

**Robert P. Astorino**  
County Executive

Office for Women

Camille Failla Murphy  
Director

March 30, 2010

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Camille Failla Murphy  
Director, Office for Women

Re: Resolution to exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the provision of a part-time counselor at the Family Justice Center at the White Plains Court Complex for an amount not-to-exceed \$26,000 for the period from April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011.

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Authority is requested from your Honorable Board to exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement between the County of Westchester (the "County") and My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), pursuant to which My Sisters' Place would provide a part-time counselor at the Family Justice Center at the White Plains Court Complex. My Sisters' Place will also be compensated for travel expenses necessary to accomplish this work.

The proposed agreement will have a term of one year from April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011, for an amount not-to-exceed \$26,000, to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved workplan and budget. A separate resolution seeking your Honorable Board's approval of the proposed agreement has been submitted along with this Resolution.

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 County's Office for Women by the Office on Violence Against Women of the U.S. Department of Justice. My Sisters' Place is one of several partner agencies that will be involved in all three aspects of this federal grant: 1) establishing and implementing a Family Justice Center; 2) installing an automated victim notification of protective orders (VNPO) system; and 3) training police, prosecutors, the judiciary, advocates and service providers.

The proposed agreement will serve a public purpose of promoting the public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the safety and independence of abused women. If abused women 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 My Sisters' Place to provide crisis intervention, individual counseling, advocacy and follow-up to 10 new victims per month, or approximately 100 new victims during the proposed term.

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 abused women 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 Westchester County Office for Women, which will be responsible for monitoring My Sisters' Place's 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 determined in a variety of ways. As a result of services provided by the part-time counselor, it is expected that voluntary surveys will report that at least 80% of clients: are satisfied with the quality of services received; know more ways to plan for their safety; and have more knowledge of community resources. Outcomes of trainings will be determined by participants' increased knowledge of specialized topics based on pre- and post-tests and evaluations.

If this resolution were not approved, the safety and security of victims of abuse would be compromised. Without receiving these vital support services, the probability of continued and escalating abuse is substantially increased. This may consequently endanger their lives and the lives of their children.

Due to the fact that My Sisters' Place has over 30 years of experience assisting victims; has developed excellent working relationships with its partner agencies; and is able to provide very high quality service at low cost, it is proposed that the best interests of the County would be served by exempting from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy the agreement between the County and My Sisters' Place for the provision of a part-time counselor at the Family Justice Center at the White Plains Court Complex.

I recommend approval of the attached proposed Resolution.

# RESOLUTION

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

**RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy, it is 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 the agreement between the County of Westchester (the “County”) and My Sisters’ Place, Inc. (“My Sisters’ Place”), pursuant to which My Sisters’ Place would provide a part-time counselor at the Family Justice Center at the White Plains Court Complex.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 4-22-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY