

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**

**F A C T   S H E E T**

**AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH QUALIFIED SIGN  
LANGUAGE PROVIDERS THROUGH A REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF  
QUALIFICATIONS  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)  
(3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

Request approval to initiate a Request for Statement of Qualifications and to enter into new agreements with qualified service providers who will provide sign language interpreter services for hearing-impaired mental health clients.

**REQUEST**

Approve and authorize the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to issue the Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ), to identify qualified providers of sign language interpreter services, including telephone transcription for hearing-impaired clients throughout Los Angeles County.

Delegate authority to the Director of Mental Health, or his designee, to prepare, sign, and execute a Master Agreement, for the provision of sign language interpreter services with qualified service providers identified through the RFSQ solicitation process, and effective upon the date of execution through June 30, 2014, with an annual maximum County obligation of \$75,000, 100 percent offset with Sales Tax Realignment funds.

Approve and delegate authority to the Director of Mental Health, or his designee, to extend the term of the Master Agreement s for two optional one-year periods from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2016.

Delegate authority to the Director of Mental Health, or his designee, to execute amendments to the agreements in accordance with increased or decreased interpreter service level needs, provided that: 1) the amendments shall not exceed 20 percent of the previously Board-approved maximum County obligation; 2) your Board has appropriated sufficient funds for all changes; 3) approval of County Counsel and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or their designee, is obtained prior to any such amendment; and 4) the Director of Mental Health provides written notification to your Board within 30 days after the execution of any Amendment.

Authorize and delegate authority to the Director of Mental Health, or his designee, to add qualified agencies to the pool of service providers and execute agreements substantially similar to the Master Agreement.

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION**

As part of its responsibilities to provide community services in accordance with Federal and State law, the County of Los Angeles offers professional sign language interpreter services to hearing-impaired persons receiving County services.

DMH has previously used the services of certified bilingual County employees with sign language skills. However, this is not always adequate because there are languages that County staff are not qualified to translate. Due to Los Angeles County's diverse population, some County departments are lacking sign language interpreter services for the non-English speaking portion of its client base.

Therefore, through this RFSQ DMH will establish a list of professional sign language interpreter services throughout the County who will provide services in multiple languages to ensure that hearing-impaired individuals have equal access to mental health services. Additionally, this RFSQ process will identify a pool of qualified vendors to provide supplemental services such as telephone transcription for hearing-impaired clients.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other Federal and State regulations mandate the availability of sign language interpreter services. As part of its responsibilities to provide community mental health services in compliance with Federal, State and local laws, DMH has made professional sign language interpreter services available and accessible at directly-operated and contracted program sites for hearing-impaired persons seeking mental health services. However, due to the increased demand for services and the need for flexibility in providing services throughout all geographic areas of the County, DMH is seeking the assistance of other service providers who will offer a broad range of sign language interpreter services.

DMH will utilize the RFSQ process to identify qualified service providers and extend contracts to those sign language interpreter service providers who demonstrate the ability to meet the requirements of the County.

## **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

Upon Board approval, DMH will implement the RFSQ, soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from prospective service providers who meet the minimum qualifications listed on the RFSQ.

The solicitation will be posted on the Office of Small Business (OSB) and DMH web sites and mailed to a number of prospective sign language interpreter service providers. Based on evaluation criteria, DMH will select those providers who meet the RFSQ requirements and enter into contracts with them.

Qualified service providers will be offered contracts that will be utilized on an as-needed basis and reimbursed, in arrears, only for services provided. Execution of any agreement does not guarantee a contract amount or allocation of resources. The County will not guarantee a specific or minimum number of referrals or funding amount as referrals will be on an as-needed basis.

As needed, Work Orders will be submitted to contractors that are best able to carry out the assignment based on expertise, geographic location, and/or competitive pricing.

### **DMH Contact:**

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### **APPROVED BY:**

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