

**65002**

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

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

**DATE:** September 13, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Request for authority to exempt from pursuant to Section 3(a)xxi of the Westchester County Procurement Policy five (5) separate agreements for services for the Westchester County Family Justice Center for a term commencing on October 1, 2018 and continuing through September 30, 2019

---

The County respectfully requests authority from your Honorable Board to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3(a)xxi thereof five (5) separate agreements, each of which will use a portion of the funds from the Grant; will be for a term commencing on October 1, 2018 and continuing through September 30, 2019; and pursuant to which each party will provide services for the FJC, as follows:

- 1.) An agreement with Hope's Door, Inc. ("HD"), pursuant to which it will provide victims entering the FJC with crisis intervention, counseling, safety planning, advocacy, emergency shelter placement and referrals, for an amount not-to-exceed \$72,556.15, pursuant to an approved budget;
- 2.) An agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc., ("MSP") pursuant to which it will provide victims entering the FJC with immediate crisis intervention, safety planning, supportive counseling and advocacy and assess the need for, and make referrals to, shelter, legal services, ongoing counseling, self-sufficiency support services, and other non-residential services, for an amount not-to-exceed \$210,000.00, pursuant to an approved budget;
- 3.) An agreement with Pace University, acting by and through its Women's Justice Center, ("PWJC") pursuant to which it will provide civil legal services for victims entering the FJC as well as conduct trainings for police, prosecutors, the judiciary, advocates and service providers, for an amount not-to-exceed \$132,758.46, pursuant to an approved budget;
- 4.) An agreement with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley ("LSHV"), pursuant to which it will provide in-depth screening to determine civil legal needs of victims and their children entering the FJC, follow-up investigations, and advise victims of legal options for domestic violence related issues, as well as provide additional civil legal services for clients in the northern part of the county, for an amount not-to-exceed \$225,989.96, pursuant to an approved budget; and
- 5.) An agreement with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc., acting by and through its Victims Assistance Services Program ("WestCOP/VAS"), pursuant to which it

will provide intake, crisis intervention, safety planning, emergency shelter placement, advocacy, and case management for victims entering the FJC, for an amount not-to-exceed \$81,397.48, pursuant to an approved budget.

All five (5) FJC Partners have provided services at the FJC from 2010 through 2017. In addition, each agency has extensive experience providing services to victims in Westchester.

HD has provided safety and support for victims of domestic violence for 38 years. The agency's organizational philosophy is firmly grounded in an understanding of violence in intimate relationships as a pattern of coercive tactics that can include physical, psychological, sexual, economic and emotional abuse and which is perpetrated with the goal of establishing and maintaining power and control. The trauma-informed services offered by HD include a 24/7 hotline, danger assessment, safety planning, emergency shelter, information and referral, personal advocacy, criminal and civil justice advocacy, counseling, support groups, emergency financial assistance, economic empowerment, and assistance with NYS Office of Victim Services applications, among other services.

Since 1976, MSP has been a pioneering leader and resource in the field of domestic violence and human trafficking in Westchester. MSP strives to end domestic violence and human trafficking through comprehensive services, advocacy, and community education, and works to create a world in which every individual has the basic human right to be free from gender-based violence and to engage in relationships that embrace the principles of respect, equality, and safety. MSP provides a 24-hour hotline and a continuum of direct services for adult and child victims (emergency shelter, counseling, legal services, and education), effectively responding to the needs of families and individuals in crisis.

Founded in 1991, PWJC is a nonprofit legal center within the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. PWJC's mission is to pursue justice for victims and prevent abuse through quality legal services, community partnerships, education and awareness. PWJC's legal programs include holistic civil legal services for victims and survivors of domestic violence, and elder abuse in all matters arising from the abuse, including child custody and visitation, child support, spousal support or maintenance, legal separation or divorce, property issues, benefits, unemployment, housing, and immigration. The level of support, depending on a client's need, may range from advice and counsel, brief services, referrals to other social service providers, to full representation in court. PWJC is currently the largest civil legal services provider in Westchester County specializing in domestic violence and elder abuse.

LSHV was established in 1967 as the only free civil legal services provider in Westchester County. Since then, LSHV has been providing high quality civil legal services affecting the necessities of life in matters involving housing, public benefits, education, foreclosure, domestic violence related immigration, and family law and offers several specialized units serving the elderly, veterans, persons with disabilities, children, and victims of domestic violence. It is the only organization providing specialized comprehensive direct legal services in the Hudson Valley, including legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and elder abuse.

WestCOP/VAS engages a skilled staff of advocates, support staff and therapists to provide free and confidential comprehensive services to all victims of crime. WestCOP/VAS works closely with law enforcement, District Attorney's Office, schools, hospitals and local community agencies to assure that victims are treated with care, respect and dignity and that their rights are protected. WestCOP/VAS is New York State Department of Health certified training facility and offers a 24-hour/7 day Helpline that provides information and referral, crisis intervention and support over the phone for any victim of crime.

The proposed agreements will serve a public purpose by enhancing the safety and independence of victims of abuse. If victims are empowered to learn how to develop and maintain their own safety, they are not as likely to return to dependence on their abusers, thereby reducing public safety costs and medical costs. If they are helped to empower themselves to be independent and self-sufficient, they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance.

The goals and objectives of the proposed agreements are for the FJC Partners to provide services for the FJC, which provides victims of abuse with centralized support services and legal services, eliminating the need for victims to go various locations for services for themselves and their children.

The goals and objectives of the proposed agreements are in the best interests of the County in terms of the public health, safety and general welfare, as it will help enhance the safety of victims of abuse. Victims are safer getting help in one secure location at the FJC, and they benefit from the expertise of a multi-disciplined team, a uniform professional approach and shared policy of confidentiality and information sharing. Through the FJC, victims are able to concurrently meet their civil and criminal needs in one center, which maintains a firewall to ensure confidentiality of information, which ultimately helps guarantee their safety.

The goal and objective of the proposed agreements will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women.

Under the Westchester County Procurement Policy Section 3(a)(xxi), your Honorable Board may determine "by resolution passed prior to commencing procurement that compliance with the Procurement Policy would not be in the best interests of the County." Due to the fact that the FJC Partners have the necessary expertise and experience providing services at the FJC, and for the reasons set forth above, it is requested that your Honorable Board make the determination that it is in the best interests of the County to exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy the proposed agreements.

Attached for your consideration is a proposed Resolution.

## RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Director of the Office for Women, 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 contained therein, including the necessity of soliciting written price quotations, is neither cost effective nor expedient, and accordingly, not in the best interests of the County in connection with the procurement of five (5) separate agreements with Hope's Door, Inc., My Sisters' Place, Inc., Pace University, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. (collectively the "FJC Partners") pursuant to which the FJC Partners will provide services for the Westchester County Family Justice Center.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 10/19/2018 LSP/MSJ/SECRETARY