

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin P. Mahon
Commissioner

DATE: April 1, 2010

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Kevin P. Mahon
Commissioner of Social Services

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the purpose of providing advocacy and support services to children and victims of domestic violence for the period from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$252,460 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

Authority is requested for the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services, to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc., for the purpose of providing advocacy and support services to children and victims of domestic violence for the period from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$252,460 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation. There has been a 5% reduction in the cost of this contract. My Sisters' Place, Inc. is also supplemented by funding from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services ("NYSOCFS") and has successfully worked in collaboration with the Child Protective Services ("CPS") Division of the Department of Social Services for the past several years.

This contract serves a **public purpose** because it promotes the safety of children and families by providing advocacy and intervention services, thereby enabling children and victims of domestic violence to access vital support services such as legal advice and housing. Services provided to children and victims of domestic violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Counseling
- Safety Planning
- Advocacy
- Securing Orders of Protection

- Securing Safe Housing/Shelter Placements
- Post-Shelter Placement Services
- Court Accompaniment
- Information and Referral
- Networking

The **goals and objectives** of this contract are to provide victims of domestic violence and their children with services such as crisis intervention, emotional support and life skills necessary to promote long-term financial self-sufficiency. Domestic violence liaisons/counselors develop safety plans that avert the need for foster care placements and their associated costs. The services provide for the health, safety and protection of children and victims of domestic violence. The ability to provide these services decreases the risk of victims developing severe emotional disorders or adopting behaviors which may put others at risk of physical harm. In addition, under the proposed agreement, four domestic violence liaisons/counselors will be located in each of the four District Offices and a floater liaison/counselor who will be available for CPS/domestic violence case coverage as needed anywhere in the County of Westchester.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** as the services provided by My Sisters' Place assist victims of domestic violence and their children with crisis intervention and emotional support. Children in the families that experience domestic violence are at risk of developing severe emotional disorders or adopting behaviors which may put others at risk of physical harm. Domestic violence services provided by My Sisters' Place help to decrease the risks associated with exposure to domestic abuse. Early intervention can avert the risks posed to children and victims of domestic violence.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as they are aimed at the safety and well being of the children and families of Westchester County. The program under this agreement provides supportive services that allow families that experience domestic violence to seek lives free of violence and achieve the legal authority to protect their children and themselves from recurrent violence. My Sisters' Place also provides services that assist victims of domestic violence in establishing stable and secure households independent of their abusers. Additionally, My Sisters' Place seeks to make the families safe whenever possible by using legal interventions, family and community resources.

The **goals and objectives 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 the taxpayers.

- **Family Foster care cost annualized per child** - The cost of foster care in a family foster setting can range from \$19.26 to \$57.76 per day per child depending on the age and level of care provided. The annual foster care cost per child ranges from **\$7, 029.90 to \$21,082.40.**

- **Residential Foster care cost annualized per child.** The cost of Residential foster care costs can range from \$40.07 up to \$800.00 per day per child. The annual residential foster care cost per child ranges from **\$14,626 to \$292,000.**
- **Shelter cost annualized per family:** The cost of placing a family in a domestic violence homeless shelter can range from \$94.38 up to \$99.68 per diem per family. The annual cost for homeless shelter placement for families ranges from **\$34,448.70 to \$36,383.20.**
- **My Sisters' Place, Inc. program cost annualized per child/family** – My Sisters' Place, Inc. CPS/MSP Collaboration program annualized program cost is \$252,460. This program expects to serve 1000 children and 500 families. The annual cost per child/family would be **\$252.46 and \$504.92**, respectively.

The negative consequence for not approving this agreement will be that the Department may have an increase in the number of children placed into foster care, thereby increasing the costs associated with placing children in foster care. The Department may also show an increase in the number of Westchester County shelter placements as well as an increase in the cost associated with providing shelter for victims of domestic violence and their children. Additionally, Westchester County may also show an increase in repeat offending and the number of crimes involving domestic violence.

The goals and objectives as stated in the resolution will be tracked and monitored to evaluate success using the performance measurement indicators developed by the Department and approved by the County Budget Office. They include, but are not limited to, reviewing of periodic reports submitted by the vendor, and making onsite visits.

Based on the **Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report** that My Sisters' Place exceeded the goal of providing services for 500 families and 1000 children in the 2009-2010 contract year. From May, 2009 to February, 2010, My Sisters' Place has served 602 families and 1124 children. In addition, My Sisters' Place has secured 324 orders of protection (a 17% increase from 2008-2009) and 413 safe housing placements (a 410% increase from 2008-2009).

This contract is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3(a) xiv as the agreement is for the purposes of providing aid, care and support to persons in need of public assistance.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authorization to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the provision of providing the aforesaid services.

A resolution requesting the same is attached for your Honorable Board's approval.

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. for the provision of advocacy and support services to children and victims of domestic violence referred to My Sisters' Place by the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Social Services for the period from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$252,460 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this contract is subject to County Appropriation; and be it further

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



RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is empowered to take such actions and execute such documents as may be necessary and appropriate to effectuate the purpose hereof.

Account to be Charged/Credited

	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2010	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$168,304
2011	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$ 84,156

Budget Funding Year(s): 2010-2011 Start Date 5/1/10 End Date 4/30/11
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars: 41%
 State Aid: 41%
\$ 252,460 Federal Aid: 18%
 (must match resolution) Other _____