

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

ONBASE # 72845

DATE: November 22, 2019

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

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

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Institute for Human Development, (“WIHD”) pursuant to which WIHD will provide therapeutic and counseling services such as individual, sibling and group therapy to children in foster care and parent training services to the birth parents or guardians of these foster children to facilitate and expedite reunification, for the period from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 for an amount not to exceed \$925,000

Authorization is requested for the County of Westchester (“County”) acting by and through its Department of Social Services (“the Department”) to enter into an agreement the Westchester Institute for Human Development, (“WIHD”) pursuant to which WIHD will provide therapeutic and counseling services such as individual, sibling and group therapy to children in foster care and parent training services to the birth parents or guardians of these foster children to facilitate and expedite reunification, for the period from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 for an amount not to exceed \$925,000 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

This is a fee-for-service contract that provides therapy for children in family foster care and parent training and/or family therapy for birth parents of these children in order to facilitate and expedite reunification. The services provided are mandated. Services include:

- Clinical services to children in foster care
- Parent training services to birth parents (or guardians) with their children
- Psychiatric assessments for children in foster care
- Ongoing psychiatric treatment, including medication, for children in foster care
- Educational remediation
- With special approval, court ordered psychiatric or psychological assessments of birth parents.

This Agreement serves a **public purpose** by improving the well-being of children in foster care by providing them with clinical services such as individual, sibling and group therapy to assist in the children's adjustment to foster care, as well as to reduce mental health symptoms by helping them resolve issues related to trauma, separation from family and in some cases, plan for permanency through termination of parental rights and adoption.

The goals and objectives of this Agreement are to meet the mental health needs of children in foster care in a timely and supportive manner by delivering services in a culturally competent manner that is respectful of cultural differences and recognizes the individual strengths of families. The program also assists in the development of permanency outcomes for children in foster care in order to reduce the length of time children stay in care.

The goals and objectives of this Agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health as these treatment services will help reduce child behavior difficulties and achieve permanency either by returning these children home, or through alternative plans such as adoption, custody arrangements, etc., thus contributing to the well-being of these children and their families. The professional expertise in the area of assessments and evaluations provided by WIHD on behalf of the Department ensures effective and efficient service delivery to the targeted population.

The goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility in that the Department is paying the Medicaid rate for the services. This is a fee-for-service contract and the Department only pays for services rendered. Furthermore, lack of these services provided by WIHD could result in deteriorated functioning requiring placements in a higher level of care at a substantially higher cost.

The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored using performance measurement indicators developed by the Department. The Program Office will be responsible for setting the milestones and tracking their achievement by reviewing the performance reports submitted by the vendor.

Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that from January 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019, the program overall served 60 families and 101 children. Also during this period, 24 children received medication management services.

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) viii.

It should be noted that this agreement is not subject to the competitive procurement requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (formerly, the Grants Management Common Rule) as the federal funding for this program falls under Social Services Block Grant.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Institute of Human Development for the aforesaid purpose.

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

