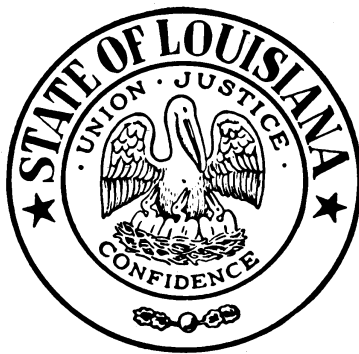


Louisiana



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Management Services for Residential and Therapeutic Foster Care Services



RFI #: _____

DUE DATE/TIME:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2015

2:30 P.M. CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

Issued: November 4, 2015

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

PURPOSE

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is seeking vendors that are capable and willing to perform administrative functions for managing placement services at the Residential Non-Medical Group Home (NMGH) and Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) levels of care throughout Louisiana.

The State is looking for a single entity to assume, administer and manage a network of NMGH and TFC providers. Services shall include (but are not limited to): managing a provider network including recruiting, certifying and contracting with providers, utilization and quality management, member services, financial management, claims management, maintaining sufficient information systems, and reporting. These services are not included in the state's Bayou Health Plan care coordination but will align with Medicaid funded services to ensure a comprehensive continuum of services for children in foster care.

Information submitted in response to this Request for Information (RFI) must comply with all instructions and procedures contained herein.

This RFI will help inform the State of Louisiana in its' planning for the delivery of certain administrative and quality oversight functions for the DCFS Residential and TFC services.

DCFS is seeking information regarding vendors who have the interest in and the ability to provide ongoing management and administrative services beginning July 1, 2016. The Department is seeking information regarding:

- Vendor experience and success managing providers of community-based residential care.
- Vendor experience and success in enrolling and credentialing providers of community-based residential care for children and youth requiring NMGH and TFC levels of care.
- Vendor experience and success managing multiple contracts and multiple provider types who serve children and youth with specialized behavioral, social and medical needs.
- Vendor ability to support the state's goal of minimizing the number of placements for each child with appropriate levels and types of services.
- Vendor strategy to address the unique needs of children and youth in foster care through a comprehensive network of services, e.g. victims of human trafficking; medically fragile; lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/questioning (LGBTQ), have behavioral health challenges, exhibit conduct disorder; are delinquent; are sexually aggressive; and who are aging out of the child welfare system.
- Vendor experience managing a network of subcontractors.
- Vendor estimates on the cost for administering this contract.
- Vendor estimates regarding staff needed to fulfill this work.
- Vendor estimates regarding system's needs to fulfill this work.

The intent of the RFI is to determine the interests and capabilities of an entity to provide the services outlined in this RFI. This RFI should not be construed as solicitation for services or a

Request for Proposals (RFP), nor should it be construed as an obligation on the part of the State to purchase services. This RFI is not a means of pre-qualifying vendors for any subsequently issued RFP related to this RFI.

Participation in this RFI is voluntary and all costs incurred are at the expense of the submitter as DCFS will not pay for any costs related to the preparation and submission of a response to the RFI. All submissions in response to this RFI will become the sole property of the State.

The provisions of the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44.1 et. seq.) apply to this RFI. Pursuant to this Act, all proceedings, records, contracts, and other public documents relating to this RFI shall be open to public inspection. Respondents are reminded that while trade secrets and other proprietary information submitted in conjunction with this RFI may not be subject to public disclosure, protections must be claimed by the respondent at the time of submission of its response. Respondents should refer to the Louisiana Public Records Act for further clarification.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Background

DCFS works to keep children safe, helps individuals and families become self-sufficient, and provides safe refuge during disasters. DCFS provides for the public child welfare functions of the state, delivering services through a state administered system of nine (9) regional offices for sixty- four (64) parishes. Within DCFS, the Child Welfare Division is committed to meeting the needs of Louisiana's most vulnerable citizens. The Department provides placement and daily care to children who are in the custody of the State of Louisiana as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Placement and care are provided through an array of services based on the unique care needs and best interests of each child.

DCFS is dedicated to fulfilling its' mission through direct provision of quality services, public and private sector partnerships and the utilization of available resources in the most effective manner.

In March 2012, the state of Louisiana initiated the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership (LBHP). Currently, the LBHP is managed by the Office of Behavioral Health, which oversees the Behavioral Health Statewide Management Organization (SMO), Magellan Health Services of Louisiana. DCFS participates as partners in the LBHP, along with the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) and the Department of Education (DOE). The LBHP is the system of care responsible for managing care for Medicaid and non-Medicaid adults and children who require specialized behavioral health services. In recognition of the benefits of managing all levels of residential care for children and youth as a continuum, the LBHP is responsible for administering residential levels of care that include treatment as a key component, as well as residential levels in which the children and youth receive treatment from home and community based providers.

As of August 2015, the LBHP provider network included 22 NMGH providers and 10 TFC providers. For the last 2 years the LBHP network of residential providers for these levels of care has remained relatively stable.

In November 2014, it was determined that the LBHP would be transitioned to a model of integrated health management, under the auspices of the Bayou Health Program. In this system, a person's medical and behavioral health needs will be managed by a single managing

entity. The NMGH and TFC residential levels of care will not be managed by Bayou Health, because medical necessity is not the qualifying factor for admission.

Beginning December 1, 2015, DCFS will assume total administrative and management responsibilities for NMGH and TFC services for children and youth in the custody of the Department.

Existing Network

In September 2015 DCFS selected 15 NMGH providers to provide 180 NMGH beds and 6 Child Placing agencies to maintain a network of a minimum of 180 TFC beds.

A key factor in the development of the community-based residential network is to ensure that beds are distributed across the state based on the needs of youth and children in the custody of DCFS. The managing entity will work with DCFS to determine needed beds and to provide a strategy for enhancing the geodensity of providers throughout the state, especially where the need is not currently sufficiently addressed. Currently the network of child placing agencies is more dense in the southern regions of the state, and could be enhanced in the northern regions.

The managing entity must be sensitive that child welfare serves a unique population with diverse and specialized needs. The network must be developed and maintained to meet the needs of this special population which includes youth who: are victims of human trafficking; are medically fragile; are lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/questioning (LGBTQ), have behavioral health challenges, exhibit conduct disorder; are delinquent; are sexually aggressive; and who are aging out of the child welfare system.

A full description of services and licensing requirements for these levels of care can be found on the [Residential Care and Special Population Licensing page](#) of the DCFS website.

The following is a high level description of the operational elements necessary to administer the NMGH and TFC levels of care. DCFS believes placement in any residential setting is a point in time intervention responding to the needs of the child in care and supports the family of origin. Smooth transition both in and out of residential care is critical to the success for any child and family intervention.

Non - Medical Group Home

NMGH residential care is defined as services that are delivered through a multidisciplinary approach and are individualized, planned, culturally relevant, and strength-based. The integrated concentration of services with daily living routines distinguishes residential care from other types of child welfare services. The NMGH level of care requires a setting, which provides room, board, and access to needed services for a child with emotional and/or behavioral management problems that interfere with the child's ability to function in a family, school and/or community setting. In this level of care, educational, medical and therapeutic services are offered in the community through a Medicaid provider. Residential care provides an opportunity to work on behavioral issues in a structured, safe, and orderly environment. These services also assist to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of a child through a specialized offering of services that are flexible to meet the particular needs of a child and his or her family or other permanency resource.

Therapeutic Foster Care

The TFC level of care requires a setting, which provides room, board and access to needed services for a child with emotional and/or behavioral management problems that interfere with the child's ability to function successfully in the family, school and/or community setting. In this level of care, therapeutic services are offered in the community through a Medicaid provider. This type of placement should be limited to children whose needs cannot be met in their own home, traditional foster home, or children who have reached their treatment goals in a more restrictive setting and are ready to be "stepped down" into a lesser restrictive setting. TFC certified foster parents care for children whose emotional or behavioral health needs can be met in a different setting. TFC services are offered through partnership with the child, the child's family, and other persons identified by the placing agency, towards the goals outlined in the family and/or child's case plans. These services allow the child to benefit from a home environment and community-based setting while receiving intensive treatment and clinical services through community providers. These placements are not meant to be a long-term placement options but should serve to meet a child's specific treatment needs until he/she is ready to be stepped down to a lower level of placement. All children placed in these settings will be continually evaluated to determine the continued need for therapeutic foster care services. Children in these programs are placed with foster families (one or two children per family) whose members are trained and provide a structured environment in which participants can learn and display social, age appropriate, emotional skills. The TFC program might include psychological therapy for children and for members of their biological families to improve family functioning.

The administrator will perform the following administrative functions:

1. Contracting with qualified providers
2. Quality Assurance & Quality Management
3. Real time reporting on provider occupancy
4. Auditing

RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

The response to this RFI should include:

- Evidence of financial stability
- Proposed reimbursement schematic
- Vendor experience in residential network development and management
- Vendor's experience managing residential services and/or TFC for children and youth involved with DCFS, if applicable
- Vendor experience in understanding, managing and ensuring adherence to licensing requirements
- Vendor's experience in managing federal/state funds in accordance with Federal and State regulations and guidelines
- Proposal to track, manage and report youth's lengths of stay
- Propose methodologies and management strategies to ensure:
 - comprehensive quality assurance strategy: including site visits, chart audits, customer satisfaction surveys and other necessary quality assurance activities;
 - uniform assessment process upon admission to NMGH and TFC levels of care to determine the array of services to support the individual needs of each youth;
 - case management for youth with a focus on returning the youth to a home setting;
 - uniform criteria to determine when youth are stepped down to a less restrictive home-like living environment discharge;
 - network providers work collaboratively with DCFS.

- Strategies to ensure network providers are trained and competent and offer milieus in appropriate and affective behavior management techniques to address the needs of the youth placed.
- Propose methodologies and management strategies for managing bed capacity.
 - NMGH Providers
 - Maintain NMGH bed capacity at the October 2015 number (NMGH: 180)
 - Reduce by a minimum of 5% annually during the contract period.
 - Every five years from the date of contract, the minimum reduction of bed capacity will be determined.
 - TFC bed capacity
 - Expand, as determined by need, and, at a minimum, by 5% per annum

Responders are requested to describe their approach to providing administrative services, third party administration, census management, resource allocation, governance and reporting for the management of NMGH and TFC levels of care throughout Louisiana.

- Describe best estimate of costs to administer this provider network;
- Describe experience working with child welfare;
- Describe experience working with providers of residential care/TFC;
- Describe experience and knowledge of the TFC level of care;
- Describe experience and knowledge of the NMGH level of care;
- Describe approach to recruiting, enrolling and certifying providers of residential and foster care services to the child welfare population;
- Describe the steps that would be necessary to successfully transition services from DCFS for a “go live” on July 1, 2016;
- Describe approach to Quality Management;
- Provide estimates of any “up-front” costs necessary to assume management of the existing program from the current vendor;
 - How would such costs be built into your pricing model, to minimize up-front program expenditures by the State?
- Describe estimates of staff/credentials;
- Provide any other information, clarifications or considerations that could help DCFS to determine the feasibility and parameters for implementing a successful transition of administration and management of NMGH and TFC no later than July 1, 2016.

Administrative Information

RFI Coordinator

1. Requests for copies of the RFI and written questions or inquiries must be directed to the RFI Coordinator. Questions and inquiries must be received by November 12, 2015.

Responses to questions or inquiries will be posted on the DCFS website by November 16, 2015.

RFI Coordinator:

Yvonne Diaz Domingue
 Child Welfare Manager
 Department of Children and Family Services
 627 N 4th Street, Rm. 3-225
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802
yvonne.domingue@DCFS@la.gov
 Phone: (225) 342-4350

2. All communications relating to this RFI must be directed to the RFI Coordinator named above. All communications between respondents and other DCFS staff members concerning this RFI is prohibited.

3. This RFI is available in PDF format at the following web link:

<http://www.dss.state.la.us/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=248>

All responses must be received at the address listed below by 2:30 P.M. CST, November 20, 2015.

Proposals received after this time will not be eligible for consideration.

If delivered by U.S. Mail, hand or courier:

Yvonne Diaz Domingue
Child Welfare Manager
Department of Children and Family Services
627 N. 4th Street, Rm 3-225
Baton Rouge, LA 70802