

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Grant E. Michell, M.D.
Acting Commissioner

13392

DATE: August 11, 2010

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Grant E. Mitchell, M.D.
Acting Commissioner, Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Volunteers of America – Greater New York, Inc. to operate a Special Category Client Monitoring Program to monitor and track the movement of all Level III and Level II sexual offenders who have victimized a child less than 16 years of age and are residing in any Westchester County Department of Social Services' shelter facility for the period of October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for a total amount not to exceed \$886,820 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation

The County of Westchester requests authorization to enter into an agreement with Volunteers of America – Greater New York, Inc., to operate a Special Category Client Monitoring Program for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$886,820 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation. There has been no increase in the amount requested for the proposed agreement.

The Special Category Client Monitoring Program will monitor and track the movements of all Level III and Level II sexual offenders who have victimized a child less than 16 years of age and are residing in any Westchester County Department of Social Services' shelter facility. These individuals will be referred to as a "Special Category Client". This program provides counseling, case management, education, supportive therapy and security for the Level III and Level II sexual offenders whose movements are tracked and monitored.

The **public purpose** of this program is to assist the County of Westchester in ensuring the safety and well being of children who will otherwise become victims of sexual offenders, by monitoring and tracking the movements of these offenders through a program designed under this agreement.

The **goals and objectives** of the proposed agreement are as follows:

- to track and monitor Level III and Level II sexual offenders who have victimized a child less than 16 years of age and residing in a Westchester County Department of Social Services shelter
- provide supportive services including counseling, therapy, education, and assistance to find employment

- to help clients become economically independent and improve their behavior and quality of life
- create a safe environment for children in Westchester County

The goals and objectives of this program are in **the best interest of the County in terms of public health and public safety.**

- 24-hour supervision of the Special Category Clients ensures the safety of and well being of Westchester County's children
- The program provides a vehicle for all Special Category Clients to receive psychotherapeutic treatment conducted by an expert in their field
- It reduces the number of sexual assaults on children by repeat offenders

The goals and objectives are in the County's **best interests in terms of fiscal responsibility** as they may lead to cost avoidance resulting from coordination and intervention to effectively monitor Special Category Clients residing in Westchester County Department of Social Services shelters.

- Providing this service may lead to future cost avoidance of expenditures associated with police, jails/prisons, court and legal expenses associated with potential sexual assaults by repeat offenders
- Special Category Clients with approved treatment plans and constant monitoring will have the opportunity to transition to an independent living situation with the approval of housing by Probation/Parole offices and Westchester County Department of Social Services. A cost avoidance is realized when residents move out of the shelters to permanent housing.

The **goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored** using the performance measurement indicators developed by the Department and approved by the County Budget Office. The contractor is required to submit to the Department, monthly statistical reports on all activities related to the program as well as have direct contact with the Department in order to quickly address problems and to adhere to the intents outlined in the contract.

The **Department is able to report that the vendor's Performance Measurement Indicators** reflect that the Volunteers of America – Greater New York, Inc. Special Category Client Monitoring program met its goal of tracking and monitoring Special Category Clients referred by the Department. The facility accepted 100% of appropriate referrals as of June 30, 2010.

As of June 30, 2010, the program placed 18 clients into independent living situations. This number is especially impressive due to the difficulty of placing this population. Legal stipulation requires that sexual offenders are not housed near schools, or playgrounds. The other difficulty is the negative reactions associated with this crime, which makes it difficult to find an individual willing to rent to a sexual offender.

As of June 30, 2010, 98% of our clients have had no new arrests while in the program, and 100% of the clients attended all programs as prescribed in their treatment plan. Program attendance is a critical component of the program. Clients attend day treatment programs and group therapy sessions conducted by experts in the sexual offender field. The treatment programs also provide valuable psychotherapeutic treatment to all "special category clients".

Positive Aspects Regarding Public Safety:

When an incident occurs with a “special category client”, senior management reviews the incident and determines what procedures should be implemented to ensure that we are more effective with our program goals.

The following procedures have been implemented this fiscal year:

1. An hourly headcount is currently being conducted and logged to better ensure the whereabouts of all “special category clients”.
2. Any client not on probation or parole who has expressed a desire to leave the program, will receive one-on-one monitoring supervision before a final decision is made.
3. “Special category clients” are moved to (three) rooms where they cannot exit the facility through the dorm windows, and where the monitors have better visibility to ensure proper monitoring.

Volunteers of America further demonstrates its commitment to public safety by holding the following meetings:

1. A monthly Community Advisory Board meeting is held at Grasslands with all senior managers attending. Also in attendance are the Westchester County Police, representatives from DSS, a number of community individuals, and community elected representatives. One of the purposes of this meeting is to allow the community an opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have with our “special category clients” and to assure the Community Board that we are doing everything in our power to monitor the “special category clients”.
2. Senior management meets monthly with the Chief Inspector for Westchester County Police, along with their contracted security company (SSC) that provides the security at Grasslands. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss any security concerns that they may have, and determine if any changes need to occur with current procedures to better ensure the safety of the clients, staff, and the community.
3. The senior management team also meets every morning at 9:30 a.m., to discuss all incidents from the previous day, review incidents for trends, and discuss critical information from each department.

This contract is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy under Section 3(a) (xiv).

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting permission to enter into an agreement with Volunteers of America – Greater New York, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

A resolution requesting the same is attached for your Honorable Board’s approval.

R E S O L U T I O N

Upon a communication from the Acting Commissioner of Social Services, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Volunteers of America – Greater New York, Inc., to operate a Special Category Client Monitoring Program to monitor and track the movements of all Level III and Level II sexual offenders who have victimized a child less than 16 years of age and are residing in any Westchester County Department of Social Services’ shelter facility for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$886,820 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Agreement is subject to County Appropriation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (the “State Budget”) proposed and adopted during the term of this agreement. The County shall retain the right, upon the occurrence of any release by the Governor of a proposed State Budget and/or the adoption of a State Budget or any amendments thereto, and for a reasonable period of time after such release (s) or adoption (s), to conduct an analysis of the impacts of any such State Budget on County finances. After such analysis, the County shall retain the right to either terminate this Agreement or to renegotiate the amounts and rates approved herein. If the County subsequently offers to pay a reduced amount to the Contractor, then the Contractor shall have the right to terminate this Agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his authorized designee is empowered to execute any document necessary to implement this Resolution.

Account to be
Charged/Credited

	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2010	101	22	8900	5860	-----	\$221,705
2011	101	22	8900	5860	-----	\$665,115

Budget Funding Year(s) 2010-2011
(must match resolution)

Start Date: 10/1/10

End Date: 09/30/11

Funding Source

Tax Dollars: 50%

State Aid: 50%

\$886,820
(must match resolution)

Federal Aid:

Other: