

**61425**

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

**FROM:** Robin Schlaff  
Director, Office for Women

**DATE:** February 13, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Authority to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. to provide domestic violence education and training services for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,031,580 for a term commencing on January 1, 2018 and continuing through December 31, 2020

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The attached Resolution, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester (the "County") to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place") to provide domestic violence education and training services, including:

- school-based education through its Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP) Program;
- education, training and domestic violence expert assistance to hospitals, healthcare providers and facilities in the County through its Operation Safety Program; and
- a coordinator of training.

The proposed Agreement will have a term of three years commencing on January 1, 2018 and continuing through December 31, 2020, for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,031,580, to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget.

The funding amount per year will not exceed \$343,860, of which the County's share is estimated to be \$227,767: \$175,609 through the budget of the Office for Women, and \$52,158 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$50,475, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$65,618, which is the Federal share of the IDCP.

The proposed Agreement is the result of a request for proposals ("RFP") which was sent out to 84 organizations throughout New York State and was made available on the County's Web site where it could be accessed by additional organizations including minority- and women-owned businesses.

In response to the RFP, My Sisters' Place was the only agency to submit a proposal. The County reviewed and evaluated the proposal based upon evaluation criteria specified in the RFP. As a result, the County determined that My Sisters' Place is an ideal agency to continue providing the solicited services.

Through the school-based DVEP Program, My Sisters' Place works with schools and various community organizations throughout Westchester to provide classroom presentations, discussion groups and individual counseling. By educating teens, they are given the tools to recognize the signs of abuse and break the cycle of violence, possibly preventing their involvement in an abusive relationship. My Sisters' Place developed this program based on its experience that educating teens themselves is the most effective way to stop teen dating abuse. There are several aspects which make this program valuable and unique. My Sisters' Place is able to reach thousands of middle and high school students on multiple levels because of the program's various components. Classroom presentations provide students with information to expand their knowledge of the issue. Discussion groups promote increased involvement and interaction while allowing teens to speak openly with each other. Individual counseling sessions, which are initiated by the students, are important because students are able to discuss private matters without fear of what others would think.

Education and training of professional communities is one of the state-mandated functions of non-residential domestic violence programs. Through the Operation Safety Program, healthcare providers gain the proper education and training required to properly respond to the specific needs of domestic violence victims. As a result, victims receive the medical assistance they need as well as obtain vital information about domestic violence services available in Westchester.

As a result of the trainings provided by My Sisters' Place's training coordinator, domestic violence service providers are better equipped to assist victims with the struggles they face. The training program not only increases the safety of victims, but also reduces duplication of services within the domestic violence community by educating service providers on the specific needs of victims, preventing them from having to go to numerous agencies for assistance.

Due to the overwhelming need for the continuation of these services, as My Sisters' Place has successfully provided these services under previous contracts with the County since 1998, and for the reasons set forth above, it is recommended that the proposed Agreement move forward instead of repeating the RFP process.

My Sisters' Place will subcontract with Hope's Door, Inc. ("Hope's Door") to provide additional domestic violence education to schools throughout Westchester through its Students Terminating Abusive Relationships (S.T.A.R.) Program.

Please be advised that Section 459-c of the New York Social Services Law directs social services districts, such as the County, to offer and provide non-residential services to victims of domestic violence, whether eligible or ineligible for public assistance. Non-residential services programs must have the ability to provide the following services:

- 1) Information and Referral services;
- 2) Advocacy;
- 3) Counseling;
- 4) Community education and outreach activities; and
- 5) Hotline services.

The proposed Agreement will serve a public purpose by educating middle and high school students in an effort to end teen dating violence.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are for My Sisters' Place and Hope's Door to collectively provide on an annual basis:

- 576 presentations to at least 86 schools and community organizations reaching approximately 8,700 students throughout Westchester;
- Four five-session peer discussion groups;
- 55 trainings/presentations to service providers, government agencies, faith-based organizations, colleges, and community organizations; and
- 75 trainings/presentations to approximately 900 healthcare professionals.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are in the best interests of the County in terms of the public health, safety and general welfare, as educating teens may enable them to recognize the signs of abuse. The ultimate goal is to break the cycle of violence and prevent their involvement in an abusive relationship now or in their future, thereby reducing pain and suffering, public safety costs and medical costs. In addition, training services will enhance the quality of services provided and responses to victims of domestic violence. A number of curricula developed by My Sisters' Place will be implemented in trainings and presentations. As a result, service and healthcare providers will be better equipped to assist victims, increasing victim safety and reducing duplication of services within the domestic violence community by educating service providers on the specific needs of victims, preventing them from having to go to numerous agencies for assistance, ultimately saving time and taxpayer dollars.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women.

I respectfully recommend the adoption of the attached Resolution.

# RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Director of the Office for Women, be it hereby

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), for a term commencing on January 1, 2018 and continuing through December 31, 2020, for provision of domestic violence education and training services, including:

- school-based education through its Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP) Program
- education, training and domestic violence expert assistance to hospitals, healthcare providers and facilities in the County through its Operation Safety Program, and
- a coordinator of training; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that My Sisters' Place will subcontract with Hope's Door, Inc. ("Hope's Door") to provide additional domestic violence education services to schools throughout Westchester through its Students Terminating Abusive Relationships (S.T.A.R.) Program; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that in consideration for services to be rendered, My Sisters' Place shall be paid a total amount not to exceed \$1,031,580, to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the funding amount per year will not exceed \$343,860, of which the County's share is estimated to be \$227,767: \$175,609 through the budget of the Office for Women and \$52,158 which is the County's share of the IDCP; New York State's share is estimated to be \$50,475, which is the State share of the IDCP; and the Federal government's share is estimated to be \$65,618, which is the Federal share of the IDCP; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this 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 (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 the County Executive or his duly authorized designee be and hereby is authorized and empowered to execute any and all documents and take any actions necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

**2018**

168,251 My Sisters' Place  
**168,251 Trust funds**

123,377 My Sisters' Place  
52,232 Hope's Door  
**175,609 Tax levy funds**

**2019**

168,251 My Sisters' Place  
**168,251 Trust funds**

123,377 My Sisters' Place  
52,232 Hope's Door  
**175,609 Tax levy funds**

**2020**

168,251 My Sisters' Place  
**168,251 Trust funds**

123,377 My Sisters' Place  
52,232 Hope's Door  
**175,609 Tax levy funds**

Account to be charged/credited:

FUND	DEPT	Major Program, Program & Phase, Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars	Funding Year
263	11	111T	4380	T111	\$168,251	2018
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$175,609	2018
263	11	111U	4380	T111	\$168,251	2019
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$175,609	2019
263	11	111V	4380	T111	\$168,251	2020
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$175,609	2020

**Budget Funding Year(s)** 2018-2020

(must match resolution)

**Start Date:** 1/1/2018

**End Date:** 12/31/2020

\$1,031,580

(must match resolution)

**Funding Source:**

Tax Dollars \$683,301

State Aid \$151,425

Federal Aid \$196,854

Other \_\_\_\_\_