

Request for Proposals

Pre-purchase Counseling for Multifamily Homebuyers

The Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) is seeking qualified organizations to provide individual, pre-purchase counseling to buyers of multifamily properties.

A. BACKGROUND

The Massachusetts Housing Partnership has administered the SoftSecond® Loan Program for a consortium of private lenders in Massachusetts since 1991. The SoftSecond Loan Program offers below-market mortgages to qualifying low and moderate-income households. Since its inception, more than 15,000 borrowers have received SoftSecond mortgages statewide. In order to obtain a SoftSecond mortgage, borrowers must complete a pre-purchase homebuyer education program through an organization approved by the Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative.

In January of 2012, MHP is implementing a pre-purchase, individual counseling requirement for buyers of three-family properties. This requirement will be in addition to the pre-purchase homebuyer education requirement. Buyers of two-family properties may access individual counseling, but they will not be required to do so as a condition of their financing. Below is a listing of the communities where multi-family properties were purchased using SoftSecond mortgages in recent years.

Boston	Haverhill	New Bedford
Brockton	Lawrence	Quincy
Chelsea	Lowell	Revere
Chicopee	Lynn	Somerville
Everett	Malden	Springfield
Fall River	Medford	Taunton
Fitchburg	Methuen	Worcester

MHP's pre-purchase counseling for multi-family buyers aims to address the following objectives:

- 1) Ensure that buyers fully understand the use of rental income in mortgage underwriting.
- 2) Ensure that buyers fully understand the condition of the property that they are buying upon review of a licensed home inspection.
- 3) Ensure that buyers understand the basics of budgeting for ongoing property maintenance.
- 4) Ensure that buyers are aware of the basics of being a landlord, as well as an owner occupant.
- 5) Enroll buyers in a HomeSafe class post-purchase.

B. WHO MAY APPLY TO DO THIS WORK?

To submit a proposal, organizations must already be approved to offer pre-purchase homebuyer services by the Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative, NeighborWorks® and/or HUD.

C. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES NEEDED

MHP is requesting proposals in two categories:

1. **Curriculum Development and Training.** Develop a step-by-step counseling curriculum that meets the objectives described above. The developer of the curriculum is also asked to provide one to two train-the-trainer sessions with approved service providers in the fall of 2011.
2. **Local Service Provision.** Provide individual, pre-purchase counseling to buyers of multifamily properties prior to closing. Homebuyers will be referred by MHP. Providers located in the areas where most three-family homes are purchased will be given priority.

D. SUBMISSION INFORMATION & DEADLINE

1. **Registration:** Agencies who intend to respond to this Request for Qualifications should register with Gina Govoni, Homeownership Director Massachusetts Housing Partnership at ggovoni@mhp.net prior to **Monday, August 8, 2011.**
2. **Questions:** Questions regarding this Request for Qualifications may be emailed to Ms. Govoni at the above-listed email address on or before the end of business on September 1, 2011. Written responses to these questions will be forwarded to all parties who have registered with MHP by that date.
3. **Deadline:** Qualification and Proposals must be received **by 2:00 PM, Friday September 2, 2011.** Proposals should be addressed to:

Gina Govoni
Homeownership Director
Massachusetts Housing Partnership
160 Federal Street, Second Floor
Boston, MA 02110
ggovoni@mhp.net

E. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Letter of Transmittal:** Please provide a transmittal letter signed by the individual authorized to negotiate for and contractually bind the agency. This transmittal should disclose any potential conflict of interest in providing services.
2. **Proposed Services:** Please indicate whether you are proposing to provide curriculum development and training, local service provision or both services.
3. **Geographic Service Area:** Describe the geographic area. Please indicate why you have chosen this area and what experience you have had providing services to this area.
4. **Qualifications:** Describe the agency's ability to successfully undertake the project technically, financially, and managerially. Include descriptions of similar work conducted elsewhere.
5. **Methodology:** Clearly describe the general work plan and methodology you would use to fulfill the scope of services. Please indicate the availability of counseling services in English, Spanish and other languages if applicable.
 - If you are proposing to develop the curriculum, please provide an overview of the curriculum you intend to develop.
 - If you are proposing to offer direct services, include the outreach techniques and the format of the proposed services, i.e. via phone or in person.
6. **Staffing:** Describe the current roles, responsibilities, capabilities and a typical working schedule of each staff member who would be involved in providing services. Provide resumes for staff members who will be directly involved in the project. Please include the titles, locations and dates of any relevant homebuyer counseling training for each staff person.
7. **Proposed Fees and Budget:** Provide an operating budget detailing staff time and expense, materials, space rental, travel cost, and organizational overhead for services provided.
8. **Financial Statement:** Provide a certified copy of the organization's most recent audited financial statement and current year-to-date financial statements.
9. **Organizational Chart:** Provide a copy of the organizational chart that indicates how the pre-purchase service providers will interact with other organizational objectives.
10. **References:** Provide three references for individuals who have experience working with the agency in similar work in the past three years. Supply name, organization, contact information, and describe relationship to agency.

F. SELECTION CRITERIA

MHP will evaluate proposals and select HomeSafe counseling agencies on the basis of the following selection criteria:

1. Current staff experience and capacity to perform the services.
2. Ability to provide services in languages other than English with particular emphasis on the ability to provide services in Spanish.
3. Demonstrated capacity to serve designated geographic area as evidenced by prior experience. Demonstrated capacity to service priority areas as determined by SoftSecond volume in Attachment A.
4. Quality and specificity of work plan.
5. Quality and relevance of references.
6. For existing HomeSafe providers, compliance with MHP's monthly and annual reporting requirements.
7. MHP may elect to hold interviews with agencies proposing to provide this work. The outcomes of these interviews may be additional selection criteria.

G. RIGHT TO REJECT PROPOSALS

MHP reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if it is in MHP's interest to do so.

MHP may consider any proposal not prepared and submitted in accordance with the provisions hereof and may waive any informality or reject any and all bids, should MHP deem it to be in their interest. MHP may also reject proposals which in its sole judgment are incomplete.