

## Attachment No.1 RFP Question and Answers

- Q1. Section B.3 indicates that the maximum quantity for each CLIN is 160. Is this quantity correct for CLIN 0001D which are to be billed on a monthly basis? In other words, is the proposed contractor supposed to submit a monthly or annual charge for this CLIN?
- A1. Yes, CLIN 0001D will be billed monthly for Kinship homes that have a child present in the home regardless of the number of children are in the home.
- Q2. Section B.4 requires the Contractor to subcontract at least 35% of the dollar volume of the contract in accordance with certified small business enterprises. This is a contract for services to be provided exclusively in Maryland by social workers who are licensed in Maryland. Will an exception be made to this requirement based upon the services being provided outside of the District of Columbia?
- A2. The 35% sub-contracting requirement does apply to this requirement. However, you may request a waiver. See, information for requesting a waiver (Attachment No. A), the waiver request must be received and approved prior to the date set for receipt of proposals.
- Q3. Similarly, the First Source Employment requirements establish a requirement that the Contractor make good faith efforts to hire District residents to fill any new positions created under this contract. Will an exception be made to this requirement based upon the services being provided outside of the District of Columbia?
- A3. First Source Employment requirements are applicable to this procurement.
- Q4. Section C.2 references the Implementation and Exit Plan of LaShawn A. v. Gray. Is the proposed contractor expected to comply with the requirements of this document, specifically with regard to Section A.6?
- A4. Section A of the Lashawn Exit Plan references CHILD SAFETY and specifically A.6 references visitation for children experiencing a new placement or a placement change. This section does not refer to the licensing contractor who does the monitoring services once the home is licensed but instead refers to the ongoing (CFSA) caseworker who is responsible for the children placed in the home.
- Q5. Section C 5.4.4.2 requires that the Contractor verify that applicants for re-licensure complete 15 hours of training, including 9 hours of face-to-face training, as **approved** by CFSA. What is the procedure for obtaining approval of the training?
- A5. Please see attached protocol for approval of In-service training hours through the Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA) at Child and Family Services Agency (See Attachment No. B)
- Q6. Section 5.3.8 is extremely confusing and requires clarification.

- a. What is the purpose of permitting closure of a home and then mandating re-opening of the home within 24 hours?  
This was instituted to help MD licensing agencies meet the state requirements regarding closures. This is only utilized when there is a child **ALREADY** placed in the home. This ensures that monitoring of the placement is occurring. **NOTE:** An extension will be granted in these instances for 90 days. This section applies to Kinship homes with emergency temporary licenses.
- b. If a home is closed and then immediately re-opened, under what circumstances will a 90 day extension be granted and what is the procedure for obtaining such an extension?  
A 90 day extension will always be granted in instances where children are already placed in the home. This extension **only** applies to kinship cases that have an emergency temporary license in Maryland. In these instances when the full license has not been achieved in 110 days, CFSA will automatically enter an extension in the system. No paperwork is required from contract agency.
- c. What does the 120 day time frame referenced in this section refer to?  
120 day timeframe comes from MD licensing standards in **COMAR**
- d. What is the purpose of granting a 90 day extension if the home must be licensed within 120 days?  
Although COMAR allows 120 days to license the home the contractual agreement allots time for CFSA review and approval therefore 110 days is the timeframe we are utilizing. Again, an extension is **only** issued in cases where there has been an emergency temp license issued and children are placed in the home.
- e. COMAR 07.05.02.13C prohibits anyone who is not a certified foster parent from providing care for a foster child. Under what legal authority would a Contractor have the ability to issue the provisional license referenced in this section?  
Provisional licenses are issued at the **discretion** of CFSA and follow the 90 day extension, if full licensure has not occurred. This process of provisional licensure is granted to CFSA through the **MD pilot program** for temporary licensure of kin and is not a COMAR or DCMR regulation.

Q7. Does CFSA anticipate that Orders of Reference in adoption cases filed in D.C. Superior Court seeking the finalization of adoption of children who are legally committed to CFSA will be directed by the Court to the Contractor or to CFSA? (See, Section 5.6.)

A7. This is a case management duty therefore CFSA's responsibility

Q8. Section C.5.7.1 appears to require the Contractor to cede its professional responsibility to approve or deny an applicant to CFSA. We believe that to do so would be a violation of professional standards and Maryland and District of Columbia requirements regarding licensure of child placement agencies. In addition, by disallowing payment for services rendered for homes that cannot be licensed, the RFP sets up a potential conflict of interest for contractors who will then have a financial incentive to license applicants that would otherwise not meet licensure standards. Nonetheless, we appreciate CFSA's interest and need to secure as many appropriately licensed homes in as timely a manner as possible and believe that there is a workable compromise that can address this situation. For example, another RFP issued by CFSA includes the following language:

*CFSA shall review the proposed recommendation and respond to the Contractor within five (5) business days. If CFSA does not accept the Contractor's decision to approve the home study, CFSA shall provide the Contractor with a list of any issues or documents that are missing from the home study report and the Contractor shall provide the additional information to CFSA within one business day. If the Contractor recommends denying the home study and CFSA disagrees with the Contractor's recommendation, CFSA and the Contractor shall work together to seek resolution of any deficiencies that are preventing approval of the home study.*

We respectfully request that CFSA consider this issue and amend the RFP to eliminate this barrier to responding to the RFP.

A8. It is not the intent of CFSA to infer that professional responsibility is negated or delegated to another entity but instead Section C.5.7.1 focuses on outcomes rather than activities. CFSA has increased its dedication to achieve standards and benchmarks set forth in our Lashawn Exit Plan. It is our intent to increase the timeliness of licensure and to direct our contracts towards performance and outcome measures. In this instance, licensing is the service being purchased.

There should never be a time where compromising of ethical standards or licensing regulations, should be utilized in order to, "license applicants that would otherwise not meet licensure standards because of financial incentives."

In addition, Section C.5.3.10 requires the submission of a monthly report which requires the contractor to provide a status update to include barriers with licensing and efforts to address the same. Therefore, any barriers that cannot be successfully addressed should become apparent prior to the 110 day licensure requirement.

In regards to "possible language" CFSA and contractor agencies have formal case staffing's to discuss strategies and processes to facilitate full licensure. These staffing's need to occur timely so that licensure can occur in the 110 day timeframe. **Section C.5.3.6** of the current solicitation already contains the language proposed.

Q9. Section C.5.7.3 requires return of the "entire official file", to CFSA when homes are denied, transferred or closed. Please define what is to be included in the "entire official file."

A9. The entire foster/adoptive/kinship home record from RAP to Approval/Denial/Closure documentation.

Q10. Section 5.7.6 contains contradictory numbers in the last line. Is the correct number of days one hundred twenty (120) or one hundred ten (110)?

A10. See addendum.

Q11. Section 5.8.2 is confusing. The performance indicator appears to establish a higher standard than the standard itself. Further, full licensure of any RAP depends upon the willingness of the applicants to complete the process and their ability to be an appropriate resource for a child. The

Contractor cannot guarantee that it will license a set percentage of RAPS as the contractor has no ability to control the quality of RAPS it receives. We respectfully request that CFSA consider this issue and amend the RFP to eliminate this barrier to responding to the RFP.

A11. See addendum.

Q12. Please describe the safety inspection referred to in Attachment J.9.

A.12 A safety inspection of the home to ensure that it remains in regulatory compliance. This involves a basic safety check

Q13. What documents will CFSA provide to the Contractor prior to placing a child in a home licensed by the Contractor to enable the Contractor to assess whether the proposed placement is appropriate for the home?

A13. CFSA will provide the documents listed in Section C.5.1