

18907

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Diane G. Balistreri
Coordinator, Office for Women

DATE: June 27, 2011

SUBJECT: Authority to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc., acting by and through its component program Victims Assistance Services, for the provision of two victim advocates at the Family Justice Center at the Westchester County Court Complex for an amount not-to-exceed \$116,000 for the period April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012

The attached Resolution, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester (the "County") to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc., acting by and through its component program Victims Assistance Services ("VAS"), pursuant to which VAS would provide two victim advocates at the Family Justice Center at the Westchester County Court Complex, one of whom would be bilingual, for the period April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012, for an amount not-to-exceed One Hundred Sixteen Thousand Dollars (\$116,000), to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget.

Please be advised that Section 459-c of the New York Social Services Law directs social services districts, such as the County, to offer and provide non-residential services to victims of domestic violence, whether eligible or ineligible for public assistance. Non-residential services programs must have the ability to provide the following services:

- 1) Information and Referral services
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) Counseling
- 4) Community education and outreach activities
- 5) Hotline services

The two victim advocates to be provided by VAS under the proposed Agreement will be assigned to provide initial intake assessments to clients entering the Family Justice Center and follow-up case management; education to clients about their options, assist them in applying

for Orders of Protection and in registering for the victim notification of protective orders (“VNPO”) automatic notification system; accompaniment and advocacy for victims within the various courts; assistance with safety-planning; and referrals to civil legal services, to self-sufficiency services and to spiritual support when requested. Advocates will also provide crisis intervention and supportive counseling, and will facilitate referrals for therapy and for other mental health services. VAS will also be compensated for travel expenses necessary to accomplish this work.

The funding for the proposed Agreement would be provided by part of a \$1,000,000 Federal Grant to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program awarded to the Office for Women by the Office on Violence Against Women of the U.S. Department of Justice. VAS is one of several partner agencies involved in all three aspects of this federal grant: 1) implementing the Family Justice Center; 2) implementing an automated VNPO system; and 3) training police, prosecutors, the judiciary, advocates and service providers.

The proposed Agreement will serve a public purpose by promoting the public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the safety and independence of victims. If victims are empowered to learn how to develop and maintain their own safety, they are not as likely to return to dependence on their abusers, thereby reducing public safety costs and medical costs. If they are helped to empower themselves to be independent and self-sufficient they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance.

The goals and objectives of the proposed agreement are for VAS to serve about 700 victims, of which approximately 98% will be assisted with crisis intervention; 100% will be provided with victim advocacy; and 65% will be provided with referrals to follow-up services. During the previous contract term, VAS served 640 victims.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are in the best interests of the County in terms of public health and safety because of the aforementioned anticipated results of enhancing the safety and independence of victims by empowering them to develop and maintain their own safety.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women, which will be responsible for monitoring VAS’ performance under this Agreement by means of site visits, as well as their monthly statistics and quarterly narratives. The effectiveness of this program will be measured by tracking the number of clients who received safety planning and referral information to community mental health services, medical services, and family counseling and support services as needed. Outcomes of trainings will be determined by participants’ increased knowledge of specialized topics based on pre- and post-tests and evaluations.

Authority to exempt this Agreement from the requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) thereof has been submitted to your Honorable Board in accordance with a separate resolution of even date herewith.

Accordingly, I recommend approval of the attached proposed Resolution.

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Coordinator of the Office for Women, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester (the "County") is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc., acting by and through its component program Victims Assistance Services ("VAS"), pursuant to which VAS will provide two victim advocates at the Family Justice Center at the Westchester County Court Complex, one of whom will be bilingual, for the period April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012, for an amount not-to-exceed One Hundred Sixteen Thousand Dollars (\$116,000), to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee be and hereby is authorized and empowered to execute any and all documents and take any actions necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be charged/credited:

FUND	DEPT	Major Program, Program & Phase, Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars	Funding Year
263	11	988J	4380	T988	\$87,000	2011
263	11	988J	4380	T988	\$29,000	2012

Budget Funding Year(s) 2011-2012 **Start Date:** 4/1/2011 **End Date:** 3/31/2012
 (must match resolution)

\$116,000
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source: Tax Dollars _____
 State Aid _____
 Federal Aid \$116,000
 Other _____

Schedule A

Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. / Victims Assistance Services Family Justice Center Grant 2011-2012 Workplan

Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. (WestCOP) and its component program, Victims Assistance Services (VAS), agrees to support the Westchester Family Justice Center (FJC) by providing two Family Justice Center Victim Advocates, at least one of whom will be Bilingual (Spanish-English), to be co-located within the Family Justice Center at the White Plains Courthouse. WestCOP/VAS will also provide specialized training consultants to develop and provide trainings on the topics of Sexual Assault Advocacy Issues and LGBTQ DV Advocacy Issues. WestCOP/VAS community education staff will also provide consultation, curriculum development and direct training as needed and as able on an in-kind basis.

Family Justice Center Victim Advocates

The Family Justice Center Victim Advocates will be recruited, hired and trained by WestCOP/VAS and will be supervised by the WestCOP/VAS White Plains Site Director. These Advocates will be co-located in office space within the FJC, including space within which to meet privately with clients, a place for secure storage of records, and dedicated secure telephone and computer access.

WestCOP/VAS will provide immediate supervision and oversight of the Family Justice Center Victim Advocates. WestCOP/VAS FJC advocacy staff will be expected to attend VAS staff meetings and in-service trainings, and any other required staff events. The FJC Advocates will be required to complete the 30-hour Rape Crisis Training for NYS DOH certification. WestCOP/VAS FJC staff will receive the same vacation, holiday and sick time as all other WestCOP/VAS staff. VAS will attempt whenever possible to provide alternate coverage during FJC staff vacations, but such coverage cannot be guaranteed.

Range of services to be provided:

The WestCOP/VAS FJC Advocates will provide a full-range of domestic violence-related crime victim services. They will provide initial intake assessments to clients entering the Family Justice Center and follow-up case management. They will educate clients about their options, assist them in applying for protective orders and in registering for the VNPO automatic notification system, accompany and advocate for victims of domestic violence within the various courts, assist with safety-planning, facilitate referrals to civil legal services, to self-sufficiency services and to spiritual support when requested. Advocates will provide access to shelter referrals and assist victims in completing NYS CVB applications. Advocates will also provide crisis intervention and supportive counseling, and will facilitate referrals for therapy and for other mental health services. The FJC Advocates will over time develop areas of expertise in the special needs of victims of stalking, elder and disabled victims and in health resources available to victims. The goal of FJC Advocacy services is to provide

comprehensive and seamless access to needed services within the Family Justice Center Model.

2011-2012 Family Justice Center Direct Service Goal: 700 clients will receive services.

2011-2012 FJC Advocacy Performance Measures:

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|---|-----|
| • Number of clients served | 700 |
| • Provide crisis intervention to 98% of clients | 680 |
| • Provide victim advocacy to 100% of clients | 700 |
| • Provide referrals to follow-up services to 65% of clients | 450 |

In addition, the following categories will be tracked and reported:

- Gender of clients served
- Type of victimization
- Number of disabled clients
- Number of Spanish-speaking clients (monolingual)
- Notable unmet needs

WestCOP/VAS Training Consultants/Staff

WestCOP/VAS will also provide specialized trainers to develop the Sexual Assault and LGBTQ DV training modules, to tailor those models to the needs of target audiences and to present of those trainings in accordance with a training schedule to be developed by the Family Justice Center Coordinator. The WestCOP/VAS training consultants will also assist in subspecialty training topics, including topics related to the unique advocacy needs of elders, the disabled and immigrant communities and in presenting the modules on the FJC Initiative and on Victim use of VNPOs.

2011-2012 Training Performance Measures:

- The Training Consultants will develop training modules on Sexual Assault Advocacy and on Working with Domestic Violence within the LGBTQ Communities.
- The Training Consultants will provide trainings as planned by the Training Coordinator.