

Q&A EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING RFP FY-2011

1. You indicate that you want multiple awardees. Can you explain how you anticipate that working, how will the caseload be divided, or are you dividing this by function so that we can bid on certain functions? Or are you going to separate the caseload alphabetically, geographically, or how will you handle that?

PGCDSS is open to awarding to multiple vendors. However, PGCDSS will consider awarding to one prime vendor if a viable proposal to provide all services is presented. An award will be made based upon what is in the best interest of the customer as well as the Agency. An award may be made by programs, by services (applicants or recipients) or by district offices, for example.

2. On page 17 of the RFA, there are RFA maximum amounts of \$2.5 million, but the breakdowns don't equate to that number. Can you clarify that for us?

There may be additional programs.

3. For planning purposes, how should we approach-- The breakdown?

At this time, bidders should only reference \$500,000 for TCA applicants, \$1,800,000 for TCA recipients, \$289,000 for Non-Custodial Parents and \$130,000 for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance recipients.

4. When was the last time this RFA was up for bid?

The last RFA for Employment and Training was issued in 2005.

5. With regard to the specific components of the application, would a company be allowed to apply for just one component of it as opposed to the whole--for example, employability services and skills, could you submit an application just for that piece?

Yes. PGCDSS is considering all options.

6. On page 18 of the RFA. When you define the populations, the fourth bullet states that certain exempt customers are required to participate in employment related services, and it says who exempt customers are. And I just want to make sure that's correct. Are they exempt from the employment services, or not? Is this correct, as written?

Yes.

7. Is there, based on the past RFP--RFA, are there statistics showing the progress of the last person providing services, pluses and minuses?

Yes, that is available on the website.

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8. What's the maximum number of participants you're expecting us to serve?

It ranges between 13 and 1800 per active cases, per month.

9. Then you talk a little about the resource centers and the main office. The resource centers are just, I guess, minimal staff by the providers and then you want the main center to be sort of centrally located?

PGCDSS will provide space for the vendor's staff in each of the district offices. The vendor must also provide a main center for their staff and for customer access.

10. For location. Prince George's County is so large and a lot of it is rural versus urban, so how are you anticipating the service across the entire county?

PGCDSS considers this a transportation barrier that should be addressed in the vendor's proposal.

11. I'm understanding that you had three locations, one kind of temporarily closed in this area. Any schedule to bring that third one back up? Could you elaborate on that?

The Hyattsville office serves the northern part of the county and remains operational.

12. Should we address servicing the Hyattsville area in the proposal?

Yes.

13. Does the 1700 include carry-overs from the previous vendor?

The 1700 is the work eligible population.

14. What is required for the invoicing process? I see when it's due, but I also see that there are documentations required in order to effectively submit an invoice?

Federal tax ID number, company name, remit to information, invoice period, invoice number and contact information. The invoice remittance is based on the benchmarks outcomes and the vendor's ability to document those outcomes and the vendor's ability to document those outcomes.

15. What are your current benchmarks and what's the average cost of a benchmark at this time?

Currently, we have a benchmark for participation, placements, retention, subsidized employment placements, workshops, assessments and incentive

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participation and placements. The costs for the proposed benchmarks will be negotiated between the vendor and PGCDSS.

16. Is there specific supporting documentation forms?

Pay stubs from employers, the work number and sign in sheets, for example. There is a comparison that goes along with what you're submitting and the population served. All quality control procedures should be in place and effective before documentation is submitted to PGCDSS.

17. What are your benchmarks? Are there assessments?

Refer to question 15. However, that's open to negotiations.

18. If you had two primary issues that you wanted to present, do you present it in two separate presentations, or is it included within the 40 points?

Included within the 40 points.

19. The health assessments and various assessments that the state agency handles, is it possible that we can get copies of those forms and maybe even have input to that if we're going to be using certain technology and some of the latest stuff? How are they referred back to the agency that is managing everything? Is it electronic, or is it a manual form? And are those forms available for us to look at?

The health screening and assessment requirements are a manual process conducted by PGCDSS. Under HIPPA this information is confidential and, at this time, is not available to outside entities.

20. To the extent that there is an invoicing discrepancy in the statistics of benchmarks between the contractor's invoice and your records, what is the reconciliation process, and typically how long does it take to get that reconciliation moving forward?

PGCDSS has a thirty day rebuttal process when a benchmark has been denied. Once PGCDSS conducts their review of the invoice, the summary of payment is forwarded to the vendor with the noted discrepancies. The vendor has thirty days from the time the invoice is sent to their attention to rebut PGCDSS' findings. After that process PGCDSS reviews the rebuttal along with applicable documentation. PGCDSS renders the final approval on all payments.

21. Could you tell me a little bit about the referral process from your organization to the vendor as far as getting the customers from you to us, I know that there's maybe some sort of list that you give and it's our responsibility to reach out to the customer. What do you do to the customer to allow the customer to know that he or she is being referred to a vendor?

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Customers are deemed eligible by PGCDSS via an interview process. Once the customer is determined eligible, they are referred to the vendor for appropriate services. Customers must be in an approved work activity to maintain access to services in several programs. For other programs the vendor must do aggressive outreach.

22. How often does the referral list come out to the vendor?

Daily

23. Subsidized Employment, that is if the participant is on subsidized employment, training needs to occur in such a way that it's not interrupted. Would you elaborate on that?

The subsidized employment program is not a mandatory program. It gives the customer the opportunity to actually work in the workplace and receive compensation. Subsidized Employment is a reimbursable program. An employer hires a customer for a consecutive sixteen week period or until the dollar amount is maxed out, whichever comes first. The objective is permanent employment of the customer.

24. The deadline is April 1st and the notification would come out May 1st, as far as the awarding of the contracts, what timeframe do we have until July 1 if we submit a request for up front money within May 1st through July 1st, when would that be awarded?

You can request a 10% advance. The advance will be offset once you begin to submit invoices. A request for a 10% advance must be submitted in your proposal.

25. Referrals are sent to the vendor on a daily basis. Does that mean the vendor is to accept those individuals daily, or is it okay to set up a weekly, biweekly process?

The vendor must accept all referrals made by PGCDSS. Customers should be assessed within a 72 hour period.

26. Is the 10% advance like a start-up?

Yes, and it will be offset each month until the funds have been recouped.

27. On the 10% question, you get \$5,000 as your 10% then you sort of allocate it over the 12 month period?

Correct. If \$6,000.00 is requested, with each invoice submitted, \$500.00 will be deducted from the invoice for a twelve month period to repay the \$6,000.00 advance.

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28. Assessments, is there a number of GED folks that have or need GEDs versus those who have high school diplomas?

Yes. Many of our customers are in need of GED services.

29. Is there a percentage, or have you noticed what the level is for those who are receiving TANF out in the more rural environment?

It is still the largest portion of TANF population is the central corridor. We don't know if the reason that we're not seeing more in the really rural part of Prince George's County is transportation. The population density is most significant in the urban and suburban areas of the County. However there are needs in the rural tier as well.

30. What does a joint sort of collaboration look like to you? Is there a joint with subcontractors and that sort of thing?

A joint venture is when vendor ABC cannot provide all the necessary services and requires assistance from vendor XYZ. The two vendors collaborate and develop a proposal. However, only one vendor can be recognized as the lead organization. If while developing the proposal, one vendor backs out, the proposal is no longer valid. Subcontracting is when a vendor subcontracts a portion of their proposal, perhaps to meet the MBE requirement. A subcontractor may be identified to meet your needs.

31. So a joint venture is not really a joint venture because you're really looking at the lead agency?

Yes.

32. So it's still a lead with subcontractors, essentially.

Yes.

33. Do you envision on the other side of the process bringing together vendors who could more efficiently work together? Is that a possibility?

No. The vendors are responsible for identifying any potential joint or subcontracting ventures.

34. Do you envision a scenario where two or more vendors would be selected to provide the same services, and if so, how do you--how does a customer determine, or how do you determine how the customer is paired with one or more of those vendors?

If we have multiple vendors, they would not provide the same services at the same location. We may have different vendors for each district office. However, those customers would be assigned to those locations based upon their geographical location, not the customer's preference.

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35. How do you determine which vendor is paired with the customer, or does the customer play a role in making that selection?

That would be determined by the award. The customer does not determine which vendor will provide services. Two will not provide the same service and compete for the same population.

36. I'm curious about non-cooperation or non-compliance as we refer to it in terms of the documentation that would set off a benchmark for that, and how you would invoice that?

Efforts to contact the customer must be demonstrated and properly documented.

37. You have dates for award, and then you have dates for start. Have you envisioned stopping of the current contractor and then the timeframe for starting of the new contractor, and do people in the different pre-intake, intake, employment levels, have you looked at that to say well now the starting company, okay, we had 400 people and they're all in different levels of the program. Have you looked at that process and how they'll move to a new company, or have you looked at a stop and go of old and new company coming in?

The customers are in various stages now. However it would be beneficial to have the customers reassessed as we move forward and transition.

38. Minority and small business preference points. Paragraph 1.7 lays out certain criteria to which points will be awarded. The total points are 17. Can one vendor, if he touches each of those MBE bases, can he receive the maximum of 17 bonus points?

Yes.

39. Based on the statement about childcare being an issue at this time, how is that affecting participation?

It isn't an issue for the TCA population but could be an issue for the SNAP/ABAWD group because currently there is a waiting list for daycare applicants who are not TCA or disabled children.

40. If you have more than one vendor, they're providing more than one service. If a customer decides that he or she doesn't want to participate at, say X vendor or wants to participate in Y vendor, is that customer just allowed to bounce from one vendor to another, does that customer stay on the roster of X vendor for the life of the contract?

The customer follows their established employment development plan. The customer does not determine which vendor will provide services.

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41. What percentage of the 1700 are men or women?

The vast majority are women. A small percentage are men.

42. Substance abuse being such a major issue, is that invoiceable, or can it be invoiced for random drug tests?

PGCDSS works with individuals when substance abuse is a barrier. Health screening assessments are conducted by PGCDSS. Regulations do not allow random drug testing.

43. What's the average age of this group?

Between 25 and 45 years old.

44. Will the new vendor have time to reconcile files from the previous vendor?

Yes, but this must be done while services are being delivered to customers.

45. What percentage of the population would you say are ex-offenders with a criminal background?

Ex-offenders are a sub-population of our entire caseload. We do not have a specific percentage to reference.

46. Non-direct funds, Is there a cap on admin costs?

There is no cap on administrative costs. The contract is performance based, however, administrative costs does figure into the competitiveness of the proposal.

47. If a bidder wants to provide all components of services, should the application be submitted as one proposal?

Yes

48. What is your enrollment number to date? How many active participants are there currently? Will a new provider take in carry-overs? Of 1700 anticipated participants, how many are carry-overs?

The 1700 is a projected number. We are currently at 1319. Our highest over the last fiscal year was approximately 1800; you should be aware that this capacity requirement may occur.

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49. Can you give us a breakdown of the numbers of each different population among the 1700 anticipated participants?

No

50. Does the \$2.5M in funding include incentives, transportation and subsidized employment?

The 2.5 million includes incentives. The Subsidized Employment Program is not included.

51. Can a bidder visit the current site where services are provided, and each of the FIA offices?

Arrangements can be made for those making it to the Best and Final to conduct a site visit at the three FIA locations: 425 Brightseat Road, Landover MD 20785, 4235 28th Avenue, Temple Hills, MD 20748 and 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

52. Can you tell us how to access policies and procedures for TCA and NCP guidelines for the state of Maryland?

Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)

53. What are the costs for a new provider to locate at the current site? Is there a current lease to assume? And, what is the cost to have a staff member in each of the 3 FIA offices?

PGCDSS does not have the current vendor's lease information. The vendor determines the salaries of the staff.

54. Page 25, item 3: the listing of our agency's programs takes up several pages. May we either (a) include a representative sample in the narrative or (b) submit the entire list as part of Attachment D.3?

Please submit as Attachment D.3

55. Is the RFA available in MS Word format? This would facilitate completing the forms.

No

56. Our understanding is that the attachments that are specific to a narrative section (e.g., C.2.1, C.2.2) should be put at the end of the narrative after Attachments 1-14. Is that correct?

As the attachments are compiled, they should follow the appropriate section. For example, all attachments related to Part C Statement of Work, should be attached after that section.

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57. Could you please clarify the amount of the total award for this RFA? On page 17, Part C, 1st paragraph, it states. "The total funds available under this RFA cannot exceed \$2,500,000 (\$500,000 for TCA applicants, \$1,800,000 for TCA recipients, \$289,000 for Non-Custodial Parents and \$130,000 for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance recipients). However, the amounts in the parenthesis total \$2,719,000, which contrasts the stated total contract value.

At this time, bidders should only reference \$500,000 for TCA applicants, \$1,800,000 for TCA recipients, \$289,000 for Non-Custodial Parents and \$130,000 for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance recipients.

58. If the vendor is a newly established organization without prior contracts, can "key personnel" having substantial experience in providing services that are similar in nature and magnitude during the past 24 months substitute for the applicant?

"Key Personnel" to mean Executive/Senior Management

59. If an organization has submitted paperwork to become a Maryland Business Enterprise (MBE) and has not received official documentation as of yet, will the organization be considered for bonus points if it can validate that documents were submitted?

No. The organization must have their MBE number issued by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT).

60. In this section it is asked that a chart be provided. Is this chart part of the 2 page minimum plus the chart or should it be included as an attachment? As noted, Attachment G.1 is for actual agreements?

It is the two page minimum plus the chart. Any actual agreements would be Attachment G.1.

61. Do we have to show participation at one site or all three sites? (Referring to Page 20 of Proposal)

Participation must be demonstrated at all sites.

62. On Page 1, you indicate your intent to award multiple contracts. Do you propose to do this by program, e.g. a different vendor for TCA, for NPEP and SNAP or by district office or possibly solely by alphabet? Any guidance here would be helpful.

PGCDSS plans to make an award that is most advantageous to the customers served and the Agency. At this time we are taking all suggestions into consideration i.e. by program, upfront applicant services, recipient services, etc.

63. Are you requiring each selected vendor to have a central location as well as placing staff in district offices?

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Yes

64. Is the requirement for a Clinical Social Worker a firm requirement?

Yes

65. Is there a limit to the number of pay points that can be proposed?

No, but pay points should be attainable and in line with requirements passed down to PGCDSS by the State of Maryland.

66. Will a set time frame be established for invoice review and payment to ensure a consistent cash flow to the vendor?

Yes. Once the vendor has been identified, all review and payment procedures will be discussed.

67. The RFP (pg 13) requires that the selected vendor must accept all referrals. However, in practice, if a referral doesn't have the proper paperwork they are turned away because a referral is only recognized for payment if the proper paperwork is present during the invoice review. Will there be a change to the current practice?

The vendor must be able to verify that the referral is valid.

68. Can positions in addition to Case Managers and Job Developers (such as Outreach, Retention and Data Entry positions) be used to establish the 50:1 caseload ratio?

Outreach and retention can be used. Data entry or other clerical positions cannot be used.

69. Should Addendum 2.8 be submitted as an attachment? There is a place for signature on page 66, but there are no instructions in the RFA or RFA checklist to include this Addendum in the submission.

Addendum 2.8 will be Attachment 14.

70. Beginning with Attachment 12, the RFA Checklist doesn't align with the attachment numbers as given in the RFA. For example, Attachment 12 is Addendum 2.9, Attachment 13 is the RFA Checklist, Attachment 14 is Addendum 2.10.

Please refer to the attached revised RFA checklist.

71. May we use smaller type and single-spacing in graphics and tables?

Yes, no smaller than 10.5 pt

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72. What is the current time frame between applicant status and recipient status for DSS customers?

Thirty (30) days

73. Is it the expectation of PGCDSS that the vendor would operate its own individual site in addition to one of the three DSS offices?

The vendor is expected to operate their own site as well as have a presence in the three district offices.

74. Does PGCDSS allow employment incentives? If so, please give examples of the employment incentives.

Yes PGCDSS does allow incentives. Currently customers are paid with gift cards from Visa and/or MasterCard and various other establishments for active participation and for job retention.

75. Can employment incentives be included in the vendor budget?

Yes

76. What form of employment incentive is allowed (i.e. cash, gift cards, etc)?

Currently the customers receive checks for participation and job retention.

77. Does PGCDSS provide bus passes or transportation stipends?

No, the vendor is expected to provide transportation.

78. Can the vendor budget van transportation to and from interviews and other employment related task for the customer?

Yes. The vendor is responsible for budgeting these services.

79. Is the vendor responsible for budgeting and issuing transportation stipends for customers in need of public transportation assistance?

Yes. The preference is that the assistance be issued in a format that can be documented.

80. Pg. 27 in the RFA) There is a requirement to collaborate with organizations selected by PGCDSS. Is there a more detailed list of these organizations and can you provide that list to us at this time?

PGCDSS works with the organizations listed in the RFA. The vendor is expected to have their own collaborations as well. Additionally, all vendors selected as a result of this RFA are expected to work cooperatively to yield the optimum outcomes for our citizens.

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81. Please provide the RFA # for the completion of one of the addendum.

There is no RFA number. The RFA should be identified as “**Application for Contract Pursuant to RFA Employment and Training 2011**”

82. Would you consider extending the due date on this RFA?

The due date has been extended until April 8, 2011.

83. Must the entire proposal be sequentially numbered, or can each section be sequentially numbered?

The entire proposal must be sequentially numbered.

84. Contract period is July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012. New contractors will require some time for start up. When are bidders expected to begin operations or are bidders to propose a start up period?

Bidders are expected to be as close to operational as possible by July 1, 2011.

85. Reporting: This section indicates that Prince George’s County has the right to review all supporting documentation and verify all claims. Please provide the documentation standards and requirements which will be used to verify claims. Specifically, what are the documentation requirements for workshop attendance, timesheets and employment?

Currently workshop attendance is verified by sign in sheets. The course, facilitator, date and time of workshop and customer signature indicating attendance is required. Time and attendance is monitored by MD Work System. Employment is verified by paystubs, Work number printouts and employee verification forms signed off by the employer.

86. Do weekly reports cover all customers or just TCA recipients?

Reports are required on work eligible population.

87. If performance is cured to the satisfaction of PGCDSS, will any financial penalties be reversed?

Negotiable.

88. Could the County please specify what must occur for a customer to be considered enrolled and registered?

Enrolled and Registered are interchangeable terms. Once a referral is received, documentation in MDWORKS must begin as it relates to outreach, assessment, employment and training; providing evidence of time and attendance.

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89. Authorization for application and summary information (5 points): Please explain the relationship, if any, between the requested information and the amounts to be inserted into the table. More specifically: Total cash resources: Does this refer to the entire Applicant company? Total annual in-kind resources: Does this refer to the Applicant's proposed budget for this opportunity, not to exceed \$2,500,000.00?

Public funds are the amount of funding PGCDSS is providing for the project. (\$2.5 million). Cash resources are additional funds provided by your organization other than the public funds. In-kind resources are services provided toward this project.

90. Is the vendor required to segment its budget based upon the percentage distribution by type of client presented in this section?

It is the expectation that all work eligible customers receive appropriate service delivery to address and remove employment barriers.

91. We understand that we must use the MD WORKS system, may we also utilize our own Case Management System?

Yes

92. Could Prince George's County please confirm that the mandatory staffing ratio is one full time job developer or case manager for every 50 active customers?

One case manager for all work eligible customers.

93. In considering an alternative to the mandatory staffing levels, would the county accept the use of proven technologies to support a different staffing model?

We will review. However, technology is not a replacement for the individualized critique received from staff to customer interaction.

94. Please verify the requirement to provide salary information for each proposed position. Also, what impact will this salary information have on the evaluation of the Applicant's response? Finally, please provide the requested staffing information for the incumbent vendor.

Salary information provides insight on the selection pool of possible candidates; its impact on this process only strengthens our knowledge of your potential employee pool.

95. Where you ask for charts, can these be considered attachments, or must they be a part of the body of the proposal and included in the page limit?

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Charts can be listed as attachments.

96. Could you please explain the reason for issuing this RFA at this time?

The current contract is expiring.

97. Can the vendor establish themselves as a work experience site? Does the County, or will the County, establish themselves as a work experience site?

The vendor is expected to develop a multitude of work experience sites that will result in both customers gaining marketable experience and employers hiring. The County has participated in the past.

98. Are there funds available for educational or vocational training in addition to the \$2.5 million?

No. Federal opportunities do become available and PGCDSS is willing to partner with the successful applicant(s).

99. How does the county currently track customer participation hours? Is there an electronic system in place? If so, does the vendor need to budget for an electronic timekeeping solution?

MD Work system monitors time and attendance. However, an electronic system that tracks customers' full participation daily is required.

100. Referrals: Could the County please provide estimates of the number of individuals who will be referred annually for each target population (TCA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients, and non-custodial parents. Given that the vendor must propose mandatory staffing levels (or alternatives), it is critical that we understand the anticipated caseload volumes.

As stated earlier, PGCDSS experienced a high volume in fiscal year 2010. At its highest point we had 1800 work eligible TCA customers. We currently have 4500 work eligible SNAP customers. You will not be required to work with this entire population; the non-custodial population has never been more than 50-100 referrals each month.

101. Referrals: Would the County be willing to implement a sliding fee scale in the event that the actual referrals materially differ from the County's estimates?

This subject is negotiable.

102. Will the Request for Applications be amended to incorporate the statements made at the Pre-Proposal Informational meeting held March 4, 2011

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regarding a cap on administrative fees? If so, when does the County anticipate issuing such amendment?

Yes. This is the addendum to the Request for Application. Please refer to Question 46 for clarification of administrative fees.

103. Given the performance based nature of the contract outlined in this RFA, can the County please describe the basis for potentially limiting the vendor's performance by establishing a cap on administrative costs?

Please refer to Question 46 for clarification.

104. Is the County flexible on the 10% administrative cap announced at the Pre-Proposal Informational meeting held March 4, 2011?

Please refer to Question 46 for clarification.

105. Will Applicants have any online read access to the MD WORKS System for viewing recipient data?

No

106. There is a gap on May 1st in choosing your vendor to starting July 1st. Is there a recommendation that the new vendor can recommend to DSS to tell the old vendor to have something in a certain electronic file format before you exit out of your contract?

We can ask, we cannot mandate.

107. Would you hire multiple contractors. Would you hire a contractor to provide full service?

PGCDSS is considering all options. PGCDSS will do what is most advantageous for the customer and the County.

108. If you have two contractors that bid to provide full service, then how would the clients get participants?

If two full service vendors are chosen, the customers will be determined based on their geographical location in the County.

109. Could someone bid to provide service only to TCA applicants? Or could someone bid to provide just job readiness workshops?

Yes.

110. It states within the RFA that the office has to be staffed at all times. Does this include 24/7 staffing?

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Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 5:30pm.

111. On page 20, you reference culturally competent services. Could you give me some sense of the diversity that you're dealing with, both generational and cultural?

Prince George's County has a population that speaks over 40 different languages. Spanish and English are the two major languages. Those language capacities must be represented by the vendor. The capacity to serve other languages must also be available under Federally mandated Limited English Proficiency Policies.

112. Is the incumbent eligible for re-application?

Yes.

113. Who is the incumbent?

ResCare dba Arbor Educational Training.

114. And on page 29, you talk about proposing incentives and or bonus pay points for exceptional job placement and retention inference. Can you explain that a bit?

Incentives are a mechanism used if the participation rate or placements significantly exceeds the established benchmarks and improves the services provided to our customers

115. What do you consider a decent amount of time being on a job? The average person now that keeps a job is anywhere between two and four years, and then they move onto something else.

The average for our customers is 90 days. We're looking more at upward mobility.

116. Regarding the notification process. You stated in the RFA that on May 1st you'll start notifying successful applicants. Will that list be made available to all of the rest of the applicants, and if so, are you okay with us contacting the lead organizations that were cited there?

This information will be made available under a Maryland Public Information Act Request.

117. Just in case we want to contact them about providing consulting services?

PGCDSS will not provide a listing of the successful applicants.

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118. Proprietary information submitted in the proposal, how do you handle the confidential nature of curriculums and things like that that's being submitted?

Proprietary information, labeled as such, will be redacted.

119. Will a copy of the application be available in Word format to make it a little easier to complete?

Microsoft Office compatible

120. The RFA is asking for a three-hole punch. We can also submit it in a binder form, or do you just want strictly three-hole punch?

A binder is acceptable. Please include tabs to separate the various sections.

121. What is the maximum available points for the application?

120 base points and bonus points as follows: COA = 5 points, Cash Match has a maximum of 10 points and MBE has a maximum of 10 points.

122. Is there a specific format or specific software or a specific system that you would expect a vendor to use for reporting?

No.

123. Is Subsidized Employment included in the \$2.5 million or is that funds that are available outside of the \$2.5 million?

No, it is not included.

124. Subsidized Employment, are those funds directly administered through the program or does accounting pay the employers directly.

The State pays.

125. So the vendor doesn't have to worry about processing payments for Subsidized Employment?

No, it's a **reimbursable program**. The vendor pays the customer through their payroll process. On a monthly basis, the employer will forward an invoice to PGCDSS for reimbursement of the salary paid.

126. Matching funds, Can you talk a little about the history of matching funds with that organization, with this specific project?

The current vendor has no history of matching funds for the project.

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127. Will you have a bidder's list?

The sign in sheets will be provided with the questions and answers.

128. Paragraph 119, entitled Payments and Penalties, on page 9 of the application, it's not clear to me the basis for assessing the penalties. Is the assessment of penalties applied to noncompliance across the board, or is it just within accurate invoicing?

PGCDSS will not impose penalties unless the vendor's performance remains substandard. PGCDSS will identify and attempt to correct any and all performance issues. However, if performance is breached and not cured, if no progress is made after the development of a correction action plan; PGCDSS may impose penalties.

129. Can you receive bonus points for adding value that may not necessarily be in the RFA?

You receive bonus points only for what is reflected in the RFA.

130. Are we required to ensure unsubsidized employment, after they go through subsidized employment?

The point of Subsidized Employment Program is employment.

131. Are you requiring the vendors to ensure that after that 16 weeks or \$8,000 is completed that the person actually has transitioned into unsubsidized employment?

Yes, that's the goal of Subsidized Employment.

132. Thinking of partnering with another firm. Our specialty is assessments. Is it possible to say, I'm sorry, we're sort of full, we probably wouldn't be able to handle another ten assessments in the next three days without there being a penalty of performance, or are you expected to be able to handle whatever comes at you?

The vendor must clearly demonstrate their ability and/or capabilities to provide the required services in a timely manner.

133. If the number of people in the population may not have a GED, would the vendor be expected to provide those services, or if not, is there collaboration with to work with the participant or client that does not have a GED? If the vendor does not provide GED services, would there be collaboration with DSS?

There are resources in place to assist with GED services.

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134. The eligible participants in those various categories. Of the 13 to 1800, is there sort of a systematic breakdown of those who are on SNAP, TANF, non-custodial. I guess you break down your TANF by recipients and applicants. My assumption is that the applicants are those who are new to the process. And is there a breakdown on the percentage in those categories?

The TCA Work Eligible IS 1300 - 1800; SNAP/ABWAD is 4500 and the Non-Custodial population is approximately 600.

135. On page 13, the acceptance of all referrals, you indicate that we are to accept all referrals. You also talk about customers must be given two opportunities to participate with the exception of good cause.

Good cause is defined by the policy and determined by PGCDSS.

136. When you make the referrals to the vendors, the referrals are not going to be made if something like childcare is not already in place?

No.

137. The work-eligible would include those who are not, or who do not have their GED or high school diploma?

It could vary.

138. Is there a process for referring individuals back if during that health assessment it was not noted or wasn't caught that they have substance abuse or mental health issues?

Yes.

139. We can decline the referral and send them back?

It wouldn't be a decline. The customer may require reassessing to determine what may have been missed in the initial assessment.

140. Is the overall objective for you to find one lead organization that can handle all these services? And, if not, how many smaller vendors are you willing to allow to participate in this process?

No the overall objective is not to have one lead organization. PGCDSS is open to multiple awards. Ultimately, PGCDSS will do what is in the best interest of the customers as well as the Agency.

150. How do you see the One Stop plan? When I first read this, I thought that you guys were looking to sort of redo your whole One Stop system. But, then I saw on page 27 that you talked about creating an allegiance with the One Stop Centers. How do you see that sort of working out, or

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just share a little bit about that, because that's done under the economic development arm of the county, correct?

Because of the expertise possessed by the One Stop, PGCDSS works in partnership with them to serve this particular population.

151. Are there any One Stops in the rural parts of the county?

PGCDSS does not operate the One Stop system. That is under the umbrella of the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation's Workforce Investment Service.

152. Would the county consider extending the closing date?

Please refer to Question 82.

153. Page 21, the barriers that customers will face, and the areas of mental health assessments, substance abuse assessments, and mental health counseling. Do you consider that a part of this proposal in terms of implementing or providing service, or more as a referral to another vendor to provide that service?

PGCDSS will consider what the applicant provides and what the applicant partners to provide. If mental health is not your area of expertise we would expect to see a strong partnership with a credible provider of mental health services.

154. Work eligible recipients, what does that mean? How do you view work eligible recipients, if they possibly have substance abuse issues or mental health issues?

The work eligible population are those individuals who have no exemptions. They were once referred to as mandatory work customers. The state doesn't necessarily consider substance abuse a barrier. There are people who work with addictions as long as they are receiving services.

155. Are there any areas of employment that you're looking to focus on?

There are a number of emerging sectors in this region. There has been great success in placing our customers in green jobs, hospitality, public service and clerical industries.

156. When you send out the bidder's list, are you okay with us contacting some of the vendors?

Yes. It's encouraged.

157. Is it your plan to award the proposal approval to a mental health agency, or are you expecting the vendors that you do accept to make a

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proposal to other mental health agencies that are already in the community?

PGCDSS is open to either. PGCDSS' concern is the coordination of the referral process and the services provided to the customer. Please keep in mind, our customers have medical insurance.

158. Vendors who are successful maybe doing GED can make a referral to another agency, but they won't be required or encouraged to make a report to one of the vendors that you selected to provide the mental health services?

No.

159. What is your current success rate for your customers receiving gainful employment?

Currently the State's benchmark for Prince George's County is 581. We're at 130%. It's our expectation that will continue.

160. What is the retention rate?

72%

161. What would you say the success rate is on retention? Not necessarily your benchmark, but the overall success rate of retention, or perhaps your success goal for retention?

PGCDSS does not have data available.

162. What is the age of these young individuals that get in your program, from 18,25,30 or older?

The ages vary from 18 to 45 and older.

163. Background checks on some of these individuals if they had criminal records, depending on what the type of job where you might need a clearance. What do you have in place for that? How do you counter that?

PGCDSS requires the vendor to assist in background checks and assistance with getting records expunged.

164. What is the current livable wage?

The State of Maryland is \$10.15.

165. With the price of gas projected to increase by the summer to \$5 a gallon, do we have an expectation that our customers or the customers will be having difficulty getting to some of the workshops or job placement

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opportunities, and should we be looking at that in terms of creativity or how we address that issue for the customer? As a part of the proposal?

Yes, transportation is always a consideration.

166. You're looking for more than one agency to provide service and not just one agency for all of Prince George's County?

Yes. But PGCDSS will consider all options presented.

167. Are there any people that are in this population that would be potential candidates for business ownership training?

Yes.

168. Do you know what percentage of the population that would be potential candidates for business ownership training?

No.