

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Grant E. Mitchell, MD
Acting Commissioner

14157

DATE: September 20, 2010

TO: Board of Acquisition & Contract

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

RE: Authority for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westhab, Inc. ("Westhab") pursuant to which Westhab will operate its Pathways to Progress program designed to assist customers of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("TANF") and the Safety Net Maintenance of Effort Program ("Safety Net MOE") for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for a total aggregate amount not to exceed \$103,500 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved program budget

Authority is requested for the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services, to enter into an agreement with Westhab, Inc. ("Westhab") pursuant to which Westhab will operate its Pathways to Progress program for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$103,500 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved program budget and subject to appropriation. There has been a 10 % reduction in the contract amount for 2010-2011. The reduction in cost was based upon renegotiations with the vendor. The services to be provided pursuant to the proposed agreement would not be affected due to this reduction.

The "Pathways to Progress" is a distance-learning program designed to assist customers of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("TANF") program and the Safety Net Maintenance of Effort ("Safety Net MOE") program in attaining enhanced literacy and mathematic proficiency and additional skills needed for career advancement.

This contract serves a **public purpose** because it assists TANF and Safety Net MOE populations in Westchester County to acquire the academic and career skills necessary for securing gainful employment. As customers receive increased academic and career skills, they may overcome the barriers to employment, obtain employment and become self sufficient, thereby promoting the general well-being of the targeted population in Westchester County.

The goals and objectives of this program are to enhance skills, provide academic support, as well as provide career readiness and workplace training to the Department's TANF and Safety Net MOE customers. Upon entry, program participants receive TABE testing assessment to ascertain their skill level in order to determine the training needs. The program also offers Work Place Literacy and Career Readiness training and materials that will enhance participants' opportunities to obtain employment and career advancements. A combination of this academic enrichment and career advancement skills training will increase the participant's opportunities to secure employment, improve employment retention rates and increase the earning potential that will ultimately result in self sufficiency and

economic independence. The program takes into account the special needs of the customers transitioning from welfare to work while providing them with the skills needed to qualify them for employment. The program will be offered as internet-based or with printed copies of learning materials available for customers who are unable to access the internet. Increased literacy proficiency which will lead to better earning potential and self sufficiency is the ultimate focus of the Pathways to Progress program.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility because the attainment of gainful employment is the intended result of this training, effectively eliminating dependence on temporary assistance. The amount of money spent by the County in providing temporary assistance payments to this population will be considerably reduced as the participants of this program secure employment and become economically independent. There is a significant economic cost for individuals in receipt of Public Assistance. Currently, Family Assistance customers receive \$11,316 per year and Safety Net Families receive \$15,684 per year. In addition, Westchester County is required to engage all TANF and Safety Net MOE customers in countable employment activities in order to meet Federal participation rate requirements. Failure to meet these standards can result in Federal fiscal sanctions for Westchester County. This program provides an educational component to supplement primary employment activities, thus serving a dual purpose of meeting the minimal participation requirements as well as enhancement of skills for customers.

The goals and objectives as stated in the resolution will be tracked and monitored using the performance measurement indicators developed by the Department and approved by the County Budget Office. They include, but are not limited to, reviewing of periodic reports submitted by the vendor and making onsite visits.

The outcomes of the program for the period from October 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010 are as follows:

- Westhab –Pathways to Progress exceeded contract goal of pre-testing 60 program participants.
- Westhab –Pathways to Progress pre-tested 185 program participants, thereby exceeding the target goal by 208%
- Westhab –Pathways to Progress exceeded contract goal of post-testing 60 program participants.
- Westhab –Pathways to Progress post-tested 84 program participants, thereby exceeding the target goal by 40%
- Westhab –Pathways to Progress exceeded contract goal of showing that 60 program participants improved one (1) grade level after 3 months of enrollment in the program; 70 program participants improved one (1) grade level after 3 months of enrollment in the program, thereby exceeding the target goal by 16%
- In addition, 39 program participants have obtained unsubsidized employment.

This contract is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy under Section 3(a) (xiv) which exempts contracts with not-for-profit organizations for the purposes of providing services to persons in need of public assistance.

An appropriate resolution is attached herewith seeking your Honorable Board's approval.

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester (the “County”) is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Westhab, Inc. (“Westhab”) pursuant to which Westhab will operate its Pathways to Progress program designed to assist customers of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (“TANF”) and the Safety Net Maintenance of Effort Program (“Safety Net MOE”) for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011 for a total amount not to exceed \$103,500 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved program budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive, or his duly authorized designee is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents and to take all actions necessary and appropriate on behalf of the County of Westchester to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/Credited

Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
263	22	708k	4380	T708	\$103,500

Budget Funding Year(s) 2010 Start Date 10/1/10 End Date 9/30/11
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars _____
 State Aid _____
\$103,500 Federal Aid: 100%
 (must match resolution) Other _____

APPROVED BOARD OF SUPERVISION & CONTRACT - 1034500 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY