

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01



Q1. 1.7.6 Authorized Vendor Signatory, Page 10 of 52 - Who is the Person(s) legally authorized? Would this be our CEO or our Board President?

R1. **The individual at the organization that is legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal is the person who should sign the proposal. This would most likely be the individual that signs other contracts and grants on behalf of the organization. This may be your CEO or Board President if they are the individual legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal.**

Q2. 3.2.1 Establish and Maintain Partnerships with Child Care Partners, Page 18 of 52 - In response to Payments to the Child Care Partner must be made at least semi-monthly or more frequently. We are currently paying Child Care Partners in a month in advance? Is this sufficient? Or will we need to pay twice monthly? Can you explain that benefit paying semi-monthly.

In response to Vendors will be responsible to ensure that a minimum of 80% of children enrolled at Child Care Partner site are also enrolled in the Child Care Subsidy Program. We as a program have struggled with finding subsidy children, and have consistently not reached this 80% requirement. Will the Department be willing to promote/recruit children who are subsidy eligible in regards to Vendors selection process in the selected region?

R2. **It is not sufficient to pay the Child Care Partner a month in advance. The Vendor must pay the Child Care Partner in advance semi-monthly or more frequently. Paying the Child Care Partner more frequently prevents the Vendor from having to pay a larger amount to the Child Care Partner in advance prior to reimbursement of funds from the Department. It also assists the Child Care Partner to better manage funds by being paid more frequently.**

The Vendor will be contractually obligated to recruit children on the Child Care Subsidy Program and to ensure that a minimum of 80% of children at a Child Care Partner site are also enrolled on the Child Care Subsidy program. Vendors will be expected to communicate and collaborate with the Child Care Management Agency in the service region. The Department will continue to promote the program and utilize selection criterion that prioritizes children eligible for the Child Care Subsidy program.

Q3. 3.2.2 Establish and Maintain EHS CCP Program Structure, Page 19 of 52 -in response to program calendar - a minimum of two inclement weather make up days. How does that work? Are they paid days?

R3. **There must be 235 days scheduled on the program calendar when EHS-CCP children are served in center-based classrooms. During the program year, there is usually at least one day the center has to close due to inclement weather. In**

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01



preparation for this, there must be 2 days scheduled as weather make-up days. The weather make-up days are scheduled in addition to the 235 days at the end of the year. Without weather make-up days, if the EHS-CCP classroom had to close one of its scheduled days due to inclement weather, then the classroom would only operate for 234 days. The weather make-up day will be used to make-up this missed day of operation. If the center does not close for inclement weather during the program year, the weather make-up days will not be utilized. If the center closes for one or two days during the program year for inclement weather, then one or two of the weather make-up days will be used respectively. Therefore, if both weather make-up days are utilized, the classroom is still only open to children for EHS-CCP services for 235 days total. All 235 days are considered “paid days” and Child Care Partners must receive payment for 52 weeks of the year, regardless of closure dates.

Q4. 3.2.4 Ensuring Policy Council Participation, page 19 of 52. In response to providing registration fees, mileage, etc. Does that come from the \$1500 per slot payment, or will there be Policy Council funds as in past budgets?

R4. There is no \$1,500 slot payment. The Policy Council funds are included in the monthly fixed cost rate per child that can be up to \$1,500 as reflected in “2. Vendor Operating Expenses E. Policy Council” in the cost proposal (Appendix F) and the annual budget sheet (Appendix H).

Q5. 3.2.8 Enrollment of Children, page 20 of 52. In response to Vendors must ensure ten percent of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA. Is this saying numbers are to be 10% at enrollment? We have always been told that you report your numbers at a scheduled date closer to the end of the program year? Just need clarification.

R5. At all times, the Vendor must ensure 10% of funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA as described in HSPPS 1302.14 (b)(1). This includes at the beginning of the program year.

Q6. 5.0 Cost Proposal, page 33 of 52. Cost will be funded at a fixed rate up to \$1500 per child per month. Is this the only funding available. In past budget periods, there have been additional line items such as , Professional Development, Health and Safety Learning Environments, Policy Council, and Cost of Living. Will those items still be available?

R6. Most of the additional line items referred to in this question are included in the monthly fixed cost rate per child as reflected in “2. Vendor Operating Expenses” in the cost proposal (Appendix F) and the annual budget sheet (Appendix H). Health and Safety expenditures are now included in “2.F. Other.” Cost of Living is now included in the increased amount for child care partner slots and the EHS-CCP Teacher Minimum Salary Scale (Appendix K) instead of being listed as a separate line item.

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01



Q7. The Contract Period will be from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021 and vendors must be fully operational on Monday, July 1, 2019. What about costs incurred prior to July 1, 2019? For example staff will have to be hired and trained and supplied; background checks will need to be completed. Legal costs may be incurred to create legally binding contracts with the child care partners. Will these costs incurred prior to July 1, 2019 be allowable costs to be charged to this contract?

R7. Prior to July 1, 2019, vendors will be responsible for any start-up costs listed in the question above in order to be operational by July 1, 2019. Valid, documented start-up costs up to \$5,000 will be reimbursed after July 1, 2019 at the Department's discretion for new Vendors only. This will be in addition to the monthly fixed cost rate per child.

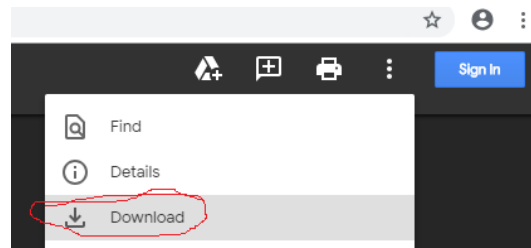
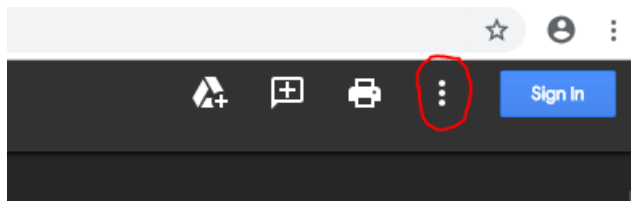
Q8. On page 8 of the RFP, in the Project Overview it states the program is "to serve 566 infants, toddlers, and their families". However, Appendix L: EHS-CCC Regions and Slots lists a combined total of 368 slots for the seven regions. Why is there a difference of 198 between slots and children to be served?

R8. This RFP is for center-based partnerships which are assigned 368 slots. The Department serves 198 children in its family child care-based partnerships that are not part of this RFP.

Q9. Can the Department provide a copy of Appendix F: Cost Proposal, in excel format, to be filled in with the Vendor's information and costs?

R9. Yes. Here is a link to the cost proposal in excel format:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N3IWYH_7Xtrcjx9LbIu2bNPpzTb78Fvb/view?usp=sharing

To download the spreadsheet, first click on the 3 vertical dots at the top right-hand of the screen. Then click on **DOWNLOAD** in the drop down box. See screenshots below.



EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01



Q10. On page 18 of the RFP, it is stated that “Vendors will be responsible to provide funding to the Child Care Partner” and “payments to the Child Care Partners must be made at least semi-monthly or more frequently”. Will Vendors receive the funds to be paid to Child Care Partners in advance or will they be expected to make the payments to the Child Care Partners and then be reimbursed by the Department? If reimbursement, how long should Vendors expect to wait for reimbursement?

R10. Vendors may submit their monthly invoice (Appendix I) on the first day of the month for the current month if they are fully enrolled with no slots vacant in excess of 30 days. Vendors will be required to submit the monthly financial reconciliation report (Appendix J) within 30 days after the end of the month to reconcile expenditures from the monthly invoice.

Q11. Is the 80% of subsidy children for the entire site or is the 80% just for EHS-CCP children?

R11. It would be 80% of the Vendor’s slots at the site to enable the Child Care Partner to leverage the funding to meet the increased quality standards.

Q12. Are the teachers employees of the Child Care Partner or the vendor?

R12. Our expectation is that the partnerships would be made with child care facilities that you are not affiliated with therefore the teachers would be employees of the Child Care Partner. If the Vendor is the licensee of the Child Care Partner and employs the teachers directly, the Vendor would still be required to pay the Child Care Partner the same amount for slots.

Q13. Some of the regions have multiple counties. Is there a minimum allocation of those slots to counties and must Vendors dole them out in increments of eight? So if you had multiple counties would there be a minimum of 8 slots required in each county?

R13. The reason the counties are listed the way they are is because those are counties we currently have Child Care Partners in and so we would expect you to partner with those Child Care Partners that already exist in those counties. We want to continue to serve the children and families already in our program when this RFP is awarded.

**EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01**



- Q14.** My question refers to 3.1.1 seven (7) service region areas. We provide services to Talladega and Randolph counties. Should we need to change those counties, could we shift as long as it is in our service region say Randolph County, could we move 12 slots to Calhoun County or do they have to remain in Randolph County?
- R14.** **Moving slots to a county we do not currently serve would depend on our community assessment. We want to serve children in the counties we currently serve if at all possible. Changing slots from one county to another would have to be approved by DHR.**
- Q15.** On the professional development money, since ECE is going to be doing the professional development plans, are they paying for any training that they are requiring or will be responsible for?
- R15.** **The only trainings that the Vendor will be responsible for with teachers are the health and safety trainings.**
- Q16.** What concerned me the most that in reading this application is the vendor has to make sure the child care partners are meeting minimum standards. Are we going to be responsible for the whole center?
- R16.** **No. You would be responsible for the EHS-CCP classrooms and any areas in the center that are shared that are used by the EHS-CCP children. So if the playground is shared between multiple groups, you would still be responsible for the health and safety of that playground if it is used by EHS-CCP children. The purpose of having the Vendor contracted to do this is to meet HSPPS 1302.47(1)(i) which states, "All facilities where children are served, including areas for learning, playing, sleeping, toileting, and eating meet licensing requirements..."**
- Q17.** If because of some of these changes we're seeing that a vendor might consider it prudent to rethink a new partner, because perhaps one of our partners is located the likelihood of having subsidy kids is not as great, how could we request that prior approval and when do we do it?
- R17.** **This would need to be handled on a case by case basis and you would approach DHR with documentation to prove why it would be beneficial to end the existing partnership and look for an additional Child Care Partner. Before any changes are made there is a process DHR goes through including consulting the Regional Office of Head Start, the Policy Council, and the Governance Committee. If you see where changes need to be made, then you bring it to the Department's attention and we will follow the necessary protocol to see what is feasible. The time to do this would be after the RFP is awarded and before the contract becomes effective.**

**EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01**



Q18. As far as the teacher pay rates are concerned, the first thing in mind is I can lead a horse to water but you can't make them drink so when we get that information from our partners what means do I have to force that?

R18. It should be in the legally binding agreement the Vendor has with the Child Care Partner. If the Child Care Partner refuses to pay the teacher the minimum salary amount, then the contract may need to be terminated.

Q19. Which audit do you want us to submit with this?

R19. Vendors must submit an audited financial statement for year 2017 and letters from the auditor(s) who performed the 2016 and 2015 financial audits. Vendors of newly formed organizations, who have been in business less than one year must submit copies of any official quarterly financial statements (from a financial institution) that have been prepared since the end of the period reported by your most recent annual report. See Amendment 1 on the department's website.

Q20. My question has to do with the provision of educational services from the DECE. Is that outlined in a formal Memorandum of Agreement with them and the vendor? How does that work? You said to develop a relationship with them. What does that look like and what would be your expectation of the vendor to follow through on that in terms of required training that they identified.

R20. DHR expect for Vendors to be able to share information about the children and families DECE is going to be serving the same children and families. DHR expects for you to maintain professional communication with them, to be professional, and collaborate with them. DECE may choose to have a memorandum of understanding with the Vendors that are selected from this RFP, but it would not be something that DHR would put in place.

Q21. I have a question just looking at Appendix L, just going back over agency for the proposal, just coming off, our agency covers a lot of counties around us but the only counties that we do serve could be the other part of the county like Houston, or other areas of that nature because our Agency do serves our Agency but our Head Start does not.

R21. This RFP is available for any organization to apply for any one of the regions or multiple regions that the Vendor has the ability to carry out services in.

Q22. My question refers back to Randolph county and Talladega county. We know at this time current Child Care Partners are not going to participate in the partnership. Do we need to

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PLACEMENT PROGRAM
RFP# 2019-200-01



wait until after the announcement is made before we can approach other centers or may we start now?

R22. You should not enter into any legally binding agreement until the RFP is awarded. If you want to do outreach to see if anybody in the area would be interested with no kind of binding agreement that is allowable.

Q23. I noticed there was no In-Kind or no federal share. Or did I miss it?

R23. On page 27 of the RFP at the very top on 3.2.17 it states, "The Vendor will be required to contribute twenty (20) percent of the contract amount in non-federal share."

Q24. 3.2.11 Educational and Child Development Services. I know you guys are referring to DECE but my question is what is our responsibility to ensure that the two parent conferences?

R24. It will be the responsibility of DECE to ensure the two parent conference, two home visits, and developmental screenings are completed.