



Q1. Page 15

“A library stocked with printed material regarding adoption related issues...”

Does the vendor have to multiple libraries or is one centrally located library be suffice?

R1. Libraries at each of the regional offices are currently being utilized. In addition, a comprehensive listing of items in the libraries is available online. Materials can be checked in/out locally or via a mail/return postage system.

Q2. Page 15

“Services must be provided to adoptive parents and their adopted and biological children under the age of 25, DHR-approved and waiting families considering adoption, and adult adoptees through monthly support groups”

Are monthly support groups supposed to be statewide? How many families are needed to have a monthly support group?

R2. Families statewide must have access to monthly support groups. The groups should be large enough for meaningful exchange of information and for it to be cost-effective. Applicants should design monthly support groups that incorporate activities for children as an incentive for families to take advantage of the services.

Q3. Page 16

“Group activities must include outings and other events for families”

How many group activities need to be provided per year? Do outings need to be statewide?

R3 Holiday, seasonal activities, opportunities for respite (no overnight), and events related to National Adoption Month are currently being provided. Yes.

Q4. Page 16

“An annual permanency conference must be offered for up to 300 DHR staff participants. Professionals serving families and children in the adoption process may also be included.”

Can you provide an estimate on how many professionals would be included?

R4. The number of other professionals vary; however, the conference is intended for DHR staff; therefore, the number of non-DHR professionals should be limited.

Q5. Page 16

“DHR partners such as AFAPA, Heart Gallery Alabama, and other as determined by the Dept. will be exempt from registration fees”

Can you provide an estimate on how many professionals from these organizations will attend the permanency conference?

R5. See R4. There is no historical data on attendance; therefore, vendors must decide how many non-DHR professional will be allowed.

Q6. Page 17

“The Vendor will be responsible for working with camp facility to ensure the proper maintenance and operation of the camp site and to ensure that the adequate number of relevant camp staff is available from all regions/counties of the state.”

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Can you provide the ratio for number of relevant camp staff and the qualifications to be a camp staff member?

R6. The “relevant camp staff” will vary based on the games, activities, events (zip lines, boating, swimming facilities) provided by the facility. The number and qualifications of the staff will be determined by the facility and agreed upon by the vendor based on the anticipated attendance. Regarding the ratio of camp staff and qualifications to be a camp staff member, vendors must research and include in their proposals the number and qualifications of staff they intend to provide. The functioning level of the children attending the camp will vary. Some children may be able to safely participate in camp activities with a higher staff-to-camper ratio; other children may require one on one, or perhaps multiple staff to the same child.

Q7. Page 18

“For pre-adoption services, since payment will not be made until match has been identified.”

What is considered a match?

R7. A match exists when the state adoption staffing team recommends moving forward after reviewing the non-identifying background summary of a child/sib group and the adoption study of a potential family and the potential family agrees to move forward and meet the child and begin pre-placement visits.

Q8. Page 26

“A fixed rate is specified in the RFP document for provision of services, any proposed submitted exceeding the fixed rate will be deemed non-responsive and no further consideration will be given.”

Is there a fixed rate the information and referral services, the library, adoptive support groups, educational trainings, counseling, permanency conference, adoption camp, and recruitment response team?

R8. The fixed rates in this procurement pertain to the pre-adoption services components, only.

Q9. Appendix, p. 39: There is a budget form for FY 2014 provided.

a. Should we submit a budget and budget narrative for both FY 2013 AND FY 2014?

R9. Yes. Vendors must submit a separate budget and narrative for each fiscal year.

Q10. Section 1.0 Project Overview, page 7: *...to families and children in the process of adopting or who have been adopted through the Alabama Department of Human Resources...*

a. Are only children and families who adopted through DHR eligible for the services or are those who adopted privately also eligible. If only DHR children/families are eligible, this could significantly affect the units of service and/or the numbers of persons served.

R10. DHR-families must be given priority for all services, activities, and projects for this procurement. Non-DHR families may be allowed to participate if/when slots are available.

Q11. Section 3.5 Counseling, page 16: *The Department reserves the right to negotiate with the selected vendor the various types (or levels) of counseling and minimum/maximum duration for each type upon execution of the contract.*

a. Can you please clarify this statement? Specifically, clarify examples of “types (or levels) of counseling”.

R11. Counseling is an essential component of the post adoption services. This service helps families adjust at various points of the adoption journey. Counselors must demonstrate the capacity to work with children who have victimized by varying degrees of abuse, neglect, trauma and loss. These

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counselors must have clinical experience and knowledge that can help them assist families with: 1) attachment and bonding issues; 2) parenting children who have been victimized sexually; and 3) work with DHR adoption placement staff to prepare families for real life with these children.

Counselors must be willing to go into families' homes when necessary. Throughout the course of the contract, the counseling needs of the children and/or families waiting will change. There must be flexibility with the selected vendor for additional units of services for children as children's and families' needs dictate. For instance, if a counselor works with a child on adoption preparation, it should not prevent the child from being able to get counseling directed at disruption prevention. In addition, counseling must not be limited to children matched to a family.

Q12. Section 3.12 Staffing Qualifications, page 19-20:

- a. Are the positions listed the only positions allowed or can the vendor propose their own staffing pattern? For example, counseling is a required service, but there is not a position for a counselor. Camp and conference services are required, yet there is no position for these services.

R12. Vendors are not required to fill all of the positions listed in the RFP nor are they limited to the listed positions. Vendors are encouraged to be creative in how services provided.

Q13. Section 3.12.1 Program Director, page 19: *The Director of the child placing agency...*

- a. Should this read "The PROGRAM Director" instead?

R13. Yes.

Q14. Section 3.12.2 Regional Coordinator/Supervisor, p. 19: *The Regional Coordinator must possess a master's degree in the human services field with more than 5 years experience in direct casework with adopting families or a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) with a minimum of five years experience in clinical casework with foster and/or adoptive families preferred.*

- a. Does this mean that non-social workers are only required to have direct work experience, but social workers are required to have CLINICAL experience? Please clarify DHR's intent between direct casework and clinical casework.
- b. If the vendor is hiring a social worker, is the candidate required to have an LCSW or can it be an LGSW with a requirement to obtain an LCSW within 2 years?

R14. a. No. Non-social workers are required to have five years direct experience. A LCSW must have some experience, but the full five years is preferred.

b. No. A master's degree in human services with five years of experience will suffice. A LGSW meets the human service degree requirement.

Q15. Section 3.12.4 Family Support Staff Level II, page 19: *The Family Support Staff Level II must possess a bachelor's degree in social work or a related field with licensure required where applicable with five years experience in field of social work.*

- a. Could DHR reconsider the years of experience for this position? The previous RFP for this service had an addendum that only required 2 years of experience. Could this be considered again?

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R15. a. Yes. Yes.

Q16. Section 3.12.5 Family Support Staff Level III, page 19: *The Family Support Staff Level III must possess a master's degree in the human services field with more than 5 years experience in direct casework with children and adopting families and a minimum of five years experience in clinical casework with foster and/or adoptive families preferred.*

- a. Could DHR reconsider the years of experience for this position? The previous RFP for this service had an addendum that only required 3 years of experience. Could this be considered again?
- b. Should this read "master's degree in the human services field with more than 5 years experience in direct casework with children and adopting families OR a minimum of five years experience in clinical casework"?
- c. Please clarify DHR's intent between direct casework and clinical casework.

R16. a. Yes. Yes.

b. Yes.

Q17. Section 3.12.9 Recruitment/Retention/Response Staff, page 20: *The Recruitment/Response Staff must have a minimum of 5 years experience in direct casework involving children and families served in the foster care system.*

- a. Could DHR reconsider the years of experience for this position? The previous RFP for this service had an addendum that only required **3** years of experience. Could this be considered again?
- b. Could DHR reconsider the type of experience required for this position? The previous RFP addendum required 3 years working with children and/or families involved with the child welfare system instead of direct CASEWORK. This would allow for foster/adoptive parents with significant knowledge to fill these positions.

R17. a. Yes. Yes.

b. Yes.

Q18. Section 3.12.10 Administrative/Office Support Staff, page 20

- a. Previously this has been utilized for a centralized office support person. Regional office support has been filled with Family Support Level I. The centralized office support person requires more experience and a higher skill level. Is this set-up still in compliance with this RFP?

R18. a. Yes.

Q19. Section 3.6 Permanency Conference, page 16: *The conference must be offered for up to 300 DHR staff participants. Professionals serving families and children in the adoption process may also be included.*

- a. Are the professionals other than the DHR participants included in the 300 or is it expected to serve 300 DHR staff and then additional professionals? This would significantly affect the cost for the event.

R19. No. The 300 are DHR staff. The costs of the additional professionals must not be built into the proposed cost to the Department; registration fees should be charged to adequately cover the cost of their participation.

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- Q20.** Section 3.7 Adoption Camp, page 16: *The camp site must also have the capacity to serve privately adopted children and their siblings when space is available...*
- a. Are children from private adoptions only allowed IF space is available or is the vendor allowed to accept privately adopted children as long as it does not exceed 10%?
- R20. Yes, children from private adoptions are allowed only IF space is available.**
- Q21.** Section 3.9.2 Training, page 18: *GPS meetings must be facilitated by co-leading teams comprised of at least one **staff** person and at least one foster or adoptive parent.*
- a. Are vendors allowed to utilize independent contractors to facilitate these meetings?
- R21. Yes.**
- Q22.** Section 3.9.5 Pre-Adoption Services Training, page 18: *For pre-adoption services, since payment will not be made until a match has been identified, vendors must track adoptive homes until a match is made.*
- a. The current practice is for the vendor to be paid after completion of each phase (i.e. training, family portfolio, match). Is it DHR's intent to change this current practice? This could be a significant barrier for a potential vendor.
- R22. The selected vendor will be paid after completion of each phase.**
- Q23.** Section 3.9.5 Pre-Adoption Services Tracking, page 18-19: *...a staffing team, which includes staff from the county where the child resides, where the resource resides, and staff from the Office of Permanency have agreed that a child will be offered to the approved adoptive resource....*
- a. Can the vendor be included in the staffing team?
 - b. Currently, an APAC resource family match conducted by a county outside of the state staffing team is also considered a match eligible for payment. Will this still be an eligible match?
- R23. a. Yes, the vendor can be included in the staffing team.**
b. Yes, an APAC resource family match conducted by a county outside of the state staffing team will be considered a match eligible for payment. Any family studied by the selected vendor that's matched with a child in the custody of another state, through ICPC, will not considered a match and would not be eligible for payment.
- Q24.** Section 6, Evaluation Criteria, page 27
- a. Can you please clarify the Cost Proposal section of the evaluation criteria? This appears to be typo.
- R24. It is a typographical error. It should read Cost Proposal. See Amendment #1.**
- Q25.** Some of the required staff may not be paid out of the Cost Reimbursement budget and may be paid out of the funds from the Adoption Homes for Special Needs Children. Is this okay with the Department and how should we reflect this in the budget and narrative?
- R25. Yes. List the positions, salaries and percentage of time on the project.**
- Q26.** Appendix F, page 44



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- a. Subcontracts states contract labor should not be included. Currently, multiple services are performed by independent contractors (such as camp contract staff workers, Adoptive Family Support Group Therapists and support group childcare). Should these be reflected in the budget under Subcontracts or somewhere else?
- b. Many categories state items over \$100 require written approval. Does approval of the line item budget and budget narrative reflect written approval or is a vendor required to obtain written approval after a budget is approved and every time a purchase is needed over \$100?

R26. a. Yes.

b. No.