

**Robert P. Astorino**  
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Grant E. Mitchell, M.D.  
Acting Commissioner

**14151**

**DATE:** September 20, 2010

**TO:** Board of Acquisition and Contract

**FROM:** Grant E. Mitchell, M.D.  
Acting Commissioner, Department of Social Services

**SUBJECT:** Authority for the County of Westchester to amend an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. to operate a special needs shelter for up to eighteen (18) women and their minor children who are victims of domestic violence at a facility known as My Sisters' Place II for an amount not to exceed \$420,000 for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, by increasing the not to exceed amount by \$83,333, exclusively designated to cover the cost associated with providing domestic violence services to undocumented aliens who are victims of domestic violence and are residing in Westchester County, from a total not to exceed amount of \$420,000 to a new total not to exceed amount of \$503,333, to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved program budget and subject to appropriation

Through a resolution approved on May 13, 2010, your Honorable Board authorized the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the provision of operating a shelter for up to eighteen (18) women and their minor children who are victims of domestic violence at a facility known as My Sisters' Place II for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$420,000, \$20,000 of which is exclusively designated to cover the cost associated with the uncompensated overstay for Westchester County residents, to be paid monthly at an approximated per diem of \$97.36 pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation. The agreement was subsequently executed.

The Department has allocated an additional \$250,000 for all three shelters, exclusively designated to cover the costs associated with providing domestic violence services in special needs shelters for undocumented aliens, residing in the County of Westchester, who are victims of domestic violence. An undocumented alien is unable to furnish evidence that he or she is lawfully residing in the United States, which makes the individual ineligible for public assistance. This allocation has been distributed evenly among the Department's three domestic violence shelter programs for an amount of \$83,333 per shelter. In order to make provision for domestic violence services in special needs shelters for undocumented aliens who are residing in Westchester County, authority is now requested to amend the current Agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. by increasing the not to exceed amount by \$83,333 from a total not to exceed amount of \$420,000 to a new total not to exceed amount of \$503,333, to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved program budget and subject to appropriation.

The **public purpose** of this contract is to provide immediate emergency shelter to eligible victims of domestic violence and their minor children.

The **goals and objectives** pursuant to this agreement are as follows:

- to provide a safe environment to women and their minor children experiencing domestic violence
- to provide on-site counseling services and support groups
- to increase responsiveness of the criminal justice system to the needs of battered women and their minor children by offering legal services, advocacy, court and accompaniment services for Court hearings and visits to the District Attorney's Office

The goals and objectives of the proposed amendment are to provide domestic violence services to undocumented aliens who are victims of domestic violence and are residing in Westchester County.

The goals and objectives of this program are in **the best interests of the County in terms of public health and public safety** as they are aimed at ensuring and enhancing the health and safety of the targeted population. The NYS Office of the Prevention of Domestic Violence reported that between 2007-2008, New York State saw an increase in indicators of domestic violence.

- 45 intimate partner homicides in counties outside New York City were reported in 2008, an increase of 45% from 2007. (DCJS)
- In 2008, 50% of females aged 16 and older who were victims of homicides were killed by an intimate partner. Four (4%) of male homicides victims were killed by an intimate partner. (DCJS)
- In 2008, the number of applicants for public assistance who indicated danger due to domestic violence increased 20% from 2007. (OTDA)

The County enhances public safety by providing a safe haven in the form of emergency housing to victims of domestic violence and their minor children. Individual and group counseling sessions are structured around empowerment, independency and self - sufficiency to reduce the number of families returning to their abusers. In the event a resident's length of stay exceeds the allowable 135 days, this program provides additional funding to allow said resident to remain in a safe haven until appropriate housing is arranged.

The goals and objectives are in the County's **best interests in terms of fiscal responsibility** as they are designed to assist women and their minor children to be immediately removed from a dangerous environment to an undisclosed and safe living arrangement and thereby, lower costs associated with responding to emergency calls by these victims for help and protection.

Listed below are some of the ways in which the program would help cut costs and thereby reduce the County's financial burden.

- As the victims are moved to safe housing, the number of emergency response calls to the police department and ambulance services, resulting from domestic violence assaults, would decrease. The expenses associated with Medicaid would also decrease.
- The frequent individual and group counseling sessions empower some of the victims to permanently leave the abusive relationships, which can be associated with a reduction in the number of referrals for abuse to Adult Protective Services and Child Protective

- Services divisions. Providing this service is a potential cost avoidance with expenditures associated with the APS and CPS staff and court costs
- The payment schedule is paid based upon an approximated per diem rate. The vendor payment for services is based upon the monthly occupancy rate in contrast to a flat fee schedule

The **goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored** using the performance measurement indicators developed by the Department and approved by the County Budget Office. The contractor is required to submit to the Department, quarterly statistical reports on all activities related to the program.

The **Department is able to report that the vendor's Performance Measurement Indicators** reflect that the aforesaid program has met its goal of housing eligible customers referred by the Department. The facility accepted 100% of appropriate referrals during the 2009 - 2010 contract period. As of 7/31/10, this program effectively provided shelter and supportive services for 17 families from the County of Westchester. The average length of stay for Westchester County residents was 76 days. Six (6) were discharged and living independently in a new location. Three (3) Long-Term Safety Plans were developed and signed by the residents.

Except as specifically amended hereby, all other terms and conditions of the original agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

Therefore, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting permission to amend an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

A resolution requesting the same is attached for your Honorable Board's approval.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACTS 12-16-2010 - JAMES W. VERNER, SECRETARY

# RESOLUTION

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

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to amend an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. to operate a special needs shelter for up to eighteen (18) women and minor children who are victims of domestic violence, at a facility known as My Sisters' Place II, for an amount not to exceed \$420,000, for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, by increasing the not to exceed amount by \$83,333, exclusively designated to cover the cost associated with providing domestic violence services to undocumented aliens residing in the County of Westchester, who are victims of domestic violence, from a total not to exceed amount of \$420,000 to a new total not to exceed amount of \$503,333, to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budgets; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this Contract is subject to County Appropriation; 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 except as specifically amended hereby, all other terms and conditions of the original agreement shall remain in full force and effect; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the County Executive or his authorized designee is empowered to execute any document necessary to implement this Resolution.

Original Contract Amount: \$420,000  
**This Amendment: \$ 83,333**  
Total: \$503,333

Account to be  
Charged/Credited

	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub- Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2010	101	22	8900	5850	_____	\$41,667
2011	101	22	8900	5850	_____	\$41,666

Budget Funding Year(s): 2010-2011    Start Date: 7/1/10    End Date: 6/30/11  
(must match resolution)

Funding Source                      Tax Dollars: 25%  
    State Aid: 25%  
\$83,333                                    Federal Aid: 50%  
 (must match resolution)            Other:

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 12-16-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY