

Assessment of Fair Housing
Request for Qualifications to Provide an Assessment of Fair
Housing Services
Mississippi Home Corporation

1. INTRODUCTION

Mississippi Home Corporation (“MHC” or “the Corporation”) was created in 1989 as a public body corporate and politic, separate and apart from the State of Mississippi the state”). MHC is a legal successor-in-interest to the Mississippi Housing Finance Corporation (“MHFC”). While granting the Corporation a broader set of powers than those possessed by MHFC, the Mississippi Home Corporation Act, Sections 43-33-701 et seq., Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended (‘the Act’), vested all property, rights and powers of MHFC in the Corporation, subject to all pledges, covenants, agreements and trusts made or created by MHFC.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) is to solicit responses in accordance with the Mississippi Home Corporation Procurement Regulations from qualified firms to furnish services to MHC as identified in the Scope of Services of this request.

3. BOARD

The powers of the Corporation are vested in nine (9) members of the Mississippi Home Corporation Board of Directors (“the Board”), six (6) of which are appointed by the Governor of the State and three (3) by the Lt. Governor of the State, all of whom shall be residents of the State. All appointments shall be with the advice and consent of the Senate of the State Legislature.

4. ADMINSTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Mr. Scott Spivey is the Executive Director of the Corporation. The Corporation has a staff of more than 60 employees.

5. ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING

On July 16, 2015, HUD published a final rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). The AFFH rule established a process that certain recipients of HUD funding will use to help them meet their long-standing obligations to AFFH. The AFFH rule creates a standardized process for fair housing planning. This process is referred to in the AFFH rule as an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH).

MHC serves as a conduit of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The goals identified in the AFH must inform the strategies and actions of the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, the Public Housing Authority Plan, and the Capital Fund Plan. The AFFH rule is designed to improve community planning in order to overcome fair housing issues.

As a HUD program participant, MHC's approach must be to more effectively and efficiently incorporate into planning processes the duty to affirmatively further the purposes and policies of the Fair Housing Act, which is title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The Fair Housing Act not only prohibits discrimination but, in conjunction with other statutes, directs HUD's program participants to take significant actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, achieve truly balanced and integrated living patterns, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination.

MHC manages over \$13 million in HOME, HOPWA, ESG, and NHTF funds for the State of Mississippi annually. The Mississippi Development Authority manages over \$22 million in CDBG funds annually. The AFH may be prepared in a joint, cooperative effort with other public entities which also receive HUD funding and which must also prepare AFHs, as allowed by the AFFH. MHC seeks to acquire AFH services from a qualified firm or individual ("Contractor") to ensure that the Corporation abides by the regulations of HUD.

6. SCOPE OF SERVICES

HUD's rule clarifies existing fair housing obligations with a streamlined process to analyze the local fair housing landscape and set fair housing priorities and goals through the AFH. The rule identifies four fair housing issues that program participants will assess:

1. Patterns of integration and segregation;
2. Racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty;
3. Disparities in access to opportunity; and
4. Disproportionate housing needs.

The AFH process begins with the provision of data, guidance, and an assessment tool that will help program participants identify fair housing issues and related contributing factors in their jurisdiction and region. Program participants are required to set goals to overcome fair housing issues and related contributing factors.

The AFFH rule, among other matters, requires community participation, consultation, and coordination in the fair housing assessment process, as generally described in the AFFH Guidebook and posted on the HUD Exchange website. The Contractor will prepare an AFH for Mississippi's use and benefit

and for the use and benefit of all other public entities that participate jointly with MHC in administering covered federal funds. The AFH will include, at a minimum, the following elements in compliance with the AFFH rule set forth in 24 CFR Part 5 §5.154(d):

- 6.1 An analysis of data and other information which will assess the following fair housing issues:
 - a. Integration and segregation patterns and trends based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, and disability in the jurisdiction and region;
 - b. Racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (R/ECAPs) in the jurisdiction and region;
 - c. Significant disparities in access to opportunity for any protected class in the jurisdiction and region; and
 - d. Disproportionate housing needs for any protected class within the jurisdiction and region.
- 6.2 The AFH will also discuss fair housing issues related to publicly supported housing; disability and access; and fair housing enforcement, outreach capacity, and resources.
- 6.3 An identification of significant contributing factors for segregation, R/ECAPs, disparities in access to opportunity, and disproportionate housing needs, including the significant contributing factors that are related to publicly supported housing, disability and access issues, and fair housing enforcement, outreach capacity, and resources.
- 6.4 A prioritization of the contributing factors identified for each fair housing issue and a justification for the prioritization. In prioritizing such factors, program participants shall give highest priority to those factors that limit or deny fair housing choice of access to opportunity, or negatively impact fair housing or civil rights compliance.
- 6.5 An identification of the fair housing goals that each program participant will use to overcome the effects of the prioritized contributing factors and related fair housing issues, including a description of how the goals relate to overcoming the contributing factors and related fair housing issues.
- 6.6 Each goal also will include an identification of the metrics and milestones for determining what fair housing results will be achieved and the timeframes for achieving them. For joint or regional AFHs, program participants will also specify which program participants are responsible for each goal.

The AFH will be completed using HUD's Assessment Tool(s), if available for use by states or an alternative process acceptable to HUD, including, but not limited to, the following areas:

- i. Cover Sheet
- ii. Executive Summary
- iii. Community Participation Process - Adhering to 24 CFR 91.110 at a minimum, when planning the public participation process.
- iv. Assessment of Past Goals and Actions
- v. Fair Housing Analysis
 - a. Demographic Summary
 - b. General Issues
 - i. Segregation/Integration
 - ii. Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs)
 - iii. Disparities in Access to Opportunity
 - iv. Disproportionate Housing Needs
 - c. Publicly Supported Housing Analysis
 - d. Disability and Access Analysis
 - e. Fair Housing Enforcement, Outreach Capacity, and Resources
 - f. Fair Housing Goals and Priorities

The AFH will be completed and submitted to MHC on or before January 31, 2019 in draft form to allow time for necessary revision prior to final submission to HUD. The Contractor must also provide the following to MHC, but is not limited to the following:

- 6.7 Keep MHC abreast of all significant activities, decisions, correspondence, reports, and communications related to AFH activities.
- 6.8 Facilitate communications between all parties ensuring responses and resolutions are provided in a timely manner.
- 6.9 Assist in the management of the data worksheet with MHC.
- 6.10 Notify MHC of any time extensions required.
- 6.11 Maintain and submit reports and documentation supporting the progress or completion of program activities prior to invoice for MHC's review and approval.

Contractor(s) will be expected to provide their own office space, office supplies,

laptop, camera, software, automobile, cellular phone, and any other items deemed necessary to complete tasks. The field equipment is considered

an incidental expense to the Contractor(s) selected for this contract and there will be no additional compensation.

7. RFQ INSTRUCTIONS

RFQ Submission and Format

Please submit three (3) copies of your response in the same package clearly marked on the outside “Response to RFQ for AFH Services” addressed to:

Dr. Ben Mokry, Executive VP and Chief Strategy Officer
Department of Research and Development
Mississippi Home Corporation
735 Riverside Drive
Jackson, MS 39202

A copy of the entire response must also be provided as an electronic version. Emails will be accepted for the electronic versions. Send email copy to ben.mokry@mshc.com.

The Board desires to minimize submission of superfluous RFQ material. Interested firms are instructed to organize their responses according to the following format:

The narrative answer should be preceded by the question or request for information, limited to one side of a single 8½” X 11” typed page. Supplemental information or background material, if any, must be restricted to Appendices following the responses.

Do not answer more than one (1) information request per page.

Number consecutively and identify the respondent on each page.

At a minimum, tab responses by RFQ question categories.

8. QUESTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY RESPONDENTS TO THIS RFQ

8.1 Organizational and Personnel Background

- 8.1.1 Provide an overview of your firm, emphasizing its qualifications and major strengths and achievements that would serve the Corporation. Why do you believe you should be selected to provide Assessment of Fair Housing services to MHC?

8.1.2 Provide the names, Mississippi office location, and brief resume of the professionals who will be assigned to the Corporation account and include their level of responsibility. Please designate the approximate percentage of work for which each team member will be responsible.

8.2 **Experience**

8.2.1 Describe your firm's experience using assessment techniques for similar activities. Cite specific examples and provide metrics if applicable to show the effectiveness of services.

8.2.2 Describe your firm's experience preparing documents containing demographic information.

8.2.3 Describe your firm's ability to generate information on segregation/integration, R/ECAPs, disparities in access to opportunity, and disproportionate housing needs.

8.2.4 Describe your firm's ability to complete a publicly supported housing analysis.

8.2.5 Describe your firm's ability to complete a disability and access analysis.

8.3 **Miscellaneous Discussion Questions**

8.3.1 Discuss any other ideas you may have, not addressed above, on how your firm can execute the services requested by MHC in this RFQ.

8.3.2 Describe any special qualifications your firm's Mississippi office has that could assist MHC in their efforts to serve low to moderate income individuals and families in Mississippi.

8.4 **Disclosure**

Describe any litigation, arbitration, and/or other actions pending against your firm arising from its involvement in providing services to entities related to use of grant funds from the U.S. Treasury or U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Please indicate your willingness to disclose additional information or any litigation pending against your firm should the Corporation request it.

The firm selected must have no financial interest in development and implementation of MHC programs other than in his/her capacity to provide Assessment of Fair Housing services to MHC.

8.5 Affirmative Action

State that the respondent complies fully with all government regulations regarding nondiscriminatory employment practices.

8.6 Cost

Selection of Contractor will be based on qualifications and ability to perform the identified services set out in this RFQ. While cost will not be considered in ranking respondents, MHC desires to understand what the cost will be based on respondents' usual time and costs for similar activities. Use a format you think most appropriate to provide the following information:

8.6.1 Method by which your firm would calculate expenses and bill for services.

8.6.2 Total cost for providing the services.

9. RFQ TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Corporation will make its selection based upon its perception of the need for Assessment of Fair Housing services, the demonstrated competence, experience, knowledge and qualifications. By this RFQ however, the Corporation has not committed itself to employ an Assessment of Fair Housing contractor for any or all of the above described matters, nor does the suggested scope of services or term of agreement require that an Assessment of Fair Housing contractor be employed for any of those purposes. MHC reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses, and the Corporation's decision on these matters is final.

10. Board and Staff Communications

Under no circumstances may any members of the Board or Staff (except for staff members named herein) be contacted during this RFQ process by any firm intending to submit a response to this RFQ. Failure to comply with this request may result in disqualification.

11. Timetable

The deadline for submissions in response to this Request for Qualifications is **Friday, November 10, 2017 by 4:00** p.m. Fax responses will not be accepted.

12. Release of Information

Information submitted in response to this RFQ will not be released by the Corporation during the proposal evaluation process or prior to a contract award.

13. Proprietary Information

If a Respondent does not desire certain proprietary information in their response disclosed, the Respondent is required to identify all proprietary information in the response, which identification shall be submitted concurrently with the response. If the Respondent fails to identify proprietary information, it agrees by submission of its response that those sections shall be deemed nonproprietary and may be made available upon public request after a contract award.

14. Terms of Contract

The contract will be offered for a term of twelve (12) months with an optional twelve (12) month renewal. The contract is cancelable by either party with thirty (30) days' notice.

15. Further Information

To obtain information about the Corporation or this RFQ, please feel free to contact Dr. Ben Mokry, Executive Vice President of Research and Development, at (601) 718-4611, ben.mokry@mshc.com.

16. Oral Presentation

Your firm may be selected to give an oral presentation to the Selection Committee at a later date. Notification will be made to you after responses have been reviewed and evaluated.

17. The Corporation Reserves the Right to:

17.1 Request an oral interview with, and additional information from firms prior to final selection of an Assessment of Fair Housing contractor;

17.2 Consider information about a firm in addition to the information submitted in the response or interview, and; Reject any and all responses and waive any irregularities.

- 17.3 Negotiate all elements that comprise the information of the Respondent(s), including cost, to ensure that the best possible considerations are afforded to all concerned, and to waive any irregularities. The Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all responses to the RFQ.
- 17.4 Select a Respondent(s) for specific purposes or for any combination of specific purposes, and to defer the selection of any Respondent(s) to a time of the Corporation's choosing.
- 17.5 Make its decision after receipt of responses and the Corporation's decision on these matters is final.

18. RFQ REVIEW

At a meeting of the Selection Committee, scheduled after such review, certain of the firms that have responded may be asked to make oral presentations. If so, those firms will be given not less than three (3) business days' notice, along with the date, time and place for the oral presentation.

19. SELECTION CRITERIA

The Corporation will evaluate only those firms meeting the qualifications. Among other things, the evaluation of statements of qualifications will be based on the following criteria:

- 19.1 Each question and question part is thoroughly answered;
- 19.2 Respondent has demonstrated that staff to be assigned to the work have the experience and knowledge to be effective based on having performed similar work;
- 19.3 Respondent's plan for managing the work, providing work products to MHC, receiving direction from MHC, and communicating with MHC is clear and feasible;
- 19.4 Respondent adheres to the Corporation guidelines in this RFQ; and,
- 19.5 The firm's commitment to Mississippi.

**PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER
November 10, 2017
4:00 P.M.
WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**