

**45377**

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

**FROM:** Robin Schlaff  
Director, Office for Women

**DATE:** March 18, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Authority to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. to provide non-residential support services for victims of domestic violence for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,747,257 for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2017

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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 My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place") to provide, through its Community Counseling and Advocacy Program (CCAP), non-residential support services for victims of domestic violence, whether eligible or ineligible for public assistance, for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2017, for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,747,257, to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget, of which

- \$565,291 will be funded in 2015. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$132,585: \$56,226 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$76,359 which is the County's share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services ("IDCP"); New York State's share is estimated to be \$76,361, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$356,345, which is the Federal share of the IDCP.
- \$582,250 will be funded in 2016. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$136,562: \$57,913 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$78,649 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$78,652, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$367,036, which is the Federal share of the IDCP.
- \$599,716 will be funded in 2017. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$140,660: \$59,650 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$81,010 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$81,010, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$378,046, which is the Federal share of the IDCP.

The proposed Agreement is the result of a request for proposals ("RFP") which was sent out to 52 organizations throughout New York State and was made available on the County's Web site where it could be accessed by additional organizations including minority- and women-owned businesses.

In response to the RFP, My Sisters' Place was the only agency to submit a proposal. The County reviewed and evaluated the proposal based upon evaluation criteria specified in the RFP. As a result, the County determined that My Sisters' Place is an ideal agency to continue providing the solicited services.

Throughout its 35+ year history, My Sisters' Place has offered, through the CCAP, a holistic approach to the many and varied needs of domestic violence victims, including safety, advocacy and supportive healing services for themselves and their children. It works with each survivor to develop a plan to be free from the violence, taking the victim's entire life situation into account as it aims to restore the victim's sense of security and dignity. Over the years, My Sisters' Place has had numerous achievements as staff and clients together create strategies that offer protection from abuse and suffering, as well as a path to a safe and peaceful future. The children's program focuses on working with children who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence in their homes. The program utilizes various skills and activities to help each child understand and heal from the trauma of their experience and to strengthen their relationships, both familial and peer. With this program, My Sisters' Place is able to assist victims to achieve safety, prevent future violence and begin the healing process, which ultimately saves lives and taxpayer dollars. Its numerous achievements have demonstrated how important its much needed services are.

Due to the overwhelming need for the continuation of these services, as My Sisters' Place has successfully provided similar services under previous contracts with the County since 1992, and for the reasons set forth above, it is recommended that this agreement move forward instead of repeating the RFP process.

My Sisters' Place will subcontract with Hope's Door, Inc. ("Hope's Door") to provide additional non-residential support services to immigrant and non-immigrant victims of domestic violence. In many cases, immigrant victims face extra pressure from abusers due to language and cultural barriers vis-à-vis using the courts, the legal system, the social services system and government and community-based organizations, in addition to threats concerning their immigration status or threats to kidnap their children back to their countries of origin.

My Sisters' Place will also subcontract with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. by and through its Victims Assistance Services Program ("WestCOP/VAS") to provide safety planning education, orientation and advocacy services to victims seeking Orders of Protection in the Yonkers Family Court, which reduces duplication of services. While victims are assisted, they will be assessed by WestCOP/VAS in order to provide services specific to their needs. Such services may include safety planning, referrals, or to help through the court process. Without this assessment, victims would likely go to a number of other agencies seeking services, wasting

time and money. Victims will be able to receive immediate assistance from WestCOP/VAS, which will ultimately increase their overall safety.

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 proposed Agreement will serve a public purpose by making available to victims various state-mandated non-residential domestic violence services.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are for My Sisters' Place, Hope's Door and WestCOP/VAS to collectively provide on a monthly basis:

- assistance to 200 hotline callers;
- assistance in 255 cases;
- 265 units of individual counseling;
- five ongoing support groups; and
- nine community education and outreach presentations.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are in the best interests of the County in terms of the public health, safety and general welfare, as providing domestic violence support services may enhance 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 become independent and self-sufficient they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women.

I respectfully recommend the adoption of the attached Resolution.

# RESOLUTION

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

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2017, for provision of non-residential support services for victims of domestic violence; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that My Sisters' Place will subcontract with Hope's Door, Inc. ("Hope's Door") to provide additional non-residential support services to immigrant and non-immigrant victims of domestic violence; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that My Sisters' Place will subcontract with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. by and through its Victims Assistance Services Program ("WestCOP/VAS") to provide safety planning education, orientation and advocacy services to victims seeking Orders of Protection in the Yonkers Family Court; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that in consideration for services to be rendered, My Sisters' Place shall be paid a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,747,257, to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget, of which

- \$565,291 will be funded in 2015. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$132,585: \$56,226 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$76,359 which is the County's share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services ("IDCP"); New York State's share is estimated to be \$76,361, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$356,345, which is the Federal share of the IDCP;
- \$582,250 will be funded in 2016. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$136,562: \$57,913 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$78,649 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$78,652, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$367,036, which is the Federal share of the IDCP;
- \$599,716 will be funded in 2017. Of this not-to-exceed amount, the County's share is estimated to be \$140,660: \$59,650 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$81,010 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$81,010, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$378,046, which is the Federal share of the IDCP; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this Agreement is subject to County appropriations; 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 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.

<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>
361,776 My Sisters' Place	372,630 My Sisters' Place	383,807 My Sisters' Place
97,143 Hope's Door	100,057 Hope's Door	103,059 Hope's Door
<u>50,146</u> WestCOP/VAS	<u>51,650</u> WestCOP/VAS	<u>53,200</u> WestCOP/VAS
<b>\$509,065 Trust funds</b>	<b>\$524,337 Trust funds</b>	<b>\$540,066 Trust funds</b>
<u>56,226</u> Hope's Door	<u>57,913</u> Hope's Door	<u>59,650</u> Hope's Door
<b>\$56,226 Tax levy funds</b>	<b>\$57,913 Tax levy funds</b>	<b>\$59,650 Tax levy funds</b>

Account to be charged/credited:

FUND	DEPT	Major Program, Program & Phase, Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars	Funding Year
263	11	111Q	4380	T111	\$509,065	2015
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$56,226	2015
263	11	111R	4380	T111	\$524,337	2016
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$57,913	2016
263	11	111S	4380	T111	\$540,066	2017
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$59,650	2017

**Budget Funding Year(s)** 2015-2017      **Start Date:** 1/1/2015      **End Date:** 12/31/2017  
 (must match resolution)

\$1,747,257  
 (must match resolution)

**Funding Source:** Tax Dollars \$409,807  
 State Aid \$236,023  
 Federal Aid \$1,101,427  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_