

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

66742

DATE: December 17, 2018

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

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

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development (“WIHD”) pursuant to which 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 the period from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 for an amount not to exceed \$558,242

Authorization is requested for the County of Westchester (“County”), acting by and through its Department of Social Services (“the Department”), to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development (“WIHD”) pursuant to which 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 the period from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 for an amount not to exceed \$558,242 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

The services to be provided pursuant to this agreement will serve a **public purpose** by enhancing 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 agreement** will:

- Identify service needs of children newly placed in foster care by conducting standardized psychological assessments;
- Assess initial foster home placement and replacement to determine appropriateness of the home;
- Improve specific parenting skills for foster parents in a way that is tailored to the individualized needs of children placed in their homes;
- 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 of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of 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.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest 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 goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored using performance measurement indicators developed by the Department. Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that from January 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018, 56 families and 105 children were served under the Enhanced Foster care component, 33 families and 72 children were serviced under the Initial Evaluation component, and 63 families and 87 children received services under the In-Home Assessment component of the program. In addition, 90.3% 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 agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) viii.

It should be noted that this agreement is not subject to the competitive procurement requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (formerly, the Grants Management Common Rule) as the federal funding for this program falls under Social Services Block Grant.

Accordingly, the County is hereby requesting authority to enter into an agreement with WIHD for the aforesaid purpose.

An appropriate resolution requesting your Honorable Board's approval is attached herewith.

