

Evidence-Based Supported Employment Services in Broward County

Request for Letters of Interest (RLI)

Solicitation # 0003

Available: November 23, 2015 – December 15, 2015

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I. BACKGROUND

The Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, Inc. (BBHC) was created in 2011 and was selected by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) as Broward County's managing entity (ME) for mental health and substance abuse services.

BBHC's mission is to advocate and ensure an effective and efficient behavioral health system of care is available in Broward County.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

BBHC in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) will be selecting a Supported Employment provider to implement evidence-based Supported Employment throughout Broward County, also known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS) developed through the Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center and endorsed by SAMHSA. IPS programs are also able to integrate Supported Education within the team approach. Information about the model can be found here: <http://www.dartmouthips.org/>

The IPS program provides all phases of the Supported Employment service (including Supported Education), from initial engagement through long term supports. IPS programs are unique in that they provide hands on approach to finding competitive jobs in the community. In order to serve individuals with mental health and co-occurring substance use disorders, IPS programs require integration of employment and behavioral health services. IPS staff also works side by side with VR counselors, who also may have shared caseloads.

Funding will be customized for this program to be successful. BBHC and VR are exploring options to the reimbursement methodology and developing a blended/braided funding system to be used by programs to the extent possible. To start, the provider must be able to obtain a rate contract for "Employment Services" with the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a vendor to maximize funding and sustainability. See attached presentation and visit: http://www.rehabworks.org/vendor_apps.shtml .

Providers are encouraged to review the Fidelity Review Manual and the Agency IPS Implementation Plan for guidance on program start-up. Agencies will be expected to implement a program that aligns with the IPS Fidelity Scale. All documents can be found here: <http://www.dartmouthips.org/resources/programs/program-implementation-and-fidelity/>

Supported Education can be provided within this model for individuals who express a desire for continuing education in order to gain employment. For more information on this model, visit: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Education-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA11-4654CD-ROM>

Further technical assistance will be provided on hiring/training staff as well as guidance on the BBHC/VR partnership for administrators will be provided to each agency by BBHC staff. For tools on staffing, please see this page: <http://www.dartmouthips.org/resources/programs/tools-for-supervision/>

Providers must have experience in serving the MH/SA population; priority will be given to providers who have a strong background in recovery initiatives, have experience in evidence-based practices, and/or are able to target special population groups such as Transition Age Youth (of working age, 16+) who are part of the One Community Partnership 2 initiative.

All programs must follow the 8 Practice Principles of IPS Supported Employment

1. **Focus on Competitive Employment:** Agencies providing IPS services are committed to competitive employment as an attainable goal for people with serious mental illness seeking employment.
2. **Eligibility Based on Client Choice:** People are not excluded on the basis of readiness, diagnoses, symptoms, substance use history, psychiatric hospitalizations, homelessness, level of disability, or legal system involvement.
3. **Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services:** IPS programs are closely integrated with mental health treatment teams and VR.
4. **Attention to Worker Preferences:** Services are based on each person's preferences and choices, rather than providers' judgments.
5. **Personalized Benefits Counseling:** Employment specialists help people obtain personalized, understandable, and accurate information about their Social Security, Medicaid, and other government entitlements.
6. **Rapid Job Search:** IPS programs use a rapid job search approach to help job seekers obtain jobs directly, rather than providing lengthy pre-employment assessment, training, and counseling.
7. **Systematic Job Development:** Employment specialists systematically visit employers, who are selected based on job seeker preferences, to learn about their business needs and hiring preferences.
8. **Time-Unlimited and Individualized Support:** Job supports are individualized and continue for as long as each worker wants and needs the support.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Eligible applicants are BBHC pre-qualified entities, who are in good standing with their contract, that have had a physical presence in Broward County, Florida for more than one year and a demonstrated history of providing behavioral health services in the community for at least three (3) years.
- B. **Written Responses to the RLI:**
The narrative portion (not including the required budget documents and any supporting attachments) of the application should be no longer than 6 pages and should cover the following:

- I. **Abstract:** Provide a brief description of your project, as well as a description of your agency's history of implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs) and using fidelity scales.
 - a. What are your agency's reasons and motivations to become an IPS provider?
 - b. How do you support recovery and employment in your organization?
- II. **Capacity/Readiness:** Describe any efforts your agency has already taken to plan for implementing Supported Employment/Supported Education.
 - a. What is your agency's organizational readiness for implementing IPS? What are some strengths your agency has that will support the implementation?
 - b. What are some implementation barriers you anticipate?
 - c. How will you adhere to the fidelity scale? Describe any items that you may have concerns with?
- III. **Proposed Program:** Describe your proposed IPS program, making sure to address the following:
 - a. Target population – describe your experience serving SMI/SPMI, co-occurring individuals.
 - b. Identified special population priorities, i.e., Transition Age Youth (14-21), individuals who are involved with Department of Juvenile Justice/Criminal Justice, LGBTQI, minority groups, etc. How will you adapt your implementation of IPS to meet the unique needs of the population groups you identify?
 - c. Physical location of the program. What are some challenges that you see in serving individuals throughout the county?
 - d. How will start-up occur in terms of staffing, caseload sizes, referrals, and outreach?
 - i. Number to be served in the program in the first year
 - ii. Staff to be hired/already hired (supervisor, employment specialists)
 - e. Plan for integrating Peer Specialists and/or youth/family advocates.
 - f. Plan for benefits counseling
 - g. Plan for implementing the Zero-Exclusion criteria (individuals who may be actively using substances, experiencing symptoms, etc – review fidelity scale)
- IV. **Partnerships:** It is highly recommended for applicants to request Support Letters from their community partners or show other documents to support this information. Describe your current partnerships with the following and list specific examples around implementation:
 - a. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; If you currently do not have a partnership with your local VR office, what steps do you plan to take to develop one?
 - b. Behavioral Health; Describe how the employment and behavioral health will work together.
 - c. Medicaid: Describe whether you currently have a contract with the Medical Management Agency (MMA) plans and coverage or lack of for employment services.
 - d. Describe how are you are or plan to work with the following organizations:
 - i. Family and peer advocacy organizations
 - ii. CareerSource Broward

- iii. Colleges/Vocational/Technical Schools
 - iv. Business Leadership Network
 - v. Other employment or education related agencies
- V. **Other Agency Selection Criteria:** Address the following throughout the narrative of your proposal:
- a. Agency CEO/Executive Director's commitment to participate in an organizational change process to implement evidence-based Supported Employment including participation in fidelity evaluation processes.
 - b. Leadership commitment to have local mental health staff, vocational rehabilitation staff, consumers, family members, and employers participate in an agency established "Leadership Team/Steering Committee".
 - c. Strength of the agency's work plan for building consensus and implementing high fidelity IPS
 - d. Strength of the agency's recovery practices
 - e. Acknowledgement that quarterly outcome data will be a requirement of participation, as well as periodic site visits for technical assistance.
- VI. **Proposed Staffing:** Provide a detailed line item budget for the first year of the program, assuming full capacity. Each program must be able to hire 1 IPS Team Supervisor and 2 FTE Vocational Specialists.
- a. Other Application Requirements:
 - 1. Agencies may only submit one (1) Response to this RLI.
 - 2. The maximum award per Response is \$250,000.
 - 3. Provide a line-item budget, including proposed personnel (name, credentials, years of experience with employment services, years of experience with MHSA population), for costs associated with provision of the work described within this RLI.
 - 4. Include a breakdown of your proposed units of service including:
 - a. Definition of Units to be Provided;
 - b. Number of clients to be served;
 - c. Estimated number of units per client; and
 - d. Estimated cost per unit type.
 - 5. One (1) original and Six (6) copies of the six (6) page response, excluding line item budget

IV. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS AND FISCAL SOUNDNESS

Applicants must submit one (1) copy of their most recent annual financial statements (within 180 days after the close of the applicant's most recent fiscal year-end) that have been audited by a Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firm licensed to do business in the

State of Florida and prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and standards contained in Government Auditing Standards and OMB 1-133. Applicant agencies with annual total revenues of less than \$500,000 may submit their most recent annual financial statements that have been reviewed or compiled by a CPA firm licensed to do business in the State of Florida and prepared in accordance with GAAP. The Independent Auditor's Report must contain an unqualified audit opinion without "going concern" disclosures and the Statement of Financial Position must show positive Net Assets.

V. DUE DATE – FATAL FLAW

All responses to this RLI are due December 15, 2015 on or before 12:00 Noon. Failure of timely submission is the only Fatal Flaw.

VI. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

Participation in the **Pre-Bid Conference on December 8, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.**, at Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, 1715 Southeast 4th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316 is recommended but not required. It is the only opportunity for verbal discussion, questions and answers about this RLI solicitation.

After the close of the Pre-Bid Conference, there will an opportunity for submission of additional written questions via email by December 10, 2015 @ 12:00 noon. The subject line to ensure that your question is readily identifiable should include the RLI number.

A summary of all written questions and answers will be posted on the BBHC website at www.bbhcfloida.org on December 11, 2015.

VII. OUTCOME PERFORMANCE MEASURES

All data will be entered into the Provider Portal or any other data collection systems specified by BBHC. In addition a provider must be able to track individual outcome data utilizing the IPS Quarterly Outcomes Report:

<http://www.dartmouthips.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/jj-dartmouth-ips-outcomes2015.pdf>

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS

All RLI responses will be evaluated by a Rating Committee comprised of community subject matter experts. Higher ranking numerical scores do not assure a funding recommendation as other factors are considered including, but not limited to, past agency performance; relevant experience and other factors. BBHC retains the right to accept, modify, negotiate or reject terms of any responses to this solicitation.

At any time during the selection process, BBHC reserves the right, at its sole and complete discretion, to: (1) conduct face-to-face interviews with all, or selected applicants; (2) require submission of additional or revised responses; (3) terminate negotiations or re-open negotiations with any applicant and (4) take other administrative actions necessary to finalize funding awards.

IX. TIMETABLE

ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME
Date Advertised:	November 23, 2015
Dates Available:	November through December 15, 2015
Solicitation Conference (Pre-Bid Conference)	December 8, 2015 @ 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Broward Behavioral Health Coalition 1715 Southeast 4 th Avenue Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316
Submission of Written Questions	December 10, 2015 @ 12 noon via email to: andrea.avecillas@concordia.bh.com
Posting of Responses to Written Questions	December 11, 2015
Deadline for Receipt of RLI Responses	12:00 p.m. noon, December 15, 2015 Concordia Behavioral Health 1717 Southeast 4 th Avenue Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316
Negotiations	January 4-7, 2016
Notice of Award	January 8, 2016
Contract Start Date	January 18, 2016

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The initial term of service for contracts awarded under this procurement is January 18, 2016 through June 30, 2016 (6 months). At the sole discretion of BBHC, two (2) optional renewals for the period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 and July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 are contingent upon availability of funding, agency viability, positive performance and successful re-negotiation of all terms.

X. BACKGROUND SCREENING

All staff who work in direct contact with children and adults, including employees and volunteers, must comply with Level 2 background screening and fingerprinting requirements in accordance with Sections 943.0542, 984.01, Chapter 435, 402, 39.001, and 1012.465 Florida Statutes and Broward County background screening requirements, as applicable. The program must maintain staff personnel files which reflect that a screening result was received and reviewed to determine employment eligibility prior to employment.

XI. CONE OF SILENCE

Interested applicants responding to this solicitation, or person acting on their behalf, may not contact any employee or board member of BBHC, Concordia or DCF concerning any aspect of this RLI, except submission of questions as described in Section III.A. of this RLI. This Cone of Silence begins upon the RLI release on November 20, 2015 until the posting of Award notice on January 8, 2016. Violation of this provision may be grounds for disqualification of the response to the RLI.

XII. APPEAL PROCESS

Protests, appeals, and disputes are limited to procedural grounds.

Whenever a competitive process is utilized, an applicant that is adversely affected by a procedural determination may file a notice of appeal/protest/dispute within seventy-two (72) hours following the receipt of written notification from BBHC of the applicant's failure to advance to the next step of review due to a critical flaw, or within seventy-two (72) hours following the posting of the solicitation decision on the BBHC website and/or notice of funding awards.

Protests, appeals, or disputes may only challenge a procedural matter related to the solicitation. A protest, appeal, or dispute may not challenge the relative weight of the evaluation criteria or the formula specified for assigning points contained in the solicitation/Invitation to Negotiate. A protest, appeal, or dispute is limited to challenging errors in procedural due process, errors in mathematical calculations, or omissions to score sections by the review team.

Protests, appeals, or disputes must comply with BBHC Procurement Policy and Procedures, posted on the BBHC website, www.bbhcflorida.org.

When protesting, appealing, or disputing a decision, the protestor must post a bond equal to one percent (1%) of BBHC's estimated contract amount. The bond is not to be filed with the notice of appeal, protest, or dispute but must be filed with the formal written protest, appeal, or dispute within the ten (10) day period for the filing of the formal written protest. The estimated contract amount shall be based upon the contract price submitted by the protestor. If no contract price was submitted, the BBHC shall provide the estimated contract amount to the protestor within 72 hours (excluding Saturday, Sundays, and BBHC holidays) after the notice of protest, appeal, or dispute has been filed. The estimated contract amount is not subject to protest pursuant to subsection 120.57(3), Florida Statutes. The bond shall be conditioned upon the payment of all cost and charges that are adjudged against the protestor in the administrative hearing in which action is brought and in any subsequent appellate court proceeding. Failure to file the proper bond at the time of filing the formal protest, appeal, or dispute will result in a rejection of the protest. In lieu of a bond BBHC may accept a cashier's check, official bank check, or money order in the amount of the bond.