



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

49862

Date: December 8, 2015

To: The Honorable Board of Acquisition and Contract

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

Subject: Resolution to exempt from compliance with the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3 (a) (xxi) an agreement between the County of Westchester and Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) for the provision of professional and technical services necessary to maintain and update the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual for the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 for an amount not to exceed \$134,970

Authority is requested to exempt from compliance with the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3 (a) (xxi) an agreement between the County of Westchester and Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) for the provision of professional and technical services necessary to maintain and update the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual for the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 for an amount not to exceed \$134,970.

The Online Policies and Procedures Manual was developed in 2006 based on the recommendation of The Child Welfare League of America “(CWLA)” for the purpose of training, orienting, and guiding staff in three program areas: Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, and Foster Care and Adoption. Prior to the development of the online Manual, the CWLA reviewed the existing program material, which consisted of disparate memos and policies, roughly organized by program area into three hard copy manuals. The CWLA subsequently recommended that the document be completely reorganized and made into one document that was more accessible to DSS staff.

Having a comprehensive and current Policies and Procedures Manual benefits the Department for multiple reasons. For one thing, it enables staff to immediately access protocols and “best practice” procedures, thereby improving their ability to care for children and families.

This, in turn, minimizes liability and helps ensure that the standards of practice are met universally across all program areas and all district offices. From a fiscal perspective, the Manual, with its thorough and easily-understood text, allows caseworkers to independently research questions on their own, reducing costly time spent in supervision. The process of seeking information in the Manual will only become easier as Manual staff continue to add to the ever-growing list of search terms indexed into the customized Google search engine. The 500 online forms currently on the Manual also promote efficiency, for these forms can be completed, saved, e-mailed, and printed without the user having to leave his/her desk.

This contract will **serve a public purpose** by providing all levels of DSS staff with immediate access to an integrated and centralized resource for all policies and directives set forth by federal, state and local authorities which would allow them to provide services to Westchester County families and children more effectively in an efficient and timely manner.

The Manual has already proven to be a useful tool for DSS staff. However, it will remain useful only if it is kept current. The success of the site depends on the ability of Department staff to count on the information they reference in the Manual being absolutely up-to-date with federal, state, and local policies. In addition, Westchester Institute for Human Development has demonstrated the ability to develop exemplary program materials and make complex research tools simple for non-research professionals to use.

Therefore, based on the expertise, experience and familiarity of the contractor in working with this program and the long-standing relationship the contractor has with the County, it is proposed that the best interests of the County would be served by entering into this agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development for continued professional and technical services. This recommendation is made pursuant to Section 3(a) (xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy.

Pursuant to Section 3(a) xxi, the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures are not applicable to any procurement for which this Honorable Board determines, by resolution passed prior to commencing such procurement, that compliance with the Policy would not be in the best interests of the County. A separate resolution has been submitted requesting authority to enter into this agreement.

Accordingly, a resolution to exempt this procurement is hereby submitted for your consideration.

Attachment

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 3(a) (xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy, it is hereby determined that application of the procedural requirements, including the necessity of soliciting proposals, is neither cost effective nor expedient and accordingly not in the best interest of the County of Westchester in connection with the procurement of professional and technical services from Westchester Institute for Human Development for the purpose of updating and maintaining the on-line Child Welfare DSS Manual; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his authorized designee is authorized to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 01/27/2016 - JUAN C. CARRADI, SECRETARY