

Allegheny County

Department of Human Services

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Process Server for the Office of Children, Youth and Families

RFP ISSUED	August 27, 2015
QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL	Until 5 Business Days Before Proposal Due Date
RESPONSES (Q & A) POSTED ON WEBPAGE	Ongoing- Final Q&A Posted 1 Business Day Before Proposal Due Date
PROPOSALS DUE	October 7, 2015
ESTIMATED AWARD DECISION / NOTIFICATION	October, 2015
ESTIMATED START DATE	December, 2015

GLOSSARY

Agreement: The contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services.

Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

ALSP: Adoption Legal Services Project is an organization located at 3 PNC Plaza, 225 5th Avenue, 9th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

ALU: The CYF Adoption Legal Unit is an organization located at Fort Pitt Commons, 445 Fort Pitt Boulevard, Suite 101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Contract Services: The specific services which the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement.

CYF: The DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families

DHS: The Allegheny County Department of Human Services.

Process Server: An individual or firm that delivers (serves) legal documents to specified individuals.

Proposal: The response submitted by a Proposer to this Request for Proposals.

Proposer(s): The entity or entities submitting a Proposal to the County in response to the RFP in an effort to become the Successful Proposer.

Required Court Papers: Petitions, Motions, Subpoenas and other documents for which personal notice is deemed to be required.

RFP: Request for Proposals.

Successful Proposer: The Proposer selected by the County to provide the Contract Services.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

Purpose

Allegheny County is soliciting proposals for a qualified person or entity to provide process serving services on behalf of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Children Youth and Families (CYF). DHS intends to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s) to provide the Contract Services for a term of three years. The Agreement will be on a fee-for-service basis; the approximate budget available for this service is \$30,000 per year for three years. If the agreement is extended beyond three years, the budget may be amended.

General Information about a Request for Proposal

Allegheny County issues Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to identify entities with the ability to meet the identified needs and quality standards within specified program and funding guidelines. Evaluation criteria are included in an RFP to measure how well a Proposal meets these criteria. The County may request additional information and/or a presentation from the Proposer during the Proposal evaluation period. Following the evaluation period, an Agreement to provide the Contract Services may be awarded to the most qualified Proposer(s), that is, the Successful Proposer(s).

The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers.

Communication about this RFP

DHS is the “Issuing Office” for this RFP and is the sole point of contact for all questions and communication regarding this RFP. All communication about the RFP, including requests for additional information or clarification, should be submitted via email to:

DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

All questions and/or requests for clarification concerning this RFP must be submitted no later than five business days prior to the proposal due date in order to guarantee a response on the website.

All information about the RFP, including changes, clarifications and responses to Proposer questions, will be posted on the RFP website at: <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.aspx>

Eligibility

Entities eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP include individuals, non-profit organizations and for-profit organizations or businesses. In order to be considered under this RFP, Proposers must be willing and able to meet all of Allegheny County’s contract requirements. These contract requirements are available at: <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/contracting.aspx>.

Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (M/W/DBE) Requirements

This RFP contains requirements for Proposers to assist Allegheny County in meeting its M/W/DBE goal (all contracts and other business activities entered into by Allegheny County having overall goals of 13% for MBEs and 2% for WBEs). A listing of M/W/DBEs certified by Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program can be found at www.county.allegheny.pa.us/mwdbbe

For more information about M/W/DBEs, please review the following. An M/W/DBE Participation Statement or Waiver Statement is **REQUIRED** with proposal submission

[MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)

[MWDBE Participation Statement form](#)

[MWDBE Waiver Statement form](#)

Proposal Preparation Costs

The Proposer is responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of a Proposal.

Allegheny County is not obligated, in any way, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a Proposal.

BACKGROUND

About DHS

DHS was created in 1997 to consolidate the provision of human services across Allegheny County. It is the largest department within Allegheny County government. In addition to its Executive Office, DHS encompasses five program offices (Behavioral Health; Children, Youth and Families; Community Services; Intellectual Disability; and the Area Agency on Aging) and three support offices (Administrative and Information Management Services; Community Relations; and Data Analysis, Research and Evaluation). Last year, DHS served more than 210,000 individuals (approximately one in six County residents) through an array of 1,700 distinct services.

DHS is responsible for providing and administering publicly-funded human services to Allegheny County residents and is dedicated to meeting these human service needs, particularly for the County's most vulnerable populations, through information exchange, prevention, early intervention, case management, crisis intervention and after-care services.

DHS provides a wide range of services, including: services for older adults; mental health and drug and alcohol services (includes 24-hour crisis counseling); child protective services; at-risk child development and education; hunger services; emergency shelters and housing for the homeless; non-emergency medical transportation; job training and placement for public assistance recipients and older adults; and services for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

DHS provides services to eligible individuals without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, political affiliation, disability, familial status, military service, or religious, community or social affiliations.

CYF

The mission of CYF is to protect children from abuse and neglect; to preserve families, whenever possible; and to assure permanency, that is, to provide permanent, safe homes for children either by assuring safety within the child's own family, or by finding an adoptive home or another permanent setting for those children who cannot be reunified with their family. In a typical year, CYF provides services for over 8,000 children and 8,000 parents.

CYF frequently must file dependency petitions and/or seek the termination of parental rights. In these cases, CYF must serve Required Court Papers on other parties. Thus, CYF has a need for a process server to handle the service of these documents.

SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUESTED

Allegheny County is soliciting Proposals for a CYF Process Server. The role of the CYF Process Server is to provide service of Required Court Papers to individuals within and outside of Allegheny County. DHS intends to make an award of up to two agreements to a Successful Proposer on a fee-for-service basis, with an estimated budget of up to \$30,000 per year for three years.

- DHS anticipates a total of 200-250 documents will require service per year. This estimate does not guarantee a minimum or maximum but a general estimate based on past years.
- The Successful Proposer will receive the service documents by mail if time allows or, if mailing is not possible, the Successful Proposer will obtain the service documents from the ALU or ALSP office. The Successful Proposer must make the first service attempt at the provided address(es) within 24 hours of receiving the service documents.
- The ALU or ALSP contact person will advise the server of the date of the hearing for which service is being attempted. Service for that hearing must be completed no later than 10 days before the hearing.
- The Successful Proposer must make at least three service attempts at a given address for each identified individual, and relay the results of these attempts to the contact person at the ALU and/or ALSP within 24 hours of the attempt.
- If the identified individual does not reside at the given address, the Successful Proposer will not be required to locate a new address. However, if the Successful Proposer does identify a new address, the Successful Proposer must both notify the office requesting service (ALU and/or ALSP) of the new address and attempt service at the new address within 24 hours.
- Once it has been determined that service has been thoroughly attempted (at least three service attempts made) or successfully completed, the Successful Proposer must return Affidavits of Service and/or Affidavits of Attempted Service to the ALU and/or ALSP no more than eight days prior to the date of the given hearing. The Affidavits must be completed fully and legibly, including notations of efforts made to find the identified individual.
- The Successful Proposer may occasionally be required to serve documents in counties contiguous and non-contiguous to Allegheny County. The Successful Proposer may also occasionally be required to serve documents in states other than the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Successful Proposer may enter into sub-contracts to provide these services.
- The Successful Proposer may be required to testify in court. On such occasions, the Successful Proposer will be given sufficient notice of the date, time and location of the testimony.
- The Successful Proposer may bill DHS for services and mileage according to the agreed-upon fee schedule. The proposed fee schedule should include a rate for rush service in addition to service in the standard time frames outlined above.

- If applicable, the Successful Proposer should designate a single point of contact for communication between DHS and the Successful Proposer .
- The Successful Proposer may enter into subcontracts to complete services required under the Agreement with the County, especially out-of-county service.

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMAT

A complete Proposal must include all of the components listed below, submitted as a word document or PDF (budget may be submitted in Excel). Use 1-inch margins, 12-point font and numbered pages. Single spacing is permissible. Please adhere to page limitations indicated below; other than required attachments, no additional attachments will be accepted (attachments may be included as a link).

Proposal Content

1. **Executive Summary (1 page):** please provide a brief summary of your Proposal
2. **Proposal Narrative (4 pages maximum)**
 - a. **Organizational Experience (1 page maximum)**
 1. Provide an overview of your organization, the range of services offered, current contracts and geographic area covered.
 2. Describe your organization's experience as a process server.
 3. Describe your organization's experience working with the target population (families involved with the child welfare system).
 - b. **Approach (3 pages maximum)**
 1. Describe how you would utilize current staff to complete service outside of Allegheny County and/or your plan for subcontracting.
 2. Describe your plan for ensuring all documents are picked up from the ALU/ALSP office within 24 hours, if the designated contact person determines they must be picked up.
 3. Describe your plan for ensuring that an initial service attempt is made within 24 hours of receiving the documents.
 4. Describe your plan for notifying the ALU/ALSP within 24 hours of the results of your service attempts and any new addresses discovered for an individual.
 5. Describe your plan for ensuring that affidavits are returned to the ALU/ALSP no later than eight days before the given hearing.
 6. Describe your plan for billing DHS for services and mileage.
3. **Budget and Budget Narrative (4 pages maximum)**
 - a. Provide your proposed fee structure, ensuring that it fits within DHS's funding guidelines. If you are unable to meet DHS's needs with the estimated available funding, please provide justification for the difference.
 - b. Complete a budget narrative explaining your proposed budget.
4. **References (1 page):** Include name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization.
5. **Required Attachments** (the following forms are available on the DHS website at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.aspx>)

- Cover Page
- MWDBE Participation Statement form
- W9
- Vendor Creation Form

SCORING AND SELECTION PROCESS

Scoring Criteria

The narrative and budget sections will be evaluated on a scale of 100 total points, based on the content of the Proposal as described above.

Proposal Narrative (80 points)

- Organizational Experience (30 points)
- Approach (50 points)

Budget and Budget Narrative (20 points)

Selection Process

DHS will use a formal evaluation process to select the Successful Proposer, including review of the Proposal and additional information/presentation as requested. DHS may contact individuals or entities with whom the Proposer has had dealings in the past, regardless of whether or not they are included as references in the Proposal.

DHS will perform an initial screening of all Proposals received. For a Proposal to be eligible for evaluation, the Proposal must be:

- Received from the Proposer by the due date/time
- Properly signed by the Proposer
- Properly formatted and include required forms and sections

Proposals that do not meet the initial screening are subject to rejection without further evaluation.

After the initial screening has occurred, the evaluation process for Proposals is as follows:

- DHS will designate an evaluation committee to review and evaluate all Proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The evaluation committee may consist of some or all of the following individuals:
 - County employees/contractors
 - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
 - Individuals selected for subject matter/content expertise or experience, or by virtue of other relevant experience/knowledge
- The evaluation committee will evaluate the Proposals based upon the Scoring Criteria.
- The County retains the exclusive discretion to shortlist a small number of Proposals receiving the

- highest or most satisfactory evaluations for more extensive review.
- If determined necessary, DHS may contact the Proposer for the purpose of clarifying any ambiguities in the Proposal, requesting Proposal modifications, or discussing Budget modifications.

Oral Presentations and Site Visits

DHS may create a short-list of Proposers who will be invited to give an oral presentation and demonstration of their tool(s). In that case, selected Proposers will be notified of the time and location, and will be provided with an agenda or topics for discussion. Questions asked during oral presentations or site visits will be for the purpose of clarifying the scope and content of the written Proposal.

Final Award Process

Following the evaluation process, which may include oral presentations and/or negotiations, the evaluation team will tabulate and submit an award recommendation to the DHS Director (the County reserves the right to recommend that none of the Proposals be selected). The DHS Director will then issue a recommendation to the County Manager who will make the final determination concerning award of an Agreement.

NOTHING HEREIN SHALL BE CONSTRUED OR INTERPRETED IN ANY WAY AS OBLIGATING THE COUNTY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ANY PROPOSER. THE COUNTY RESERVES THE RIGHT AT ALL TIMES NOT TO AWARD OR ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Proposals must be submitted by email to DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us, no later than 3:00 p.m. EDT on September 30, 2015. Proposals received after this time will not be accepted. The County reserves the right to extend or postpone the date and time for RFP activities; in the event of a change, the information will be posted on the website at <http://www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations.aspx>.

You will receive an email confirmation of receipt of your Proposal. Please contact us (via email or by calling Kelly Prokop at 412-350-6622) if you do not receive an email confirmation.

To be considered, the Proposal must include all of the specified information. DHS may request additional information and/or conduct investigation as necessary to determine the Proposer's ability to provide the requested service. This additional information may become part of the County's final award decision-making process.

All Proposals are the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement. Additionally, the Successful Proposer's Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive.

CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Agreement Terms and Conditions

The Successful Proposer will enter into an Agreement with the County of Allegheny, on behalf of DHS, for performance of the Scope of Services specified in this RFP and set forth in the Proposal. The Scope of Services specified in the RFP and Proposal shall become the Contracted Services. Information about contracting with the County to provide services to DHS and the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts for services for DHS which will be included in the Agreement can be found on the DHS website at:

<http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/contracting.aspx>

HIPAA compliance

DHS is a “covered entity” under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

CYBER Security

A significant portion of DHS business activities and related billing carried out under this RFP are done through information management systems or tools, including email. Proposers should meet the minimum computer specifications beginning on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#) and should make sure their computers, laptops and other electronic devices have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of a breach of information. In addition, the Proposer should have policies and procedures in place to assure that their electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected, etc.).

Conflict of Interest

By submitting a Proposal, the Proposer certifies and represents to the County that the Proposer has not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient’s decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Non-Discrimination

Proposer agrees to not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, consumer or any other person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, familial status, age (40 or over), or use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability of any individual or independent contractor or because of the disability of an individual with whom the person is known to have an association or on any other basis prohibited by federal, state or local law.