 48 hours prior to the due date and time for the submission of an

Application, there is no guarantee that they will be resolved in time for the Application to be submitted on time and, therefore, considered for funding.

During the Application process, please pay particular attention to the following:

- Not-for-profit Applicants must be prequalified, if not exempt, on the date and time Applications in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) are due as specified in the "Key Dates" set forth on the Cover Page of this RFA. Be sure to maintain prequalification status between funding opportunities. **NOTE**: Three of a not-for-profit's essential financial documents - the IRS990, its Financial Statement, and its Charities Bureau filing - expire on an annual basis. If these documents are allowed to expire, the not-for-profit's prequalification status expires as well, and it will not be eligible for State grant funding until its documentation is updated and approved, and prequalified status is reinstated.
- Only individuals with the role of "Bid Response Submitter" can submit an Application on behalf of an Applicant.
- Prior to submission, the Statewide Financial System will automatically initiate a global error checking process to protect against an incomplete Application. An Applicant may need to attend to certain parts of the Application prior to being able to submit the Application successfully. An Applicant must be sure to allow time after pressing the submit button to clean up any global errors that may arise. (Vendor User Guide).
- Applicants should use numbers, letters, and underscores when naming their uploaded files. There cannot be any special characters in the uploaded file name. Also, be aware of the restriction on file size (20 MB) when uploading documents. Applicants should ensure that any attachments uploaded with their application are not "protected" or "pass-worded" documents.

The Applicant's Delegated Administrator is able to assign, modify, remove roles for the applicant in SFS. Please see SFS Vendor Portal Access Reference Guide, SFS_Vendor_Portal_Access_Reference_Guide.pdf (ny.gov), for additional information on roles. **Bid Response Initiator** and **Bid Response Submitter** are the **necessary roles for applying to a Bid Event in SFS**. If you are a not-for-profit you will also need Prequalification Processor for Prequalification purposes.

PLEASE NOTE: Waiting until the last several days to complete your Application online can be dangerous, as you may have technical questions. Beginning the process of applying as soon as possible will produce the best results.

Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, paper copy or hand delivery.

LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

F. Department of Health's Reserved Rights

The Department of Health reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all Applications received in response to this RFA.

2. Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department's sole discretion.

3. Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.

4. Disqualify any Applicant whose conduct and/or Application fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.

5. Seek clarifications and revisions of Applications, in the Department's sole discretion.

6. Use Application information obtained through site visits, management interviews, and the State's investigation of an Applicant's qualifications, experience, ability, or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the Applicant in response to the Department's request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFA.

7. Prior to Application opening, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available.

8. Prior to Application opening, direct Applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.

9. Change any of the scheduled dates.

10. Waive any requirements that are not material.

11. Award more than one contract resulting from this RFA.

12. Negotiate with successful Applicants within the scope of the RFA in the best interests of the State.

13. Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible Applicant, should the Department be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected Applicant.

14. Utilize any and all ideas submitted with the Applications received, at the Department's sole discretion.

15. Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, every offer in an Applicant's Application is firm and not revocable for a period of 60 days from the Application opening.

16. Waive or modify minor irregularities in Applications received after prior notification to the Applicant.

17. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an Applicant's Application and/or to determine an Applicant's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.

18. Eliminate any term of this RFA that can be complied with by none of the Applicants.

19. Award grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interests of the State.

G. Term of Contract

Any Contract resulting from this RFA will be effective only upon approval by the New York State Office of the Comptroller.

It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2030

Continued funding throughout this five-year period is contingent upon availability of funding and state budget appropriations and the Grantee's continued satisfactory performance of its obligations under the Contract. NYSDOH also reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

A sample New York State Master Contract for Grants can be found at https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/12/january-2024-contract-for-grants.pdf

H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardees

1. No advances will be allowed for contracts resulting from this procurement.

2. The Grantee will be required to submit invoices and required reports of expenditures based upon the terms for payment set forth in Attachment A-1 to its Grant Contract to the State's designated payment office (below) or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

   Office of Aging and Long-Term Care
   New York State Department of Health
   875 Central Avenue
   Albany, NY 12006

   A Grantee must provide complete and accurate billing invoices in order to receive payment of the grant funding provided for under the terms of its Grant Contract. Invoices submitted to the Department must contain all information and supporting documentation required by the Contract, the Department, and the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Payment for invoices submitted by the Grantee shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner of Health, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with OSC's procedures and practices to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at OSC's website at: http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm, by email at: epayments@osc.state.ny.us or by telephone at 855-233-8363. Each Grantee acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any claims for reimbursement submitted under its Grant Contract if it does not comply with OSC's electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

   Payment of claims for reimbursement by the State (Department) shall be made in accordance with Article XI-A of the New York State Finance Law. Payment terms will be: Grantee will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred as allowed in the Contract Budget and Work Plan.

3. The Grantee will be required to submit the following reports to the Department of Health at the address above or, if requested by the Department, through the Statewide Financial System:

   Monthly and annual reports will be required to be submitted to the Department under the terms of each Grant Contract entered pursuant to this RFA. The reports will be used as the basis for evaluation of completed work plan deliverables and additional justification for payment.

   Contractors are responsible for submitting correctly prepared vouchers for payment. The Department reserves the right to request additional documentation.

   All payment and reporting requirements will be detailed in "Attachment D: Payment and Reporting", of the final STATE OF NEW YORK MASTER CONTRACT FOR GRANTS.

I. Procurement Requirements

1. General Requirements

The Grantee may procure various goods and services in connection with the grant-funded project ranging from routinely purchased goods or services to those that involve substantive programmatic work. The procurement of such goods or services, however, must be conducted in an equitable and competitive manner to promote equal treatment, efficiency, and economy in grant-funded activities.

Any Grantee that is a State entity (i.e., a State agency or political subdivision of the State) must follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its general funds. All other Grantees (private companies, not-for-profit-organizations, etc.) must have a sufficient and documented procurement process that maintains records to detail the history of procurements associated with any awarded grant project. These records shall include, but are not limited to, rationale for the method of procurement (e.g., micro-purchase, small purchases, sealed bids, request for proposals, noncompetitive/sole source), the selection of a contract type, contractor selection and/or rejection, and the basis of a contract price.

The Grantee's documented procurement process must conform with any applicable federal, State and local laws and regulations. As part of the required procurement procedures, a Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflict of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations by officers, employees or agents of the Grantee. Such standards shall provide, at a minimum, that no employee, officer, or agent of the Grantee will participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by grant funds if a conflict of interest, real or actual, is involved. Such conflicts may arise when:

- The employee, officer, or agent, or
- Any member of such individual's immediate family, or
- Such individual's partner, or
- Any organization which employs, or is about to employ the selected contractor, has a financial or other interest in or receives or stands to receive a tangible personal benefit from a firm being considered for a contract.

The standards of conduct shall also cover organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest arise where an entity is or appears to be unable to conduct an impartial procurement action due to relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization.

2. Bid Protest Procedures

Any contractor, subcontractor, or aggrieved party has the right to protest actions before or after the award of a contract utilizing grant funds. The Grantee alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgement, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurement contract solicitations and awards.

Grantees shall have written protest procedures, which may be analogous to those set forth in Part 24 of Title 2 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, in order for effective due process to be achieved. A Grantee's specific protest procedures shall be outlined in all bid requests, request for proposals, request for applications, etc. issued by or on behalf of the Grantee concerning any grant-funded projects. In summary, Grantees are responsible for handling all contract activity protests. Except in matters of direct State or possibly Federal concern (in cases involving federally funded grants), the Department of Health will not substitute its judgement for that of the Grantee.

3. Procurement Contract Language

Any contract concerning a grant-funded project must be a written agreement between the Grantee and the third party providing specific goods and/or services. Whether with a contractor, subcontractor, consultant or vendor, the contract must as appropriate state the activities to be performed; the time schedule; the policies and requirements that apply to the contractor, subcontractor consultant or vendor, including the above procurement requirements; and any other terms and conditions of the grant and the master grant contract.

J. Assurances of No Conflicts of Interest and/or Other Detrimental Effects

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall attest that their performance of any contracted services does not and will not create a conflict of interest with nor position the Grantee to breach any other contract it currently has in force with the State of New York.

The Grantee as well as any subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors or consultants engaged by the Grantee to provide goods or services in connection with the grant-funded project shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including relationships with any member, shareholder of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliate organization, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers/agents of the Grantee, subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or former officers and employees of the State and its affiliates, in connection with the providing of goods or rendering of services related to the grant-funded project. The Grantee shall have procedures in place for alerting the State of any such actual or potential conflicts as well as procedures to resolve the same.

K. Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the Department recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of New York State-certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of NYSDOH contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether minority and women-owned business enterprises had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title "The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York" ("Disparity Study"). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises in state procurement contracting versus the number of minority- and women-owned business enterprises that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the statewide certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises program. The recommendations from the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires, among other things, that NYSDOH establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State Certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises ("M/WBE") and the employment of minority groups members and women in the performance of New York State contracts.

Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs

For purposes of this solicitation, the Department of Health hereby establishes a goal of **30%** as follows:

1) For Not-for-Profit Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.
2) For-Profit and Municipality Applicants: Eligible Expenditures include the value of the total amount of the Budget provided for the Work Plan in the Grant Contract entered pursuant to this RFA.

The goal on the Eligible Expenditures portion of a Grant Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will be **15%** for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises ("MBE") participation and **15%** for Women-Owned Business Enterprises ("WBE") participation (based on the current availability of qualified MBEs and WBEs and outreach efforts to certified M/WBE firms). A Grantee awarded a Grant Contract pursuant to this RFA must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by M/WBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the Grant Contract and Grantee will agree under the terms of its Grant Contract that NYSDOH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required M/WBE documentation required by the Department or the OSC. For guidance on how NYSDOH will determine "good faith efforts," refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

The directory of New York State Certified M/WBEs can be viewed at: https://ny.newnycontracts.com. The directory is found on this page under "NYS Directory of Certified Firms" and accessed by clicking on the link entitled "Search the Directory". Engaging with firms found in the directory with like product(s) and/or service(s) is strongly encouraged, and all communication efforts and responses should be well documented by a Grantee to evidence its good faith efforts to encourage M/WBE participation in the performance of its obligations under its Grant Contract.

By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an M/WBE

Utilization plan as directed in **Attachment 5 (a or b)** of this RFA. NYSDOH will review the M/WBE Utilization Plan submitted be each Grantee. If a Grantee's M/WBE Utilization Plan is not accepted, NYSDOH may issue a Notice of Deficiency. If a Notice of Deficiency is issued, Grantee agrees that it shall respond to the Notice of Deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt. NYSDOH may disqualify a Grantee as being **non-responsive** under the following circumstances:

a) If a Grantee fails to submit a M/WBE Utilization Plan;
b) If a Grantee fails to submit a written remedy to a Notice of Deficiency;
c) If a Grantee fails to submit a request for waiver (if applicable); or
d) If NYSDOH determines that the Grantee has failed to document good-faith efforts to meet the established NYSDOH M/WBE participation goals for the procurement.

In addition, Grantees will be required to certify they have an acceptable Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement.

L. Vendor Identification Number

Effective January 1, 2012, in order to do business with New York State, you must have a vendor identification number. As part of the Statewide Financial System (SFS), the Office of the State Comptroller's Bureau of State Expenditures has created a centralized vendor repository called the New York State Vendor File. In the event of an award of a grant to a successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of this RFA and in order to initiate a Grant Contract with the New York State Department of Health, a Grantee must be registered in the New York State Vendor File and have a valid New York State Vendor ID.

If already enrolled in the Vendor File, the Applicant should include the Vendor Identification number in your organization information. If not enrolled, to request assignment of a Vendor Identification number, an Applicant should please submit a New York State Office of the State Comptroller Substitute Form W-9, which can be found on-line at: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/vendors/2017-11/vendor-form-ac3237s-fe.pdf

Additional information concerning the New York State Vendor File can be obtained on-line at: http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm, by contacting the SFS Help Desk at 855-233-8363 or by emailing at helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

M. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

The Department strongly encourages each Applicant to file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System. The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire must be updated and certified every six (6) months. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/file-your-vendor-responsibility-questionnaire or go directly to the VendRep system online at https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-vendors/vendrep/vendrep-system.

An Applicant must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor ID or for VendRep System assistance, contact the Office of the State

Comptroller's Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov.

Applicants opting to complete online should complete and upload the Vendor Responsibility Attestation **(Attachment 4)** of the RFA. The Attestation is located under the SFS Attachments Section and once completed should be uploaded to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

Applicants opting to complete and submit a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website, www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep, and upload it with their Application in response to the applicable PSQ/Bid Factor.

N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits

Each not-for-profit Applicant subject to prequalification is required to prequalify prior to having the ability to submit an Application in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated July 16, 2014, and revised on December 9, 2023, the new Prequalification Policy will be effective as of January 16, 2024. The updated policy requires that not-for-profit organizations register and prequalify in the SFS using the updated Prequalification Application. The updated Prequalification Application and New York State Prequalification Manual for Grantees can be found on the Grants Management website at: https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/get-prequalified.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that (a) has not Registered in the NYS Statewide Financial System or (b) has not Prequalified in the Statewide Financial System by the Application's due date specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The Vendor User Manual within the Statewide Financial System Website details the requirements and job aid walks users through the process.

1) Register for the Statewide Financial System

- Applicants will first need to create an account in SFS. Applicants that need to create an account should do so at the following link: https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/portal/enroll-vendor-self-service-portal. Any questions related to SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk (HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov).

If you have previously registered and do not know your Username, please email helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov. If you do not know your Password, please click the "I Forgot My Password" link from the main log-in page and follow the prompts.

2) Complete your Prequalification Application

- Log in to the Statewide Financial System.

- Applicants will first need to create an account in SFS. Applicants that need to create an account should do so at the following link: https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/portal/enroll-vendor-self-

service-portal. Any questions related to SFS accounts should be sent to the SFS Help Desk (HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov).

- Instructions for SFS Prequalification can be found on Page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, "! Grantee Processing in SFS". This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select "Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots" from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual, please contact HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov. Please see the section entitled, "Enter and Submit a Prequalification Application", located on page 20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual, for complete instructions on how to complete and submit an SFS Prequalification in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your primary New York State agency representative (vendor.responsibility@health.ny.gov) or to the Grants Management Team at grantsmanagement@its.ny.gov.

3) Add a signatory or "Grant Contract Approver" to your account

- In order to have your designated signatory (known in SFS as Grant Contract Approver) sign a contract and have their name appear on the contract agreement you have to add the Grant Contract Approver's name to your SFS Vendor Profile. The Delegated Administrator for your organization can add the Signatory's Name by following the instructions found on page 17-20 of the SFS Grantee User Manual entitled, "! Grantee Processing in SFS". This user manual is accessible to organizations with an SFS account under the SFS Coach Tile/Button in the SFS Vendor Portal. Select "Handbook: User Manual with Screenshots" from the Training Type drop down to locate the manual. If you have any problems accessing the manual, please contact HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov.

All potential Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin Statewide Financial System Registration and Prequalification process as soon as possible in order to participate in this opportunity.

O. General Specifications

1. By submitting the "Application Form" each Applicant attests to its express authority to sign on behalf of the Applicant.

2. Grantees will possess, at no cost to the State, all qualifications, licenses and permits to engage in the required business as may be required within the jurisdiction where the work specified is to be performed. Workers to be employed in the performance of any Contract awarded pursuant to this RFA will possess the qualifications, training, licenses, and permits as may be required within such jurisdiction.

3. Submission of an Application indicates the Applicant's acceptance of all terms and conditions contained in this RFA, including the terms and conditions of the Master Contract for Grants. Any exceptions the Applicant would like considered by the Department relating to the terms and conditions of this RFA and/or Master Contract for Grants must have been raised during the Question and Answer Phase of this RFA (See, Section IV.B.).

4. An Applicant may be disqualified from receiving an award if such Applicant or any subsidiary, affiliate, partner, officer, agent, or principal thereof, or anyone in its employ, has previously failed to perform satisfactorily in connection with public bidding or contracts, in the State of New York or otherwise.

5. Provisions Upon Default

a. If an Applicant is awarded a grant pursuant to this RFA, the services to be performed by the successful Applicant pursuant to the terms of the Grant Contract entered into with the Department shall be at all times subject to the direction and control of the Department as to all matters arising in connection with or relating to the Contract resulting from this RFA.

b. In the event that the Grantee, through any cause, fails to perform any of the terms, covenants, or promises of any Contract resulting from this RFA, the Department acting for and on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate the Contract by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Grantee.

c. If, in the judgement of the Department, the Grantee acts in such a way which is likely to or does impair or prejudice the interests of the State, the Department acting on behalf of the State, shall thereupon have the right to terminate any Contract resulting from this RFA by giving notice in writing of the fact and date of such termination to the Grantee. In such case the Grantee shall receive equitable compensation for such services as shall, in the judgement of the State Comptroller, have been satisfactorily performed by the Grantee up to the date of the termination of the Contract, which such compensation shall not exceed the total cost incurred for the work which the Grantee was engaged in at the time of such termination, subject to audit by the State Comptroller.

V. Completing the Application

A. Application Format/Content

Please refer to the Statewide Financial System: Vendor User Guide for assistance in applying for this procurement through the NYS Statewide Financial System. This guide is available by logging into the Statewide Financial System and searching under SFS Coach.

Please respond to each of the sections described below when completing the Statewide Financial System online Application. Your responses comprise your Application. Please respond to all items within each section. When responding to the statements and questions, be mindful that Application reviewers may not be familiar with your agency and its services. Your answers should be specific, succinct, and responsive to the statements and questions as outlined. Please be aware that the value assigned to each section described below indicates the relative weight that will be given to each section of your Application when scoring your Application.

It is each Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all materials included in its Application have been properly prepared and submitted. Applications must be submitted via the Statewide Financial System by the Application deadline date and time specified on the Cover Page of this RFA.

IMPORTANT: Any material added to a Bid Factor "Add Comments" box in SFS will not be reviewed

as part of a submitted application. Applicants are instructed to use the "Response" box for narrative responses unless otherwise instructed within this RFA.
Please note there is a 2,000-character limit for each response.

Please provide any requested attachments as specified within this RFA. Applicants are instructed to upload one (1) attachment in response to any request for an attachment. If more than one (1) version of an attachment is uploaded, the final version uploaded will be the version considered for review.

See the Event Comments and Attachments link at the bottom of the Bid Event page in SFS for required attachments to be completed in response to corresponding bid factor questions, as well as informational only attachments.

Direct Care Training Centers and Support Hubs

Application Format

1.	Program Summary	Not Scored	
2.	Statement of Need	Maximum Score:	10 points
3.	Applicant Organization	Maximum Score:	20 points
4.	Program Structure and Activities	Maximum Score:	50 points
5.	Budget Proposal	Maximum Score:	20 points
6.	Work Plan – State Defined	Not Scored	
			100 points

As a reminder, the following completed attachments need to be uploaded under the specific bid factor/question below where it is requested.

Attachment 1: Application Cover Sheet
Attachment 4: Vendor Responsibility Attestation
Attachment 5 (a or b): Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms
Attachment 8: Training Certificate Approval Letter
Attachment 9: Organizational Chart

- Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors

1. Program Summary (not scored)

1a) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload Attachment 1: Application Cover page to this bid factor.
1b) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload Attachment 4: Vendor Responsibility Attestation to this bid factor.
1c) Applicants are instructed to complete and upload Attachment 5 (a or b): Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms to this bid factor.
1d) Applicants are instructed to upload Attachment 8: Training Certificate Approval Letter to this bid factor.
1e) Summarize how the program will meet the program goals stated in Section I: Introduction of the RFA. Indicate how you will ensure that services are provided, and how you will reach the region(s) which you intend to serve. Please indicate in your answer which Economic

Development Region(s) you are applying to serve.

2. Statement of Need (Maximum Score: 10 points)

2a) Describe the need for a Training Center and the direct care worker training challenges in your region.
2b) Describe the distinct need for a Direct Caregiver Support Hub in addition to the Training Center and how these services will be provided (i.e., directly or through contractual arrangement).
2c) Describe the outreach process that will be used.
2d) Describe the assessment process that will be used to support individuals in training or who may need remedial or other supportive services either prior to or during training.
2e) Describe your organization's experience with eligibility and access to public benefits.

3. Applicant Organization (Maximum Score:20 points)

3a) Describe your organization and its mission and services and indicate whether your organization is a DOH or SED training program or an organization. (Not Scored).
3b) Applicants are instructed to upload an organization chart as Attachment 9 to this bid factor. (Not Scored).
3c) Does your organization have the relationships required in Section II of this RFA to make sure your program can train PCAs, HHAs and CNAs? Explain your answer. (Not Scored).
3d) Please list all direct care titles your agency is currently approved by DOH or SED to train.

a. PCA
b. HHA
c. CNA

(Not Scored)

3e) Provide the length of time your agency has been approved and has trained direct care workers.

i. 0-2 years
ii. 2-5 years
iii. 5-10 years
iv. 10 plus years

(Not Scored)

3f) Describe your organization's experience in the field of workforce development. Please include any experience working with individuals who are unemployed or underemployed.
3g) Describe any specific experience you have had in assessing individuals for job readiness and training, particularly in health care.
3h) Describe any experience your organization has had connecting individuals to public benefits, entitlements, or other supports. Please be specific in the areas in which your organization has worked and how you have carried out these activities.
3i) Describe your vision for the potential of the Caregiver Support Hub component, including opportunities for setting individuals on a career path.

4. Program Structure and Activities (Maximum Score: 50 points)

4a) Describe the organizational structure of the proposed program that will be implemented under this grant to ensure that the core services are provided including the roles of the lead organization. If a subcontractor is to be used for any services, please give the proposed name(s) and service to be completed (not scored).
4b) Describe the staffing plan for the proposed program, including how many staff are currently available or will be hired to ensure coverage for the proposed scope of work and their credentials if they are directly involved in training.
4c) Describe the required qualifications and experience of the staff person(s) who will be responsible for implementing the program, including evaluation, fiscal management and reporting.
4d) Describe how your organization will ensure that it is meeting contract deliverables and how deficiencies in performance will be addressed either internally or with subcontractors if used.
4e) Describe how your organization will work with the students to ensure successful completion of training.
4f) Describe your plan to promote the opportunity for free, paid training in your region including travel costs, uniforms, textbooks.
4g) Describe your plan to address language and cultural considerations.
4h) Describe the method your program will use to process stipends and travel reimbursement for students.
4i) Describe the support services (job readiness training, tutoring, assistance with accessing benefits) that your program will offer or provide, inclusive of relationships with other partnering organizations.
4j) Describe how individuals requesting Alternative Competency Demonstration will be able to access the competency assessment.
4k) Describe how individuals wishing to transition from CNA to HHA will be able to connect to or receive the additional training required.
4l) Describe the required qualifications, skills, and experience of the staff person(s) who will be responsible for implementing and overseeing the Support Hub component and performing program monitoring, evaluation, and fiscal management.
4m) Describe how you will outreach and assess potential trainees.
4n) Describe how you will mentor individuals for work following training.
4o) Describe the process you will utilize to assess each trainee's needs for support other than those included with the training (e.g., travel costs, uniforms, textbooks) for which there is a stipend while in training.

5. Budget Proposal/Cost Proposal (Maximum Score: 20 points)

A Budget Proposal/Cost Proposal for the purposes of this RFA will be an Applicant's completed budget as initially submitted in SFS in response to this RFA. Applicants should strive to ensure that their total Budget Proposal submitted in SFS is as low as possible while still being able to meet the scope of work/work plan. **Applicants applying for more than one Economic Development Region are required to apply separately for each region and the total budget per each application should not exceed the total max amount indicated for the region in Table 2.**

Budgets are required to include detailed narrative justifications for each expense line. If applicable, applicants should include the name of each subcontractor, what services the subcontractor will provide, and specific to the region being applied to. If subcontractors are not yet established, list as TBD. The applicant must include an explanation of how the amount of funding for each subcontractor was determined.

The budget for year one 2025-2026 must be entered into SFS on-line. Once the budget in SFS is completed, Applicants are required to also enter the total grant funds being requested in the Unit Bid Price field at the bottom of the page. The total grant funds and Unit Bid Price must match in order for the application to submit successfully.

Eligible expenses for direct care training center applicants include:

- Advertising/ promotional cost
- Instructor salary cost (per hour, per program or per annum)
- Stipend for students
- Transportation reimbursement costs for students
- Textbooks, materials (please provide a breakdown, per item type), and scrubs
- Administrative costs (enrolling and tracking students, issuing certificates and Home Care Registry entry, CNA testing and entry into the Nurse Aide Registry, State reporting requirements)
- Supportive services such as assistance with accessing public benefits such as food and housing support. This can be provided either by applicant or subcontractor. (If a subcontractor will be providing these services, please include name of agency and letter of intent.)

All costs must be related to the provision of the Direct Care Training Center activities as well as be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable and cost effective. Justification for each cost should be submitted in narrative form. For all existing staff, the Budget Justification must delineate how the percentage of time devoted to this initiative has been determined. THIS FUNDING MAY ONLY BE USED TO EXPAND EXISTING ACTIVITIES OR CREATE NEW ACTIVITIES PURSUANT TO THIS RFA. THESE FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED TO SUPPLANT FUNDS FOR CURRENTLY EXISTING STAFF ACTIVITIES.

Poorly explained or poorly justified proposed expenses may be eliminated from reimbursable expenses during contract negotiation. Any ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting and the budget amount requested will be reduced to reflect the removal of the ineligible items. **However, proposed budget expenses will not be altered or deleted from an Applicant's Budget Proposal for the purposes of financial calculation during the cost evaluation scoring process as described in Section C. Review & Award Process, "Cost Evaluation".**

THIS FUNDING MAY ONLY BE USED TO EXPAND EXISTING ACTIVITIES OR CREATE NEW ACTIVITIES PURSUANT TO THIS RFA. THESE FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED TO SUPPLANT FUNDS FOR CURRENTLY EXISTING STAFF ACTIVITIES.

Any ineligible budget items will be removed from the budget prior to contracting. The budget amount requested will be reduced to reflect the removal of the ineligible items.

6. Work Plan (Not Scored)

The Work Plan for this RFA Program Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures are State defined and listed in **Attachment 6 - Regional Training Center and Support Hub Work Plan**. Please note that successful applicants (Grantees) could be asked to modify work plans prior to initiation of the contract to address issues identified during the review process or needs to be met.

For the SFS Work Plan Project Summary, applicants are instructed to insert the Project Summary as it is listed in Attachment 6. Any additional Project Summary entered in the Project Summary area will not be considered or scored by reviewers of your application.

Applicants are not required to enter nor can applicants remove any Objectives, Tasks, or Performance Measures in the SFS Work Plan at the time of application as this is a State Defined Work Plan set in SFS that will become part of the executed contract as Attachment C. Funded applicants will be held to the Objective, Tasks and Performance Measures as listed in **Attachment 6 - Regional Training Center and Support Hub Work Plan.**

B. Freedom of Information Law

All Applications may be disclosed or used by NYSDOH to the extent permitted by law. NYSDOH may disclose an Application to any person for the purpose of assisting in evaluating the Application or for any other lawful purpose. All Applications will become State agency records and will be available to the public in accordance with the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). **Any portion of an Application that an Applicant believes constitutes proprietary information entitled to confidential handling, as an exception to the general rule regarding the availability to the public of State agency records under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Law, must be clearly and specifically designated in the Application.** If NYSDOH agrees with the Applicant's claim regarding the proprietary nature of any portion of an Application, the designated portion of the Application will be withheld from public disclosure. Blanket assertions of proprietary material will not be accepted, and failure to specifically designate proprietary material may be deemed a waiver of any right to confidential handling of such material.

C. Review & Award Process

An Application which meets ALL of the guidelines set forth above will be reviewed and evaluated competitively by the NYSDOH Office of Aging and Long-Term Care. An Application that does not meet the minimum criteria (PASS/FAIL) will not be evaluated. An Application that does not provide all required information will be omitted from consideration.

Applications with minor issues (for example, an Application missing information that is not essential to timely review and would not impact review scores) MAY be processed and evaluated, at the discretion of the State, but any issues with an Application which are identified by the Department **must** be resolved prior to time of award. An Application with unresolved issues at the time award recommendations are made will be determined to be non-responsive and will be disqualified.

The Applications will be evaluated on a 100 point scale as follows:

Application Cover Page	Not scored
Program Summary	Not scored
Statement of Need	10 points
Applicant Organization	20 points
Program Structure and Activities	50 points
Budget Proposal	20 points
Work Plan	Not Scored

The evaluation process will be conducted in a comprehensive and impartial manner, as set forth herein, by an evaluation committee. The Technical Proposal will be weighted 80% of an application's total score and the information contained in the Cost Proposal will be weighted 20% of an application's total score. [e.g., 80% Technical, 20% Cost].

Applicants' responses to Program Specific Questions (Applicants' Technical Proposals) will be reviewed by one team of NYSDOH reviewers. Applicants' Budget Proposal/Cost Proposals will be reviewed by another separate team of NYSDOH reviewers.

- Technical Evaluation

The evaluation process will be conducted in a comprehensive and impartial manner. Applications will first undergo a preliminary evaluation to verify an Applicant has met all Minimum Eligibility Requirements as specified in Section II. Who May Apply of this RFA.

Technical reviewers comprised of NYSDOH staff will review and evaluate Applicants' Technical Proposals (Applicants' responses to Program Specific Questions).

The technical reviewers will independently score each Program Specific Question and add the scores together to arrive at the reviewer's total technical score. All individual reviewers' total technical scores will be averaged to calculate an Applicant's raw technical score.

The application with the highest raw technical score will receive a final technical score of 80 points. Other applicants will receive a proportionate final technical score according to the following formula:

$z = (x/y) \times 80$ where:
x = Technical score for proposal being scored
y = Technical score of the highest scoring proposal
80 = The total technical points available
z = The Applicant's Technical Score

The technical evaluation is 80% (up to 80 points) of the final score.

- Cost Evaluation

The cost reviewers will examine Applicants' Budget Proposals. The Budget Proposals will be scored based on a maximum cost score of 20 points. The maximum cost score will be allocated to the Budget Proposal with the lowest budget. All other Budget Proposals will receive a proportionate cost score based on the relation of their Budget Proposal to the Budget Proposal(s) offered at the lowest final cost, using the following formula:

C = (A/B)* 20%

A = Total cost of lowest Budget Proposal;
B = Total cost of Budget Proposal being scored; and
C = The Applicant's Cost Score.

The cost evaluation is 20% (up to 20 points) of the final score.

- Composite Score

A composite score will be calculated by The Department by adding an Applicant's technical score together with their cost score. Finalists will be determined based on composite scores.

Applications must receive a passing composite score of 65 to be considered for funding. Up to 23 awards will be ranked by composite score and awarded to the highest scoring applicant(s) in a region up to the maximum number awards as indicated in Table 2 of the RFA.

In the event of a tie score, the applicant that scored the highest on the Applicant Organization Section will be awarded the contract for their region. If the scores resulting from that section are a tie, the score from Program Structure and Activities section will be used to determine who will receive the award.

If there is an insufficient number of fundable applications in a region, the maximum number of awards may not be met for that region. NYSDOH OALTC reserves the right to offer a neighboring awardee any unmet region award from this RFA. If any neighboring awardees decline, NYSDOH OALTC reserves the right to re-solicit any region where there are an insufficient number of fundable applications.

If changes in funding amounts are necessary for this initiative or if additional funding becomes available, funding will be awarded to the Caregiver Training Centers and Caregiver Support Hub based on the statewide coverage for each Economic Development Region

Applicants will be deemed to fall into one of three categories: 1) not approved, 2) not funded due to limited resources, and 3) approved and funded. Not funded Applications may be awarded should additional funds become available.

Once awards have been made pursuant to the terms of this RFA, an Applicant may request a debriefing of their own Application (whether their Application was funded or not funded). The debriefing will be limited only to the strengths and weaknesses of the Application submitted by the Applicant requesting a debriefing and will not include any discussion of ANY OTHER Applications. Requests for a debriefing must be received by the Department Office of Aging and Long-Term Care no later than fifteen (15)

Calendar days from date of the award or non-award announcement to the Applicant requesting a debriefing.

To request a debriefing, please send an email to Carol Rodat at DCF.Grant@health.ny.gov with a copy to oaltc.contracts@health.ny.gov. In the subject line, please write: Debriefing Request (Direct Caregiver Flexibility).

Unsuccessful Applicants who wish to protest the award(s) resulting from this RFA on legal and/or factual grounds, should follow the protest procedures established by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These procedures can be found on the OSC website at https://www.osc.state.ny.us/state-agencies/gfo/chapter-xi/xi17-protest-procedures (Section XI. 17.)

VI. Attachments

- Please note that ALL Attachments to this RFA are accessed under the **"Attachments Section"** of the Statewide Financial System online Application/Bid Event and are not included in the RFA document. In order to access the online Application/Bid Event and other required documents such as the Attachments, a prospective Applicant must be registered and logged into the NYS Statewide Financial System. Attachments that are requested to be uploaded as part of an Application/Bid Event response will be requested in individual corresponding Bid Factors (See Section V.A., "Program Specific Questions(PSQ)/Bid Factors").
- **ALL applicants are instructed to verify each required attachment that has been uploaded to the application**. To check attachments, Applicants are instructed to click "View" in the SFS application for each uploaded attachment to ensure that the attachment and all of its applicable information/data is viewable in its final format.
- **PDF Attachments – due to system constraints, PDF attachments cannot be uploaded with annotations, editable fields, or JAVA/active controls. Please submit PDFs that are read- only.**

Attachment 1:	Application Cover Sheet
Attachment 2:	OSOS Intake Form
Attachment 3:	Empire State Development ("ESD") Trainee Information Form
Attachment 4:	Vendor Responsibility Attestation
Attachment 5a:	Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms (For-profit)
Attachment 5b:	Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise Requirement Forms (Not-for-profit)
Attachment 6:	Regional Training Center and Support Hub Work Plan
Attachment 7:	SFS Budget Data Entry Guidelines
Attachment 8:	Training Program Approval Letter
Attachment 9:	Organizational Chart