



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

18529

Date: April 13, 2011

To: Honorable Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner
Department of Social Services

Re: Authority to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy an amendment to an Agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the purpose of providing advocacy and support services to victims of domestic violence and their children pursuant to Section 3(a)xxi of the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures

Authority is hereby requested from your Honorable Board to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy an amendment to an Agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc., for the purpose of providing advocacy and support services to victims of domestic violence and their children for the period May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$252,460. The Amendment is for the purpose of extending the end date of the agreement from April 30, 2011 to December 31, 2011 and increasing the not-to-exceed amount by \$204,992 from an amount not to exceed \$252,460 to a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$457,452 payable monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation. The additional funding shall be used to cover the cost associated with the services to be provided during the extended term. The eight months' extension would allow this contract to run concurrent with Department's other existing non residential Domestic Violence services contracts.

Pursuant to Section 6 of the Procurement Policy, the County is required to issue a Request for Proposals to procure these type of services. Because this is an amendment to an existing agreement with the said agency, it would be more cost effective to have the current contractor continue providing this service during the extended period than having a new contractor. Further, My Sisters' Place, Inc. has provided this service to the Department for the

last many years. This agency has contracts with other departments of the County for administering similar programs. My Sisters' Place has a long standing relationship with the County. My Sisters' Place's experience and familiarity with the program makes them uniquely qualified to continue providing this service during the extended term.

Pursuant to Section 3(a)xxi, the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures are not applicable to any procurement for which this Honorable Board determines, by resolution passed prior to commencing such procurement, that compliance with the policy would not be in the best interests of the County. Based on the reasons stated above, it is proposed that the best interests of the County would be served by exempting the procurement of this agreement from the County Procurement Policy.

This contract serves the **public purpose** of promoting the safety of children and families by providing advocacy and intervention services, thereby enabling children and victims of domestic violence to access vital support services such as legal advice and housing. Services provided to children and victims of domestic violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Counseling
- Safety Planning
- Advocacy
- Securing Orders of Protection
- Securing Safe Housing/Shelter Placements
- Post-Shelter Placement Services
- Court Accompaniment
- Information and Referral
- Networking

The **goals and objectives** of this contract are to provide to victims of domestic violence and their children services such as crisis intervention, emotional support and life skills necessary to promote long- term financial self-sufficiency. Domestic violence liaisons/counselors develop safety plans that avert the need for foster care placements and their associated costs. The services provide for the health, safety and protection of children and victims of domestic violence. The ability to provide these services decreases the risk of developing severe emotional disorders or adopting behaviors which may put others at risk of physical harm. In addition, under the proposed agreement, four domestic violence liaisons/counselors will be located in the District Offices and a floater liaison/counselor who will be available for CPS/domestic violence case coverage as needed anywhere in the County of Westchester.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** as the services provided by My Sisters' Place assist victims of domestic violence and their children with crisis intervention and emotional support. Children in the families that experience domestic violence are at risk of developing severe emotional disorders or adopting behaviors which may put others at risk of physical harm. Domestic violence services provided by My Sisters' Place help to decrease the risks associated with exposure to domestic abuse. Early intervention can avert the risks posed to children and victims of domestic violence.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as they are aimed at the safety and well being of the children and families of Westchester County. The program under this agreement provides supportive services that allow families that experience domestic violence to seek lives free of violence and achieve the legal authority to protect their children and themselves from recurrent violence. My Sisters' Place also provides services that assist victims of domestic violence in establishing stable and secure households independent of their abusers. Additionally, My Sisters' Place seeks to make the families safe whenever possible by using legal interventions, family and community resources.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** in that the Department is able to avert the need for foster care placements and the costs associated with such placements. Preventing children from entering the foster care system can result in substantial savings for the County and the taxpayers.

The **goals and objectives as stated in the resolution will be tracked and monitored** to evaluate the success 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 authority to amend the agreement will be requested through a separate resolution with even date.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to exempt this procurement from the Policy and Procedures of the Westchester County Procurement Policy.

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

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 4-22-2011 JIMBRUNVEIRA, SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures, it is hereby determined that application of the procedural requirements contained therein, including the necessity of soliciting proposals, is neither cost effective nor expedient, and accordingly, not in the best interests of the County in connection with the procurement of an agreement for the provision of advocacy and support services to victims of domestic violence and their children with My Sisters' Place, Inc.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 4-28-2011 - JONAS VIERA, SECRETARY