

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

43717

Date: December 12, 2014

To: Honorable Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner
Department of Social Services

Re: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester ("County") to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development ("WIHD") whereby WIHD, through its "Enhanced Foster Care Program", will promote the well being and stability of children in foster care by conducting assessments of initial foster home placements and replacements as well as individualized evaluations that assist in the early detection of service needs of children in foster care, the foster families as well as birth families for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and terminating December 31, 2015 in an amount not to exceed \$558,243 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

Authority is requested for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development ("WIHD") whereby WIHD, through its "Enhanced Foster Care Program", will promote the well being and stability of children in foster care by conducting assessments of initial foster home placements and replacements as well as individualized evaluations that assist in the early detection of service needs of children in foster care, the foster families as well as birth families for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and terminating December 31, 2015 in an amount not to exceed \$558,243 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

The public purpose of this program is to enhance the well-being and permanency for children in foster care by providing in-home support and training to foster parents taking care of children with behaviors that are difficult to manage. The individualized assessments of children and families generated from this program assist in the early detection of services needed to stabilize foster care placements and prevent replacement of children from one home to another or to higher levels of care.

The goals and objectives of this program are as follows:

- To identify service needs of children newly placed in foster care by conducting standardized psychological assessments;
- To assess initial foster home placement and replacement to determine appropriateness of the home;
- To improve specific parenting skills for foster parents in a way that is tailored to the individualized needs of children placed in their homes;
- To stabilize foster care placement by ensuring that the health, developmental, mental health and educational needs of the children are met appropriately and in a timely manner.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County with regards to public health, safety and well being as the program provides screening, assessments, training, as well as respite/recreational services for children in the care and custody of the Commissioner of Social Services. These services promote the advancement of the physical and mental well being of the most vulnerable children of Westchester County, children who have been abused or neglected and placed in foster care to ensure their safety. With the right support, foster parents are more likely to adopt children in their care or to remain active foster parents for Westchester County.

Furthermore, this program is in the best interests of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility as the support services provided by the vendor to children in foster care help to identify and ameliorate child behavioral problems which if left unchecked, can lead to a deterioration of functioning and may result in placement in higher and more costly levels of care such as therapeutic homes, residential facilities or hospitals.

The **Performance Measurement Indicator** reports and statistics submitted monthly by the vendor will be tracked and monitored by the Program office. Based on the data submitted from January, 2014 through September, 2014, the department is able to report that 52 families and 102 children were served under the Enhanced Foster care component, 27 families and 83 children were served under the Initial Evaluation component and 54 families and 75 children received services under the In Home assessment component of the program. In addition, 93% of the children served did not face placement disruptions, therefore did not need to be replaced with another foster family or to a higher level of care.

This contract is exempt from the application of the Common Grant Rules as this is a contract that falls under the Social Services Block Grant funding.

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

An appropriate Resolution is attached herewith seeking your Honorable Board's approval.

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester (“County”) is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development (“WIHD”) whereby WIHD, through its “Enhanced Foster Care Program”, will promote the well being and stability of children in foster care by conducting assessments of initial foster home placements and replacements as well as individualized evaluations that assist in the early detection of service needs of children in foster care, the foster families as well as birth families for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and terminating December 31, 2015 in an amount not to exceed \$558,243 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Agreement 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 the 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 authorized designee is empowered to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/Credited

	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2015	101	22	8900	5880	-----	\$558,243

Budget Funding Year(s): 2015
(must match resolution)

Start Date: 01/01/15

End Date: 12/31/15

Funding Source

\$558,243
(must match resolution)

Tax Dollars: 31%
State Aid: 40%
Federal Aid: 29%
Other: