

APPENDIX B

RFP STATEMENT OF WORK

**Benefits Establishment Assistance and Advocacy Services
Program**

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STATEMENT OF WORK (SOW)
Benefits Establishment Assistance and Advocacy Services Program

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The Benefits Establishment Assistance and Advocacy (BEAA) Services Program has been established to provide essential services to Los Angeles County residents living with serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI) by helping them obtain Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Additionally, the BEAA Services Program provides benefits establishment training and consultation to the staff of Department of Mental Health (DMH) directly operated clinics (hereafter “Centers”). The BEAA Services Program also provides training, advocacy, and consultation to the families of severely emotionally disturbed (SED) school-age children and TAY – ages 16-25, on acquisition of benefits including special education and other related services.

For people who cannot sustain employment due to a disability, SSI/SSDI are the primary sources of available income. Without SSI/SSDI income, a person may become homeless and/or repeatedly cycle through the network of emergency shelters and transitional housing. Medi-Cal coverage, which is automatically provided to SSI/SSDI recipients, is also crucial for people living with SPMI. Through Medi-Cal, such disabled individuals are able to access essential health and mental health services and successfully integrate into their communities. SSI/SSDI advocacy is therefore a key element to improving the quality of life for people with mental disabilities.

Applying for SSI/SSDI can be a long and difficult process for people living with mental disabilities and there are many possible complications which can lead to the denial of such benefits. Experienced, knowledgeable advocates are needed to assist people with mental disabilities in obtaining SSI/SSDI and to help them prevent disruption of payments after they have been approved. A successful SSI/SSDI application requires that all the required documents are thoroughly and correctly completed in a timely manner. Additionally, applicants are more successful if they are accompanied by skilled advocates to the local Social Security Administration (SSA) Office for appointments.

To date, the funds made available through this county-wide project have assisted more than 3,400 DMH consumers with the SSI/SSDI application process resulting in more than an 85% approval rate.

1.2 HEADINGS/ACRONYMS AND TERMS/DEFINITIONS

Specialized terms, roles, groups and departments/agencies referenced throughout this Request for Proposal (RFP) are defined in Appendix C, Exhibit 1 – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms.

1.3 SCOPE OF WORK

Proposer shall explain how the proposal will meet the expectations as detailed in this RFP and more specifically in this SOW. Proposer shall explain how its plan will meet the requirements necessary to maximize SSI/SSDI benefits establishment within the budgeted allocation, provide periodic training and consultation to DMH Centers' staff, and provide advocacy service to families of TAY and school-age children. Proposer shall ensure that all services furnished meet the language and cultural needs of participants.

2.0 POPULATION TO BE SERVED

The Proposer will provide BEAA services to Los Angeles County residents who are eligible for SSI/SSDI benefits during the contract period. Eligible clients are generally those who have been unable to sustain gainful employment for the previous 12-month period and who are not expected to be able to return to employment for at least the next 12 months; have an income below \$2,000 per month; are citizens or qualify as legal residents; and have been DMH service recipients for at least six (6) months.

The following groups will be served by BEAA:

- 2.1 Adults, 18 years or older, living with SPMI and/or co-occurring disorders (mental illness and substance abuse) including those with special issues such as homelessness and/or HIV/AIDS;
- 2.2 TAY or children living with or at risk of SED and/or co-occurring disorders, including those with special issues such as homelessness and/or HIV/AIDS; and
- 2.3 Families with school aged children, including TAY, who are SED and require special education or other related services identified through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process.

3.0 SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Proposer will provide benefit establishment services within the budgeted allocation to clients referred from DMH Centers within Los Angeles County's

geographic boundaries. Proposer will also provide periodic training and consultation services to DMH Centers' staff. In addition, Proposer will provide advocacy services to families of TAY and school-age children.

3.1 BENEFITS ESTABLISHMENT ASSISTANCE

Proposer's benefits establishment and advocacy staff (hereafter "BEAA Specialists") will assist clients with the initial application as well as any subsequent appeals and reconsideration processes to maximize the acquisition of benefits. The Proposer's staff will also provide training to DMH Centers' staff regarding benefits establishment.

The Proposer will:

- 3.1.1 Consult with DMH Centers' staff to identify consumers who may be eligible for SSI/SSDI benefits.
- 3.1.2 Arrange schedules and appointments for the BEAA Specialists to visit the referring DMH Center to interview potential clients.
- 3.1.3 Screen clients for potential eligibility for SSI/SSDI and Medi-Cal benefits and keep referred clients engaged in the application process to reduce "no shows" for required appointments.
 - 3.1.3.1 The Proposer shall begin client screenings within 30 days of the initial referral.
- 3.1.4 Collect existing, supporting documentation to verify financial eligibility.
- 3.1.5 Complete comprehensive client application packets, including obtaining mental health and/or medical records supportive of a successful application.
 - 3.1.5.1 The Proposer shall complete and file at the SSA Office each application packet within 30 days of the first contact with a client.
- 3.1.6 Make arrangements with client treatment staff to complete the SSA Evaluation Form for Mental Disorders (known as the DEP1002 form) and to obtain additional mental health status examinations and/or other medical testing, as necessary, to prove medical eligibility.

- 3.1.6.1 The completed DEP 1002 form must be signed by a licensed psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist.
- 3.1.6.2 The completed DEP 1002 form must be attached to the submitted pre-application package.
- 3.1.7 File new applications as well as reconsideration packets with the appropriate SSA office.
 - 3.1.7.1 The Proposer shall file no less than 700 applications per fiscal year for new or existing clients referred from the DMH Centers.
 - 3.1.7.2 The Proposer is expected to achieve an annual approval rate of at least 85% for initial applications and an approval rate of 90% or higher when combined with resubmitted appealed applications.
- 3.1.8 Maintain on-going contact with the appropriate State Disability Evaluation Division (DED) analyst to monitor the process and progress of the application.
- 3.1.9 Assist clients with keeping all required appointments with the local SSA office and in replying in a timely manner to any additional SSA or DED inquiries.
- 3.1.10 Represent clients in SSI hearings in cases filed by the Proposer.
- 3.1.11 Compile monthly service delivery statistics for submission to DMH.
- 3.1.12 Provide DMH Centers with a copy of each SSI approval letter to facilitate Medi-Cal billing for the delivery of mental health services.
- 3.1.13 Provide training to DMH Centers' staff on benefits establishment, the Proposer's services, and how to write and prepare the DEP1002 form.
 - 3.1.13.1 A minimum of one (1) training per Center per fiscal year is required.
- 3.1.14 Provide individualized case consultation to Centers' staff
 - 3.1.14.1 A total of 300 hours per fiscal year is required.

3.2 ADVOCACY SERVICES

Proposer will provide on-going community-based advocacy trainings in all eight (8) Service Areas to educate families of school-age children and TAY on how to obtain special education and other related advocacy services. Using its existing relationships with the local school systems, Head Start programs, and community providers in Los Angeles County, the Proposer will outreach to parents educating them in their child's/TAY's educational rights to ensure timely receipt of appropriate special education services. Additionally, the Proposer will provide trainings and technical assistance to clinicians and other mental health service providers regarding special education services.

The Proposer will:

- 3.2.1 Provide community-based trainings in each Service Area to educate as many families as possible on how to obtain special education and mental health services for their children/TAY in a timely manner.
 - 3.2.1.1 A minimum of two (2) trainings per month per Service Area is required, targeting no less than 5-10 people per training session.
- 3.2.2 Distribute training materials describing available educational services and methods for obtaining these services.
- 3.2.3 Conduct screening interviews and assessments of families participating in the training sessions to determine eligibility for special education services and the need for supportive advocacy, consultation, or additional training.
- 3.2.4 Provide technical assistance to families regarding assessment methods, written documentation and other communications utilized by school districts or other public agencies.
- 3.2.5 Help families prepare for and participate in IEP meetings.
- 3.2.6 Individually represent and advocate for no less than 24 families that are unable to obtain appropriate special education services, each year.

- 3.2.7 Participate in IEP meetings, mediation conferences, and related administrative hearings with school districts and other public agency representatives to resolve disputes between families and agencies.
- 3.2.8 Provide consultation to DMH Centers' staff regarding children and adolescents entering the system without benefits as well as TAY who are aging out of the Children's System of Care (CSOC) to establish or continue needed benefits.

4.0 STAFFING

4.1 GENERAL STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Proposer shall ensure that staffing conforms to the following staff and volunteer requirements:

- 4.1.1 Criminal Clearances: Proposer shall ensure that criminal clearances and background checks have been conducted for all Proposer's staff prior to beginning and continuing work under any resulting Contract. The cost of such criminal clearances and background checks is the responsibility of the Proposer whether or not the Proposer's staff pass or fail the background and criminal clearance investigations.
- 4.1.2 Language Ability: Proposer's personnel who are performing services under this Contract shall be able to read, write, speak, and understand English in order to conduct business with County.
 - 4.1.2.1 Proposer shall have a plan to ensure that all clients who require BEAA services in one of the following threshold languages will be assisted: Arabic, Chinese-Traditional, Chinese-Simplified, Cambodian, Korean, Russian, Armenian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese and Farsi.
- 4.1.3 Cultural Competency: The Proposer shall ensure all staff and volunteers providing BEAA services are able to provide culturally competent services in a manner that effectively responds to differences in cultural beliefs, behaviors, learning, and communication styles within the communities in which services will be provided.
- 4.1.4 Driver's License: Proposer shall maintain copies of current driver's licenses, including current copies of proof of auto insurance of staff.

- 4.1.5 Driving Record: Proposer shall maintain copies of driver's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) printouts for all Proposer's drivers providing service under this Contract. Reports shall be available to DMH on request. The County reserves the option of doing a DMV check on Proposer's drivers once a year.
- 4.1.6 Education and Experience: Proposer shall be responsible for securing and maintaining staff that possess sufficient experience and expertise required for providing services as reflected in this SOW.
- 4.1.7 Staff Training: Proposer shall provide orientation and training to all staff providing BEAA services of their expected duties to perform effective benefits establishment and educational advocacy within 30 days of commencement of the Contract.
- 4.1.7.1 Proposer is required to train all staff including, interns and volunteers, in the areas of Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), sexual harassment, and cultural competency as provided in Appendix A (Sample Contract), Paragraph 10 (STAFF TRAINING AND SUPERVISION).
- 4.1.8 Documentation: Proposer shall maintain documentation in the personnel files of all staff. This documentation shall include: (1) all training hours and topics; (2) copies of resumes, degrees, and professional licenses; and (3) current criminal clearances.
- 4.1.9 Rosters: Proposer shall provide DMH, at the beginning of each Contract term and within 30 days of any staff change(s), a roster of all staff that includes: (1) name and positions; (2) work schedule; and (3) fax and telephone numbers.
- 4.1.10 Changes in Staffing: Proposer shall advise DMH in writing of any change(s) in Proposer's key personnel at least 24 hours before proposed change(s), including name and qualifications of new personnel. Proposer shall ensure that no interruption of services occurs as a result of the change in personnel.

4.2 BEAA STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

- 4.2.1 Proposer shall be responsible for securing and maintaining a minimum of 4.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) experienced BEAA Specialists in order to meet the services required in this SOW.

4.2.2 Proposer shall provide all BEAA Specialists sufficient supervision and oversight of their work to ensure compliance with all requirements and commitments of this contract.

5.0 SERVICE DELIVERY SITES

The Proposer shall have the capacity to provide services for all DMH Centers located within Los Angeles County's service areas (Service Areas 1 through 8) as listed below:

- Area 1 - Antelope Valley and Palmdale Mental Health Centers (MHCs)
- Area 2 - San Fernando, West Valley, and Santa Clarita MHCs
- Area 3 - Arcadia MHC
- Area 4 - Hollywood, Downtown, and Northeast MHCs
- Area 5 - Edmund D. Edelman Westside MHC
- Area 6 - West Central, Compton, and Augustus F. Hawkins MHCs
- Area 7 - Rio Hondo, San Antonio, Roybal Family, and American Indian Counseling Services MHCs
- Area 8 - Long Beach Adult, Long Beach Child and Adolescent, San Pedro, Harbor/UCLA, Long Beach Asian, Coastal Asian, and South Bay MHCs

6.0 ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

6.1 Record Keeping: Proposer shall keep a record of BEAA services provided to adults, TAY, and families.

6.2 Data Collection and Outcome Measurement: Proposer shall be responsible for collecting, entering, managing and submitting any data required by DMH, such as demographic, client identification number, age group, referring DMH Center or program name, application status and description of services recommended and received. Proposer shall clearly describe the specific measures that will be developed and implemented to ensure accurate collection, management, and reporting of data to demonstrate successful outcomes of this project.

6.2.1 MONTHLY REPORT

Proposer shall submit a monthly Report to DMH on the status of all SSI/SSDI/Medi-Cal applications for DMH referred clients and families. The monthly Report shall be submitted electronically to the DMH Administration by the 15th of each month for services rendered in the previous month. The Report should include, but is not limited to, information on the following:

- 6.2.1.1 The number of individuals referred and source of referrals;
- 6.2.1.2 The number of new applications completed and filed;
- 6.2.1.3 The duration of time between the first meeting with a client and the submission of a completed application to the SSA;
- 6.2.1.4 The number of clients whose applications were approved;
- 6.2.1.5 The number of clients assisted with filing reconsideration packets;
- 6.2.1.6 Staff trainings provided to DMH Centers as outlined in Sections 3.1.13, 3.1.14 and 3.2.8 of this SOW;
- 6.2.1.7 Community-based trainings provided to client families as outlined in Section 3.2 of this SOW; and
- 6.2.1.8 Assistance provided to designated families to prepare for and participate in IEP meetings as outlined in Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, and 3.2.7 of this SOW.
 - 6.2.1.8.1 If applicable, the number of IEPs attended to advocate on behalf of each family.

6.2.2 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Proposer shall collect information regarding client satisfaction in the form of a client survey upon completion of the initial SSI/SSDI/Medi-Cal application. The responses obtained will be tracked, tallied, and included with the June (fiscal year-end) monthly Report for submission to DMH. Proposer is expected to achieve a minimum of 75% client satisfaction rating.

The survey will include, but not be limited to the following:

- 6.2.2.1 Timeliness of the application;
- 6.2.2.2 Responsiveness of Proposer's staff to client questions and concerns; and

- 6.2.2.3 Cultural competency and linguistic sensitivity of the Proposer's staff, interns and/or volunteers.
- 6.3 Cooperation: Proposer shall work cooperatively with DMH Administration and Centers' staff. Proposer shall submit monthly invoices to DMH Administration along with supporting documentation indicating the services associated with each invoice.
- 6.4 Meetings: Proposer shall send a representative to attend periodic benefits establishment and/or other meetings as determined by DMH.
- 6.5 Days/Hours of Operation: The Proposer will ensure that BEAA services are available for DMH clients and staff during the County's regular business hours of Monday through Friday, from 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Extended hours shall be offered to meet the needs of the program participants (e.g., training sessions on weekends or after regular office hours for working parents and/or families of potential beneficiaries).
- 6.6 Proposer's Project Manager: Proposer's designated Project Manager shall have full authority to act for the Proposer on all matters relating to the daily operation of this Contract and shall be accessible via telephone, e-mail, or fax during regular business hours to respond to County inquiries and/or concerns.
- 6.7 Computer and Information Technology Requirements: Proposer shall possess or acquire a computer system with the capability to comply with the terms of the Contract, within 30 days of commencement of the Contract, with sufficient hardware and software and on-site maintenance for the entire term of this Agreement.

7.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Proposer shall establish and utilize a comprehensive Quality Control Plan to ensure the County a consistently high level of service throughout the term of the Agreement. The Plan shall be submitted to DMH for review and approval. The Plan shall be effective on the Contract start date and shall be updated and re-submitted for DMH approval as changes occur.

- 7.1 The Proposal shall include an identified monitoring system covering all the services listed in this RFP. The system of monitoring to ensure contract requirements are being met shall include:
- 7.1.1 Ensuring the services, deliverables, and requirements defined in the contract are being provided at or above the level of quality agreed upon by the County and the Proposer.

7.1.2 Ensuring that BEAA Specialists who render services under the contract have the necessary prerequisites.

7.1.3 Identifying and preventing deficiencies in the quality of service before the level of performance becomes unacceptable.

7.1.4 Reviewing report data to identify, investigate, and plan for future performance improvement.

8.0 CONTRACT DISCREPANCY REPORT (Appendix C, Exhibit 2)

Verbal notification of a Contract discrepancy will be made to the Contract Project Monitor as soon as possible whenever a Contract discrepancy is identified. The problem shall be resolved within a time period mutually agreed upon by the County and the Proposer. The County Contract Project Monitor will determine whether a formal Contract Discrepancy Report (CDR) shall be issued. Upon receipt of this document, the Proposer is required to respond in writing to the County Contract Project Monitor within five (5) workdays, acknowledging the reported discrepancies or presenting contrary evidence. A plan for correction of all deficiencies identified in the CDR shall be submitted to the County Contract Program Manager within 10 workdays.

9.0 PRIVACY AND ELECTRONIC SECURITY

Any Proposer that is deemed a “Business Associate” of County under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”) shall enter into a Business Associate Agreement with the County of Los Angeles to ensure compliance with the privacy and electronic security standards.

10.0 TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Proposer shall acquire, manage, and maintain its own information technology and systems in order to meet relevant workflow, data collection, and privacy/security requirements of the work authorized in this RFP.

10.2 Proposer shall be solely responsible for complying with all applicable State and federal regulations affecting the maintenance and transmittal of electronic information.

11.0 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

All listings of services used in the Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) are intended to be completely consistent with the Contract and the SOW, and are not

meant in any case to create, extend, revise, or expand any obligation of the Proposer beyond that defined in the Contract and the SOW. In any case of apparent inconsistency between services as stated in the Contract and the SOW and this PRS, the meaning apparent in the Contract and the SOW will prevail. If any service seems to be created in this PRS which is not clearly and forthrightly set forth in the Contract and the SOW that apparent service will be null and void and place no requirement on Proposer (Appendix C, Exhibit 3).