

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**IMPLEMENTATION OF STATEWIDE QUALITY RATING AND
IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS) RATING SYSTEM: TO
EVALUATE AND VALIDATE THE RATING SUBMITTED BY
GROW NJ KIDS PROGRAMS**

January 8, 2021

Natasha Johnson, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Family Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Purpose and Intent.....	3
II.	Funding and Contract Term	4
III.	Background and Population to be Served	4
IV.	Eligible Applicants	5
V.	Contract Scope of Work	5
VI.	RFP Schedule	6
VII.	Required Proposal Content.....	6
VIII.	Appendices.....	11
IX.	General Contracting Information	11
X.	Mandatory Bidders Conference	15
XI.	Submission of Proposal Requirements	16
XII.	Review of Proposals	17
XIII.	Appeal of Award Decisions	17
XIV.	Post Award Required Documentation	18
XV.	Attachments	19
	Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet.....	20
	Attachment B – Addendum to RFP for Social Service and Training Contracts	21
	Attachment C – Statement of Assurances	23
	Attachment D – Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions.....	25

I. Purpose and Intent

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family Development (DFD), provides resources and supports to address the child care needs of families and support providers and programs servicing families that need early care and education services.

New Jersey's Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) state plan focuses on high quality early care and education. By participating in Grow NJ Kids, New Jersey's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), programs receive resources which include training and technical assistance to create a stronger infrastructure to support and sustain high quality services regardless of the setting. A high quality early care environment supports the child in their development by providing a safe, nurturing, and interactive space in which the child feels secure. Quality early care and education is a vital component of New Jersey's plan to support working families. The State plan emphasizes the importance of broadening the awareness of the components of high quality early care and education by helping to benchmark quality indicators for families/caregivers. Essential to the process of elevating quality, is a rating system that includes a robust set of measures for validity and reliability. Funds will support a rating entity (Rating Entity) which consists of a cadre of independent raters to evaluate and validate the ratings submitted by Grow NJ Kids programs.

DHS/DFD is issuing this Request for Proposal (this RFP) for the purpose of awarding one contract for the provision of a Rating Entity, to support the early care and education programs participating in Grow NJ Kids. The focus of this RFP is to provide a comprehensive, rigorous rating and monitoring process for systemic and unbiased observations of programs enrolled in Grow NJ Kids.

For purposes of this RFP, the term "Program" refers to child care centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, preschool programs, and family child care providers enrolled in Grow NJ Kids.

The overall goal of this RFP is to implement a statewide Rating System, with the Rating Entity as a partner, to support the implementation of Grow NJ Kids. Grow NJ Kids is a critical component of New Jersey's Early Care and Education System designed to increase the quality of the early care and education system for all children in New Jersey and to communicate effectively to families/caregivers regarding the services their children are receiving. The Rating Entity must have a presence in New Jersey and willing to travel statewide. The Rating Entity must have adequate and qualified staff to meet the needs and goals of this RFP. The Rating Entity staff members will work with Grow NJ Kids Programs across all sectors of early care and education (i.e. Family Child Care, Head Start, Child Care, District funded Preschool) to provide comprehensive, rigorous rating and monitoring process for systemic and unbiased observations of programs.

The rating process outlined in this RFP was in place prior to March 2020. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, certain activities outlined in this RFP might need to be adjusted to ensure compliance with the ongoing Health and Safety COVID-19 Guidance from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Health (DOH) and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In addition to conducting ratings, the project entails coordination and collaboration with other key stakeholders, as well as identifying and sharing research-based promising practices to address early childhood-related, cross-sector system issues and to identify knowledge gaps and best practices.

II. Funding and Contract Term

Funding in the amount of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) is being made available through DHS/DFD for this RFP. Continued funding for the contract(s) resulting from this RFP, is subject to the availability of State and Federal (if applicable) funding. Contract awards may be subject to upward or downward adjustment based on funding, need, performance and/or other factors.

The initial contract period is for one (1) year, with the ability to extend annually for up to 4 years. The actual contract beginning and end dates are contingent upon the contract being fully executed and signed by all appropriate parties (DHS/DFD and the successful bidder(s)). The DHS/DFD reserves the right not to issue a contract for a second year under certain circumstances, such as, but not limited to, the unsatisfactory work of the selected vendor, failure to meet agreed upon minimum standards, or the failure to submit required documentation within requested timeframes.

A bidder will submit a proposal for statewide services. No funding match is required, however bidders will need to identify any other sources of funding, both in-kind and monetary, that will be used. Bidders may not fund any costs incurred for the planning or preparing a proposal in response to this RFP from current DHS/DFD contracts. Minimal start-up costs may be considered.

III. Background and Population to be Served

In April 2013, DHS in partnership with other state agencies Department of Education (DOE), Children and Families (DCF), and Health (DOH)), conducted a pilot of quality rating and improvement system called Grow NJ Kids in four New Jersey counties, serving approximately fifty-seven (57) early childhood programs. In January 2014, New Jersey was awarded the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC). DOE was the lead department for the grant, but all four state departments mentioned above were partners. The RTT-ELC award allowed New Jersey to expand Grow NJ Kids statewide. To support the expansion of Grow NJ Kids, and to ensure sustainability of the rating process as the RTT-ELC grant concluded, DHS/DFD through the support of Child Care Development Block Grant will be supporting an entity to rate the Grow NJ Kids Programs.

The quality rating process typically occurs 18-24 months after a Program has enrolled in Grow NJ Kids. The time period between enrollment in Grow NJ Kids and rating depends on the Program type. Grow NJ Kids programs apply for a rating once they have conducted self-assessments and made sustainable improvements to their program to increase its quality based on quality standards. During the rating process, on site observations using the Environment Rating Scales (ERSs) are used to determine to measure interactions and environments of the program classroom and practices. The version of the tool used is determined by Program type and age group. The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-3 (ECERS-3) and Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-3 (ITERS-3) are used in all Program types excluding Family Child Care and will occur in 50% of the classrooms, in each age group, as appropriate. For Family Child Care Providers, the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revision (FCCERS-R) is currently used, with an updated version released in late 2019. A transition plan to introduce the new tool will be developed over the course of the next year.

As previously noted, The rating process outlined in this RFP was in place prior to March 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some changes to the rating process may need to be updated for onsite observations based on guidance from DCF, DOH, and/or CDC.

IV. Eligible Applicants

The bidder may be a non-profit or for-profit entity or governmental entity and subject to conditions outlined in General Contracting provisions on Page 17 of this RFP.

V. Contract Scope of Work

The rating process focuses on the following Grow NJ Kids' categories:

1. Safe and Healthy Learning Environment
2. Curriculum and Learning Environment
3. Family and Community Engagement
4. Workforce/Professional Development
5. Program Administration and Management

Rating visits will be conducted onsite, unless otherwise directed by DHS/DFD in accordance with COVID-19 public health guidance, at Grow NJ Kids Programs and documented on follow-up rating summary reports.

The Rating Entity will utilize NJCCIS (New Jersey Child Care Information System) to communicate rating summary reports which include Environment Rating Scale scores. As the funding agency, DHS/DFD will have authority over decisions made regarding the rating process including but not limited to score thresholds used on assessment tools, rating policies, and report templates.

The Selected Bidder(s) will coordinate and collaborate with partners from Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), Grow NJ Kids Regional Technical

Assistance Centers, school districts, Grow NJ Kids Training Services, Head Start, Montclair University, and other key quality partner entities as deemed appropriate. Grow NJ Kids includes a robust process for establishing and maintaining inter-rater reliability. Ongoing and in collaboration with DHS/DFD, the successful bidder will develop a reliability and inter-rater reliability plan to ensure rater competence with the ERS tools for State Anchor Status. Reliability schedule for the ERS tools will be established in partnership with DHS/DFD.

Orientation of new rating staff will include the process of guided practice, which includes lessons on developmentally appropriate practices, and reviews of completed assessments.

Staff who are new to the rating process will complete at least three reliability visits in which both they and a State Anchor Rater complete a full assessment.

After each reliability visit, new rating staff will debrief and review scoring with the State Anchor Rater.

New rating staff must complete at least three visits in which their assessment scores are at or greater than 90% reliability with the State Anchor Rater.

All raters, including State Anchors, are monitored for reliability over time to prevent deviation. Each monitor undergoes a reliability check on an annual basis, and any scores lower than 85% require additional practice assessments before returning to the field. This plan of reliability check will be done in partnership with the state.

VI. RFP Schedule

The anticipated time frames (calendar days) for completion of the RFP process are as follows:

DATE	DAY	ACTION
January 8, 2021	1	Notice of Funding Availability
January 29, 2021	21	Mandatory Bidders Conference
February 22, 2021	45	Deadline for receipt of proposals
May 10, 2021	122	Preliminary award announcement
May 18, 2021	130	Appeal deadline
June 2, 2021	145	Final award announcement

VII. Required Proposal Content

A. Completed Funding Proposal Cover Sheet

See Attachment A.

B. Bidder's Organization, History and Experience (15 points)

Provide a brief and concise summary of the bidder's background and experience in implementing this or related types of services and explain how the bidder is qualified to fulfill the obligations of the RFP. The written narrative should:

- Describe the bidder's history, mission, purpose, current licenses and modalities, and record of accomplishments. Explain the work with the target population and the number of years' experience working with the target population;
- Describe the bidder's background and experience in implementing this or related types of services. Describe why the bidder is the most appropriate and best qualified to implement this program in the target service area;
- Summarize the bidder's administrative and organizational capacity to establish and implement sound administrative practices and successfully carry out the proposed program;
- Describe the bidder's current status and history relative to debarment by any State, Federal or local government agency. If there is debarment activity, it must be explained with supporting documentation as an appendix to the bidder's proposal;
- Provide a description of all active litigation in which the bidder is involved, including pending litigation of which the bidder has received notice. Failure to disclose active or pending litigation may result in the agency being ineligible for contract award at DFD's sole discretion.
- Include a description of the bidder's ability to provide culturally competent services;
- Describe the bidder's current status and compliance with contract commitments in regard to programmatic performance and level of service, if applicable.

C. Project Description & Narrative (45 points)

The successful Bidder will be required to work collaboratively with other TA agencies/organizations and partners of the Grow NJ Kids to leverage resources to assist in the implementation of Grow NJ Kids.

1. DOE, Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) provides leadership, resources, and professional learning opportunities that support high-quality early childhood and early elementary learning programs. DECE provide guidance and capacity-building for meaningful family engagement in the developmental and learning support for children from birth through third grade. Head Start/Early Head Start is also found in the DECE. The following collaboration activities must occur between the selected agency and DECE and Head Start/Early Head Start:
 - Provide ongoing feedback to DECE staff on trends and needs identified through the rating process for district funded preschool programs.

- Attend regular meetings with DECE and district staff/coaches for clarification of rating observations and summaries.
2. New Jersey Workforce Registry (New Jersey Child Care Information System) promotes and coordinates systems for the educational development of early childhood and primary education, family child care, and afterschool program professionals. NJ Workforce Registry System (NJCCIS) is the data system that collects and stores data related to the early childhood workforce. The data system will be the mechanism to collect and track technical assistance data for Grow NJ Kids. The following collaboration activities must occur between the successful bidder(s) and NJCCIS:
 - Collaborate with NJCCIS to collect, review and analyze the rating reports completed by the raters and use the data to develop a plan to address identified trends and needs.
 - Rating staff must register in NJCCIS.
 3. Collaboration with CCR&Rs. The resource and referral agencies are the entities that have been contracted with the state to administer the child care subsidy program in each county. Bidders will be expected to coordinate with county Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies around activities for the Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System. The following collaboration activities must occur between the selected agency and CCR&Rs:
 - Partner, as needed and appropriate, with resource and referral agencies to outreach to programs on the benefits of participating in Grow NJ Kids.
 4. Collaboration with Rutgers University, School of Social Work, Institute for Families. The training academy created through funding from Race to the Top and supported by the Child Care Development Block Grant, will provide targeted training opportunities that reflect the components of Grow NJ Kids. The following collaboration activities must occur:
 - Collaborate with the training academy to address overall training needs of the programs as identified in trends based on the rating observations.
 - Collaborate with training academy to ensure that rating requirements align with training offerings.
 5. Collaboration with Regional Technical Assistance Centers. The Technical Assistance Centers are contracted with the state to provide support and strengthen the quality of Grow NJ Kids programs who serve New Jersey subsidy programs and providers. Technical assistance is a critical component of the Grow NJ Kids quality improvement system and a key strategy to help improve quality in early care programs. The following collaboration activities must occur:

- Provide ongoing feedback to Technical Assistance Specialist (TAS) on trends and needs identified through the rating process for Grow NJ Kids programs.
- Attend regular meetings with TAS for clarification of rating observations and summaries.
- Work with Portfolio Reviewers to complete a final rating summary report.

D. Outcome(s) and Evaluation (5 points)

Provide the following information related to the projected outcomes associated with the proposal as well any evaluation method that will be utilized to measure successes and/or setbacks associated with this project:

- The bidder's approach to measurement of consumer satisfaction.
- The bidder's measurement of the achievement of identified goals and objectives.
- The evaluation of contract outcomes.
- Description of all tools to be used in the evaluation.
- The bidder will conduct a satisfaction survey of the sites on Grow NJ Rating Process. The results and plan for improvement will be provided to DHS/DFD as part of the bidder's Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI).

Measures include, but are not limited to:

- i. Increase in Environmental Rating Scale Score
 - ii. Curriculum Implementation
 - iii. Programs moving through tiers
 - iv. Increase in the number of credentialed/degreed professionals
- Tools and activities the bidder will implement to ensure fidelity to the evidence-based practice.
 - To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, ongoing and cyclical evaluation and monitoring of the accomplishment of benchmarks and activities is required. Corrections and fine-tuning of the program will be made as needed.
 - The Bidder must obtain prior written approval from DHS/DFD before engaging in any research or evaluation projects that will affect Grow NJ Kids programs. All research projects are subject to DHS/DFD review, policies and procedures regarding research evaluation.
 - Bidders will be responsible for using the identified Grow NJ Kids Data System. Reports will be requested both in paper and electronic form.

E. Budget (10 points)

Bidders must complete a detailed budget utilizing the DHS/DFD Annex B Excel template. (See Submission of Proposal Package Section). DHS/DFD will consider the cost efficiency of the proposed budget as it relates to the scope of work. The budget should be reasonable and reflect the scope of responsibilities required to accomplish the goals of this program. All costs associated with the implementation and conducting the program must be clearly delineated and the budget narrative

notes must clearly articulate all budget items, including a description of miscellaneous expenses and other costs.

Detailed instructions to complete the Annex B Excel template can be found in the DHS Contract Reimbursement Manual, (CRM) 5.3 Cost-Related Contracts – Annex B and Annex B-2:

http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/DHS/DFD/info/standard/anxb_instb_sec531.pdf

Budgets should include the costs for training, if necessary. Please note that training costs must be specifically approved by DHS/DFD. Additionally, all out-of-state travel will require separate, specific approval from DHS/DFD.

F. Personnel and Salaries (20 points)

Bidders must determine staff structure to satisfy the contract requirements. Bidders should describe the proposed staffing structure and identify how many staff will be hired to meet the needs of the program.

- Describe the composition and skill set of the proposed program team, including staff qualifications.
- Provide details of the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing required to satisfy the contract scope of work. Describe proposed staff qualifications, including professional licensing and related experience. Details should include currently on-board or to be hired staff, with details of the recruitment effort. Identify bilingual staff positions (if any).
- Provide copies of job descriptions or resumes as an appendix – limited to two (2) pages each – for all proposed staff.
- Identify the number of work hours per week that constitute each FTE in the bidder's proposal. If applicable, define the Part Time Equivalent (PTE) work hours.
- Description of the proposed organizational structure, including the submission of an organizational chart as an appendix to the bidder's proposal.
- The bidder's hiring policies, including background and credential checks, as well as handling of prior criminal convictions.
- The approach for supervision of agency staff.
- A list of the bidder's board members and current term, including each member's professional licensure and organizational affiliation(s). The bidder's proposal must identify each board member who is also an employee of the bidder or an affiliate of the bidder. The proposal shall indicate if the Board of Directors vote on contract-related matters.
- A list of names of consultants the bidder intends to utilize for the contract resulting from this RFP, including each consultant's professional licensure and organizational affiliation(s). Each consultant must be further described as to whether they are also a board member and, if so, whether they are a voting member. The bidder must identify all reimbursement the consultant received as a board member over the last twelve (12) months.

G. Facilities, Logistics, Equipment (5 points)

The bidder should detail its facilities where it's normal business operations will be performed and identify equipment and other logistical issues, including at a minimum:

- A description of the manner in which tangible assets, i.e., computers, phones, other special service equipment, etc., will be acquired and allocated.
- A description of the bidder's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility to its facilities and/or offices for individuals with disabilities.
- Proposed location of the program, including office space allocation. Specify if bidder has site control or ownership of the proposed site. If not, describe how site will be secured.
- A list of all costs for materials and supplies necessary to carry of the objectives of the proposed plan.

VIII. Appendices

The following items must be included as appendices with the bidder's proposal, limiting appendices to a total of 40 pages. Please note that if items 9-12 are not submitted, the proposal will not be considered:

1. Bidder mission statement;
2. Organizational chart;
3. Job descriptions of key personnel;
4. Resumes of proposed personnel if on staff, limited to two (2) pages each;
5. A description of all pending and in-process audits identifying the requestor, the firm's name and telephone number, and the type and scope of the audit;
6. List of the board of directors, officers and terms;
7. Copy of documentation of the bidder's charitable registration status;
8. Original and/or copies of letters of commitment/support;
9. Department of Human Services Statement of Assurances (RFP Attachment C);
10. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions (RFP Attachment D);
11. Disclosure of Investment in Iran (www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml);
12. Statement of Bidder/Vendor Ownership Disclosure (www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml).
13. Most recent single audit report (A133) or certified statements (submit only two [2] copies); and
14. Any other audits performed in the last two (2) years (submit only two [2] copies).

IX. General Contracting Information

- A. Bidders must currently meet or be able to meet the terms and conditions of the DHS/DFD contract policies and procedures as set forth in the Standard Language Document (SLD), the Contract Reimbursement Manual (CRM), and the Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM). These documents are

available on the DHS website at:

<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/>

- B. It is the goal DHS/DFD to make the terms of every cost-related contract concurrent with the Bidder's fiscal year. Such alignment will facilitate the single audit concept, eliminate duplicate expenditure reporting, and establish consistency with the Bidder's books, records and annual financial statement. Further clarification can be found in the DHS Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM) P1.05, Concurrent Contract Term and Bidder's Fiscal Year. This document is available on the DHS website at:
<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/CPIM/P1.05.pdf>
- C. Bidders are required to comply with the Affirmative Action Requirements of Public Law 1975, c. 124 (N.J.A.C. 17:27) and the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (P.L. 101-336).
- D. DHS is a covered entity pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C.A. §1320d et seq. ("HIPAA"); 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164. Before Applicant(s) obtains or is permitted to access, create, maintain or store Protected Health Information ("PHI") as part of its responsibility under this contract, the Applicant(s) shall first execute a Business Associate Agreement ("BAA"). DHS shall have the sole discretion to determine when an Applicant's work will involve PHI. Protected Health Information shall have the same meaning as in 45 CFR 160.103.
- E. Budgets should be reasonable and reflect the scope of responsibilities in order to accomplish the goals of this program.
- F. In no event shall DHS/DFD be liable for, or absorb, the Agency (Bidder)'s costs in the preparation of proposal submission (or submissions) in response to the RFP. In addition, funds awarded to a successful Agency (Bidder) may not be used to cover any expenses incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFP.
- G. The DHS/DFD reserves the right not to issue a contract for a second year, under certain circumstances, such as, but not limited to: unsatisfactory performance of the selected vendor, failure to meet agreed upon standards, or the failure to submit required documentation within the requested timeframe.
- H. The DHS/DFD will own all program information, forms, reports, records, databases, data code, data systems, computer programs, computer software, publications, presentations and/or other reports of work products as defined by DHS/DFD. Further clarification can be found in the DHS Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM) P2.01, Section 5.10:
<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/CPIM/P2.01.pdf>

- I. Funds may only be used to support services that are specific to this award; hence, this funding may not be used to supplant or duplicate existing funding streams. Actual funding levels will be contingent upon the availability of funds and/or the satisfactory performance of the selected bidder.
- J. In accordance with DHS Policy P1.12, available on the web at <http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/CPIM/P1.12.pdf> contracts awarded pursuant to this RFP will be separately clustered until the DHS/DFD determines, in its sole discretion, that the program is stable in terms of service provision, expenditures, and applicable revenue generation and the Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM). These documents are available on the DHS website at: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/>
- K. Bidders are required to comply with the Affirmative Action Requirements of Public Law 1975, c. 124 (N.J.A.C. 17:27) and the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (P.L. 101-336).
- L. All bidders will be notified in writing of the State's intent to award a contract. All proposals are considered public information and will be made available for a defined period after announcement of the contract award and prior to final award, as well as through the State Open Public Records Act process at the conclusion of the RFP process.
- M. Should service provision be delayed through no fault of the provider, funding continuation will be considered on a case-by-case basis based upon the circumstances creating the delay. In no case shall the DHS/DFD continue funding when service commencement commitments are not met, and in no case shall funding be provided for a period of non-service provision in excess of three (3) months. In the event that the timeframe will be longer than three (3) months, DHS/DFD must be notified so the circumstances resulting in the anticipated delay may be reviewed and addressed.
- N. The Agency (Bidder) must be a fiscally viable for-profit organization, non-profit organization, hospital or governmental entity based upon an assessment of the Agency (Bidder)'s audited financial statements. If an Agency (Bidder) is determined, in DHS/DFD's sole discretion, to be insolvent or to present insolvency within the twelve (12) months after bid submission, DHS/DFD will deem the proposal ineligible for grant award.
- O. If an Agency(Bidder) has a contract with DHS/DFD when this RFP is issued, that Agency (Bidder) must have all outstanding Plan of Correction (PoC) for deficiencies submitted to DHS/DFD for approval prior to submission of an application for funding.

- P. The Agency (Bidder) must not appear on the State of New Jersey Consolidated Debarment Report at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/debarment/debarsearch.shtml> or be suspended or debarred by any other State or Federal entity from receiving funds.
- Q. Non-public (non-profits) Agency (Bidder) must demonstrate that they are incorporated through the New Jersey Department of State and provide documentation of their current non-profit status under Federal 501 (c) (3) regulations, as applicable.
- R. If the Agency (Bidder) is a For-Profit entity, a business registration certificate from the New Jersey Department of the Treasury must be obtained prior to the time the contract is awarded. For-Profit agencies may obtain the certificate at: <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/busregcert.shtml>
- S. The Agency (Bidder) must meet Division, State and/or Federal licensing standards.
- T. None of the Applicant's Board Members, Officers, staff members, or any other person in a position of trust nor any member of his or her immediate family shall have any personal, familial or financial interest in, or substantial obligation to, any supplier of goods or services, or any other organization that is engaged in doing business with or serving the Applicant unless it has been determined by the Board of Directors and approved by DHS/DFD, based on the full disclosure of facts and circumstances, that such interest does not give rise to a direct conflict of interest or the substantial appearance of a conflict of interest. A position of trust may include Applicant staff members, Officers, Governing Board Members, legal advisors, agents, consultants or benefactors. DHS/DFD shall check for any potential conflicts of interest as part of its application review.
- U. Any of the Applicant's Board Members that are aware of a potential conflict of interest with respect to any matter coming before the Applicant's Board of Directors shall disclose such potential conflict to the Applicant's Board of Directors. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the Applicant's Board Member shall recuse himself/herself from any discussion or vote in connection with the matter involving a conflict.
- V. All information provided by Applicants to the Division of Family Development ("DFD") pursuant to this RFP, including the narrative, budget documents, employee information etc., is subject to the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA"), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the provisions of OPRA. In no event shall the DFD, or any of its agents, representatives, employees or consultants, be liable to an Applicant, a team member or employee of an Applicant or subcontractor of the applicant as the result of the disclosure of all or a portion of a proposal submitted under this RFP. If a responding Applicant has special concerns about information which it desires

to make available to DFD but which it believes constitutes a trade secret, proprietary information, or other confidential information exempted from disclosure under OPRA, the Applicant shall specifically and conspicuously designate that information as such in its Proposal and state in writing why protection of that information is needed. Blanket designations that do not identify the specific information subject to protection shall not be acceptable and may be cause for DFD to treat the entire Proposal as public information without objection. The failure to designate information as trade secret, proprietary information, or otherwise confidential information, exempt from disclosure under OPRA may cause DFD to treat the entire proposal as public information, with no objection. The ultimate determination on whether the designated material is exempt from disclosure under OPRA shall be made by the DFD OPRA Records Custodian. Nothing contained in this provision shall modify or amend requirements and obligations imposed on the DFD by OPRA or other applicable law, and the applicable Law(s) shall control in the event of a conflict between the procedures described above and any applicable Law(s).

X. Mandatory Bidders Conference

A bidder intending to submit a proposal in response to this RFP must attend a Mandatory Bidders Conference to be held virtually. It is the responsibility of the bidder to arrive promptly at the beginning of the Mandatory Bidders Conference and confirm their attendance. A proposal submitted by a bidder not in attendance will not be considered. The Mandatory Bidders Conference will be held as follows:

Date: January 28, 2021
Time: 10:00 AM

The Mandatory Bidders Conference shall be conducted using either Zoom or Microsoft Teams services. Virtual meeting information for the Conference shall be provided to the bidder following their successful registration.

The Mandatory Bidders Conference will provide the bidder with an opportunity to ask questions about the RFP requirements, the award process, and to clarify technical aspects of the RFP. This ensures that all potential bidders have equal access to information. Questions regarding intent or allowable responses to the RFP, outside the Mandatory Bidders Conference, are not permitted. Any necessary response to questions posed by a potential bidder during the Mandatory Bidders conference that cannot be answered at that time will be furnished via electronic mail to all potential bidders registered as being in attendance. Specific individual guidance will not be provided to individual bidders at any time.

Potential respondents to this RFP are requested to register for the Mandatory Bidders Conference via the registration link provided on the Notice of Funding. Additionally, if you require assistance with this registration link, please contact DFD.RFP@dhs.nj.gov, no later than two (2) days prior to the Mandatory Bidders Conference.

Anyone who requires special accommodations should notify DFD.RFP@dhs.nj.gov. For sign language interpretation, DFD must be contacted within at least five (5) business days in advance of the Mandatory Bidders Conference. Once reserved, a minimum of 48 hours is necessary to cancel this service, or else the cost will be billed to the requestor.

XI. Submission of Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on February 22, 202. DHS/DFD assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation and submittal of a proposal in response to this RFP. The narrative portion of the proposal should not exceed 20 pages, be single-spaced with one (1") inch margins, and no smaller than twelve (12) point Arial, Courier or Times New Roman font. For example, if the bidder's narrative starts on page 3 and ends on page 23 it is 21 pages long, not 20 pages. DHS/DFD will not consider any information submitted beyond the page limit for RFP evaluation purposes. The budget notes and appendix items do not count towards the narrative page limit.

At least one (1) week prior to the RFP Package submission due date (See Section "RFP Schedule"), Agencies(Bidders) must send an email to DFD.RFP@dhs.state.nj.us containing the Organization/Agency's Name and their email address to obtain a Username and Password for access to the DHS/DFD File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site. DHS/DFD FTP is the only submission method allowed.

Agencies (Bidders) are responsible for completing, saving and submitting the "Proposal Package Cover Sheet" (Section II.), "RFP 3rd Party Vendor Submission Checklist", this completed "Request for Proposal" document, with all required forms (See section "RFP 3rd Party Vendor Submission Checklist"), including the Budget Narrative and Annex B in the numbered order indicated by the deadline. The entire "RFP Submission Proposal" package must be submitted electronically to the DHS/DFD FTP site at <https://ftpw.dhs.state.nj.us> no later than 4:00 p.m. EST on the due date.

The proposal must be uploaded as a PDF file and the Annex B template as an Excel file, including the Agency (Bidder)'s name in both file names. DHS/DFD will not accept submissions from facsimile (faxes) or mail courier service. Submissions via the File Transfer Protocol (FTP) will be automatically time and date stamped. Username and Passwords for the FTP site will expire, upon the RFP deadline close. Proposal submissions that are missing required documents will be disqualified.

Agencies (Bidders), who are planning to submit proposals to serve multiple regions, must submit a separate proposal package for each region to be served.

XII. Review of Proposals

DHS/DFD will convene a review committee of public employees to conduct a review of each timely submitted proposal accepted for review.

The bidder must obtain a minimum score of Seventy (70) points out of One Hundred (100) points for the proposal narrative and budget sections in order to be considered eligible for funding. The maximum points any proposal can receive is One Hundred (100) points.

In addition, if a bidder is determined, in DHS/DFDS' sole discretion, to be insolvent or to present insolvency within the twelve (12) months after bid submission, DHS/DFD will deem the proposal ineligible for contract award.

Contract award recommendations will be based on such factors as the proposal scope, quality and appropriateness, bidder history and experience, as well as budget reasonableness. The review committee will look for evidence of cultural competence in each section of the narrative. The review committee may choose to visit a bidder's existing program(s), invite a bidder for a virtual interview, and/or review any programmatic or fiscal documents in the possession of DHS/DFD. The bidder is advised that the contract award may be conditional upon final contract and budget negotiation.

DHS/DFD reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so. DHS/DFD's best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, loss of funding, inability of the bidder(s) to provide adequate services, an indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with State and federal laws and regulations, existing DHS contracts, and procedures set forth in DHS Policy Circular P1.04:

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/olra/ocpm/resources/manuals/>

DHS/DFD will notify all bidders of contract awards by May 10, 2021 with a final award announcement by June 2, 2021.

XIII. Appeal of Award Decisions

An appeal of any award decision may be made only by a respondent to this RFP. All appeals must be made in writing and sent via email to DFD.RFP@dhs.nj.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 18, 2021. The written appeal must clearly set forth the basis for the appeal.

DFD will review all appeals and render a final decision by June 1, 2021. Contract award(s) will not be considered final until all timely filed appeals have been reviewed and final decisions rendered.

Please note that all costs incurred in connection with appeals of DFD decisions are considered unallowable cost for the purpose of DFD contract funding.

XIV. Post Award Required Documentation

Upon final contract award announcement, the successful bidder(s) must be prepared to submit (if not already on file), one (1) original signed document for those requiring a signature or copy of the following documentation (unless noted otherwise) in order to process the contract in a timely manner, as well as any other contract documents required by DHS /DFD as follows:

- Most recent IRS Form 990/IRS Form 1120, and Pension Form 5500 (if applicable) (submit two [2] copies);
- Copy of the Annual Report-Charitable Organization (for information visit: http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/dcr/programs/ann_rpt.shtml);
- A list of all current contracts and grants as well as those for which the bidder has applied from any Federal, state, local government or private agency during the contract term proposed herein, including awarding agency name, amount, period of performance, and purpose of the contract/grant, as well as a contact name for each award and the phone number;
- Proof of insurance naming the State of New Jersey, Department of Health, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, PO Box 362, Hamilton, NJ 08691-0362 as an additional insured;
- Board Resolution identifying the authorized staff and signatories for contract actions on behalf of the bidder;
- Current Agency By-laws;
- Current Personnel Manual or Employee Handbook;
- Copy of Lease or Mortgage;
- Certificate of Incorporation;
- Co-occurring policies and procedures;
- Policies regarding the use of medications, if applicable;
- Policies regarding Recovery Support, specifically peer support services;
- Conflict of Interest Policy;
- Affirmative Action Policy;
- Affirmative Action Certificate of Employee Information Report, newly completed AA 302 form, or a copy of Federal Letter of Approval verifying operation under a federally approved or sanctioned Affirmative Action program. (AA Certificate must be submitted within 60 days of submitting completed AA302 form to Office of Contract Compliance);
- A copy of all applicable licenses;
- Local Certificates of Occupancy;
- Current State of New Jersey Business Registration;
- Procurement Policy;
- Current equipment inventory of items purchased with DHS funds (Note: the inventory shall include: a description of the item [make, model], a State identifying number or code, original date of purchase, purchase price, date of

receipt, location at the Provider Agency, person(s) assigned to the equipment, etc.);

- All subcontracts or consultant agreements, related to the DHS contract, signed and dated by both parties;
- Business Associate Agreement (BAA) for Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of 1996 compliance, if applicable, signed and dated;
- Updated single audit report (A133) or certified statements, if differs from one submitted with proposal;
- Business Registration (online inquiry to obtain copy at https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_BRC/jsp/BRCLoginJsp.jsp; for an entity doing business with the State for the first time, it may register at <http://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue>);
- Source Disclosure (EO129) (www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml); and
- Chapter 51 Pay-to-Play Certification (www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml).

XV. Attachments

Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Family Development
Proposal Cover Sheet

_____ Date Received

Name of RFP _____

Incorporated Name of Bidder: _____

Type: Public _____ Profit _____ Non-Profit ___ Hospital-Based _____

Federal ID Number: _____ Charities Reg. Number (if applicable) _____

DUNS Number: _____

Address of Bidder: _____

Chief Executive Officer Name and Title: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Contact Person Name and Title: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Total dollar amount requested: _____ Fiscal Year End: _____

Funding Period: From _____ to _____

Total number of unduplicated consumers to be served: _____

County in which services are to be provided: _____

Brief description of services by program name and level of service to be provided:

Authorization: Chief Executive Officer (printed name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attachment B – Addendum to RFP for Social Service and Training Contracts

STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

ADDENDUM TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE AND TRAINING CONTRACTS

Executive Order No. 189 establishes the expected standard of responsibility for all parties that enter into a contract with the State of New Jersey. All such parties must meet a standard of responsibility that assures the State and its citizens that such parties will compete and perform honestly in their dealings with the State and avoid conflicts of interest.

As used in this document, "provider agency" or "provider" means any person, firm, corporation, or other entity or representative or employee thereof that offers or proposes to provide goods or services to or performs any contract for the Department of Human Services.

In compliance with Paragraph 3 of Executive Order No. 189, no provider agency shall pay, offer to pay, or agree to pay, either directly or indirectly, any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity, or other thing of value of any kind to any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13b and e, in the Department of the Treasury or any other agency with which such provider agency transacts or offers or proposes to transact business, or to any member of the immediate family, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i, of any such officer or employee, or any partnership, firm, or corporation with which they are employed or associated, or in which such officer or employee has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g.

The solicitation of any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity or other thing of value by any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from any provider agency shall be reported in writing forthwith by the provider agency to the Attorney General and the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards.

No provider agency may, directly or indirectly, undertake any private business, commercial or entrepreneurial relationship with, whether or not pursuant to employment, contract or other agreement, express or implied, or sell any interest in such provider agency to, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee having any duties or responsibilities in connection with the purchase, acquisition or sale of any property or services by or to any State agency or any instrumentality thereof, or with any person, firm or entity with which he is employed or associated or in which he has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g. Any relationships subject to this provision shall be reported in writing forthwith to the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards, which may grant a waiver of this restriction upon application of the State officer or employee or special State officer or employee upon a finding that the present

or proposed relationship does not present the potential, actuality or appearance of a conflict of interest.

No provider agency shall influence, or attempt to influence or cause to be influenced, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in his official capacity in any manner which might tend to impair the objectivity or independence of judgment of said officer or employee.

No provider agency shall cause or influence, or attempt to cause or influence, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee to use, or attempt to use, his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for the provider agency or any other person.

The provisions cited above shall not be construed to prohibit a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from receiving gifts from or contracting with provider agencies under the same terms and conditions as are offered or made available to members of the general public subject to any guidelines the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards may promulgate.

Attachment C – Statement of Assurances

Department of Human Services Statement of Assurances

As the duly authorized Chief Executive Officer/Administrator, I am aware that submission to the Department of Human Services of the accompanying application constitutes the creation of a public document that may be made available upon request at the completion of the RFP process. This may include the application, budget, and list of applicants (bidder's list). In addition, I certify that the applicant:

Has legal authority to apply for the funds made available under the requirements of the RFP, and has the institutional, managerial and financial capacity (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal/State share of project costs, as appropriate) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.

Will give the New Jersey Department of Human Services, or its authorized representatives, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Will give proper notice to the independent auditor that DHS will rely upon the fiscal year end audit report to demonstrate compliance with the terms of the contract.

Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain. This means that the applicant did not have any involvement in the preparation of the RLI, including development of specifications, requirements, statement of works, or the evaluation of the RLI applications/bids.

Will comply with all federal and State statutes and regulations relating to non-discrimination. These include but are not limited to: 1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352; 34 CFR Part 100) which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin; 2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR Part 104), which prohibits discrimination based on handicaps and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.; 3) Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101 et. seq.; 45 CFR part 90), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; 4) P.L. 2975, Chapter 127, of the State of New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et. seq.) and associated executive orders pertaining to affirmative action and non-discrimination on public contracts; 5) federal Equal Employment Opportunities Act; and 6) Affirmative Action Requirements of PL 1975 c. 127 (NJAC 17:27).

Will comply with all applicable federal and State laws and regulations.

Will comply with the Davis-Bacon Act, 40 U.S.C. 276a-276a-5 (29 CFR 5.5) and the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act, N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.27 et seq. and all regulations pertaining thereto.

Is in compliance, for all contracts in excess of \$100,000, with the Byrd Anti-Lobbying amendment, incorporated at Title 31 U.S.C. 1352. This certification extends to all lower tier subcontracts as well.

Has included a statement of explanation regarding any and all involvement in any litigation, criminal or civil.

Has signed the certification in compliance with federal Executive Orders 12549 and 12689 and State Executive Order 34 and is not presently debarred, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded. The applicant will have signed certifications on file for all subcontracted funds.

Understands that this provider agency is an independent, private employer with all the rights and obligations of such, and is not a political subdivision of the Department of Human Services.

Understands that unresolved monies owed the Department and/or the State of New Jersey may preclude the receipt of this award.

Applicant Organization

Signature: CEO or equivalent

Date

Typed Name and Title

6/97

Attachment D – Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE SIGNING THIS CERTIFICATION. THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by an Federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 CFR Part 98, Section 98.510.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of facts upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to whom this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or had become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms covered transaction, debarred, suspended, ineligible, lower tier covered transaction, participant, person, primary covered transaction, principal, proposal, and voluntarily excluded, as used in this clause, have the meaning set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transaction," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs.

8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.