



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

43627

Date: December 4, 2014

To: The Honorable Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire, Commissioner
Department of Social Services

Subject: Resolution to exempt from compliance with the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3 (a) (xxi) an agreement between the County of Westchester and Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) for the provision of professional and technical services necessary to maintain and update the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual for the period January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 for an amount not to exceed \$134,970.

Authority is requested to exempt from compliance with the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3 (a) (xxi) an agreement between the County of Westchester and Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) for the provision of professional and technical services necessary to maintain and update the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual for the period January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 for an amount not to exceed \$134,970.

The Online Policies and Procedures Manual was developed in 2006 based on the recommendation of The Child Welfare League of America “(CWLA)” for the purpose of training, orienting, and guiding staff in three program areas: Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, and Foster Care and Adoption. Prior to the development of the online Manual, the CWLA reviewed the existing program material, which consisted of disparate memos and policies, roughly organized by program area into three hard copy manuals. The CWLA subsequently recommended that the document be completely reorganized and made into one document that was more accessible to DSS staff.

Having a comprehensive and current Policies and Procedures Manual benefits the Department for multiple reasons. For one thing, it enables staff to immediately access protocols

and “best practice” procedures, thereby improving their ability to care for children and families. This, in turn, minimizes liability and helps ensure that the standards of practice are met universally across all program areas and all district offices. From a fiscal perspective, the Manual, with its thorough and easily-understood text, allows caseworkers to independently research questions on their own, reducing costly time spent in supervision. The process of seeking information in the Manual will only become easier as Manual staff continue to add to the ever-growing list of search terms indexed into the customized Google search engine. The 500 online forms currently on the Manual also promote efficiency because these forms can be completed, saved, e-mailed, and printed without the user having to leave his/her desk.

WIHD has been the sole provider of services and management of the CW Manual for over 7 years. They have developed an expertise in the development of Child Welfare related materials, interpretation of Child Welfare regulations, identifying Child Welfare resources in the community. WIHD has customized the manual to the specific needs and wants of the Department and works closely with DSS representatives to ensure that the content of the manual remains current; edits and changes are made in real time, reflecting changes to practice, policy and expectations based on local, state and federal regulations. Finally, WIHD a long time community partner, is in its own right recognized a leader in fields of child welfare and child development issues, providing great benefit to the manual team, as they bring this expertise into the ongoing planning and development of the manual.

In an ongoing effort to support users of the manual, WIHD has customized the search engine to allow caseworkers to more easily identify and locate the resources and text, and forms they need to complete their work; developing individual/personalized search lists, customized search profiles and the ability for the manual team or DSS management to search for the most commonly used resources and text keeping us aware of the staff needs.

This contract will **serve a public purpose** by providing all levels of DSS staff with immediate access to an integrated and centralized resource for all policies and directives set forth by federal, state and local authorities which would allow them to provide services to Westchester County families and children more effectively in an efficient and timely manner.

The Manual has already proven to be a useful tool for DSS staff. However, it will remain useful only if it is kept current. The success of the site depends on the ability of Department staff to count on the information they reference in the Manual being absolutely up-to-date with federal, state, and local policies. In addition, Westchester Institute for Human Development has demonstrated the ability to develop exemplary program materials and make complex research tools simple for non-research professionals to use. January 2014 through September 2014, 1,966 (duplicated) users accessed a total of 62,676 pages of text. Additionally, approximately 86 online fill-able forms were created and uploaded to the website and 304 new policy updates were completed.

Given below is a chart that shows the improvement in usage, number of pages accessed and the number of updates over two consecutive periods.

Milestones	TOTALS 12/12 TO 11/13	TOTALS 12/13 TO 11/14
# Users each month	2548	2552
# Pages accessed each month	76449	78663
# New policy updates to the text on a monthly basis, based on directives from OCFS and/or Westchester County DSS (Monthly target 3-5)	374	434

Therefore, based on the expertise, experience and familiarity of the contractor in working with this program and the long-standing relationship the contractor has with the County, it is proposed that the best interests of the County would be served by entering into this agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development for continued professional and technical services. This recommendation is made pursuant to Section 3(a) (xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy

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. A separate resolution has been submitted requesting authority to enter into this agreement.

Accordingly, a resolution to exempt this procurement is hereby submitted for your consideration.

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 3(a) (xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy, it is hereby determined that application of the procedural requirements, including the necessity of soliciting proposals, is neither cost effective nor expedient and accordingly not in the best interest of the County of Westchester in connection with the procurement of professional and technical services from Westchester Institute for Human Development for the purpose of updating and maintaining the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his authorized designee is authorized to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.

Account to be

Charged/Credited

Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Budget Funding Year(s): N/A Start Date: N/A End Date: N/A
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars: N/A
 State Aid: N/A
\$ N/A Federal Aid: N/A
 (must match resolution) Other: