

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

80956

DATE: November 24, 2020

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 Family Services of Westchester, Inc., (“FSW”) to provide the Family Strengthening Program to families with children at risk of foster care placement, for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for an amount not to exceed \$82,400**

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 Family Services of Westchester, Inc., (“FSW”) to provide the Family Strengthening Program to families with children at risk of foster care placement, for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for an amount not to exceed \$82,400 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** as the program will provide crisis oriented treatment that includes supplying families with the tools and skills to address their children’s behavior.

The **goals and objectives** of this program are in compliance with NYS Office of Children and Family Services regulation NYCRR 18, Part 423 (9) (10), which mandate that the Department provide preventive services to families at risk of foster care placement. The main goal of this agreement is to keep young children out of psychiatric hospitals and assist families in locating appropriate resources for their child within their communities. The Family Strengthening Program is a crisis-oriented program that works with children and families within their communities. Another significant program goal is to identify gaps in services and to encourage more collaboration between the hospitals, schools, outpatient mental health clinics and intensive/clinical case management programs. The Family Strengthening Program is available to families with a young child who has behavioral and/or emotional difficulties. This program provides direct intervention in the home and community, focusing on restoring and/or stabilizing

family functioning. The provider is able to accomplish the goals and objectives through the provision of the following services:

- Intensive, in-home, crisis-oriented treatment
- Family education in order to preserve families and prevent foster care placement
- Assessment services to access community resources
- Teaching child development and age appropriate expectations
- Improving overall functioning and ability to parent children
- Improving family communication and establishing household routines

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health and safety because the services provided through this contract enhance parental child-rearing abilities by empowering parents, strengthening families and increasing the stability of families, thereby reducing the risk of abuse, neglect and/or need for foster care placements.

The goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility in that the Department is able to avert the need for foster care placements and the costs associated with such placements. Preventing children from entering the foster care system can result in substantial savings for the County and its taxpayers.

The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored to evaluate success through the monitoring of established performance measures as stipulated in the agreement, reviewing periodic reports submitted by the vendor, and making onsite visits.

Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that from January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, the program is meeting targets and outcomes as stipulated by the current agreement and has in fact exceeded the contract capacity (14 children) to be served, having served 20 children year-to-date. In addition, 100% of the children served did not become the subject of an indicated CPS report and all were diverted from foster care placements while receiving services. Of the 20 children served, 20 were diverted from psychiatric hospitalization.

The procurement of this agreement is exempt from application of 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 Family Services of Westchester, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

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

