

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

73180

DATE: December 6, 2019

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 The Children's Village, Inc. ("Children's Village") pursuant to which Children's Village will provide crisis respite care and services at the Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter to youth at risk of foster care placement for the period from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 for an amount not to exceed \$412,832

Authorization is requested for the County of Westchester acting by and through its Department of Social Services ("the Department") to enter into an agreement with The Children's Village, Inc. pursuant to which Children's Village will provide crisis respite care and services at the Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter to youth at risk of foster care placement for the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 for an amount not to exceed \$412,832 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 promoting the well-being of Westchester County youth through the provision of temporary shelter care and by implementing crisis services that will allow youth to return to their homes after completing the program. These services will divert youth from homelessness, truancy and foster care placement.

Crisis respite services are offered in compliance with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services' (NYS OCFS) mandates. Children's Village provides crisis respite to adolescents at high risk of foster care. Referrals come from the Probation Department, Social Services System, local Police Departments, School Districts, Community Agencies and Families. PINS legislation mandates this service be provided to adolescents as a PINS diversion strategy. Services are also provided to older adolescents listed as maltreated children on CPS (Child Protective Services) reports.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement** will introduce safety and risk reducing interventions to youth and their families during the temporary separation. Services provided will also include coping strategies for the safe and smooth transition of the youth back into the family system. This service will also prevent foster care placement of adolescents. The design of the Children's Village Respite program provides families with the break that is needed to problem solve and mediate youth/guardian familial difficulties. There is a daily 14 bed capacity. Services are provided for a maximum of 21 consecutive days. Extensions beyond 21 days require prior Department approval. In addition to the shelter services, the children also receive services such as case management and educational supports, HIV/AIDS testing and counseling, community recreation, Independent Living Services instructions, academic success assistance and after care planning.

The **goals and objectives of this Agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as they will prevent placement in foster care, reducing risk of abuse and neglect in highly volatile situations and preventing runaway situations where adolescents make unsafe plans. The youth remain in Westchester and continue their connections with the community and school. Youth receiving services through the Children's Village Respite Program receive counseling to determine their individual strengths and needs. The youth will be maintained in a highly supervised environment and therefore are less likely to be vagrant, residing in unsafe housing situations and possibly committing crimes throughout the community.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** of the youth and families of Westchester County because the services provided by the Children's Village Respite Program are designed to support the well-being of the youth and the maintenance of the family system. The short-term program not only reduces foster care placements, but will also provide an opportunity for youth to receive mental and physical health assessments. The benefits extend beyond the youth. The Children's Village Respite Program organizes family and community resources that restore healthy family functioning.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** as the program will reduce foster care placements, residential care placements and juvenile detention. The diversion of any out-of-home placement of youth would result in substantial savings for the County and taxpayers.

The **goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored using performance measurement indicators developed by the Department.** Children's Village will submit monthly statistics and quarterly performance reports in the formal approved by the Department. The Department will be responsible for setting the milestones and tracking the achievements by reviewing the performance reports submitted by Children's Village and by making onsite visits.

Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that Children's Village has satisfactorily met the performance goals as of the end of the third quarter of 2019. The Children's Village served 122 youth as of the close of the third quarter.

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) xviii.

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 of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to enter into an agreement with The Children's Village, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

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

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 12/19/2019 - LISA MARIJAJ, SECRETARY

