



Social Work, Therapy and Counseling Internship Program

RFP Questions and Answers

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Q1: Are programs funded by Regional Centers that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities—including those with co-occurring behavioral health needs—eligible placement sites under this RFP, if they meet other criteria such as serving Medi-Cal beneficiaries?

A1: In general, the Regional Center programs are not eligible for placement under this RFP. The placement sites need to be primarily focused on providing services to individuals with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) and/or substance use disorder (SUD).

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Q2: I would like to clarify language on page 4 which states “seeking proposals from County-funded behavioral health service providers,..” Does this mean that only County-funded BH providers can apply? Or can non-County funded providers apply? If non-County-funded providers can apply, can they only work with Master’s level interns placed at one of the County-funded provider sites on pp20-21? Can you clarify the process to become a site for intern placement?

A2: Please see Amendment 001.

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Q3: Pg 12, item 5.a, which notes that "letters are required for clinical partnerships, but not required, just highly encouraged, for educational and any other partnerships." It was stated that eligible employers may continue to be added over time and that lead agencies will be introduced to them post-award to develop partnerships. Does this mean that proposals need only include one or two example letters of commitment or MOUs to demonstrate the capacity to form agreements, rather than fully executed partnerships for every potential placement site?

A3: We expect strong proposals to demonstrate existing partnerships through letters of commitment, support, or executed MOUs. Adding additional partners throughout the grant period is also encouraged.

Q4: For employers/partners that require executive or board approval for MOUs/MOAs, would it be acceptable to survey potential partners to assess their interest and intent to collaborate, and include those responses (e.g., survey results or emails) in the proposal in lieu of formal agreements?

A4: Please include anything that will demonstrate that you have or are working toward commitments from a diverse set of partners for your network, such as letters of support.

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Q5: Is there a standard or recommended MOU/MOA template available for proposers to use?

A5: No.

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Q6: Could you clarify what qualifies as “any other partnerships”?

A6: Partnerships with educational institutions or any other partners that may help you achieve the scope of work.

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Q7: If a proposer does not currently have staff in place for the proposed roles, will a job description meet the requirement for demonstrating staff qualifications?

A7: Yes

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Q8: If the proposer intends to have support from existing executive leadership but does not intend on seeking reimbursement for those roles then can the anticipated pay ranges be excluded with a notation to that effect?

A8: Yes, please only include anticipated pay ranges for new positions being funded by this grant.

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Q9: While the intent of the program is clearly to build the San Diego County behavioral health workforce, if a trainee has a specific interest that cannot currently be met within the County (e.g., specialized population or setting), can the proposer offer a temporary rotation or short-term experience in another county (e.g., Los Angeles), provided the trainee intends to remain in and work in San Diego?

A9: Overall, the intent of the RFP is to fund programs that will lead to more individuals trained, hired, and retained as associate and licensed clinicians in behavioral health settings within San Diego County. The evaluation panel will assess how well each proposal accomplishes that goal.

Q10: The numbering convention/references in paragraphs 6.d through f on page 13 do not appear to align with Scope of Work Section 6.b. i-vi (Internship Placement and Support); 6.c. i-vi (Associate Clinician Hiring, Supervision, and Retention); and 6.d. i-vi (Reporting and Continuous Improvement) on pages 7-8.

A10: Please see clarification below:

- a. The approach to the tasks listed in **Section B.1.a: Licensed Clinician Pathway Partnership Network Establishment**, including how many and what job titles will be hired, what curriculum, didactics, and processes need to be developed, and how the lead agency will ensure standardization, coordination, and equality of resources across the network.
- b. The approach to the tasks listed in **Section B.1.b: Internship Placement and Support**. Please also include how many new interns (by grant year) the lead agency and each of the partners in the network will recruit and place. Please also ensure details on how the network will support their educational journey toward future licensure and employment with a County-funded behavioral health program.
- c. The approach to the tasks listed in **Section B.1.c: Associate Hiring, Supervision, and Retention**. Please include specifics on how the partnership network will work to hire interns into associate positions and retain them beyond licensure.
- d. The approach to the tasks listed in **Section B.1.d: Reporting and Quality Improvement**. Please describe in detail the lead agency's ability to comply with the requirements listed as well as how the program can be sustainable and/or scalable once the grant period is over. Please include what system of record will be used to track and report outcomes.

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Q11: On page 7, in the Internship Placement and Support section B. Scope of Work 1.b. subitem v states, "Develop additional training, onboarding, mentorship, and support processes and procedures to improve the experience of interns placed in the partner network." Can you please define what is meant by the partner network? If a lead agency is not partnering with other community-based providers is this item applicable?

A11: This does not apply if you are not partnering with other agencies. It is worth noting, however, that one of the priorities of this RFP is to provide internship experiences at a diverse set of County-funded settings and agencies providing direct behavioral health services to clients with Severe Mental Illness (SMI), substance use disorder (SUD) and/or Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) who are eligible for or enrolled in Medi-Cal or Medicare programs. Lead agencies are **strongly encouraged** to develop partnerships (a "provider network") with other organizations serving culturally diverse priority populations from the list of providers in Section H: Attachment A.

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Q12: Can psychology interns participate in the ELEVATE BH Workforce fund and program?

A12: No. This opportunity is focused on social work, therapy, and professional counseling interns.

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Q13: What supporting documentation will be required to accompany the monthly invoice for amounts claimed as personnel and fringe benefits?

A13: This is a cost-reimbursement contract. Providers will need to have backup of actual costs paid to substantiate each invoice (e.g., payroll records for salary and fringe costs) available upon request.

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Q14: On page 10, Section 3.c. (Quarterly Impact Reporting), Please clarify if the quarterly impact reporting is to be conducted every 3 or 4 months.

A14: At this time, we anticipate this reporting will happen every 4 months. We will work with awarded lead agencies at contract signing to discuss specifics.

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Q15: How can the number of interns increase in the first year (Step 2 outcome on page 14) as required in this RFP since interns were already selected and scheduled to commence in July/August for the internship year July 2025 through June 2026?

A15: The table on page 14 is asking for the number of interns and associates by grant year. There is no requirement that this number increase in year 1.

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Q16: The Outcomes chart, Section 7.a. on page 14, has a timeline that seems incorrect. It reads 9/2027 to 6/2028. Is the correct timeline 7/2027 to 6/2028?

A16: Yes

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Q17: To whom should the transmittal letter be addressed?

A17: The Policy and Innovation Center

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Q18: Can the table summarizing the partnership network referred to on page 14 of the RFP be attached to the application/proposal narrative or does it need to be embedded in the narrative?

A18: It should be included in the 20 pages of narrative. The table, itself does not need to be used in its exact form, but the information requested in the example table in the RFP must be included.

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Q19: Are there any guidelines for lead agencies on how to allocate some of their funding for partners, particularly since lead agencies are encouraged to partner with multiple organizations?

A19: No.