

**New York State Department of Health
AIDS Institute**
*Division of HIV & Hepatitis Health Care
Bureau of Community Support Services*

Questions and Answers

Comprehensive Legal Services for People Living with HIV/AIDS RFA RFA #20781/Internal Program #25-0001

SFS ID: CLSPLH2026

SFS Event Name: RFA #20781 Legal Services for People with HIV/AIDS

Questions below were received by the deadline announced in the Request for Applications. New York State Department of Health is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received.

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the **RFA #20781**. In the event of any conflict between the Request for Applications (RFA) and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Application Submission in the Statewide Financial System (SFS)

Question 1: Where can I access the RFA?

Answer 1: This opportunity has been posted on the [New York Statewide Financial System \(SFS\) website](#).

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.

Questions? Contact the SFS Technical Support Help Desk:
helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov | 1-877-737-4185 toll-free | 518-457-7737.

Question 2: How do I apply in SFS?

Answer 2: Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application** in the Request for Applications.

Reference materials and videos are available for Applicants to funding opportunities on the New York 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: **RFA #20781 Legal Services for People with HIV/AIDS**. 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.

Additionally, you can search using the SFS ID in the Event ID field as follows: **CLSPLH2026**

You can 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.

Question 3: What if I try to submit my application and it is past the due date/time of the RFA?

Answer 3: Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, E. How to File an Application** in the Request for Applications.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted online via the Statewide Financial System (SFS) by the date and time posted on the Cover Page of this Request for Applications under the heading “Key Dates”.

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 Request for Applications. 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.**

Question 4: How do I determine if my agency is pre-qualified?

Answer 4: Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits** in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:

- (a) has not Registered in the New York State 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 the Request for Applications.

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.

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>.

Question 5: Can an agency apply if they are not prequalified?

Answer 5: Applicants *must* be prequalified in SFS (if not exempt) by the date and time applications are due.

Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, N. Vendor Prequalification for Not-for-Profits** in the Request for Applications.

An Application cannot be submitted/received from a not-for-profit Applicant that:
(a) has not Registered in the New York State 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 Request for Applications.

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>.

Question 6: What does the asterisk * mean in the SFS on-line application?

Answer 6: The asterisk* alerts applicants that a response is mandatory. Applicants will not be allowed to submit their application without completing all mandatory questions and uploading all mandatory attachments.

Application Format

Question 7: How do I submit my application in SFS?

Answer 7: Please refer to **Section V. Completing the Application** in the RFA for guidance.

Applicants are instructed to respond to each of the following statements and questions under "Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors." Your responses comprise your application. Number/letter your narrative to correspond to each statement and question in the order presented below. 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.

An **Application Checklist (Attachment 15)** has been included to help ensure that submission requirements have been met. Applicants should refer to this Attachment before and after writing the application. In assembling your application, please follow the outline provided in the **Application Checklist: Attachment 15**.

The Application Narrative, including the Program Abstract, should not exceed twelve (12) double-spaced pages, using an 11-point Arial font with one-inch margins on all sides. Pages should be numbered consecutively. All Attachments should be labeled with the Attachment name and corresponding attachment number. The twelve (12) double-spaced page limitation is specific to the Application Narrative and does not include all required Attachments. Please submit only the requested information in the attachments and **do not add attachments or information that are not requested**. Any additional attachments or narrative exceeding the twelve (12) double-spaced page limitation will not be scored or considered by reviewers.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a deduction of up to ten (10) points.

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: Please upload the full Application and all required Attachments as one (1) complete PDF document no larger than 20MB in response to Bid Factor Question 01.

Please ensure that uploaded files are not fillable PDFs or "secure" or "password protected" or your document will not upload properly.

Any material added to a Bid Factor "Add Comments" box in SFS will not be reviewed as part of a submitted application.

Question 8: What do I enter for the Work Plan Project Summary in SFS?

Answer 8: Please review the instructions given in the RFA for the Work Plan section (**Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, 6. Work Plan**).

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

Question 9: When will announcement of grant awardees be made?

Answer 9: The estimated award announcement date is September 1, 2026.

Question 10: When do you anticipate that the contract will begin for the project funded under the RFA?

Answer 10: Please refer to **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, G. Term of Contract** in the Request for Applications.

It is anticipated contracts will have a start date of January 1, 2027.

Question 11: In the RFA, Section "K" Page 20, Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements it states, "By submitting an Application, each Applicant and potential Grantee agrees to complete an **M/WBE Utilization Plan** as directed in **Attachment 12** of this RFA." Kindly clarify whether the **M/WBE Utilization Plan: Attachment 12** is incorporated as a reference OR must be completed and submitted with the RFA application in order for the application to be considered complete.

Answer 11: The **M/WBE Utilization Plan** included in **Attachment 12** must be completed and submitted with the Application for the Application to be considered complete. Instructions for completing **Attachment 12** can be found on the first page of the document.

Question 12: Should the M/WBE Utilization Plan be reflective of just the first-year budget or all five years? Will there be a possibility of applying for a waiver from the MBE and WBE requirements? Is this form required?

Answer 12: The **M/WBE Utilization Plan** (Form #1 of **Attachment 12**) should be based on the life of the contract, which is five (5) years. Eligible M/WBE expenditures include any subcontracted labor or services, equipment, materials, or any combined purchase of the foregoing under a contract awarded from this solicitation.

Please refer to the instructions in **Attachment 12**, Guide to New York State DOH M/WBE RFA NFP Required Forms, Form #2: M/WBE Utilization Waiver Request for instructions on applying for a waiver. If the M/WBE Utilization Plan is incomplete, and the applicant is selected for funding, the resulting award will be held pending completion of the required documentation. All Applicants must complete Form # 3 (Online Compliance System Payment Submission Confirmation), Form #4 (M/WBE Staffing Plan), and Form #5 (EEO and M/WBE Policy Statement) in addition to the forms noted above.

Question 13: RFA P.15, item #15: Does "application opening" mean RFA release date, application due date, or another date?

Answer 13: "Prior to Application opening" refers to the period up to and before Applications are due.

Program

Question 14: Are you only looking for vendors with a legal background to participate in this project?

Answer 14: IMPORTANT: Please refer to Addendum #1 of the RFA which states:

Applicant must:

- Have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing comprehensive legal services to People Living with HIV/AIDS, HIV-affected families, and populations most impacted by HIV/AIDS including Black/Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); **OR** have a signed **Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (submitted as Attachment 4)** with one (1) or more legal services organizations, law schools, law school clinics, or community-based organizations with legal capacity that has/have the required minimum of three (3) years of experience providing comprehensive legal services to People Living with HIV/AIDS, HIV-affected families, and populations most impacted by HIV/AIDS including BIPOC. This experience must be as documented in **Section V. Completing the Application, A. Application Format/Content, Program Specific Questions (PSQ)/Bid Factors, PSQ 1a.**

The applicant must *either* have the required three (3) years providing comprehensive legal services as outlined above **OR** have and submit a signed **Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding** with an organization that has the required three (3) years of experience.

Question 15: Regarding the requirements stated on page 26 on the RFA for the following:

1h) Applicants are instructed to upload the **Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding as Attachment 4** as part of your full Application submission.

1i) Applicants are instructed to upload the agency's **Operating Certificate pursuant to Article 28 of the Public Health Law** as **Attachment 5** as part of your full Application submission.

Given we are a non-profit civil legal service provider, what is required to satisfy this for attachment #4 & #5? Do we just provide our proof of 501(c)iii status in place of these?

Answer 15: As described in **Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements** of the RFA, applicants must be a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community-based provider; **OR** be an entity pursuant to Article 28 of the New York State Public Health Law that has a signed **Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 4)** with one (1) or more legal services organization, law school, law school clinic or a community-based organization with legal services capacity.

Attachment 4: Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding and **Attachment 5: Operating Certificate** are required to be submitted by applicants who are applying as an entity pursuant to Article 28 of the New York State Public Health Law.

Attachment 4: Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding is also required for any not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community-based provider that does not have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing comprehensive legal services to People Living with HIV/AIDS, HIV-affected families, and populations most impacted by HIV/AIDS including BIPOC, and is proposing to partner with an agency or agencies that have the required years of experience.

Not-for-profit organizations will be registered as such in SFS.

Question 16: What is the definition of a "health harming legal need"?

Answer 16: For purposes of this RFA, "health harming legal needs" are defined as unmet legal needs that have the potential to impact the ability of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) to achieve and maintain viral load suppression and/or cause negative health outcomes. Refer to **Section I. Introduction, A. Background/Intent** for more detail.

Question 17: What are a few examples of the unmet needs of PLWHA?

Answer 17: This RFA seeks to support innovative and comprehensive legal services that address the Social Determinants of Health affecting the health outcomes of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), prioritizing the most disproportionately impacted populations such as Black/Brown, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). Such legal services cover a wide variety of civil legal issues including but not limited to benefits, income maintenance, housing, individual rights, education, employment, health, advance directives and family matters. Please refer to **Section I. Introduction, A. Background/Intent** in the RFA for more detail.

Question 18: Can the vendor participate remotely as well as in person?

Answer 18: Yes, remote participation is acceptable provided the proposed model and services meet the requirements and intent of the RFA.

Question 19A: Correct that we are not required to provide executed linkage agreements/MOU's with this application. If awarded, we are required to provide these within the first year of the contract?

Question 19B: (Attachment 20) Are applicants expected to have MOUs/Linkage Agreement prior to submitting the application, or rather, to put them in place if awarded the grant? Additionally, for whatever timeframe the MOU/linkage agreements are required, must there be an MOU/linkage agreement for every organization listed on Attachment 20?

Answer 19 A-B: As stated in **Section II. Who May Apply, A. Minimum Eligibility Requirements** of the RFA, an applicant pursuant to Article 28 is required to provide signed **Linkage Agreement or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)** as **Attachment 4** to meet Minimum Eligibility Requirements and be considered for funding.

Attachment 4: Linkage Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding is also required for any not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community-based provider that does not have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing comprehensive legal services to People Living With HIV/AIDS, HIV-affected families, and populations most impacted by HIV/AIDS, and is proposing to partner with an agency or agencies that have the required years of experience.

As stated in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description** of the RFA, **within the first year of program implementation**, funded providers are expected to establish **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with two (2) or more community-based HIV providers to conduct legal clinics** for people with HIV/AIDS. Applicants are not required to have these MOUs/Linkage Agreements in place prior to submitting the application.

As stated in **Attachment 20: Referral Services Linkages Chart**, applicants are encouraged to enhance existing and/or establish new formalized collaborative partnerships to provide linkages, which are supported by detailed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)/Linkage Agreements.

Question 20A: As mentioned on page 9 of the RFA, what is the definition of a legal clinic?

Question 20B: What is envisioned by the term "legal clinic"?

Answer 20 A-B: A "legal clinic" is a scheduled, legal service session (in person or virtual) conducted in collaboration with a community-based HIV service provider, where People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) can receive comprehensive legal services.

Question 21: If the legal clinics do not have attendees, is it mandatory that staff still attend twice each month even with no volume?

Answer 21: Funded programs should ensure that program staff are available for their assigned scheduled legal clinic. The RFA does not limit program staff availability and virtual accessibility can be an option to meet emergent client needs for legal assistance.

Question 22A: What if there is not more than 1 HIV service provider in the geographic area served? Can we hold clinics at only one location?

Question 22B: Is it permissible to conduct the 12 legal clinics per year at more than two community-based HIV services providers – for example, quarterly clinics at 3 different community-based providers, or clinics 3 times a year at 4 different community-based providers?

Answer 22 A-B: Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative models which can include multiple partnerships for conducting legal clinics. As stated in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan**

Outcomes, A. Program Model Description, Applicants are required to establish two (2) or more partnerships with community-based HIV Service providers (community-based organizations, Federally Qualified Health, Centers (FQHCs), legal providers and medical providers) via Memorandum of Understanding to conduct legal clinics. It is permissible to conduct legal clinics at more than two (2) community-based HIV providers as long as the required number of clinics is conducted per year. The legal clinic service locations should maximize access to services for the priority populations and be responsive to this RFA. Applicants are instructed to complete and include **Attachment 19: Service Delivery Site(s) Chart** as part of the full application submission.

Question 23: In New York City – the only region with more than one grantee – is it permissible for grantees with complementary, but different, areas of expertise to co-host legal clinics so that clients have immediate access to more comprehensive services, and there is less administrative burden on community-based hosts?

Answer 23: There is no restriction in this RFA for establishing legal clinics with multiple and complementary legal services in one (1) location. All applicants are encouraged to consider innovative models for the delivery of comprehensive legal services for People Living with HIV/AIDS. Please refer to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description** of the RFA for further description of the program model.

Question 24: (Attachment 19) Are applicants expected to specify, in this application due June 11th, the exact date and hours of clinics at community-based HIV service providers in 2027? Or is it sufficient to specify the frequency (e.g., monthly or quarterly) and number of hours of each clinic?

Answer 24: Applicants are encouraged to complete **Attachment 19: Service Delivery Site(s) Chart** as thoroughly as possible and can use frequency specifications such as daily, bi-monthly, monthly, quarterly as appropriate, as well as number of hours services are available for each site where services will be available. This can include any site where services may be delivered during the evening or other times outside of a traditional workday schedule to meet community needs.

Question 25: If my legal services agency has multiple locations does it count towards the off-site legal clinic requirement?

Answer 25: Funded providers are required to establish Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a minimum of two (2) community-based HIV service providers for the provision of the required twelve (12) legal services clinics annually. Clinics should be held at the partner HIV service provider's locations to meet this requirement.

Detailed information for the proposed legal services clinics must be included on **Attachment 19: Service Delivery Site(s) Chart** of the RFA, in addition to all other identified locations for the provision of funded legal services which can include existing agency locations. Further information regarding off-site legal clinics can be found in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description** of the RFA.

Program Staffing

Question 26A: Can non-attorney advocates conduct initial legal screenings and SDOH assessments?

Question 26B: Is it mandatory that an attorney staff the clinic? Can a paralegal staff the clinic?

Answer 26 A-B: The applicant should determine the most appropriate staffing structure, based on the community needs assessment, position responsibilities, program model, and available funding. The staffing structure is expected to include an Attorney, Paralegal or Client Service Support staff, Data Entry and Evaluation staff as outlined in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, D. Program Staffing** of the RFA.

While providers may assign non-attorney staff to conduct initial legal screenings, Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) assessments and provide community education, legal clinics require the provision of comprehensive legal services and the staffing structure should support that effort.

Question 27A: As mentioned on page 10 of the RFA, are we required to include the Data Entry and Evaluation position on our budget as direct personnel? These positions are typically included as part of our 15% indirect rate.

Question 27B: Does the budget have to include some portion of each position listed (attorney, paralegal, data entry)?

Answer 27 A-B: As stated in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, D. Program Staffing** of the RFA, the staffing structure of funded applicants must include an Attorney, Paralegal/Client Services Support, and Data Entry and Evaluation staff. Applicants should provide a sound rationale for the proposed staffing structure and demonstrate how it supports the proposed model. All applicants should complete and upload **Attachment 21: Agency Capacity and Staffing Information** of the RFA identifying the staff responsible for the identified activities and services. **Attachment 16: Agency Organizational Chart** and **Attachment 17: Program Organizational Chart** of the RFA should also clearly identify staff (including any in-kind staff) to demonstrate how the proposed program will meet the RFA requirements. The intent of the RFA is that these functions exist and are adequately resourced.

Question 28: Will DOH require timecard submissions with each voucher? or just have available if/when there is an audit?

Answer 28. As outlined in **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardee(s)** of the RFA, a grantee must provide complete and accurate billing invoices in order to receive payment 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). At this time, there are no established requirements for additional documentation that must be supplied for routine invoicing.

Question 29: What specific data related to legal needs assessments, SDOH assessments, referrals, and outcomes must be entered into AIRS or other systems, and how often?

Answer 29: Funded applicants will collect and report all required data using the AIDS Institute Reporting System (AIRS) on a monthly basis, as stated in **Section IV. Administrative Requirements, H. Payment & Reporting Requirements of Grant Awardees** of the RFA. AIRS is a data reporting system that is used by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to report client demographic information as well as program activities. Please refer to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, E. Program Requirements of the RFA** for more information.

Question 30: Regarding question 4m as stated on page 28 of the RFA:

4m) Describe people living with HIV/AIDS will be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of program services.

Does this requirement relate to conducting community needs assessment? If something more is expected, would you kindly provide more guidance or an example.

Answer 30: Applicants should detail strategies and methods to describe how People Living with HIV/AIDS will be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of program services appropriate to their proposed program model and needs of the community. Please refer to **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, E. Program Requirements** of the RFA for examples that include consumer advisory groups and focus groups to obtain consumer input.

Question 31A: To avoid burdening clients with duplicative SDOH assessments, is it permissible for funded applicants to rely on SDOH assessments that a community partner, such as one hosting the legal clinics, or another funded legal services provider recently performed? For example, if one funded applicant completes the SDOH assessment tool on a client and is providing that client with legal services on housing and benefits, but refers the client to a second funded applicant to receive legal services on HIV privacy, would the second funded applicant also need to complete the SDOH assessment? Or could it obtain client consent to obtain the SDOH from the first legal services provider or otherwise verify that the SDOH assessment was performed?

Question 31B: Can you give us more information on the SDOH assessment? What should it look like?

Question 31C: Do you have a sample of the online tool that you can share for reference?

Question 31D: Is it to be applied to individual clients or a general assessment?

Answer 31 A-D: Funded applicants will be required to conduct assessment/reassessment of all enrolled clients' Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) needs, using a standardized SDOH screening tool in the AIDS Institute Reporting System (AIRS). Applicants are encouraged to create innovative partnerships and collaborations which can include streamlined referral processes sharing relevant information with a client's consent.

The AIDS Institute SDOH Assessment and tool are described in **Section III. Project Narrative/Work Plan Outcomes, A. Program Model Description** of this RFA. The tool can be downloaded from the AIDS Institute's AIRS website at: www.airсны.org/instruction-videos under the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Assessment section.

Question 32: Regarding RFA, page 27, question 3d, "What is your organization's policy for addressing social determinants of health (SDOH)?"

By policy, do you mean a written policy? If we do not have such a written policy, will it suffice for this application to speak about what we would include within a written policy should we be awarded funding?

Answer 32: Applicants should describe their overall agency's policies and practices that address Social Determinants of Health. This can include how the agency will implement the Social Determinant of Health Assessment as detailed in **Attachment 6: Workplan, Objective 4** of the RFA.

Question 33: If an applicant provides legal services on issues within the scope of the grant on which no other applicants or grantees in the State have expertise, is it permissible to apply to serve primarily

one region, but also all other counties, as needed – so that individuals living with HIV will have access to this expertise regardless of where they live in New York?

Answer 33: As stated in **Section I. Introduction, A. Available Funding** of the RFA, applicants are instructed to select their primary region of service on **Application Cover Page: Attachment 2**. The Department of Health region selected should be the location where the largest number of clients will be served. This does not preclude an applicant from proposing to serve one (1) or more counties outside a defined service region.

Question 34A: Regarding a bullet point under question 5e on page 29 of the RFA:

Funding may only be used to expand existing activities or create new activities pursuant to this RFA. Funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff and activities. Agencies currently funded by the Department of Health AIDS Institute to provide program services identified in this RFA must apply for continuation of funding. **As a current funder, are we required to expand services or are we applying for a continuation of funding?**

Question 34B: Section V. 5e. On page 29 says that “funds may not be used to supplant funds for currently existing staff and activities.” Based on this section

- a. Can current HIV legal staff have increased allocation percentages?
- b. Are backfills allowable?
- c. What documentation would be required to demonstrate expansion of services versus replacement/supplanting of existing activities

Answer 34 A-B: This is a new solicitation of a new model of comprehensive legal services for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Existing providers must apply for continuation of funding. If awarded, applicants must implement the new model as noted in the RFA. Applicants should propose staffing that meets the needs of the program and reflects the requirements of the RFA.

Budget

Question 35: Section V. 5a. On page 29, it states that “the budget for year one (1), January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027, must be entered into the Statewide Financial System (SFS)”.

- a. Will future years be budgeted annually?
- b. Can partially funded existing staff be shifted onto this grant?
- c. Are annual budget modifications or rebudgeting requests permitted during the contract term?
- d. Is there guidance on allowable variance thresholds between budget categories before formal approval is required?

Answer 35: All funded applicants will submit annual budgets related to the proposed costs of the program for each year of the 5-year contract cycle. Budget modifications to meet changes in community needs and program design, which can include changes in program staffing, are allowable and are subject to an approval process. All budget changes should be discussed with the AIDS Institute Contract Manager to assess for potential impact to scope of services, and to determine if reasonable and cost effective. Guidelines regarding the budget submission are in **Section V. Completing the Application, 5. Budgets and Justifications** of this RFA.