

# Connecticut Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Persons

## *Service Providers for PY 2016-17*

### **Proposal Review Team Recommendations for Selection of Service Providers**

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), as the state grantee for the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program for low-income persons, released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on June 2, 2016, to select weatherization service providers for the duration of federal program year 2016-2017. The RFP process addresses the need to clarify the capacity of existing providers, and to identify a weatherization service provider for the southwest Connecticut region formally served by ABCD. The RFP Process provides a comprehensive review and selection process based on the qualifications contained in each proposal as well as the service providers' past performance in the federal weatherization assistance program or a comparable program. The RFP Notice can be found at [Weatherization in Connecticut](#).

The RFP instructed potential service providers to bid on one or more of the five pre-determined service regions which are illustrated in the map of Connecticut Weatherization Assistance Program regions (Attached). These regions are the same geographic areas used in previous program years. Responses were received from 5 potential weatherization service providers including: The Access Agency Inc. (ACCESS), Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH), Community Renewal Team (CRT), Green EcoWarriors, and New Opportunities Inc. (NOI). In the process of selecting the service providers, DEEP followed the agency's standardized procedures for developing requests for proposals and reviewing proposals. DEEP advertised the RFP, referenced its availability during meetings with stakeholders, developed review criteria, assembled a review team, reviewed the proposals, and developed these recommendations.

The Proposal Review Team consisted of CT DEEP staff involved with residential energy efficiency programs, both within and outside of the staff administering the federal Weatherization Assistance Program. The Proposal Review Team reviewed each proposal using the criteria identified in the RFP. A unique assessment was completed for each proposal. Based on the review the Proposal Review Team submitted the following recommendations:

For Region 1, the Proposal Review Team received proposals from both Community Renewal Team (CRT) and Green Eco Warriors. According to the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15) a Sub-grantee must be a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity with experience performing weatherization or housing renovation activities. CRT is a community action agency and the incumbent weatherization service provider for Region 1. The proposal submitted by CRT adequately demonstrated the agency's capacity to provide weatherization services within Region 1 and federal regulations give priority to incumbent community action agencies as a service provider unless they lack the capacity to provide services in accordance with the program guidelines (10 CFR 440.15). CRT demonstrated the highest achievement of production goals of all the proposals for recent performance periods. Green Eco Warriors is a non-profit organization and is eligible to be a subgrantee as is stated in the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15). However, the proposal submitted by Green Eco Warriors did not show that the company had experience in the performance of weatherization or housing renovation activities as is

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required in the federal regulations at [10 CFR 440.15\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). The Green Eco Warriors proposal documented experience in education regarding weatherization, and indicated a plan to use an experienced subcontractor(s) to perform work, however this proposal did not include evidence of the subgrantee itself [Green Eco Warriors] having experience performing and implementing a weatherization program, as required by federal regulations at 10 CFR 440.15(a)(2)(i). **The Proposal Review Team recommends Community Renewal Team to provide weatherization services in Region 1 for PY2016 & PY2017.**

For Region 2, the Proposal Review Team received bids from both ACCESS and Green Eco Warriors. According to the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15) a Sub-grantee must be a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity with experience performing weatherization or housing renovation activities. In this case, the incumbent service provider ACCESS is a community action agency that produces weatherization work and federal housing rehabilitation work. A review of past performance indicates that ACCESS has had difficulties in completing the number of units identified as production goals in the past few years in the Connecticut Weatherization Assistance Program, due to a variety of factors. Green Eco Warriors is a non-profit organization and is eligible to be a subgrantee as is stated in the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15). However, the proposal submitted by Green Eco Warriors did not show that the company had experience in the performance of weatherization or housing renovation activities as is required in the federal regulations at [10 CFR 440.15\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). The Green Eco Warriors proposal documented experience in education regarding weatherization, and indicated a plan to use an experienced subcontractor(s) to perform work, however this proposal did not include evidence of the subgrantee itself [Green Eco Warriors] having experience performing and implementing a weatherization program, as required by federal regulations at 10 CFR 440.15(a)(2)(i). **The Proposal Review Team recommends The ACCESS Agency Inc. to provide weatherization services in Region 2 for the duration of PY2016-2017, with the inclusion of performance metrics to be reviewed at regular intervals to monitor progress and ensure completion of production goals. These metrics and monitoring practices will be applied to all service providers this program year.**

For Region 3, the Proposal Review Team received a proposal from the Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH). CAANH's proposal was the only proposal submitted for Region 3. According to the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15) a Sub-grantee must be a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity with experience performing weatherization or housing renovation activities. A review of past performance indicates that the Community Action Agency CAANH has had difficulties in completing the number of units identified as production goals in the past few years in the Connecticut Weatherization Assistance Program, due to a variety of factors. Based on the proposal submitted and reviewing the broader agency history, the team determined that CAANH has sufficiently defined its ability to improve its operational capacity to ensure it provides quality services to the clients in Region 3. **The Proposal Review Team recommends Community Action Agency of New Haven to provide weatherization services in Region 3 for the duration of PY2016 & PY2017 with the inclusion of performance metrics to be reviewed at regular intervals to monitor progress and ensure completion of**

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**production goals. These metrics and monitoring practices will be applied to all service providers this program year.**

For Region 4, the Proposal Review Team received proposals from both NOI and CRT. According to the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15) a Sub-grantee must be a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity with experience performing weatherization or housing renovation activities. Region 4 is unique in the fact that there is no incumbent service provider and that two proposals were submitted by Community Action Agencies that have previous experience working in the Connecticut Weatherization Assistance Program and with completing federal housing renovations activities. The incumbent provider for Region 4 was the Community Action Agency ABCD; however, during Federal Program Year 2015, ABCD ceased providing weatherization services. Both proposals that were reviewed are from incumbent Community Action Agencies with a long past history of providing weatherization and housing rehabilitation services to the communities in their respective service regions. The decision to select NOI as the service provider for Region 4 was based in part on its proposal to provide service delivery to the area. NOI has outlined a plan for opening a satellite office and partnering with nearby community action agencies (ABCD and WCCAA) to gather referrals and deliver services. The proposal submitted by NOI was more detailed and included a customized plan for service delivery for Region 4, as compared to the CRT proposal. Furthermore, NOI has past experience in opening satellite offices and executing agreements to manage intake within multiple Regions. During the review process the Proposal Review Team identified, through standard Single State Financial Audits routinely conducted for the agency, trends indicating that the agency may be developing financial instability. However, there is no evidence currently available to document that federal funds from the weatherization assistance program have been managed inconsistently with federal regulations. Therefore, although there is a concern, it does not prevent the issuance of a contract to this subgrantee. To be prepared if the situation changes, the contract for this service provider will include a contingency in case the instability evolves into an inability to deliver services pursuant to its contractual obligations. The contingency language in the contract will reference the process for deobligating and reobligating the subgranted funds, consistent with federal regulations, if conditions warrant such action. **The Proposal Review Team recommends New Opportunities Inc. to provide weatherization services in Region 4 for the duration of PY2016 & PY2017 with the inclusion of contract contingency language and performance metrics to be reviewed at regular intervals to monitor progress and ensure completion of production goals. These metrics and monitoring practices will be applied to all service providers this program year.**

For Region 5, the Proposal Review Team received a proposal from NOI. No other proposals were submitted for Region 5. According to the federal regulations (10 CFR 440.15) a Sub-grantee must be a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity with experience performing weatherization or housing renovation activities. The Community Action Agency NOI has a history of providing weatherization and housing rehabilitation services and producing quality work within this Region. During the review process the Proposal Review Team identified, through standard Single State Financial Audits routinely conducted for the agency, trends indicating that the agency is developing financial instability.

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However, there is no evidence currently available to document that federal funds from the weatherization program have been managed inconsistently with federal regulations. Therefore, though there is a concern, it does not prevent the issuance of a contract to this subgrantee. To be prepared if the situation changes, the contract for this service provider will include a contingency in case the instability evolves into an inability to deliver services pursuant to its contractual obligations. The contingency language in the contract will reference the process for deobligating and reobligating the subgranted funds, consistent with federal regulations, if conditions warrant such action. **The Proposal Review Team recommends New Opportunities Inc. to provide weatherization services in Region 5 for the duration of PY2016 & PY2017 with the inclusion of contract contingency language and performance metrics to be reviewed at regular intervals to monitor progress and ensure completion of production goals. These metrics and monitoring practices will be applied to all service providers this program year.**

### **Contingencies and metrics to be included in contracts**

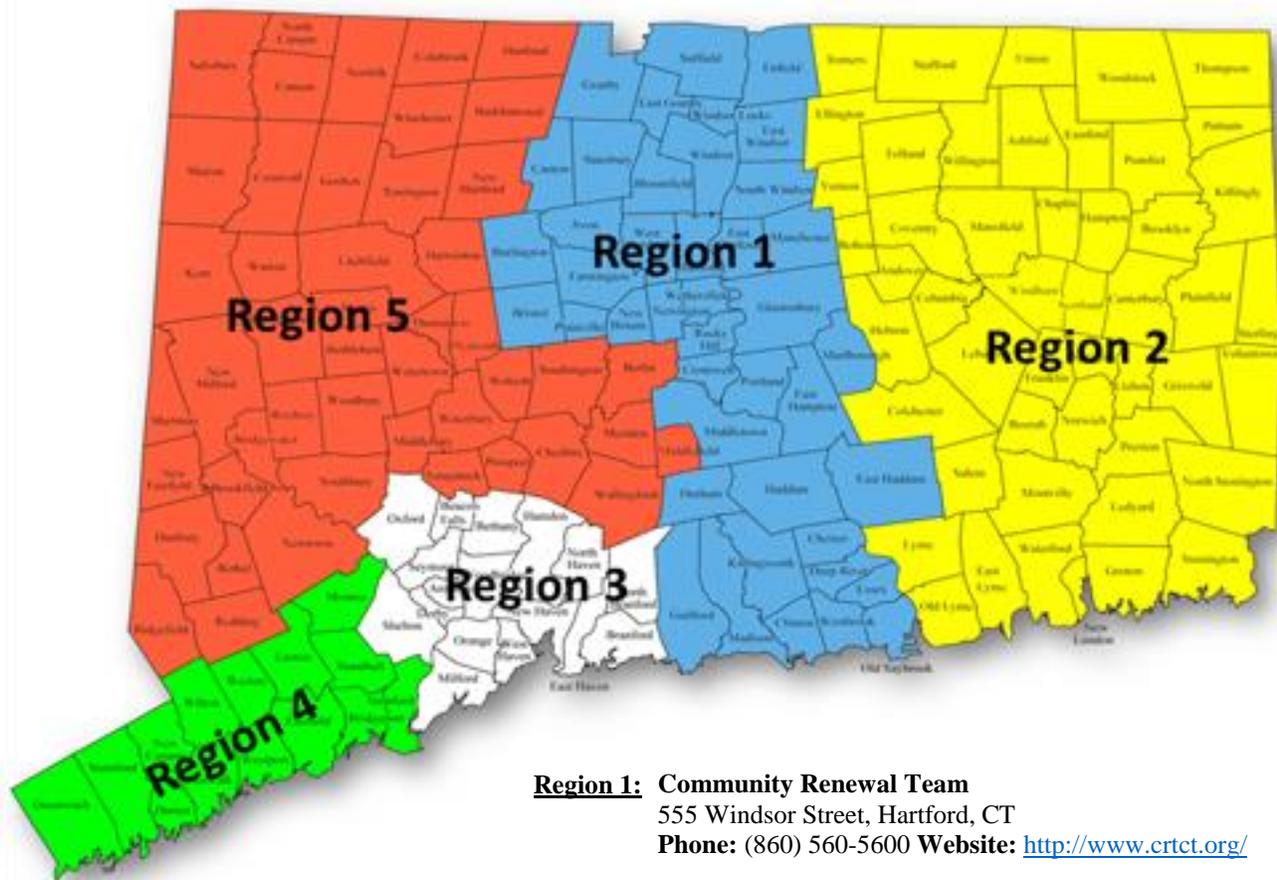
After review of each proposal and analyzing past performance of each bidder, the Proposal Review Team is satisfied that the agencies recommended for selection are experienced and have the capacity to complete the obligations imposed through selection as a subgrantee. However, DEEP is concerned about the long-term capacity, performance variability, and financial stability of most of the entities that we are recommending for selection. Therefore, DEEP will include in each service provider's contract required performance benchmarks and criteria, regular review reports, and contingencies for reassigning the contracted work to other entities in the event the service provider fails to meet its performance criteria or demonstrates a degree of financial instability that causes the service provider to become incapable of performing its obligations. DEEP would address such adverse actions of the subgrantee as outlined in The State of Connecticut's Weatherization Assistance Program Operations and Training Manual (Plan). In the Plan it states:

***105.2 Production Goals-*** *The State will monitor production reports submitted by the Subgrantee during the contract to see that the number of weatherization completions and Subgrantee expenditures meet quarterly goals. If the Subgrantee's production falls substantially below the projected schedule of production, the State may require a written corrective action plan for bringing production in line. If production continues to fall short of program goals, the State may, at its sole discretion, suspend, de-obligate and re-distribute all or any portion of the funds allocated to the Subgrantee.*

Additionally, during the review of the proposals, the Proposal Review Team determined that the constraints of a one year contract duration could constrain WAP service delivery in Connecticut. Therefore, DEEP has determined that a contingent two year contract duration would provide the subgrantees the time and resources to be consistent and comprehensive in their efforts to complete the weatherization of residential units in their service areas. Such provision for the extension of a contract for a second year is contingent on the successful achievement of performance criteria as defined in the contract and federal and state program guidelines.

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**Region 1:** Community Renewal Team  
555 Windsor Street, Hartford, CT  
Phone: (860) 560-5600 Website: <http://www.crtct.org/>

**Region 2:** The Access Agency, Inc.  
1315 Main Street, Suite 2, Willimantic, CT 06226  
Phone: (860) 450-7400 Website: <http://accessagency.org/>

**Region 3:** Community Action Agency of New Haven  
419 Whalley Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511  
Phone: (203) 387-7700 Website: <http://www.caanh.net/>

**Region 4:** New Opportunities, Inc.  
232 North Elm Street, Waterbury, CT 06702  
Phone: (203) 575-9799 Website: <http://newoppinc.org/>

**Region 5:** New Opportunities, Inc.  
232 North Elm Street, Waterbury, CT 06702  
Phone: (203) 575-9799 Website: <http://newoppinc.org/>