



State of Delaware

*The Department of Services for
Children, Youth and Their Families*

RFP #17

**Request for Proposals
For Professional Services
Bid under Title 29 Chapter 69 Section 6981**

DESCRIPTION

Foster Care Pre-Service Training
And
Home Study Approval

INFORMATIONAL BIDDERS CONFERENCE: Thursday May 19, 2011 @ 2 pm ET

PROPOSALS DUE: Monday, June 6, 2011 by 2 pm ET

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TIMELINE

Questions? Contact: H. Ryan Bolles, Contract Administrator at herbert.bolles@state.de.us
OR (302) 633-2701

**Thursday
5/19/11 @
2 pm ET** There will be a informational bidders' conference held as follows:
Delaware Youth & Family Center
1825 Faulkland Road
Room 199
Wilmington, DE 19805

**Proposals
Due Monday
6/6/2011
By 2 pm ET** Sealed Cover Letter and Proposals shall be submitted as follows:
Please submit 1 original paper proposal marked "ORIGINAL" and 6 paper copies marked "COPY". Also, submit 1 electronic copy (CD or DVD) of your proposal along with 1 copy (either electronic or paper) of your most recent business fiscal audit or tax filing.

If you are or plan to be a new business organization without a previous fiscal audit or tax filing please indicate that in your Cover Letter.

Sealed letter and proposals must be delivered by **2:00PM ET on Monday, June 6, 2011**. Letters and proposals arriving after 2:00pm ET will not be accepted.

For these purposes an electronic copy can be either CD or DVD.

Express Courier or hand deliver the sealed bids as follows:
State of Delaware
Ryan Bolles
1825 Faulkland Road
Administration Building #2, Room 177
Wilmington, DE 19805

A date/time receipt for your records is available upon request.

Although it is not recommended to ship by the US Postal Service, if this is your preferred delivery method, please address as follows:

State of Delaware
Ryan Bolles, Grants & Contracts
1825 Faulkland Road
Wilmington, DE 19805

The proposing firm bears the risk of delays in delivery. The contents of any proposal shall not be disclosed to competing entities during the negotiation process.

As soon as possible The Department will work diligently to complete the proposal review and selection process in an expeditious fashion. Bidders may be asked to be available to respond to questions from the review panel by telephone or in person, if necessary. However, proposals are expected to stand alone based upon the written information submitted.

Minority or Women Owned Business Enterprise?
Visit <http://gss.omb.delaware.gov/omwbe/index.shtml> to register with the State of Delaware.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING and HOME STUDY APPROVALS

I. INTRODUCTION

ORGANIZATION and SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families - “Our children, Our future, Our responsibility.”

The Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families was established in 1983 by the General Assembly of the State of Delaware. Its primary responsibility is to provide and manage a range of services for children who have experienced abandonment, abuse, adjudication, mental illness, neglect, or substance abuse. Its services include prevention, early intervention, assessment, treatment, permanency, and after care.

The Children’s Department employs approximately 1200 staff at 31 locations, who serve over 8,000 children on any given day. Among the workforce are 52 Family Crisis Therapists (FCTs), who work in elementary schools throughout the state. Additionally, the Department provides licenses to nearly 2,200 daycare operations, which provide services for more than 49,000 children in Delaware.

The mission of the Delaware Children's Department is to assist children, youth and families in making positive changes through services that support child and public safety, behavioral health and individual, family and community well-being.

The Children’s Department wants every child to be safe, live in a stable home, learn and grow in self-esteem, and embrace a sense of hope about the future. The Department leads a system of care approach (both community based and residential) that is child centered and assures effective, timely and appropriate support for Delaware’s children.

The Department is comprised of four divisions. There are three service divisions and one management support division. They are as follows:

- Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services
- Division of Family Services
- Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
- Division of Management Support Services

Division of Family Services

The Division of Family Services work to promote the well-being and safety of children and their families through prevention, protection and permanency.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The safety and protection of a child is the paramount priority of the Division of Family Services (DFS). As such, the division strives to ensure:

- At-risk children are safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- Inter-divisional planning and coordination of services for children and families;
- Professional development of all staff to provide quality service;
- Quality assurance activities are thorough and ongoing;
- Interagency and community collaboration exists to build a system of care to support and strengthen families;
- Licensing and monitoring of the State’s out-of-home child care facilities;
- Recruitment and retention of sufficient, quality foster families and improved quality of life for children living in foster care;
- Foster families have the support and parenting skills needed to work with challenging children;

- An enriched continuum of care for children needing placement in specialized and treatment foster and group care; and
- Children who cannot be returned to their family are settled, in a timely way, with a permanent family through adoption or guardianship or older youth are prepared for independence.

II. PURPOSE

The Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, Division of Family Services seeks proposals for Foster Care Pre-Service Training and Home Study Approval for families recruited by the Division of Family Services foster care team who are interested in fostering children entering out of home care due to abuse, neglect or dependency.

Priorities of the Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families, Division of Family Services are to ensure child safety, promote family stability and to preserve the family as a unit whenever possible. However, out-of-home care or treatment is sometimes necessary to protect the health, welfare, or safety of the child. As a community based alternative which provides children and youth with access to normal daily life, foster family care is often the placement of choice when substitute care is necessary. The Department has made a commitment to ensure a professional level of foster care services; part of that commitment is to provide adequate training to prospective foster parents.

The teen pre-service training would prepare resource families to accept teenage youth who can be placed immediately upon completion of training; this will be beneficial at a time when we lack capacity within DFS for specialized and treatment level placements.

One of the primary methods for strengthening the partnership between foster parents and the agency and for enhancing the professional level of foster family care is to provide evidence based training and a thorough assessment of prospective families. This request for proposals is to provide the pre-service training and home study approvals for prospective foster and adoptive families referred and recruited by the Division of Family Services.

The Division of Family Services plans to contract for Parent Resource for Information Development and Education (PRIDE) Pre-Service Training, Teen Pre-Service Training, Fost/Adopt Training and all Home Study Approval activities.

DFS is seeking to award a single contract for training and approvals of foster families statewide in the following areas:

PRIDE Foster Families:

PRIDE is a nationally recognized pre-service training to prepare potential families with skill and knowledge to care for children who enter foster care. This care is designed for regular and some special needs children. PRIDE trained foster families should be able to manage children with mild to moderate emotional disturbances and behavioral challenges that require higher levels of supervision and structure. Preferred models of service delivery will incorporate foster parent and youth co-facilitators. Bidders will describe methods to maintain PRIDE model integrity.

Teen Foster Families:

Delaware's Children Department developed this pre-service training designed for caregivers of adolescents with behavioral or emotional disturbance or mental health problems that may have necessitated residential treatment. Adjudicated youth that have completed their residential treatment goals or program requirements and require an intensive step down service may also be included in this category. These youth may be returning from residential/institutional care after receiving maximum benefits from the placement facility. (Sex offenders and adolescents with conduct disorders will fall into this category). The youth's behaviors are such that the professional staff believes he/she can continue progress in community based family foster care settings. The Division is especially interested in approving families who are willing to work with youth while they are participating in

residential treatment whose goal is family placement when treatment is completed. Preferred models of service delivery will incorporate foster parent and youth co-facilitators.

Foster/Adoptive Foster Families:

Fost/Adopt training was designed by the Delaware's Adoption Program to prepare foster parents to become permanent resource for a child who is currently residing in their foster home and do to unplanned circumstances are now eligible for adoption. The successfully bidder will offer this training to new foster parents and experienced foster parents in additional sessions to pre-service training. Preferred models of service delivery will incorporate foster parent and youth co-facilitators.

Home Study Assessment and Approvals:

Home Study Assessments and Approvals will be required on each of the above outlined pre-service training areas. The contractor will be required to produce thorough and complete home study approvals based on best practice. Bidders will document methodology and components of assessing, approving and documenting home studies.

III. AVAILABILITY of FUNDS:

Funds for this award total \$200,000 for training components and home study approvals. Proposals must identify specific itemized budget for PRIDE, Teen, Fost/Adopt trainings and foster home approvals. The successful bidder must accept full payment by conventional check and/or other electronic means and/or procurement (credit) card at the State's option, without imposing any additional fees, costs or conditions.

The initial contract period will be for approximately one year ending June 30th. Subsequent contract terms will be for one or two year periods for a total of two (2) additional years. Continuation of contracts will depend on the availability of funds, bidder progress in meeting project goals and objectives, timely submission of required data and reports, and compliance with all terms and conditions of award. The Department reserves the right to extend the contract award for up to an additional two (2) years for a total of five (5) years.

The department is requesting proposals based upon the following unit cost methodology of payment:

1. Hourly rate per classroom training hour
2. Unit cost per home study (indicate estimated hours anticipated per home study)

IV. BIDDER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Eligible bidders are domestic public, private nonprofit entities (i.e., associations, coalitions, agencies, state and local governments; public or private colleges and universities, faith-based organizations).

All bidders (and proposed subcontractors) must have a minimum of one year experience in delivering services that address the comprehensive needs of families in the child welfare arena including foster care and the delivery of training to adult learners. Bidders should be able to demonstrate experience in assessment and home study approvals.

V. SCOPE of SERVICE:

Training and Home Approvals:

The training will consist of the established formal training currently delivered by DFS staff that includes PRIDE Training, a nationally recognized training curriculum that consist of twenty-seven hours (see attachment A for PRIDE outline). Another component of training is Delaware Teen Training, developed by the Division of Family Services, Professional Development Center to address the unique challenges and issues resource families will face caring for teens, consisting of thirty hours (see attachment B for Teen outline). The third component of training is Fost/Adopt Training developed by DFS adoption specialists to develop the skills and knowledge of foster families who made the decision to adopt a child currently residing in their foster home, consisting of twelve hours (see attachment C for Fost/Adopt outline). An outline of the minimum required home study components can be found in attachment D.

A copy of the full PRIDE, Teen and Fost/Adopt curriculum and home study template will be given to the successful awardee. Bidders are encouraged to propose creative, innovative project methods which will motivate perspective foster families to participate in pre-service training activities and the home study approval process.

Training Frequency

Bidders may propose any training schedule, however the preferred training frequency would be based upon the model that training occurs at regular intervals throughout the year and new that families can enter training at the start of the next session of that training. The goal is that no family waits longer than four (4) weeks to begin training.

ALL bidders are required to submit a proposal with cost based upon a three (3) hour maximum per classroom session model; however bidders may also submit as part of their proposal alternative methods for delivering classroom sessions (ie, weekends, etc).

Training Locations

Training shall occur in the county of residence of the perspective family or within a 30 minute drive of that residence.

VI. TRAINING and HOME STUDY GOALS:

Proposals should outline the following activities to achieve pre-service training and home study approval goals:

- Train perspective foster parents on the PRIDE Pre-Service curriculum to introduce and prepare them to care for children and youth who enter foster care
- Train perspective foster parents on the Delaware Teen Pre-Service curriculum to provide them with knowledge and skills to perform their role as a substitute parent for teens who enter foster care
- Train perspective adoptive parents on the Delaware Fost/Adopt pre-service curriculum to prepare potential adoptive resources for permanent placement of children whose goal is adoption
- Successfully complete home studies on perspective foster care and adoptive providers who are able to carry out the function of an approved foster or adoptive parents
- Promote foster parents' roles as partners to function as team members with DFS staff
- Involve experienced foster parents, adoptive parents and youth in all aspects of planning and conducting training activities
- Encourage and facilitate foster parents to provide support with each other through Foster Parent Associations and informal networks
- Encourage and facilitate adoptive parents to provide support with each other and through community formal and informal adoption networks
- Ensure services are culturally competent and representative of Delaware's foster care population
- All proposals must specify how the rich knowledge and experience of foster and adoptive parents will be incorporated into every aspect of the entire project.

VII. TRAINING and HOME STUDY OBJECTIVES:

Bidders shall submit a timetable for accomplishing the following project objectives:

- Collaborate with the Department Foster Care Program Manager and Professional Development Center to design activities to meet outlined needs, including but not limited to training knowledge of DFS foster care policy and procedures
- Actively involve experienced foster and adoptive parents in planning and conducting training and as co-trainers
- Develop training schedule, arrange training sites, advertise training and register participants
- Train the PRIDE curriculum and approve home studies on 35 new foster families (20 PRIDE families in New Castle County and 15 split between Kent/Sussex Counties); 27 hours of training is required for PRIDE
- Train the Teen curriculum and approve home studies on a minimum of 40 new foster families, 20 teen foster families in New Castle County and 20 split equally between Kent/Sussex Counties. The Teen training curriculum is 30 hours.
- Train and approve a minimum of 50 foster-adoptive families with 12 hours of required training (35 fost/adopt family approvals in New Castle County and 15 Kent/Sussex). These families are already trained as foster parents and this curriculum prepares the family to adopt.
- Create and utilize evaluation instrument(s) to measure levels of accomplishment of goals and objectives for training and for the entire project
- Compile and submit monthly, mid- year, and end of year reports

VIII. TARGET POPULATION:

The 2010 U.S. Census puts Delaware's population at 900,877, with the 13th highest percentage increase in the nation in the past decade, about a 15% increase (News Journal Dec. 2010). Delaware is comprised of three counties: New Castle County-534,634 residents; Kent County-157,741 residents; and Sussex County- 92,747 residents (2009 U.S. Census estimates). The State is distinctive in that the northernmost county, New Castle, is mostly urban, while the two southern counties, Kent and Sussex, have more rural characteristics. That too is changing with the new census indicating larger population growths in Kent and Sussex Counties. Delaware's largest city is Wilmington, located in New Castle County, with a population of 72,826 (2009 U.S. Census estimate). Wilmington and part of New Castle County are included in the Philadelphia Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Providers must be prepared to train potential families recruited by the Children's Department statewide, and from all socio-economic, racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Providers should be able to approve fifty percent of the statewide families in New Castle County and the remaining approvals split between Kent and Sussex Counties, for each of the training categories.

IX. PROJECT ASSESSMENT

Evaluation measures for each training course and for overall evaluation of the project must be described in the proposal.

- Number of new foster families trained and approved as DFS PRIDE resource providers
- Number of new foster families trained and approved as DFS teen resource providers
- Number of fost/adopt families trained and approved as DFS adoptive resource providers

X. SELECTION PROCESS and REVIEW CRITERIA

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will be reviewed by an evaluation team composed of representatives of the Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families and others as may be deemed appropriate by the Department. Each proposal will be independently reviewed and rated against review criteria. Selection will be based upon the recommendations of the review committee.

***Please note that successful bidders may be required to participate in trainings to ensure the successful implementation of the Division of Family Services practices, policies and programs.

Proposal Review Criteria:

1. Compliance with requirements as states in the RFP (20%)
 - a. Are the objectives stated clearly? Are they specific, measurable, and feasible?
 - b. Do the objectives support and enhance the goals and objectives established by the Department?
 - c. Is the budget submitted on the Department's format (Budget, Budget Narrative, Salary Schedule)?
2. Organizational capacity and capability to meet requirements to provide service described (ie. Staffing, financial condition, etc) (10%)
 - a. Does the Bidder organization and/or sponsoring agency have the capacity to carry out the project described?
3. Service Delivery/Program Methods (20%)
 - a. Are the mechanisms described for providing service timely and consistent with a conscientious delivery of service?
 - b. Does the proposal clearly describe the nature of the service and how, where, and by whom it will be delivered?
 - c. Can the methods described for delivering the service support the achievement of the Department and agency objectives as stated?
 - d. Are the time frames given for accomplishment realistic?
4. Service Delivery/Program Monitoring and Evaluation (20%)
 - a. Does the proposal contain adequate procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the project?
 - b. Does the proposal adequately describe the agency's procedures for monitoring service. Is it clear how the agency will document receipt of the services by the target population?
 - c. Does the data presented demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of the service?
 - d. Does the agency require any form of regular internal or peer review of cases (when applicable)?
5. Experience/Demonstrated Ability and Reputation (15%)
 - a. History of the organization with DSCYF and/or other State agencies with this or other services (ie. accessibility, responsiveness, and effectiveness).
6. Budget (15%)
 - a. Is the budget reasonable; i.e., can the objectives be accomplished with the funding available?
 - b. Has the Bidder clearly explained the cost of the budget items?
 - c. Has the Bidder secured matching funds (*in-kind or cash assistance*) to support the project?