

Dear Jean,

I am writing on behalf of Ability Housing concerning RFA 2024-103; requesting two modifications to the draft RFA; as well as to share some comments, questions and concerns.

First, please remove the Priority 1 limitation.

- Ability Housing has been partnering with St Vincent dePaul CARES (SVdP) for several years, co-developing supportive housing projects. It is a successful partnership that has increased SVdP's capacity to develop and provide supportive housing along the Gulf Coast. Ability Housing brings the real estate experience, financial capacity, and ability to provide guarantees; SVdP brings its local connections, services resources, and mission to implement supportive housing best practices.
- Ability Housing and SVdP have been in discussions concerning a specific project on the Gulf Coast. Ability Housing also intends to submit a project of our own. If the Priority 1 limitation remains, we will be forced to choose which project to submit. A great deal of work has gone into both projects; and each is "shovel ready".
- It is very late in the process to announce such a significant change.
- Please amend the limitation to permit a second Priority 1 application if both partners in the JV are nonprofits with demonstrated experience providing supportive housing

Second, concerning the Operating/Managing Permanent Supportive Housing Experience narrative, there is a great deal of information being requested. Please expand the maximum number of pages to 4 or 5. Otherwise respondents will be forced to not answer all aspects of the question.

A couple of notes:

- In the Instructions the Operating/Managing Permanent Supportive Housing Experience narrative is worth 60 points total, but in Exhibit A it is only awarded 40 points.
- In the Instructions, the Access to Community-Based Services and Resources is one narrative and is provided 4 pages to respond; in Exhibit A it is two responses and provided 6 pages total to respond.
- Please clarify or expand upon what information is being sought in response to item g under the Access to Community-Based Services and Resources response.

Ability Housing also wishes to state that it is concerned by the overall change in the selection process. In reviewing the sorting order, the tiebreakers that will determine which projects are selected will not be related to the quality of the supportive housing.

Ability Housing has worked diligently for many, many years, and overcome many obstacles, to become a nationally recognized developer and provider of supportive housing. We believe that once a project is deemed to meet threshold criteria, a commitment to excellence - and what is best for the residents - by any organization should be the key deciding factor in determining which projects are selected for funding. It is disheartening to see Florida Housing reverse course and start towards a process that will result in lottery being the deciding factor.

Florida Housing was a leader in commissioning "pilot 1.0". That pilot identified best practices that are the keys to serving persons with the greatest barriers. Those are the types of items that should determine which project is selected.

Further, Florida needs a robust cadre of dedicated supportive housing providers. If providers can rely solely on lottery, and not merit and a demonstrated commitment to best practices, it will be nigh on impossible to increase capacity amongst the industry. Please reconsider this decision.

I am happy to discuss any of these items further.

Thank you,



**Shannon Nazworth**

President & CEO

**Ability Housing, Inc.** | [abilityhousing.org](http://abilityhousing.org)

3740 Beach Blvd, Suite 304 | Jacksonville, FL 32207

904.359.9650 x. 106

*building flourishing communities where everyone has a home*