

Robert P. Astorino  
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin McGuire  
Commissioner

Philippe Gille  
First Deputy Commissioner

50556

**DATE:** January 15, 2016

**TO:** Board of Acquisition and Contract

**FROM:** Kevin McGuire  
Commissioner, Department of Social Services

**SUBJECT:** Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc ("WestCOP") for the provision of assisting low-income households with the application process for regular and emergency heating benefits (HEAP program) for the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 in an amount not to exceed \$27,200 to be paid in accordance with an approved program budget

Transmitted herewith is a resolution requesting authority for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP") for the provision of assisting low-income households with the application process for regular and emergency heating benefits (HEAP) for the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 in an amount not to exceed \$27,200 to be paid in accordance with an approved program budget.

According to the Guidelines established by the HEAP Manual, the Department of Social Services is tasked with establishing their local certification network within the district. Each SSD must attempt to include an alternate certifier in the network. The SSD may contract directly with local Offices for the Aging and/or other community based organizations for outreach, intake, and certification of applications. WestCOP is a Community Based Organization and has provided this service for the past several years.

The services provided pursuant to this agreement serve a **public purpose** as the program is designed to assist low-income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes, who pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, primarily in meeting their immediate home energy needs.

**The goals and objectives** of this program are to aid the vulnerable households in Westchester County with the application process for the HEAP program. An outline of the goals and objectives is as follows:

- Provide outreach and intake sites for regular and emergency benefits
- Provide certification services

- Coordinate access or alternate hours for HEAP applicants whose employment schedule makes it difficult to apply during normal business hours
- Conduct eligibility interviews
- Obtain documentation
- Conduct certifications in accordance with federal, state and local HEAP policy and procedures
- Route all applications to Westchester County HEAP within 15 calendar days of the receipt of a signed and completed application
- Route all original applications, documentation to Westchester County HEAP
- Assist applicants with the filing of a HEAP application
- Calculation of the budget worksheet

**The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County regarding fiscal responsibility** in that there is a significant cost to adding additional employees to the County workforce to process HEAP applications. By contracting with WestCOP, Westchester County is able to address the needs of the vulnerable and meet federal and state processing requirements. The program is in the best interests of the County in terms of **public health and public safety** as it is aimed at ensuring the availability of proper heating to those families and individuals who cannot afford high energy costs.

**The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored** using Performance Measurement Indicators adopted by the Department. They include, but are not limited to, the submission of a detailed billing summary that the organization is required to file before payment is made.

**The Department is able to report that the results achieved under this program** for the 2014 – 2015 contract period are as follows:

- WestCOP filed a total of 526 applications for the 2014-15 heating season for both regular and emergency benefits.
- WestCOP submitted applications twice a week to Westchester County DSS  
All applications were submitted in a timely fashion.

Authority to exempt this Agreement from the requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) xxi has been requested through a separate resolution.

Accordingly, authority is requested for the County to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc (“WestCOP”) to operate the above said program.

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

**RESOLUTION**

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

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with the Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc (“WestCOP”) to assist low-income households with the application process for regular and emergency heating benefits through the HEAP program in Westchester County for the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 for an amount not to exceed \$27,200 to be paid in accordance with an approved program budget; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement is subject to County appropriations; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this Agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (“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 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 impact of any such budget(s) 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 the agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents and to take such other actions 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
2016	101	22	4000	4420	-----	\$27,200

Budget Funding Year(s): 2015- 2016      Start Date: 10/01/15      End Date: 9/30/16  
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source

**\$27,200**  
 (must match resolution)

Tax Dollars: 100%  
 State Aid:  
 Federal Aid:  
 Other: