



Robert P. Astorino  
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin. M. McGuire, Commissioner

**24182**

DATE: November 4, 2011

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Kevin McGuire  
Commissioner of Social Services

SUBJECT: **Authority for the County of Westchester to amend an agreement with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Inc. to provide trainings and technical assistance to the Division of Child Welfare for the period June 23, 2011 through December 31, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$103,000 by extending the end date of the agreement to June 30, 2012 at no additional cost to the County**

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Through resolution approved on June 2, 2011, your Honorable Board authorized the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services (the "Department") to enter into an agreement with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Inc. ("PISB") pursuant to which PISB provides training and technical assistance to the Division of Child Welfare for the term June 23, 2011 through December 31, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$103,000. The agreement was subsequently executed. Authority is now requested to amend the aforesaid agreement by extending the end date from December 31, 2011 to June 30, 2012 at no additional cost to the County.

This extension is required as weather-related issues resulted in cancellation of training sessions which could not be rescheduled during the busy holiday season.

The Department must continue to build our capacity to be an informed, strong and effective child welfare system providing high quality community-based services which are culturally competent, unbiased and accessible to all children and families at risk of abuse, neglect or foster care. New York State has identified the disproportionate minority representation and disparities in the child welfare system as critical issues to be addressed by all county Departments of Social Services. New York State defines disproportionality as the over representation and higher rate of foster care placement and disparity in child well-being as compared to the numbers for the general population.

The Department's staff lacks the professional expertise to effectively address these sensitive yet critical issues. Therefore, the Department has identified a nationally recognized organization that has trained child welfare staff and community partners throughout the nation on the issue of race, ethnicity and the disproportionality found in the child welfare population. PISB's employees are trained professionals who specifically address, in a historical context, the issues of race, ethnicity and disparity, and challenge participants to critically view child welfare work in that context.

PISB was chosen because it is highly recommended by Casey Family Programs. Casey Family Programs are the nation's largest operating foundation focused entirely on foster care and improving the child welfare system. PISB is a training institute used nationally as a model for addressing and improving the knowledge base of child welfare professionals in understanding disproportionality and helping organizations to critically examine practices. The Casey Family Programs brought the PISB training to the attention of CPS staff and leaders, community partners, and child welfare constituents with its evidence based outcomes. It has professional dedicated veteran trainers.

The services provided pursuant to this agreement serve **a public purpose** as the training offered by PISB will help staff in the Division of Child Welfare critically review the decision making process within the context of their work. The provision of these trainings for staff in the Division of Child Welfare is a significant part of the Department's effort to reduce the number of children in care and how long they remain in foster care once they are placed.

The goals and objectives of this contract are to provide trainings and technical assistance to the Division of Child Welfare in an effort to reduce the disproportionality and disparity in the placement of children of color in foster care and other out of home placements. The trainings are designed to provide valuable information needed by staff in the Division of Child Welfare in order to make decisions that do not lead to the disproportionate placement of children of color. The PISB training will heighten staff/system awareness, provide a framework, give them tools to understand issues, and improve services that promote safety and permanence for all children and families. These strategies include training on diversity, understanding the impact and effects of bias, disparity, race, class and culture in the various decision-making points throughout the child welfare system.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety as the training and technical assistance provided by the PISB address the critical issues of safety and permanency for children in out of home care. Staff develops skills to use in addressing disproportionality in placement of children without compromising safety. With training and technical assistance, participants will be more likely to create sustainable solutions to increase safety and prospects of permanency for children in the County of Westchester.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health of the youth and families of Westchester County because the services provided by the PISB

address the health and well-being of children, while reducing the disproportionate placement of children in foster care and other out of home placements.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility as the trainings and technical assistance offered by the PISB are strategically aligned with New York State Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for Westchester. The average annual cost of foster care can be as high as \$205,130 per child. These figures do not even begin to calculate the other costs associated with foster care to other systems such as family court, health and mental health systems. The benefit to the County of Westchester and taxpayers is the cost avoidance of maintaining children in out of home placements.

The goals and objectives are tracked and monitored using the performance measurement indicators developed by the department and approved by the County Budget Office.

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a)(ix) as this procurement contracts with teachers, lecturers and other educational professionals or experts. Except as specifically amended hereby, all other terms and conditions of the original agreement shall remain the same.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to amend the agreement with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

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

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION  
02/2012  
COUNTY CLERK SECRETARY

**RESOLUTION**

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

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to amend an agreement with the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, Inc. to provide training and technical assistance for staff in the Division of Child Welfare for the period June 23, 2011 through December 31, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$103,000 by extending the end date of the agreement from December 31, 2011 to June 30, 2012 at no additional cost to the County; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that except as specifically amended hereby, all other terms and conditions of this agreement shall remain the same; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is hereby authorized to take such action and execute such documents as may be necessary and proper to effectuate the purposes hereof.

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  
(must match resolution)

Start Date: N/A

End Date: 06/30/2012

Funding Source

Tax Dollars: N/A

State Aid: N/A

**\$N/A**

Federal Aid: N/A

(must match resolution)

Other: N/A

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION, SECRETARY