

Health Ambassadors for People Experiencing Homelessness FAQ Document

Question	Response	Date Posted
Peer Health Ambassador Eligibility		
<p>Can the outreach be to formerly homeless individuals currently living in our affordable Permanent Supportive Housing or does it need to be outreach to unsheltered homeless?</p>	<p>Yes. Those living in permanent supportive housing can be hired as peer ambassadors and can also receive services from peer ambassadors.</p> <p>Ambassadors do not need to be literally homeless at the time of being employed through the peer ambassador program and individuals receiving services from peer ambassadors can be living in a permanent supportive housing unit. Please refer to questions 14 through 17 for further guidance on the priority population(s) and how the population is defined.</p>	7-1-2022
<p>Many people who are houseless/unsheltered do not identify as homeless (For many reasons). Can Public Health Ambassadors reflect this same experience with being houseless?</p>	<p>Yes. Applicants do not need to limit peer health ambassador positions or the services they offer to people experiencing homelessness based on whether any individual self-identifies as "homeless."</p>	7-8-2022
<p>Do the Health Ambassadors need to be new hires? Can they be existing staff we want to train to be Health Ambassadors?</p>	<p>Health Ambassadors do not need to be new hires. All individuals with lived experience can be considered for peer health ambassador roles.</p>	7-1-2022

<p>How are you defining homelessness?</p> <p>Are people staying in transitional housing considered homeless?</p> <p>Are couch surfers considered homeless?</p> <p>Are persons in temporary, transitional, and emergency housing considered homeless and worthy of these services?</p>	<p>This funding opportunity takes a broad definition of homelessness, but is based on the HUD definition. (See: https://www.hudexchange.info/news/huds-definition-of-homelessness-resources-and-guidance/)</p> <p>People staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and "couch surfers" would all be eligible for services offered by peer health ambassador programs funded through this opportunity.</p> <p>Proposals should use the definition of homelessness most appropriate for the population they aim to service. Literal homelessness is defined by HUD as staying in a place not meant for human habitation (i.e., a car, street, or outdoors), or in a shelter or transitional housing. Shelter can include hotel/motel stays paid for by a nonprofit or governmental institution. Some populations may be defined more broadly than that – for example, transition age youth (ages 18-24) and families with children may sometimes experience homelessness as being unstably housed or doubled up in another's home ("couch surfing"). Proposals not using HUD's definition of literal homelessness should define their target population and make the case for why their target population would benefit from health ambassadors.</p> <p>Funded peer health ambassador programs should not require anyone to "prove" homelessness in order to be served.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
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<p>Is there a definition for "recent" with regard to ambassadors having "recently" experienced homelessness?</p>	<p>No, there is no specific time length referring to 'recent.' We advise applicants to use their best judgement, keeping in mind that one of the reasons peers make especially effective health ambassadors is their shared experiences and community ties to those they are working to support. The recency of one's lived experience of homelessness may impact familiarity with existing challenges, resources, and realities of those currently experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>I heard "certified" re Health Ambassadors a couple of times. can you expand on what that means?</p>	<p>There is no certification required for Health Ambassadors. People hired to serve as peer health ambassadors should be provided with the necessary training and support to ensure they can fulfill the duties of the role effectively and equitably.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>What certification/training is required? Will that be part of the technical assistance?</p>	<p>There is no certification required for Health Ambassadors. People hired to serve as peer health ambassadors should be provided with the necessary training and support to ensure they can fulfill the duties of the role effectively and equitably.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Is there a way to be connected with individuals who are eligible to be a peer specialist (one who has gone through homelessness)?</p>	<p>Organizations should have a history of working with people who have experienced homelessness. Organizations applying for this funding who are not a part of or already connected with their local Continuum of Care (CoC) are highly encouraged to work with them and agencies who work directly with people experiencing homelessness in designing and developing a peer health ambassador program. They may be able to assist in identifying people to serve as ambassadors. Additionally, the technical assistance provided to grantees can include support with identifying and recruiting ambassadors if needed.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Are undocumented community members eligible to benefit from this program?</p>	<p>Federal restrictions require that any employees compensated by this funding, including peer ambassadors, must be authorized to work in the United States.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>

	<p>However, immigration status will not be collected for linkage to services. Therefore, anyone who is currently or has recently experienced homelessness should be eligible to receive incentives for activities such as getting tested and/ or vaccinated for COVID- 19, regardless of their immigration status.</p> <p>Please consult with your agency's counsel or an immigration attorney for more detailed nuances of the law.</p>	
<p>Is there a preference between peer specialists or peer supporter for this grant?</p> <p>Can you hire peer supporters as well as peer ambassadors (in other words, persons who have experience working with homeless)?</p>	Peer health ambassadors funded through this program must have current or recent lived experience of homelessness and should be provided with the necessary training and support to ensure they can fulfill the duties of the role effectively and equitably.	7-8-2022
Are there requirements on the amount and type of training for health ambassadors? Is training something that would fall under support from Homebase?	There is not a training requirement, but Health Ambassadors should be fully supported in their role.	7-8-2022
Program Related		
Will the proposer's webinar be recorded and shared?	Yes it will be recorded and posted here .	7-1-2022
Can an application include more than one jurisdiction where outreach is conducted?	Yes. An application can include more than one county to conduct the peer health ambassador program. Please indicate areas served in the application.	7-1-2022
For organizations that serve multiple jurisdictions, can we submit multiple applications?	Yes. Applications can be bundled (multiple jurisdictions in one application) or individual (each unique jurisdiction submitting a different application). Each application will be reviewed and scored based on merit.	7-1-2022

<p>What would our relationship be with the following entities (or other entities I may have missed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Center for Health Program Management (The Center) • Sierra Health Foundation • California Department of Public Health, • HomeBase, • Other? <p>For example, contract parties, billing, reporting, etc.</p>	<p>The Center at Sierra Health Foundation is the administrator of the program. You will submit your application and progress reports to The Center.</p> <p>Your contracts and payments will be issued by the California Department of Public Health</p> <p>Homebase is the Technical Assistance provider for this program.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>When was the pilot first started? Is this the first RFP for the program?</p>	<p>This is the first RFA for this program. We have sometimes referred to this first RFA as a pilot.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Compensating Peer Health Ambassadors</p>		
<p>With regard to staffing models, are stipend interns serving as Peer Health Ambassadors aligned with expectations?</p>	<p>Compensation for Health Ambassadors should be fair and equitable. Ambassadors should be paid an equal to or greater than hourly rate as other staff with similar responsibilities.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Can peer stipends be paid in cash for people who are unbanked?</p>	<p>REVISED on July 18, 2022: No. Federal regulations do not allow stipends to be paid in cash. We encourage organizations to work with Ambassadors to assist them in setting up accounts or systems needed to pay them in an authorized way.</p> <p>As an employee or contractor, peer health ambassadors should be paid in accordance with all various employment laws.</p> <p>For one-time, short-term ambassadors (e.g., someone who is recruited to support a vaccination event for an afternoon</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>

	<p>after receiving their vaccine or those who provide feedback on the peer ambassador program) an organization <u>may</u> offer gift cards as an incentive (cash incentives are NOT allowed). All incentives including the above example, are subject to review and approval.</p>	
<p>Regarding compensation, we have run into challenges with making sure the income level does not then get people kicked off of public benefits. Can that be a consideration in setting stipend/compensation rates?</p>	<p>Please provide a full description of your compensation metrics in your budget justification to outline the amounts.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Are compensated volunteers to be compensated with through commission-based rewards or is that up to the org?</p>	<p>The amount and nature of the compensation for peer health ambassadors is at the discretion of the organization but should be fully described in the budget and budget justification.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Can you provide clarification on allowable ways to pay peer health ambassadors?</p>	<p>As an employee or contractor, peer health ambassadors should be paid in accordance with all various employment laws.</p> <p>For one-time, short-term ambassadors (e.g., someone who is recruited to support a vaccination event for an afternoon after receiving their vaccine) an organization <u>may</u> offer gift cards as an incentive (cash incentives are NOT allowed). All incentives including the above example, are subject to review and approval.</p>	<p>7-18-2022</p>

Letters of Support

Are Letters of Support restricted to 200 words or less?	No. The RFA stipulates that at least one Letter of Support is required under Narrative Question #9; however, Letters of Support do not need to be limited to 200 words. Only the Partnerships Narrative is required to be 200 words or less. Letters of Support are required to be combined into one PDF document, meaning organizations that have more than one Letter of Support need to combine them into one PDF.	7-6-2022
Do agencies need just one letter of support signed by multiple partners (if agencies have multiple) or is one letter from each partner required?	No. Letters of Support can be signed by more than one agency if a project has multiple partner agencies supporting the applicant's project proposal. If submitting one letter signed by multiple supporters, each agency's role should be clearly explained in the letter. Multiple letters are not required.	7-6-2022
How many letters of recommendation are required? Can letters come from Public Health & Behavioral Health, who we will partner with?	One letter of support from your agency administrator is required. Additional letters of support from partners are encouraged but not required.	7-8-2022

Partnerships

Are partnerships required as part of the program and if not, will a letter of support be required?	Partnerships are not required if your organization has capacity to run the program on its own. However, if you plan to partner with another organization, you must also submit a letter of support from that agency. See page 12 in the RFA.	7-8-2022
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Organizational Requirements

Is there a required financial match?	No. There is not a required financial match.	7-8-2022
Is a full audit required or is an audit review ok? Do you need current audit or is financial statement sufficient?	An audit and financial statement is not required. You do need a W-9.	7-8-2022
Are Public Housing Authorities eligible as government entities?	Yes, public housing authorities are eligible.	7-8-2022
Is fiscal sponsorship possible? Can you apply if your 501c3 status is pending?	Yes, you may apply with a fiscal sponsorship.	7-8-2022
We are applying to be a 501c3 and should have authorization by September but do not have a UEI yet (as seen as required on the application) - we are currently fiscally sponsored, should we be applying with the fiscal sponsorship?	Apply with the fiscal sponsorship at this time.	7-8-2022
If we are already receiving funding from The Center for another grant, are we still eligible to apply?	Yes.	7-8-2022
Does a 501c(5) qualify? We have done numerous grant programs from The Center as a Labor agency with a 501c(5) IRS title.	Yes, 501c(5), Labor Agencies qualify.	7-8-2022
"Unique Entity Identifier" refers to SAM UEI or Tax ID?	SAM UEI	7-8-2022
What is the administrative cost allowable?	The maximum indirect rate is 20%.	7-8-2022

Will this be a cost reimbursement grant?	At least 25% of full funds will be available upon award. Agencies may, on a case-by-case basis, request a higher percentage of funds up front if needed to be able to launch the program. Please note that any funds spent on non- approved/ non- allowable expenses must be repaid, so please check to ensure all expenses are allowable before expending the funds.	7-8-2022
Can the grant be the sole funder of the program or other funding is required?	Yes, the grant can be the sole funding source of the program. Other funding is not required.	7-8-2022
Can applicants utilize 501(C)(3) organizations outside of California as a fiscal sponsorship?	An applicant may use a 501(c)(3) as a fiscal sponsorship outside of California as long as the applicant will conduct their program exclusively within California.	7-18-2022
If we include a sub-award to another organization within our project budget, do we list them under "Consultant Fees", or would they be included under the "Other Expenses" category? Similarly, if we wanted to partner with an entity to provide vaccine services, but they are not a nonprofit, could we list them under the "consultant fees" category? Or would this kind of partnership be completely unallowable?	List any sub-awards to partner organizations under the "Consultant Fees" section of the Budget Template. There are no restrictions on the entity applicant organizations decide to partner with. Please be sure to fill out the "Partnerships" narrative question and Budget Justification Form thoroughly.	7-18-2022
Program Technical Assistance		
Can you describe the technical help participation requirements for the org?	Please see the technical assistance section of the RFA on Page 3.	7-8-2022

<p>Will The Center provide training for Health Ambassadors, are there designated training providers, or are grantees to obtain their own training for the Health Ambassadors?</p>	<p>Please refer to the technical assistance resources on page 3 of the RFA.</p> <p>Homebase can support grantees with identifying and providing needed training for peer health ambassadors, which may include providing resources, conducting some training directly, or identifying and helping grantees to connect with additional training resources or partners when needed.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Is a stakeholder meeting that provides systems mapping exercises is in the scope of work of Homebase? If so, would the facilitation be in person? If not, is there funding within CDPH to pay for a local organization with experience providing similar technical assistance to carry out a similar system's mapping exercise, or is this something we would need to consider carving out of our project budget for additional technical assistance or training?</p>	<p>Homebase will work with awardees to identify technical assistance needs for their health ambassador program development, implementation, and sustainability. If a system mapping exercises is identified as necessary for the successful development and implementation of the health ambassador program, it would be within the scope of the technical assistance offered by this funding opportunity. In-person meeting facilitation and training is not guaranteed, but Homebase has extensive experience and expertise in virtual meetings and exercises of all kinds. In the event an awardee wants an in-person event that Homebase is not able to facilitate in person, they could provide materials and other support to assist a community stakeholder to facilitate the event.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Data Collection and Program Outcomes</p>		
<p>As someone with lived experience (currently homeless actually) as well as administrative experience, I am aware of distrust both in healthcare as you mentioned, but also in data collection. From an administrative perspective I also worry about extensive data collection between peers, as this creates unhealthy power dynamics. What data collection level is required and/or expected?</p>	<p>We are sensitive to potential concerns about personal data collection. We are working to determine what level of data is needed to ensure the we are being good stewards of tax payer dollars and can ensure program deliverables are being met.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>

<p>Please expand on the metrics/outcomes that you are looking for. e.g., the example models talked about additional/expanded services, but were these tied to increased participation in health programs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would they be assessed? • What percentage would be considered success? • What data points and targets are you looking for agencies to report on/achieve 	<p>We do not have percentages for success, knowing that these programs are often challenging and iterative.</p> <p>Metrics and outcomes will likely include aggregate data on the total number served, number of vaccines administered, demographics (for equity measures), number of health service connections made, etc.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>COVID-19 Related Program Requirements</p>		
<p>Is Covid related work a required component of this grant? If we already have health ambassadors for Covid, but wanted to use this grant to fund health ambassadors doing work with other health issues/illnesses? Is that allowed?</p>	<p>COVID-19 testing, mitigation, and/or vaccination related work is a requirement of this funding.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Covid-19 is just one element correct? This should also be able to address other health related issues such as SUD treatment?</p>	<p>Other health related issues may be addressed, but work relating to COVID-19 testing, mitigation, and/or vaccinations is a required activity.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>We do not need to provide the Covid vaccine, correct? The goal is education and increase awareness.</p>	<p>Applicants do not need to provide the COVID-19 vaccine, but must provide resources and education on the vaccine, including where and how to get it. Direct connections to or partnerships with entities providing vaccines are highly encouraged.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>

Program Development

<p>Can these funds support individuals with lived experience that provide guidance and advice to providers to help better assist the homeless population?</p>	<p>Yes- these funds can be used to compensate people with lived experience of homelessness who participate in developing the peer health ambassador program.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Can the budget be for an existing program that will incorporate the HA, or should be budget reflect only the Health Ambassador portion of the program?</p>	<p>Funds provided through this opportunity should be utilized for activities related to the Health Ambassador program. If other funding supports this program, please list that in the committed funding portion of the budget. Please provide full details in the budget justification.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Does the developed program have to target all homeless people or can it target a specific group or age? (EX: a program that focuses on senior homeless people)</p>	<p>Applicant programs can focus on specific sub-populations of people experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>For this funding opportunity, the Health Ambassador would need to focus specifically on physical/medical health, correct? Would it be acceptable for the Health Ambassador to focus on mental health?</p>	<p>In addition to the focus on COVID-19 testing, mitigation, and/or vaccinations, activities relating to mental health resources would be allowable.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>
<p>Would those awarded funding have the flexibility to use an evidence based model such as PCH (Pathways Community Hub https://www.pchi-hub.org/) as long as they hire CHW's with lived experience and collect any other data outside the PCH model that Sierra Health would require?</p>	<p>Applicants could use an existing model or program as long as proposed activities to be funded match those outlined in the RFA.</p>	<p>7-8-2022</p>

Application Scoring / Selection

What is the scoring process for determining funding allocation?

Each application will be reviewed by at least two reviewers and a full review team will develop recommendations for funding. Please see the selection criteria listed in the RFA.

7-8-2022

Non-COVID-19 Related Services

Will vaccinations of Monkeypox and Meningitis be considered as a part of this RFA or is it only for COVID?

The focus of this funding opportunity is for COVID-19 testing, mitigation, and/or vaccinations. However, mitigation strategies against COVID-19 will likely have protective effects against of infectious disease. Resources about vaccinations of Monkeypox and Meningitis may be included, but only in addition to COVID-19 vaccinations.

7-8-2022

If a homeless person is found capable can they be helped through this grant to help house them, training, and prep for hiring? (not a health ambassador)

No. The purpose of this funding is for health ambassadors to provide resources and information related to COVID-19 vaccines and testing, as well as other health resources.

7-8-2022

Is there a percentage of funding that needs to focus on COVID-19 testing/vaccines vs. SUD treatment etc.?

While there is not a hard and fast cutoff for what percentage of funds must be spent on COVID- specific activities, COVID testing, mitigation, and/or vaccinations rates will be used as metrics for gauging a program's success. While we encourage programs to think expansively about auxiliary health- enhancing services to include alongside the COVID activities, funding should still mostly be covering salaries of ambassadors and other staff that support the program. We support empowering

7-8-2022

	ambassadors to link people to care, but this funding is not intended to cover the costs of care itself. Therefore, something such as treatment for substance use disorder would not be an eligible program activity for this grant, but linkages to a treatment program would. Other services might include linkages to testing and treatment for Hepatitis C and/ or sexually transmitted infections, since both disproportionately impact people experiencing homelessness.	
Is providing housing readiness activities allowable for this grant?	Housing readiness activities are not allowable, unless explicitly related to COVID-19 testing, mitigation, and/or vaccinations education or support.	7-8-2022
Incentives		
Can you please provide examples of allowable incentives?	<p>Some incentives that may be allowed (pending pre-approval) include gift cards (max value \$100 for per participant), including gas cards, grocery cards, Visa or Mastercard gift cards, gift cards for other retail stores, various non-branded items such as clothing, hats, backpacks, books, Personal Protective Equipment (hand sanitizers, masks, etc.) school or office supplies, public/ mass transportation passes (bus train). Note that gift cards may not be used to purchase alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis products.</p> <p>All incentives are subject to review and approval. A specific incentives request form will be provided to awardees. Technical assistance will be available to assist with the incentives application(s) based on what your organization plans to offer and which actions are being incentivized.</p>	7-18-2022

<p>If we offer vaccines at our organization, can we budget for incentives for getting vaccine?</p>	<p>All incentives, including those for getting vaccinated, are subject to review and approval. Please include the incentives in the budget.</p> <p>A specific incentives request form will be provided to awardees. Technical assistance will be available to assist with the incentives application(s) based on what your organization plans to offer and which actions are being incentivized.</p>	<p>7-18-2022</p>
<p>Are incentives allowed in budget?</p>	<p>Incentives should be built into the budget. All incentives are subject to review and approval. A specific incentives request form will be provided to awardees. Technical assistance will be available to assist with the incentives application(s) based on what your organization plans to offer and which actions are being incentivized.</p>	<p>7-18-2022</p>