

Office of the County Attorney

ID# 82042

TO: Honorable Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: John M. Nonna
County Attorney

DATE: January 11, 2021

RE: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester (“County”) to enter into an agreement with The Legal Aid Society of Westchester County and the Westchester County Bar Association for the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, for the provision of counsel to indigent persons, subject to a sixty day cancellation and subject to County appropriations

Article 18-B of the County Law requires each county to establish a plan for providing counsel to certain indigent persons. Such a plan may be established by agreement with a legal aid society and/or bar association. The Legal Aid Society of Westchester County (the “Legal Aid Society”) and the Westchester County Bar Association have been providing these services for many years pursuant to agreements with the County.

Under the terms of the proposed agreement, the County will pay to the Legal Aid Society an amount not to exceed \$14,097,624 payable in monthly installments in advance upon receipt of appropriate vouchers for their services for a term commencing January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021. This amount includes funding for both the indigent defense service and for certain related administrative duties.

Further under the terms of the proposed agreement, the County will advance on a monthly basis certain approved yet not received grant funds that are anticipated to be received by the County from the State of New York by and through its Office of Indigent Legal Services (“ILS”) during the calendar year 2021, under approved grant agreements, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,200,000. The monthly requests shall require proper documentation and approval by the Departments of Budget and Finance. The reason for these monthly advances is that the grant funds approved and anticipated to be received from ILS are often delayed which then impacts the operations of the Legal Aid Society and its ability to provide the important services that are required under the grant agreements. A list of these grant agreements is attached hereto as Exhibit “A” (the Grant Agreements”). Under the terms of the proposed agreement, any and all grant funds advanced by the County to the Legal Aid Society that are not received by the County from ILS will be repaid by the Legal Aid Society to the County upon notice.

Accordingly, attached herewith is a resolution which I recommend for adoption authorizing the agreement with the Legal Aid Society and the Westchester County Bar Association for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, subject to a sixty day cancellation, and subject to County appropriations, to provide legal services to persons entitled to counsel pursuant to Article 18-B of the County Law and to provide the services required under the Grant Agreements. Under the terms of the agreement, the Legal Aid Society will furnish trained qualified personnel and office space to provide persons charged with a felony who are entitled to counsel pursuant to Chapter 878, representation in all courts located in Westchester County, unless such representation involves a conflict of interest, perform investigations, expert and other services necessary for an adequate defense of such persons, oversee a plan for the rotation and coordination of a panel of private assigned counsel (Westchester County Bar Association) to provide representation of clients not serviced by the Legal Aid Society, and carry out all of the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreements.

This agreement serves a public purpose in that it enables the County to fulfill its lawful obligation of providing counsel to certain indigent persons pursuant to Article 18-B of the County Law and to improve those services pursuant to the Grant Agreements. The goals and objectives are to ensure that effective and improved counsel is provided in a cost efficient manner. The cost effectiveness of the Legal Aid Society's performance under the agreement is reviewed on a recurring basis by the Department of Budget.

The agreement is exempt from the County's procurement policy pursuant to Section 3(a)xi and 3(a)xiv thereto.

Approval of the attached resolution is respectfully requested.

JMN/LAC
Attachment

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the County Attorney, be it

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester (the “County”) be and is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement for the provision of legal services (including ancillary administrative services) to persons entitled to counsel pursuant to Article 18-B of the County Law with The Legal Aid Society of Westchester (the “Legal Aid Society”) and the Westchester County Bar Association for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, in an amount not to exceed \$14,097,624 payable in monthly installments in advance upon receipt of the appropriate vouchers; and an amount up to \$2,200,000 pursuant to approved grant agreements with the State of New York, by and through its Office of Indigent Legal Services in monthly advances upon receipt of the appropriate vouchers and approved by the Departments of Budget and Finance (the “Agreement”); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Agreement may be cancelled upon sixty (60) days prior written notice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Agreement is subject to County appropriations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 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 the 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 the Agreement upon reasonable prior written notice, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive, or his duly authorized designee, is empowered to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/credited	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub Object	Trust Account	Dollars
	101	52	2085	5100		\$14,097,624
	101	52	1000	9734		\$ 3,811,651

Budget Funding Year(s) 2021 Start Date 1/1/21 End Date 12/31/21
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars \$10,285,973
 State Aid \$ 3,811,651
 Federal Aid _____
 (must match resolution) Other _____

EXHIBIT "A"
List of Grant Agreements

Distribution #4/Contract #C000555
\$2,793,498
1/1/2014 – 12/31/2020

Distribution #5/Contract #C000755
\$5,586,993
1/1/2015 – 12/31/2020

Distribution #8/Contract #C800055
\$5,586,993
1/1/2018 – 12/31/2020

Distribution #9/Contract #C900055
\$2,793,498
1/1/2019 – 12/31/2021

Upstate Quality and Caseload Reduction Grant/Contract #C000655
\$258,344
1/1/2014 – 12/31/2020

2nd Upstate Quality and Caseload Reduction Grant/Contract #C2ND655
\$279,566
7/1/2017 – 6/30/2020

2nd Counsel at First Appearance Grant/Contract #CAFA255
\$723,326.40
1/1/2017 – 12/31/2020

Regional Immigration Assistance Center Grant/Contract #C000855
\$1,350,000
11/1/2015 – 10/31/2020

2nd Regional Immigration Assistance Center Grant/Contract #C2ND855
\$1,654,260
1/1/2020 – 12/31/2022

Statewide Expansion of Hurrell-Harring/Contract #CSTWIDEHH51
\$7,823,701.65
4/1/2018 – 3/31/2023