



Request for Proposals

Case Consultation for Child Welfare-Involved Families Experiencing Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence

RFP Posting: Friday, October 28, 2016

Deadline for Questions: Friday, December 2, 2016

Submission Deadline: Friday, December 9, 2016

Estimated Award Decision/Notification: February 2017

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
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Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following capitalized words are defined as follows for purposes of this RFP:

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. Child Fatality/Near-Fatality Reviews: State and local reviews of child fatalities and near fatalities when there is suspicion of abuse or neglect required by Pennsylvania's Act 33
4. 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
5. Conferencing and Teaming: The DHS standard of practice that engages individuals, families, supports and professionals in assessing strengths and needs and developing a plan for keeping children, youth and adults safe and healthy while continually integrating individual and family actions with professional services
6. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
7. Family Plan: A written plan for each family receiving services through DHS that describes: the specific circumstances under which the case was accepted; service objectives for the family (i.e., changes needed to protect children in need of protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation and to prevent out-of-home placement); services to be provided to achieve the objectives; and actions to be taken by the parents, children, DHS and others and the dates when these actions will be completed
8. Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): There are multiple definitions of family and intimate partner violence and abuse. According to the Department of Justice, it is defined as a "pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one intimate partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Family violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure or wound someone." In this RFP, we recognize that violence towards intimate partners does not exist in a vacuum and has direct or indirect effects on children, family members, cohabitants or other household members. For purposes of this RFP, family violence is not intended to mean child abuse, neglect, physical or sexual violence.
9. FAST: Family Advocacy and Support Tool, an assessment tool used to determine and discuss the strengths and needs of families involved in the child welfare system
10. KIDS: Key Information and Demographic System (KIDS), the electronic case record for clients of the Allegheny County child welfare office
11. PFA: Protection from Abuse, a document that offers legal protection from domestic violence; a paper signed by a judge that orders the perpetrator to stop the abuse or face serious legal consequences
12. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
13. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP

14. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
15. RFP: Request for Proposals
16. Specialist: One of the three full-time staff members that the Successful Proposer will provide as part of the Contract Services
17. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services' (DHS) child welfare office, is soliciting Proposals for expert consultation for cases with families experiencing Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The Successful Proposer will provide three full-time staff to: 1) assist child welfare caseworkers with planning for complex cases, as needed, during the day, evening and weekends; 2) provide support to child welfare-involved families who are experiencing Family Violence and IPV, and; 3) deliver training and ongoing education for caseworkers as requested.

Award Details

At the end of the RFP Process, the County, on behalf of DHS, anticipates entering into an Agreement with one Successful Proposer for the requested services. The anticipated amount of the Agreement will not exceed \$275,000 annually and is intended to fund three full-time staff (henceforth referred to as Specialists).

DHS expects there will be one Successful Proposer. However, DHS encourages two or more agencies to apply together under one Proposal to provide the scope of services requested. If two or more agencies partner together in submitting a Proposal, only one of the partnering agencies will enter into the Agreement.

What's important to us

The Successful Proposer must be an expert in engaging with and supporting all members of a family experiencing Family Violence and IPV (victims, perpetrators and children).

It is essential that the Specialists proactively work with caseworkers as a team.

Specialists must provide advocacy and guidance for victims of Family Violence and IPV in court, specifically providing the support needed before, during and after the process of securing a Protection from Abuse order (PFA).

Specialists must be available on weekends, evenings and holidays to respond to Family Violence and IPV emergencies.

What we don't want

This RFP is not soliciting Proposals for services that are applicable only to victims. Although services for victims of Family Violence and IPV is an essential piece of the RFP, expertise in working with perpetrators and children is also required.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposers to submit questions is Friday, December 2, 2016.
Proposals must be submitted by 3 p.m. EST on Friday, December 9, 2016.
Proposers will be notified of their selection status by February 2017.

Who we are

DHS is the issuing office for this RFP, on behalf of Allegheny County.

DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly-funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, intellectual disability, homelessness and community services.

More information about DHS is available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>

The issuance of this RFP and the receipt of any Proposals does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement. The County reserves the right at all times to reject any and all Proposals.

Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP

Some of Allegheny County's trends on the prevalence of violence are alarming. A five-year trend analysis of Child Fatality/Near-Fatality reviews found that almost 50 percent of mothers and 40 percent of fathers in these cases reported a history of involvement in Family Violence and IPV. The analysis concluded that child welfare professionals underestimate the significance of this risk factor and the potential immediate and future threats it may pose to child safety.

Children exposed to Family Violence and IPV suffer significant emotional, behavioral, psychological and physical consequences.¹ Therefore, it is vitally important that child welfare caseworkers have the support and guidance they need to identify and respond to Family Violence and IPV in families. To increase the level of staff understanding and competence, DHS is making Family Violence and IPV training available for child welfare intake and family service caseworkers, supervisors and other support staff. Part of this training is learning to use the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) assessment to support identification of Family Violence and IPV. With its new Family Violence and IPV module, the FAST can facilitate communication with child welfare-involved families about their strengths and needs and provide important information about Family Violence and IPV for case planning.

While this training is intended to significantly increase staff knowledge in Family Violence and IPV, staff will continue to need expert guidance to enhance their skills, especially when they encounter complex cases and families who need direct guidance and advocacy.

Section 2: What We Are Looking For

2.1 Scope of Services

DHS is seeking a Successful Proposer that will provide three full-time staff Specialists to assist child welfare caseworkers and families in relation to all aspects of Family Violence and IPV. Child welfare caseworkers and supervisors will contact the Specialists when they need assistance. The Successful Proposer must clearly demonstrate its ability to meet the requirements described in this section.

Assisting Caseworkers

The Successful Proposer will provide consultation to child welfare caseworkers in several different ways, including, but not limited to, phone consultation, on-site consultation and consultation through Conferencing and Teaming² and other child welfare meetings. Consultation must be provided to the five child welfare regional offices, spread geographically throughout the County, and the intake office.³ Specialists must develop professional relationships with caseworkers at the various offices and work

¹ Child-Witnessed Domestic Violence and its Adverse Effects on Brain Development: A Call for Societal Self-Examination and Awareness, Front Public Health 2014. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4193214/>

² Conferencing and Teaming is the practice model DHS uses. For more information, visit <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Children-Families/Conferencing-and-Teaming-in-CYF.aspx>

³ For a map and addresses of the child welfare offices, visit <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Offices.aspx>

with them as a team. It is essential that the Specialists are an accessible and valuable resource to caseworkers.

At the request of a caseworker, supervisor, clinical manager or regional office director, Specialists will provide expert guidance to enhance staff skills around case practice and decision making in cases involving Family Violence and IPV. This includes:

- Responding immediately to calls from child welfare caseworkers working with a family experiencing a crisis related to Family Violence and IPV
- Providing expert advice when caseworkers are making decisions about whether it is safe for child(ren) to remain in the home, and if not, how Family Violence and IPV impacts where a child can be placed in the extended family
- Providing guidance to caseworkers who have identified Family Violence and IPV in a family on their caseload, but who need help approaching family members (including victims, perpetrators and children) in a safe and trauma-informed way
- Providing guidance to caseworkers about how to refer family members (including victims, perpetrators and children) to appropriate Family Violence and IPV-related services in a safe way
- Giving input on how the service plan (Family Plan) that the caseworker puts in place must be prepared to ensure the child(ren)'s and victim's safety
- Attending Conferencing and Teaming meetings and other child welfare meetings as needed
- Guiding caseworkers navigating cases related to Family Violence and IPV on risk factors for children
- Helping caseworkers who may experience confusion and even frustration when the victim does not follow the plan that they have suggested (i.e., "Why isn't she leaving him?") to understand the complex dynamics at play
- Assisting caseworkers to ensure the safety of the victim when weighing options to leave the abusive relationship, including safety concerns when applying for a PFA and limitations of a PFA
- Helping caseworkers who are unsure how to engage with a perpetrator, particularly perpetrators exhibiting threatening behavior
- Assisting caseworkers in understanding how to reduce the risk to families through treatment for perpetrators in the family
- Assisting caseworkers with making decisions about their safety in relation to a case and navigating potentially unsafe and/or highly escalated situations
- Providing insight on how co-occurring issues within the family are affecting the Family Violence and IPV, including substance use and mental health disorders
- Guiding caseworkers through working with all types of families experiencing Family Violence and IPV, including families with same-sex couples, families with men who are victims, and immigrant/refugee populations
- Helping to guide and provide resources, as needed, to caseworkers and supervisors who may be experiencing secondary trauma or who are themselves survivors of Family Violence and IPV

Supporting Families

At the request of a caseworker, supervisor, clinical manager or regional office director, Specialists will support families experiencing Family Violence and IPV (i.e., clients). Responsibilities for supporting families include:

- Working with perpetrators to involve them in appropriate treatment
- Educating families about Family Violence and IPV and the impact on their child(ren)
- Engaging with victims who need additional support and educating them about their rights and how their decisions may impact their case
- Connecting children and youth to appropriate support services
- Assisting clients in securing services and/or treatment (e.g., helping the client make initial appointments, accompanying the client to the appointment, inquiring about progress)

Specialists also must provide advocacy and guidance for victims of Family Violence and IPV in court (all divisions of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas). Specifically, Specialists must provide support before, during and after the process of securing Protection from Abuse orders (PFAs), including helping victims to create a safety plan and access needed services and resources for their child(ren) and themselves.

Educating and Training Staff

In addition to assisting caseworkers and supporting families, the Successful Proposer must provide training and ongoing education to enhance the knowledge and skills of both newly-hired and experienced child welfare workers. At the request of the child welfare training department and/or regional office leadership, Specialists will provide education and training, in a variety of learning formats, on topics such as:

- Impact of violence on children, before and after birth
- Cycle of violence
- Perpetrator's behaviors and impact on the family
- Supporting survivors of Family Violence and IPV
- Teen dating violence
- Safety planning with families impacted by violence
- Secondary trauma from exposure to Family Violence and IPV

Training for newly-hired staff should include an overview of Family Violence and IPV, including but not limited to indicators of violence, interviewing and screening families for the presence of violence, worker safety and secondary stress, impact of violence on child development, and the approach to working with batterers, survivors, children and child welfare staff. Ongoing education for more seasoned staff will build on this foundation by offering skill-based learning opportunities through coaching that further enhance skills for working with families affected by Family Violence and IPV.

Additional Responsibilities

Specialists may be assigned additional responsibilities related to assisting caseworkers, supporting families and educating staff as needed, such as:

- Attending various case review processes as requested, including, but not limited to, Child Fatality and Near-Fatality reviews when the incidence involved Family Violence and/or IPV
- Providing consultation for qualitative case record review processes, within and independent from the child welfare office
- Providing guidance on policies and system responses related to Family Violence and IPV

2.2 Budget

At the end of the RFP Process, the County, on behalf of DHS, intends to enter into an Agreement with one Successful Proposer to provide the Scope of Services requested in this RFP. The anticipated amount of the Agreement will not exceed \$275,000 for one year and there will be an option to renew the Agreement. This amount is to fund three full-time Specialists for this service. If two or more agencies partner together in submitting a Proposal, only one of the partnering agencies will enter into the Agreement.

2.3 Staff Qualifications

The three Specialists must have, as a team, the spectrum of expertise required to perform the duties outlined above in the 'Scope of Services' section as well as experience with the child welfare system. Specialists must have the experience and educational background necessary to:

- Effectively engage and support child welfare caseworkers and all members of a child welfare-involved family experiencing Family Violence and IPV (including victims, perpetrators and children)
- Help caseworkers manage the Family Plan process with families in a way that keeps the child(ren) safe and connects families to effective interventions that safely assist them toward change
- Engage victims and assist caseworkers working with victims to keep them as safe as possible
- Engage perpetrators and assist caseworkers to safely engage and appropriately support perpetrators
- Use clinical skills and therapeutic knowledge to work with clients and families in sensitive situations

DHS expects that the Specialists will work comfortably with different populations, including victims, perpetrators, children/youth, child welfare staff, judges and child and family advocates. Specialists must be able to serve a diverse population with expertise and compassion. All caseworkers and families should feel well-served regardless of their ethnic or racial heritage, sexual orientation and gender identity, intellectual or physical disability, English language proficiency or life experiences.

Specialists must respond efficiently to caseworker requests, including on nights, weekends and holidays. Safety concerns around Family Violence and IPV are time sensitive and caseworkers must be able to receive assistance 24/7 when crises arise. Wait times for emergency consultation are not acceptable.

2.4 Data Collection and Reporting

Communication with caseworkers

The Specialists must communicate effectively with caseworkers, particularly in regard to their direct work with clients. It is imperative that the Specialists document the work that they do with families and efficiently communicate that information back to caseworkers and the court. Caseworkers need to have an up-to-date, specific record of the work Specialists have done with families on their caseload at all times. The Specialists are expected to document their work in KIDS and establish an efficient feedback loop with caseworkers.

Data collection and reporting to DHS

DHS expects to receive a comprehensive log of work completed by each of the Specialists, no less frequently than once per quarter. Examples of information that should be reported include:

1. In what circumstances was a crisis call made?
 - a. What advice/support was given?
2. If not a crisis call, how was Family Violence and IPV identified?
 - a. What advice/support was given?
3. Was the perpetrator successfully engaged?
4. Did the Specialist meet or speak directly with any members of the family?
5. Did the Specialist discuss or assist with any legal processes? Specify:
 - a. Did the Specialist go to court with the victim? If yes, for what?
 - b. How was safety ensured during the PFA process?
6. Were drug and alcohol or/and mental health services recommended? Was a referral made? Which family members were referred to services?
7. How was secondary trauma addressed with the child welfare caseworker?

Additionally, the Successful Proposer must measure caseworker satisfaction and, if possible, client satisfaction for the consulting services provided.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and should address their qualifications by responding to the specifically-requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 130 points, as outlined in the following sections.

Organizational Experience (45 points)

- Experience working with victims of Family Violence and IPV (5 points)
- Experience working with perpetrators of Family Violence and IPV (5 points)
- Experience working with children and youth who have witnessed Family Violence and IPV and/or have been abused/neglected (5 points)
- Experience with Family Violence and IPV and the judicial system, specifically PFAs (5 points)
- Experience working with the child welfare system and/or DHS (5 points)
- Experience making decisions about child safety related to Family Violence and IPV (5 points)
- Experience serving diverse populations, including working with special populations, such as same-sex couples and immigrants/internationals (5 points)
- Experience providing training and ongoing education about Family Violence and IPV (5 points)
- Experience with executing contracts similar to this, if applicable (5 points)

Staff Qualifications (20 points)

- Proof of appropriate staff qualification for the staff currently employed or planned to recruit to fill the three Specialist positions (10 points)
- Well thought-out plan for initial training for the Specialists to prepare them to provide quality services at the start of the contract (5 points)
- Exceptional organizational support and a solid strategy for ongoing professional development for the Specialists that will enable them to continue to provide quality services over time (5 points)

Staff Management (15 points)

- Solid strategy for distributing consulting requests among the three Specialists and, if applicable, working with partnering agencies (5 points)
- Workable plan for ensuring caseworker requests for crisis assistance will always receive an immediate response, including after hours and on weekends (10 points)

Data Collection & Reporting Requirements (15 points)

- Strategy to develop an efficient feedback loop that will provide caseworkers with specific documentation about work Specialists completed with clients on their caseload (5 points)
- Example or description of a comprehensive log of consultation work and a plan to provide log data to DHS (5 points)
- Plan for measuring caseworker and client satisfaction of consulting work and impact of services (5 points)

Addressing Implementation Challenges (10 points)

- Comprehensive plan to build positive relationships with caseworkers and engage them in utilizing the consulting services (5 points)
- Ability to respond to unexpected implementation challenges (5 points)

Financial Management (10 points)

- Experience fulfilling contractual obligations and fiscal management (5 points)
- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits and/or other supporting financial documentation (5 points)

Budget and Timeline (15 points)

- Detailed budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with the requested services and does not exceed \$275,000 annually (5 points)
- Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies the proposed budget (5 points)
- Implementation plan and timeline that aligns with the budget and lists the specific activities that will be completed during the first six months (5 points)

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

This RFP is a solicitation to individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations or businesses (Proposers) to submit a Proposal to perform the services as described in *Section 2: What We Are Looking For*. Proposers must have the ability to meet the identified needs and quality standards within the programmatic and funding guidelines specified in this RFP.

4.1 Submission Process

- a. Please take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see *Section 1: Why We Are Issuing this RFP*)
 - The narrative (see *Section 2: What We Are Looking For*)
 - The requirements (see *Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria*)
 - The evaluation process (see *Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal*)
- b. Please use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available at our Active Solicitations website with the RFP announcement at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- c. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following attachments that are available on our Active Solicitations website:
 - Response Form
 - MWDBE Participation Statement or MWDBE Waiver and Participation Statements
 - Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
 - Audited financial reports for the last three years
 - W-9
- d. Please do not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.
- e. If you do not have audited financial reports for the last three years, you may submit other financial statements that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing financial statements is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.
- f. Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts that may be specified in the Response Form.
- g. Proposals must be submitted electronically to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us no later than 3:00 p.m. EST on Friday, December 9, 2016 to be considered for review.**
- h. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will not be considered.
- i. You will receive an email when your Proposal is received. If you do not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting your Proposal, please contact DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us

4.2 How to Contact DHS about this RFP

- a. All inquiries and questions must be submitted via email to DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to questions, changes and clarifications will be posted at our Active Solicitations website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations
- c. Please be sure to check this website regularly for answers to questions, additional information or changes to the RFP or the RFP process.

4.3 Other Information

- a. The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers.
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all of the Terms and Conditions specified in *Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers*.
- c. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of a Proposal.
- d. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- e. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposer(s).

Section 5: How We Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee convened by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based on the Program description in *Section 2: What We Are Looking For* and on the evaluation criteria in *Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria* using the scale listed in *Section 5.1 c*.

5.1 Evaluation Model

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An Evaluation Committee will be formed by DHS and will consist of some or all of the following:
 - Content experts from within DHS, selected for their expertise and/or experience
 - Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
- b. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points to each response on a Proposer's Response Form according to their expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in *Section 3* using the following scale:
 - 0 – Not addressed in Proposal
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Below expectations
 - 3 – Meets expectations
 - 4 – Exceeds expectations
 - 5 – Outstanding
- c. The Evaluation Committee members then will meet collectively to compile and discuss the individual scores and evaluation of each committee member.
- d. The County shall have exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review using the same criteria outlined above. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make modifications to their Proposal or budget or make a formal oral presentation. The Evaluation Committee will review the modifications and/or oral presentation and rescore the shortlisted Proposals using the original evaluation criteria.

- e. At any time during the review process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- f. The Evaluation Committee will submit their recommendation for award of an Agreement to the Director of DHS for his approval, who in turn will submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).
- g. **The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- h. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination of which Proposer(s) will be awarded Agreements.
- i. Proposers not awarded an Agreement who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

For a Proposal to be eligible for evaluation, it must be:

- Received by the due date/time
- Properly formatted and include responses to all requested information
- Complete with all required forms and attachments

Proposals which do not meet the above requirements will not be considered.

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must be willing to comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County are provided in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.allegHENYcounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

6.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Requirements

Allegheny County has MWDBE goals of 13% participation for Minority Business Enterprises and 2% participation for Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, and expects that Proposers will make a good faith effort in assisting the County in meeting these goals.

- a. Proposers may be registered and certified with the Allegheny County Department of Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. If so, please indicate registration on the RFP cover page.
- b. Regardless of registration status, Proposals must include either of the following:
 1. If your organization is able to meet the MWDBE contract goals, an MWDBE Participation Statement is REQUIRED.
 2. If your organization will request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, an MWDBE Participation Statement and a Waiver Statement are REQUIRED. Please attach the required explanations with the waiver statement.
- c. MWDBE statements and resources can be found at:
 - [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)

- [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
 - A list of MWDBEs that have been certified by Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program can be found at <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/mwdbe/index.aspx>
- d. For more information about MWDBEs, please review the following: [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)

6.2 HIPAA Compliance

DHS is a covered entity under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Therefore, a Successful Proposer must comply with all HIPAA requirements.

6.3 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. All electronic devices must have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of an information breach.
- c. Successful Proposers must also have policies in place to ensure that electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected).

6.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

By submitting a Proposal, a Proposer agrees to not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, client 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.

6.5 New Provider Requirements

If awarded an Agreement, a Successful Proposer who does not have current Allegheny County contracts will be required to complete the [DHS New Provider Application](#), available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Prospective-Providers.aspx>. While not required as part of your Proposal, Proposers may wish to review the requirements of this application.