

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**For**  
**Child Care Management Services**



**ISSUED BY**

**STATE OF ALABAMA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Child Care Services Division**  
**Office of Child Care Subsidy**

**May 24, 2004**

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

## **Child Care Management Services**

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## I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

### A. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals for professional services in the area of child care management services for the Child Care Subsidy Program in the State of Alabama. The mission of the Child Care Subsidy Program is to provide Alabama's families equal access to affordable and quality child care services. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 amended section 418 of the Social Security Act to provide Federal child care funds to State Lead Agencies. The funds designated under section 418 are referred to by the Department of Health and Human Services as the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to reflect the integration of multiple funding sources. The Department of Human Resources (hereafter referred to as the Department) has been designated in the State of Alabama as the Lead Agency for the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

The Department is announcing the availability of CCDF funds received pursuant to U.S. Department of Human Services regulations found at 45 CFR Part 98. Funds totaling **approximately \$8 million** will be available for child care management administrative service during fiscal year 2005.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$375,000 - \$1,200,000 for one year

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$720,000

Estimated Number of Awards: 1 - 8

Project Period: Up to 24 months

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this RFP. Actual funding will depend on the availability of federal and state allocations and size of project area. Funding will be distributed in a way that will maximize equitable services to families eligible under the Child Care Subsidy Program.

Address all proposals to:

**Jeanetta Green, Director  
Office of Child Care Subsidy  
Child Care Services Division  
Alabama Department of Human Resources  
50 Ripley Street  
P. O. Box 304000  
Montgomery, AL 36130-4000**

- a) Proposals must be received at the above address by:  
**Date: June 30, 2004**  
**Time: 12:00 Noon (Central Time)**  
Late or incomplete Proposals will not be accepted. Also, no changes or supplements to the Proposal will be allowed after the deadline, except for those provided for and/or requested by the Department.
- b) Special Note: The Department encourages applicants to consider using an alternative delivery method to normal mail delivery (for example, a commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service; U.S. Postal Service Express mail) to transmit your proposal to the Department. Alternative delivery methods also allow applicants to track the delivery of their proposal, which may be useful in ensuring timely delivery of proposals. Applicants should allow ample time for proposals to reach the Department by the deadline date. If you use an alternative method to deliver your proposal, address proposals to:  
**Jeanetta Green, Director**  
**Office of Child Care Subsidy**  
**Child Care Services Division**  
**Alabama Department of Human Resources**  
**50 Ripley Street**  
**Montgomery, AL 36104**
- c) Applicants may submit written questions regarding this RFP to:  
**Office of Child Care Subsidy**  
**Child Care Services Division**  
**Alabama Department of Human Resources**  
**50 Ripley Street**  
**P. O. Box 304000**  
**Montgomery, AL 36130-4000**  
**FAX: (334) 353-1491**  
**Email: [aallen@dhr.state.al.us](mailto:aallen@dhr.state.al.us) or [lcaver@dhr.state.al.us](mailto:lcaver@dhr.state.al.us)**
- d) To be considered, all proposals must be concise, describing the agency's ability to meet the RFP requirements. Agencies should avoid fancy bindings and promotional materials within the proposal. All material submitted becomes the property of the Department.
2. RESERVATIONS
- a) The Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion to reject any or all of the proposals received and/or cancel the

RFP if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Department to do so.

- b) The Department reserves the right to waive any minor irregularity in an otherwise valid proposal that would not jeopardize the overall program and to award a contract in the best interest of the Department. Minor irregularities are those which will not have a significant adverse effect on overall program cost or performance.
  - c) The Department reserves the right to reject a proposal from any entity whose history in working with the Department indicates that the entity and the Department have historically been unable to work in harmony and cooperation.
  - d) Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Department to select a proposal, to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request.
  - e) The Department reserves the right to negotiate with any applicant whose proposal is within the competitive range with respect to technical plan and cost, as well as to select an applicant other than the applicant offering the lowest price.
  - f) The Department reserves the right to adopt to its use all or any part of an applicant's proposal and to use any idea or all ideas presented in a proposal.
  - g) The Department reserves the right to have some or all of the applicants provide oral presentations of their proposals.
  - h) The Department reserves the right to amend this RFP.
3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
- a) The proposal must contain original signatures of persons legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal.
  - b) The original proposal along with **four (4)** copies must be submitted to the Department.
  - c) The proposal must be responsive to the RFP and must use the forms and format as specified by the Department.

- d) The proposal must be the work product of the applicant. If the proposal is determined not to be the work product of the applicant, the proposal may be rejected.

#### 4. PROPOSAL SELECTION

- a) If a proposal is selected, the selection will be based upon evaluation methodology developed by the Department (See Section C). However, selection of a proposal may or may not result in a contract. The Department reserves the right to reject a proposal, to select another proposal, or to cancel the RFP.
- b) Notification in writing will be provided to all applicants of the selection or rejection of their proposal.

#### 5. QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANT

The applicant should state in the proposal qualifications that will lead to successful completion of the requirements of this RFP including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) The applicant must possess a high degree of professional skill in the area of child development, early care and education, and/or social service. In addition, applicants must demonstrate the ability to manage Department funds in accordance with Federal and State regulations and guidelines. Private for profit, non-profit organizations and agencies, and public entities are eligible to submit a proposal.
- b) A summary of the structure of the applicant organization and evidence of sufficient organizational resources to ensure successful project management and successful completion of services with a high standard of quality including:
  - (1) Description of the legal status of the organizations (i.e., non profit for profit, sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, and whether public or private)
  - (2) Description and names of the program's governing board of directors and the names, title, and responsibilities of all officers, identifying those who are authorized to negotiate a contract with the Department and

who have responsibility and accountability for the contract.

- (3) A brief history of the applicant, with the date of incorporation or if unincorporated the date the business began; other programs operated in the past and currently; and prior names of the organization if any.
  - (4) For non-governmental agencies, a **copy** of the most recent financial audit.
  - (5) Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- b) The applicant must identify individuals and service sites in various communities that the agency intends to use in performing this service. Only prior work by the applicant that is relevant to this RFP should be documented. A brief history of the formation and development of the applicant organization must be provided.
  - c) A job description of each type of position that will be used in providing the service. Such description should include specific duties of the position and the process or procedure for supervision, minimum education, training and experience required, and length and type of in-service training to be provided.
  - d) Information indicating the ability to secure staff to provide the service.
  - e) Any special consideration of a technical or administrative nature (i.e., management or financial controls) that would tend to enhance program performance.
  - f) Any licenses held by the applicant.
  - g) Minimum qualifications established by the Department in the RFP.

6. BUDGET INFORMATION

A budget detailing all reasonable and necessary expenditures of the proposal must be submitted. The budget information must be compiled in the manner specified in Attachment A. A narrative

description of each line item and also the responsibilities of all personnel must also be submitted.

## **B. NOTICE**

If a proposal is accepted and a contract is executed on the basis of a proposal, the applicant will be subject to the following requirements:

### **1. TIMELY SUBMISSION**

Reports and data delineated in Part II-A, PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS, must be submitted on a timely basis in the format required by the Department.

### **2. ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORTS**

The Department may request written reports of achievement and the applicant will be required to comply with such requests.

### **3. PROGRESS REVIEW MEETINGS**

The Department may request progress review meetings and the applicant will be required to comply with such a request.

### **4. PROGRAM AUDITS AND RECORD KEEPING**

The Applicant must comply with financial and programmatic audits as well as record keeping requirements as may be established by the Department. Reports and data requested by the Department must be submitted on a timely basis in a format requested by the Department. Program monitoring will occur on an ongoing basis and written reports will be reviewed and evaluated by the child care subsidy staff at the Department.

### **5. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

A performance evaluation tool developed by the Department will be used to evaluate the degree to which agencies administer programs according to applicable Federal and State regulations and Department policies. Agencies that are not maintaining acceptable performance standards will be subject to corrective action including repayment of funds and/or termination of contract.

6. INVESTIGATIONS

The Department will require the applicant's cooperation and assistance in any investigations of compliance including allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

7. OTHER

Other requirements as may be established by the Department and communicated in writing to the applicant.

**C. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

1. The Department will review and select proposals received in accordance with the general criteria defined herein.
2. Failure of the applicant to provide information required in this RFP may result in the disqualification of the proposal.
3. A comparative scoring process, using detailed criteria, will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the general evaluation criteria. A committee composed of representatives from the state and county offices of the Department of Human Resources and other agencies will review all proposals based on the following criteria:
  - a) Demonstrated ability to provide the specified services to families and providers within the proposed service area.
  - b) Span of the geographic service area.
  - c) Adequacy and completeness of the proposal with regard to the information specified in the RFP, and compliance with the provisions contained in the RFP.
  - d) Qualifications and experience of the applicant to successfully complete the contract.
  - e) Technical content of the proposal concerning the program description and the management controls to be applied.
  - f) Reasonableness and amount of the proposed cost, the current financial stability of the agency and the ability of the agency to handle programs on a **cost reimbursement basis**. However, the proposed cost will not be the primary factor in the selection process.
  - g) Degree to which the agency's most recent financial audit is free of material weaknesses and compliant with the

requirements of laws, regulations, and contracts and grants applicable to each of its funding programs.

- h) Other criteria as may be determined by the Department.

## II. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

### A. PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

The mission of the Department's Child Care Subsidy Program is to provide Alabama's families equal access to affordable and quality child care services. The Department is responsible for directing and approving the development, implementation and administration of all services authorized under the Child Care Subsidy Program in the State of Alabama. This includes: interpreting federal and state laws, regulations and requirements; establishing Program and funding priorities; promulgating all rules, policies and procedures governing the services to be provided; and planning, coordinating and directing all Program services.

#### 1. POPULATION TO BE SERVED

- a) **Project Service Area:** The Project Service Area for each proposed child care management service agency should include no less than four counties within the State of Alabama. An applicant can propose to provide services for a group of four or more counties or the entire number of counties in the state. No applicant will be constrained from proposing to provide the services to only a certain geographical area of the state. If two or more selected applicants propose to provide services for one or more of the same counties, the Department will reserve the right to designate only one of the applicants to provide services to each or any of these counties.
- b) **Eligible Client:** In order to be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program a child must be in need of services and live with a parent(s) who are gainfully employed and/or participating in an allowable job training or educational program, for a minimum average of 15 hours per week. Each family must also be a resident of Alabama and must apply for services with the designated agency or service provider responsible for their county of residence.
- c) **Number to be Served:** See **Attachment C** and **Attachment D** for a list of the estimated numbers of families and children served by county and the estimated number of families and children on a waiting list for care. The number of staff

positions requested in a proposal should take into account the number of families served in a county and the number of eligible families that may be placed on a waiting list. Staff making eligibility determinations are expected to maintain a minimum caseload of 250 families.

## 2. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The child care management service agencies are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Child Care Subsidy Program, which includes:

- a) **Determination of initial and continuing eligibility for services:** Agencies are responsible for accepting applications for child care assistance, conducting client interviews and determining eligibility based upon eligibility policies and procedures outlined in the *Child Care Subsidy Program Policies and Procedures Manual*. Each agency or service provider will also be responsible for assessing the need, on an on-going basis, for implementing a waiting list in project service area, when sufficient child care funds do not exist to serve new applicants for child care assistance.
- b) **Providing case management services:** Agencies are responsible for providing on-going case management services for all families and child care providers in the service area. This includes scheduling and conducting all initial and continued eligibility determination interviews; processing all changes received from families and providers, and working closely and cooperatively with County Department offices in processing referrals for JOBS, Foster Care and Protective Service recipients. Each caseworker will be expected to maintain a caseload of approximately 250 families and may have to travel to remote sites and/or satellite office locations within the service area.
- c) **Providing Resource & Referral (R&R) Services:** Agencies are responsible for providing basic Resource & Referral Services to families as needed or requested in order to assist parents in selecting a child care provider. Each agency or service provider will be responsible for maintaining such an R & R listing using Departmental approved software.
- d) **Making Payments To Providers:** Agencies are responsible for issuing correct and timely monthly reimbursement payments to child care providers. This process includes:

- (1) Registering providers for participation in the Child Care Subsidy Program on an annual basis including documenting published rates, policies and closure dates and ensuring that correct rates and closure days and other pertinent and required information is entered into the child care subsidy system.
  - (2) Mailing out monthly Enrollment Attendance Verification (EAV) forms to providers.
  - (3) Receiving completed attendance reports from providers.
  - (4) Reconciling attendance reports with automated reimbursement reports and making necessary adjustments in the actual payments to be issued to child care providers.
- e) **Documenting the delivery of services:** Agencies are responsible for providing the administrative services needed to effectively implement and carry out Program Services in a timely manner.
- f) **Conducting fiscal and administrative monitoring of providers:** Agencies are responsible for conducting fiscal and administrative monitoring of child care providers that receive funds under the Child Care Subsidy Program according to policy established by the Department to determine their compliance with Program guidelines including correct billing and collection of the required parent fees.
- g) **Providing prudent management of departmental funds:** Agencies are responsible for managing Departmental funds in accordance with applicable Federal and State regulations. Agencies are required to maintain sufficient documentation of any and all expenses reimbursed from Departmental funds. Agencies are required to have an annual A-133 audit conducted in accordance with Department guidelines and federal and state regulations. The Department will also conduct periodic programmatic and fiscal audits to determine program compliance. Agencies will have the responsibility of making ongoing assessments of program services to determine the amount of funds available for maintaining continued services to families in care, and when funds are limited, to place future applicants for services on a waiting list.

- h) **Completing and submitting timely data and reports required by the Department:** Agencies are required to submit accurate billing reports on a monthly basis, and other reports as required by the Department for the management of the Program.

## **B. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL**

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates understanding of the nature of the proposed project will have a substantial bearing on the evaluation of the proposal. Proposals shall contain certain specified information and should adhere, as closely as possible, to the format presented here. Each copy of the proposal shall contain the following:

1. **Title Page (no points; 1 page)** with the following information:
  - a) Agency submitting the Proposal.
  - b) Name, title, phone number and address of person who can respond to inquiries regarding the proposal. Original signature of person(s) legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal.
2. **Program Narrative: (20 points: maximum of 3 pages)** This section should contain information which demonstrates the applicant's understanding of the nature of the proposed project including an understanding of the need for and purpose of the program
  - a) A brief summary of the applicant's understanding of the requirements set forth in this RFP. The narrative must address the following:
    - (1) The project objectives (as the applicant views them) necessary to fulfill service provision and program goals and including all service elements contained in the specifications sections of the RFP (Section II, A).
    - (2) A description of the proposed program components and a rationale for each component based on either existing research and/or agency experience.

- (3) A clear explanation of the methods by which the agency intends to provide the service(s).
  - (4) An implementation plan which lists for each service the activities which will be conducted to accomplish the objective and a beginning and completion date for each activity.
3. **Proposed Project Service Area: (20 points, maximum 2 pages)**  
This section should indicate the counties included in the proposed service area; give the rationale for selecting the proposed service area and indicate the ability of the Applicant to provide the required services within all counties in the proposed service area.
4. **Prior Experience: (25 points; maximum 3 pages)** Describe the structure of the applicant organization (Per the criteria outlined in Section II-B) and its capacity to deliver the service(s). Describe prior history of providing case management to clients or other customer service experience, prior experience in serving the target population and any prior history of issuing monthly payments or reimbursements. For applicants new to the field, document your experience and expertise related to this RFP.
  - a) The applicant should provide copies of the following documents:
    - (1) Documentation that the Applicant agency is registered with Alabama's Secretary of State to conduct affairs in Alabama and documentation of its for profit or not for profit status.
    - (2) Names of members of the board of directors.
    - (3) Copies of all licenses held by the Applicant for licensed day care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes and/or approval to operate an exempt from licensure child care facility.
    - (4) Disclosure of any staff member's affiliations with licensed day care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes and/or exempt from licensure child care facilities including board membership and management responsibility.

5. **Staff Recruitment and Job Descriptions: (20 points, maximum 1 page for description of staff recruitment; a separate page for each staff position title).** The Proposal should indicate if the Applicant has sufficient staff available to perform the services required under this RFP. Indicate the number of anticipated staff for each position title.

Job descriptions must be provided for each staff position that will be involved in performing the services required in this proposal. For each staff position involved in providing services in this proposal the job description must include:

- a) Title of the position
  - b) Working hours
  - c) Salary range
  - d) Narrative job summaries
  - e) Specific responsibilities
  - f) Educational and experience requirements
6. **Management and Financial Controls: (25 points, maximum 1 page)** Indicate procedures in place to assure that Departmental funds are handled in accordance with federal and state regulations and procedure for maintaining accountability of funds including but not limited to:
- a) Procedures for documenting expenditures of funds
  - b) Financial structure for receipting funds and issuing reimbursements to providers
  - c) Procedures for maintaining accurate inventory of supplies and equipment purchased with Departmental funds
  - d) Clear and concise plan for allocation of funds if the Applicant operates under more than one funding source.
  - e) Degree to which the most recent financial audit is free of material weaknesses and compliant with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts and grants applicable to each of its funding programs.

7. **Budget: (10 points)** Prepare budget using the attached Budget form. Attach a detailed budget justification (**maximum 2 pages**) that describes the activities and responsibilities of all personnel as well as other proposed line item expenses. The evaluation process will give priority to Proposals that include budgets with a greater percentage of funds for direct services rather than program administration.

## **III. ATTACHMENTS**