

State of Louisiana

Department of Children and Family Services
Request for Information (RFI)

For

{Strategies To Empower People (STEP) Transportation}

RFI # _____

RFI due date/time: May 22, 2012 (CST/CDT)

NOTE: This Request for Information (RFI) is solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. This information will be reviewed and discussed by the state agency and may result in the advertisement of a formal and competitive Request for Proposal for any or all of the services included in the RFI.

Only information which is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data may be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within a response to this RFI identified as such must be clearly marked and will be handled in accordance with the Louisiana Public Records Act, R.S. 44:1-44 and applicable rules and regulations. Any response marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse.

May 3, 2012

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Background

This RFI contains guidelines for submitting a proposal to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for a performance-based contract to provide transportation to Strategies To Empower People (STEP) participants and their children. Proposals may be submitted for services to be provided statewide, regionally, or for one or more parishes. Federal TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funds for this competitive selection process are provided through the Louisiana DCFS.

STEP participants attend assigned work activities designed to enable families to achieve self-sufficiency. STEP participants' minor children are transported to appropriate child care facilities.

Eligibility for transportation services is limited to participants in the STEP program, which assists work eligible recipients of cash assistance with educational, training, and work related activities designed to lead to employment and self-sufficiency. Eligibility for transportation services may also include the participant's dependent child(ren).

Eligibility and referral is determined by the case worker within DCFS. An unlimited number of work eligible recipients are required to participate 20 to 30 hours per week in Employment, Education, Job Search/Job Readiness, On-the-Job Training, Work Experience, Community Service, and Provision of Child Care to another Community Service participant, and other activities as determined by DSS/OFS personnel.

For statewide or regional proposals, the Primary Contractor will assume total responsibility for the oversight of all direct service delivery and subcontractors (if applicable). Each proposal must demonstrate how maximum coverage will be achieved throughout the state, region or parish(es) served.

1.2 Purpose of RFI

This RFI is issued for the purpose of gathering information and cost information from qualified companies, individuals, etc. who show a demonstrated capacity to provide transportation to STEP participants. The purpose of the service is to enable cash assistance recipients to participate in the STEP program who do not have other available transportation.

1.3 Project Overview

Attachment I details the overview of the project requirements inclusive of deliverables and/or desired results that the State is considering.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

2.1 RFI Coordinator

Requests for copies of the RFI must be directed to the RFI coordinator listed below:

Kim Braswell
Program Manager 2

Mailing Address: Department of Children and Family Services
P O Box 94065
Baton Rouge LA 70804-9065

Physical Address: Department of Children and Family Services
627 B, 4th Street
Baton Rouge LA 70802

Telephone # 225-342-2118
Fax # 225-342-2536
Email Address Kim.Braswell@LA.GOV

The RFP will be posted to the agency website at <http://www.dcf.louisiana.gov>

2.2 Schedule of Events

<u>Activity/Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Public notice of RFI	May 3, 2012
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	May 9, 2012
Response to written inquiries	May 15, 2012
Deadline for receipt of RFI	May 22, 2012

(DCFS) reserves the right to deviate from this Schedule of Events.

2.3 Response Content

2.3.1 Executive Summary

This section should serve to introduce the scope of the response. It should include administrative information including, at a minimum, responder's contact name and phone number, email address and any other pertinent contact information. This section should also include a summary of the responder's qualifications and ability and willingness to comply with the State's requirements.

2.3.2 Corporate Background and Experience

The responder should give a brief description of the company including a brief history, corporate structure and organization and number of years in business. Responders should also describe their experience with projects of this type with other states or corporate/governmental entities of comparable size and diversity.

2.3.3 Approach and Methodology

The responder should provide approach and methodology recommended to accomplish the scope of services described. Best practices garnered from previous experience with this scope of services should be described. Provide a list of issues/concerns that were not taken into consideration in the Scope of Services described herein that you think is important for the agency to consider. Provide alternative solutions for accomplishing the project objectives, if applicable, and any other additional pertinent information.

2.3.4 Cost Estimate

Direct Service Delivery costs (either by the Primary or sub-contractors) will be paid on a unit-cost basis with the submittal of verification and documentation mandated by the Department of Children and Family Services and State and Federal regulations. Administrative costs should not exceed 10% of the overall costs to deliver the services.

The unit cost is defined as a one way trip per participant/from point of origin to a specified location and no return trip to the initial point of origin.

See Attachment II for the current number of STEP participants located in each parish. Not all of these participants utilize the contracted transportation. Participants attend work activities approximately four or five days per week and normally require two units each day.

Provide an estimate of total costs for twelve months. The estimate should contain a line item budget detailing all costs to deliver the services.

Detail the calculation methodology used to derive the unit cost. The unit cost is determined by dividing the total costs for service delivery by the total number of projected units for the service.

2.4 Response Instructions

2.4.1. Response Submittal

Responders interested in providing information requested by this RFI must submit responses containing the information specified no later than the deadline for response to RFI as stated in the Schedule of Events. Proposers mailing their responses should allow sufficient mail delivery time to ensure receipt of their response by the time specified. The response package must be delivered at the responder's expense to the RFI coordinator contract and address provided in section 2.1 of the RFI.

For courier delivery, the street address and phone number is as provided in 2. 1 of the RFI. It is solely the responsibility of each responder to ensure that their response is delivered at the specified place and prior to the deadline for submission. Responses misdirected or otherwise received late may not be considered.

The State requests that three (3) copies of the responses be submitted to the RFI coordinator by the means and at the address specified.

2.5 Additional Instructions and Notifications to Responders

2.5.1 RFI Addenda/Cancellation

The State reserves the right to revise any part of the RFI by issuing an addendum to the RFI at any time. Issuance of this RFI, or subsequent addendum, (if any) does not constitute a commitment by the State to issue an RFP or any other process resulting in award of a contract of any type or form. In addition, the State may cancel this informal process at any time, without penalty.

2.5.2 Ownership of Response

The materials submitted in response to this request shall become the property of the State.

2.5.3 Cost of Preparation

The State shall not be liable for any costs incurred by responders associated with developing the response, preparing for discussions (if any) or any other costs, incurred by the responder associated with this RFI.

ATTACHMENT I Scope of Services

Direct Service Delivery – Applies to Primary Contractor providing direct service delivery and/or Subcontractor providing direct service delivery

The Contractor shall have all of the resources necessary to begin service not later than July 1, 2012. The Department may award contracts for a 12 month time period or up to a 36 month time period.

Generally, STEP participants with access to public transportation will not utilize these requested services.

The majority of current service delivery is available Monday through Friday during normal working hours. In parishes with a large number of employed clients who work extended hours, the Contractor shall provide the service seven days per week for extended hours. Currently, this extended service is available in service delivery areas within the following parishes:

Seven days per week, 24 hours per day – Acadia, Bossier, Caddo and Rapides
Seven days per week, 6:15 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Lafayette

Referrals are based on applicants who are determined eligible for cash assistance and who are work eligible. The number of participants may increase or decrease over the duration of the Contract. See Attachment II for the current number of STEP participants located in each parish.

STEP participants attend assigned work activities designed to enable families to achieve self-sufficiency. Work activities may include Employment, Education, Job Search/Job Readiness, On-the-Job Training, Work Experience, Community Service, Provision of Child Care to another Community Service participant and other activities as determined by DCFS personnel. Each participant can be in a single activity with one drop off and pick up per day, or a participant could be involved in multiple (normally not more than two) activities which would require drop off and pick up from each activity. Transportation must be provided to the STEP participants' minor children who are transported to appropriate child care facilities. The Contractor must be prepared to handle fluctuating volumes to be transported each day.

For routine transportation, participants will be referred to the contractor by the appropriate DCFS document no less than 24 hours before services are to commence. For statewide proposals, the proposal should outline the referral structure proposed, including whether referrals will be made from DCFS to the primary contractor or from DCFS directly to subcontracts, if applicable.

In rare instances, the Contractor must be prepared to make unscheduled trips to training, educational, or job sites in emergency situations, which include illness of the participant or her child or death in the immediate family of the participant. In these instances, the participant must be returned to his/her home; no other drop off point will be allowed.

The Contractor must track each individual participant transported by name, date, and time each time the participant is picked up or dropped off. Each participant will be required to sign and date daily boarding logs for themselves and/or their children at each pick up. This documentation must be maintained to clearly verify the delivery of services. The Contractor will be responsible for validating all services provided prior to submitting a monthly invoice to DCFS. Validation will include coordination with the Parish and/or Regional DCFS Offices to ensure appropriate rider ship.

When a participant is not at the designated place for pick up, this trip is considered a dry run (no show). The Contractor must notify DCFS of the dry run as soon as possible but no later than 12:00 p.m. on the same day for morning trips and no later than 12:00 p.m. the following working day for afternoon trips. At the time of notification, DCFS will advise the Contractor if no further transportation is authorized. When all scheduled trips are dry runs for two consecutive scheduled days, no further transportation is authorized. Transportation will be re-authorized by DCFS personnel if services are to resume. No dry runs will be charged for children at any time.

The Contractor will be reimbursed for only those persons authorized by DCFS personnel.

A parent or guardian must be in the vehicle with the child at all times. The Driver must routinely check the vehicle after each route to ensure that no child is left in the vehicle.

The Contractor must provide reports of incidents regarding any problems with the passenger, the driver, traffic, the run schedule, and location issues when requested by DCFS personnel.

The Contractor will need to implement a system to monitor the participant's satisfaction. DCFS will provide a required participant satisfaction form to be provided to participants and to be available in the vehicles.

The Contractor shall be required to adhere to any and all applicable laws concerning the use of safety devices (car safety belts, child restraining seats, infant car carrier seats and seat belts) in the transportation of any individual (child or adult), which the Contractor is serving through this agreement.

The Contractor shall at all times during the existence of this contract maintain a sufficient fleet of properly insured, maintained, and licensed vehicles suitable for transporting participants. The Contractor shall maintain contact with its vehicles on a regular basis.

The Contractor shall maintain an Anti-Drug Program as prescribed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Urban Mass Transportation Administration, 40 CFR Part 653 for the duration of this contract.

The Contractor must ensure that all drivers have safe driving records and up-to-date Class D (or higher) driver's license. Drivers must attend safety training at least once per year.

Periodic testing relating to drug and alcohol use shall be conducted by the Contractor in accordance with 40 CFR Part 653 and policies established by the State of Louisiana's Department of Transportation.

DCFS must be notified in writing of all driver and vehicle changes with ten (10) days of the change.

The Contractor shall maintain adequate liability insurance coverage. The Louisiana Office of Risk Management recommends liability coverage of \$1,000,000. The contractor shall provide current insurance certificates verifying coverage throughout the term of the contract.

The Contractor must maintain a plan for vehicle maintenance and keep records documenting scheduled maintenance. The Contractor should have a plan for vehicle breakdown to ensure that service delivery is not adversely affected fire extinguishers and first aid kits must be available in all vehicles.

The Contractor must submit copies of all subcontracts for approval by DCFS before finalizing the subcontract to assure appropriate and required language is in accordance with Agency policy and that payment terms and conditions are clearly defined.

Attachment II

REGION/PARISH	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
Region 1 - Orleans	
26 - Jefferson Westbank	90
36 - Orleans Midtown	439
38 - Plaquemines	1
44 - St. Bernard	15
65 - Jefferson Eastbank	31
66 - Orleans Algiers	48
Region 2 - Baton Rouge	
17 - East Baton Rouge North	189
19 - East Feliciana	22
24 - Iberville	27
39 - Pointe Coupee	11
61 - West Baton Rouge	5
63 - West Feliciana	6
97 - East Baton Rouge South	145
Region 3 - Covington	
32 - Livingston	2
46 - St. Helena	11
52 - St. Tammany	26
53 - Tangipahoa	128
59 - Washington	36
Region 4 - Thibodaux	
03 - Ascension	22
04 - Assumption	9
29 - Lafourche	8
45 - St. Charles	4
47 - St. James	7
48 - St. John	32
55 - Terrebonne	15

Region 5 - Lafayette

01 - Acadia	14
20 - Evangeline	21
23 - Iberia	56
28 - Lafayette	111
49 - St. Landry	70
50 - St. Martin	37
51 - St. Mary	37
57 - Vermilion	25

Region 6 - Lake Charles

02 - Allen	4
06 - Beauregard	4
10 - Calcasieu	70
12 - Cameron	1
27 - Jefferson Davis	7

Region 7 - Alexandria

05 - Avoyelles	20
13 - Catahoula	2
15 - Concordia	4
22 - Grant	3
30 - Lasalle	0
40 - Rapides	37
58 - Vernon	5
64 - Winn	9

Region 8 - Shreveport

08 - Bossier	32
09 - Caddo	111
14 - Claiborne	12
16 - DeSoto	4
35 - Natchitoches	32
41 - Red River	3
43 - Sabine	11
60 - Webster	9
93 - Sabine - Zwolle	2

Region 9 - Monroe

07 - Bienville	14
11 - Caldwell	11
18 - East Carroll	40
21 - Franklin	14
25 - Jackson	11
31 - Lincoln	60
33 - Madison	15
34 - Morehouse	123
37 - Ouachita	175
42 - Richland	19
54 - Tensas	1
56 - Union	17
62 - West Carroll	15