

**PATERSON COALITION FOR OPIOID ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE (COAR)
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) FOR OPIOID RESPONSE TEAM (ORT) OUTREACH PARTNER/S**

Contract Timeline: September 13, 2022 – September 30, 2023

The Paterson Coalition for Opioid Assessment and Response (“COAR”) seeks applications from community-based organizations (“CBOs”) interested in performing street-level outreach in partnership with the Paterson Opioid Response Team (ORT). The ORT is comprised of specially-trained, off-duty, and plain-clothed police and FF/EMS first responders who volunteer to pair with a professional outreach worker [either ORT Social Workers from Paterson Health and Human Services (HHS) or a CBO] to perform outreach. ORT’s Geographic Outreach began in Paterson on September 13, 2021; currently, outreach operates two days per week, four-hour shifts per day (Wednesdays and Saturdays).

Approximately one year into its current efforts, COAR plans to launch an expanded approach to ORT outreach; the goals are to perform outreach more frequently per week, to introduce new recovery mechanisms as they become available (i.e. RealFix), and to reach additional audiences with positive messages about Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and recovery, including but not limited to the following:

- OUD is a medical condition that can be medically treated. When medication is used, it is vital to secure a legitimate prescription and oversight from a licensed medical professional.
- There are three Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT)—Suboxone, Methadone, and Sublocade—that are clinically proven to reduce mortality rates among those suffering with OUD.
- Medical treatment alone is not likely to resolve OUD for an individual that is struggling with additional factors like homelessness, lack of income or social supports, health care coverage, etc.; there are often many complex barriers to recovery that must be addressed in order to help an individual be successful. There is no one-size-fits all approach to recovery or “right way” to embark upon recovery. The ORT and/or its partners can help provide consistent case management, service navigation, and support to those who need assistance.
- There are many ways to reduce potential harm (i.e. overdose, injury, or death) among people who use drugs, including those with OUD. Individuals who participate in harm reduction programs or services are five times more likely to eventually enter recovery treatment.
- Those suffering from OUD (as well as their loved ones) deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, therefore, they:
 - o Deserve to be provided factual information about mortality rates related to a variety of recovery options (MAT included);
 - o Deserve to be provided information about strategies and services that can reduce harm to their life or livelihood; and
 - o Deserve to be offered genuine, reliable assistance and navigation that yields clear points of access to effective services and as few “dead ends” as possible.

The ORT is meant to provide a consistent, community-based presence of factual information about data-driven, patient-centric methods of OUD recovery. ORT members are meant to provide a safe and positive exchange of factual information regarding the above messages. ORT members are not meant to debate, argue, convince, shame, or coerce individuals into believing the above messages. Information and/or items disseminated by the ORT during outreach are not contingent upon believing or agreeing with the above messages or agreeing to seek/access any ORT-related services. All individuals who interact with the ORT must be afforded respect, patience, and factual information; even if an individual does not wish to receive the ORT’s information or support at that moment, that is very acceptable and should not impact the way that any ORT member talks to, respects, or treats them. This is in an effort to

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build trust over time between the ORT and its target audience, as well as the Paterson community. Similarly, all MAT referrals made by the ORT or its partners during ORT Geographic Outreach must be made to trusted, medically-appropriate treatment providers; lists of approved MAT referral sources will be provided and are subject to change. Assuring quality referrals is necessary to building trust and a positive impact over time.

All ORT outreach activities occurring alongside CBOs must conform to the following parameters:

- Must occur for at least four hours per outreach session.
- Must occur alongside ORT members (no less than one specially-trained, off-duty, plain-clothed police officer and no less than one specially-trained, off-duty, plain-clothed FF/EMS member).
 - o CBOs are not responsible for financially supporting the needs/time of other members.
- Must take place within a COAR-approved target area, at COAR-approved address(es)/location(s), and/or among COAR-approved target audience(s). CBOs will have the opportunity to propose their ideal/suggested outreach strategy in the ORT Partner Application Questions. COAR and the CBO must mutually agree on the outreach strategy prior any outreach activity taking place. Award of this RFA does not constitute direct approval of the proposed outreach strategy.
- Must account for every individual that was reached out to on a real-time basis; this will be facilitated by a secure survey tool that was specially developed by COAR for use by ORT members. Please note that the depth/quality of outreach per individual is more important to the COAR team than quantity of individuals reached. This tool must be used to track each individual interacted with, and include (at minimum):
 - o Which group is performing the outreach;
 - o What information or item(s) the individual was provided during outreach (if any); and
 - o Where the outreach occurred.

All CBOs awarded via this RFA must comply with/agree to the following parameters:

- Attending all COAR Stakeholder Meetings (hosted virtually on a quarterly basis). If the meeting cannot be attended, the CBO must inform the COAR Sr. Program Manager ahead of time.
- Attending all ORT Trainings/Team-building Activities (in-person or virtual). If the training/activity cannot be attended, the CBO must inform the COAR Sr. Program Manager ahead of time.
- Only performing outreach on the dates/times that are scheduled and mutually agreed upon by the CBO and COAR. All scheduling will be negotiated and/or confirmed on a quarterly basis.
- Signing HIPAA-advised confidentiality agreements with COAR and other ORT-related entities (as needed) to ensure that personally-identifiable information (PII) entered into the outreach tool and/or passed between ORT Social Workers and the ORT Outreach Team can be shared and kept confidential between all parties.
- Sending an invoice for all billable outreach services on a quarterly basis. Invoices shall be addressed to the COAR Sr. Program Manager and sent via email. Please note that expenses related to food or refreshments are not billable.
- Being generally available during reasonable business hours (Monday through Friday 9 am to 4 pm) for meetings, timely emails, and/or phone discussions with the COAR/ORT team.
- Agreeing to participate in any requested and/or ongoing Quality Improvement meetings, should they be called. Any such meetings will be held on dates/times that are scheduled and mutually agreed upon by the CBO and COAR.

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- Recognizing that COAR activities, decisions, and programs (including those which dictate ORT Geographic Outreach, as well as the RealFix program) are rooted in data, and thus are subject to change with new data insights. Any data insights that implicate change to a CBO's outreach strategy will be discussed between COAR and the CBO on a case by case basis. Any changes to the outreach strategy must be mutually agreed upon by both parties.

CBOs that are aligned to the ORT's mission and are interested in being a partner in ORT Geographic Outreach are invited to **submit the following application materials to Tenee Joyner at 125 Ellison Street, 1st Floor, Health and Human Services no later than 3:00 pm on Friday, August 5, 2022:**

- Completion of the ORT Partner Application Cover Page (with complete checklist and signatures)
- Completion of the ORT Partner Application Questions, including:
 - o Proposed outreach strategy, including any harm reduction supplies (needles are not allowable), supportive information, or additional services/linkages/direct referrals your team would provide on-site (Section A)
 - Please note that any group making direct referrals will be required to follow-up with all individuals to whom referrals were written and to help create a data-sharing plan with the COAR Data Manager so all metrics can be centralized.
 - o Proposed target location(s), venue(s), and/or audience(s) (Section B)
 - o Relevant credentials of those who will perform outreach (Section C)
 - o Weekly schedule/availability (Section D)
- Completion of the ORT Partner Budget Justification Form (Section E)
 - o Please note that COAR cannot reimburse for expenses related to food or refreshments
- Business Registration Certificate (can be ordered here: <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/busregcert.shtml>)
- Most Recent W-9
- Five (5) total copies of the final application packet (all documents listed above)

Please note the following:

- **There will be an in-person Technical Assistance (TA) session held on July 26, 2022 at 10:00 am, located at 155 Market Street, 3rd Floor, City Council Chambers** to review the Application Cover Page, Application Questions, and Budget Justification Forms. This is the venue in which the COAR/ORT team will answer any outstanding questions about either document.
 - o If you plan to attend the TA session, please RSVP by email to aramalho@patersonnj.gov
- Anyone is invited to pick up a blank application packet at 125 Ellison Street. However, all final application packets must be submitted as typed pages (handwritten pages will not be accepted).
- One or more entities may be awarded via this RFA.
- Any awardee(s) of this RFA wishing to extend their partnership beyond September 30, 2023 will be required to respond to a subsequent, fair and open RFA in the Summer of 2023. A forthcoming RFA is not guaranteed and will be contingent upon the availability of grant funding.

Thank you for considering this RFA. Paterson's COAR and ORT look forward to aligning efforts with one or more CBOs that are interested in performing (or already performing) outreach to the OUD population in a manner that highlights data-driven, patient-centric methods of recovery as well as the access points through which such services can be reached.