



**Request for Proposal
for
County of La Crosse, Wisconsin**

Thursday, July 16, 2020

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Child Welfare Community Alignment & Intensive Permanency Services (IPS)

Proposals must be received no later than
3:00 p.m., August 6th, 2020

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Place the signed Signature Affidavit as the first page of your proposal.**
- 2. Proposers must submit an original and three (3) copies of all materials**
Label the lower left corner of your sealed submittal envelope as follows:
Proposer's name and address:
Proposal Title: Child Welfare Community Alignment & IPS RFP
- 3. Vendor Conference will be held via Microsoft Teams online and/or phone**
RSVP will be required to attend – **See Section 1.5**
- 4. Deliver on or before August 6th, 2020, by 3:00 p.m. to**
La Crosse County Human Services - Contract Unit
Attn: Chris Sander
300 4th Street North
PO Box 4002
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54602-4002
Please see Section 2.4 for specific instructions due to building closure
- 5. Final award decision anticipated by September 1, 2020, with an estimated contract start date of October 1, 2020.**

LATE, FAXED AND/OR UNSIGNED PROPOSALS WILL BE REJECTED

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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction and Background

The past decade has brought many advances in scientific knowledge and reform relating to child welfare practice. Particularly, much more is known about the impact of trauma on child development, capacity for connection and parental behavior. Both the Federal and State government have used this knowledge to update laws, policies and strategic direction. For example, the Federal Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) includes reforms to help keep children safely with their families and avoid the traumatic experience of entering foster care (<https://familyfirstact.org/about-law>). Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) has adopted the strategic goal of transforming Wisconsin’s approach to child welfare services by keeping more families together (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first>).

La Crosse County Human Services is seeking to improve the effectiveness of its child welfare system by aligning both as an agency and a community with these advancements. While we have put much effort in orientating our team members on trauma informed care, we are anxious to get to the “next level” in putting this knowledge to use in impactful ways within our child welfare system. As the “system” includes many community partners (i.e., schools, law enforcement, courts), and the State and Federal reforms represent a significant change from past philosophy and practice, we want to be thoughtful and coordinated in moving forward. Therefore, we would like consultation and other assistance in aligning community partners with this change.

In addition to community alignment, a direct area we are seeking improvement in outcomes is in the timeliness in achieving permanency for children in out-of-home care. Simply put, we have too many children and youth who have been in out-of-home care for too long. In addressing this issue, we are interested in implementing Intensive Permanency Services. Based on what is now known about relational trauma and its impact to form meaningful and supportive connections, we are seeking to improve how we engage with and achieve permanency for these children and youth who have been in out-of-home care for such an extended period.

1.2 Service Description

The scope of the project includes both community alignment and implementation of intensive permanency services.

Community Alignment

The project seeks consultation to Human Services leadership and direct education to various community partners. The goal is to align philosophy and approaches to serving children, youth and their families within and at- risk of entering the child welfare system consistent with the strategic direction of the Wisconsin DCF, the FFPSA and what is now known about trauma and its impact on children and families. This would include activities like:

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- Presenting to child welfare system partners on topics such as the child welfare change movement and impacts of out-of-home care.
- Providing leadership coaching for a select number of Human Services supervisors.
- Providing consultation for Human Services managers and supervisors on how to most successfully bring our community in alignment with recent child welfare reforms. This would include how to anticipate and address common barriers and pushback to this type of change.
- Sharing how other states and counties have used resources differently to succeed at keeping children and youth with their families.

Intensive Permanency Services

This project seeks consultation on implementing an Intensive Permanency Services (IPS) model at La Crosse County Human Services. This model will help us gain permanency and overall improve outcomes for children and youth who have been in out-of-home care for an extended period of time. It will also be a vehicle to improve our quality of engagement, trauma-sensitive and permanency-focused work throughout our case practice. Intensive Permanency Services work by having a trained worker guide the youth through a process to heal from what has happened to them. Another aspect that is important to us is bringing in community partners to collaborate with this model. Outcomes expected would be:

- Provide a foundational understanding of the IPS model for leaders and staff.
- Assist in the selection of IPS worker(s).
- Provide an understanding of how to support and sustain individual and organizational resilience.
- Assist in improving outcomes for youth by troubleshooting interventions, developing team expertise and developing resources that promote sustainability.
- Provide coaching to leaders to increase the capacity to troubleshoot the difficult cases and sustain the model.
- Assist with bringing community partners to collaborate with La Crosse County Human Services in implementing this model.

The budget for this entire project is around **\$400,000**.

This project could last up to three years long. *Services should start by October 1, 2020 and can be delivered virtually, if appropriate.*

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1.3 Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout the RFP:

DCF – State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

FFPSA – Families First Prevention Services Act

IPS – Intensive Permanency Services

1.4 Clarifications and/or Revisions to the Specifications and Requirements

This Request For Proposal (RFP) process is administered by La Crosse County, Human Services Department and the person responsible for managing the procurement process is Chris Sander.

Any questions concerning this document must be received via email to csander@lacrossecounty.org by **12:00 p.m. on July 21, 2020.**

Providers are expected to raise any questions, exceptions, or additions they have concerning this document at this point in the process. If a provider discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in this document, the provider should immediately notify the above named individual of such error and request modification or clarification.

In the event that it becomes necessary to provide additional clarifying data or information, or to revise any part of this document, revisions/amendments and/or supplements will be provided via the La Crosse County Website and via email to all known interested parties.

1.5 Vendor Conference

A vendor conference will be held at **10:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2020** via Microsoft Teams online and/or phone. This is held to respond to written questions and to provide additional instruction and information to providers on the submission of proposals. There will be minutes taken, posted on the website and emailed to all known interested parties. ***This will be the only forum where questions will be answered.***

To receive the information on how to attend the vendor conference, please **RSVP** via email Chris Sander at csander@lacrossecounty.org by **8 a.m., Thursday, July 23rd, 2020**. Chris will forward you the link and phone information via email prior to the vendor conference.

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1.6 Calendar of Events

July 16, 2020	Release date of RFP
July 21, 2020	Questions on RFP due to County by noon
July 23, 2020	Vendor Conference, 10:00 a.m. – RSVP required
August 6, 2020	Proposals due from vendors, receipt by 3:00 p.m.
August 20, 2020	Vendor Interviews- please hold these times open for possible vendor interviews (10 a.m.; 2 p.m.)
September 1, 2020	Anticipated notification of award sent to vendors
October 1, 2020	Estimated contract start date

1.7 Contract Terms

The contract effective dates will be negotiated with the successful proposer, but are anticipated to be **October 1, 2020**, through **December 31, 2023**.

2.0 PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

2.1 General Instructions

The evaluation and selection of a provider and the contract will be based on the information submitted in the provider’s proposal and any required vendor presentation/interviews. Failure to respond to each of the requirements in the RFP may deem the proposer non-responsive.

Elaborate proposals (i.e. expensive artwork) beyond that sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal, are not necessary or desired.

2.2 Public View of Proposals

To the extent permitted by law, it is the intention of La Crosse County to withhold the contents of the proposal from public view until such times as competitive or bargaining reasons no longer require non-disclosure, in the opinion of La Crosse County. At that time, all proposals will be available for review in accordance with the Wisconsin Public Records Law.

2.3 Incurring Costs

La Crosse County is not liable for any cost incurred by proposers in replying to this RFP.

2.4 Submitting the Proposal

Proposers must submit **an original and three (3) copies** of all materials required for acceptance of their proposal by **3:00 p.m., August 6th, 2020** to:

Chris Sander
La Crosse County Human Services
Contract Unit – 4th Floor
300 4th Street North
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54602

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Due to COVID, the offices are closed. If you would like to drop off your proposals, you can do that by emailing Chris at csander@lacrossecounty.org to set up a time to meet her outside the building.

You may also send proposals via mail, UPS or Fed Ex, but proposals must be received in the above office by the specified time and date stated above. Proposals must be available electronically if requested by La Crosse County.

All proposals must be packaged, sealed, and show the following information on the outside of the package:

- Proposer's name and address.
- RFP title: Child Welfare Community Alignment and IPS RFP

2.5 Proposal Organization and Format

Proposals should be typed and submitted on 8.5 x 11 inch paper bound securely. The "original" should be marked as such on the title page. Proposals should include a Table of Contents and be organized and presented in the order and by the number assigned in the RFP. Each heading and subheading should be separated by tabs or otherwise clearly marked. The RFP sections which should be submitted or responded to are:

- Evaluation Criteria (See Section 3.5 if this RFP)
 - Service Methodology
 - Organizational Capabilities
 - Funding/Price Proposal
- Required Forms
 - Attachment A Signature Affidavit
 - Attachment B Vendor Data Sheet
 - Attachment C Purchase of Service Contract (return only if any requested revisions) or submit your suggested contract template.

2.6 Multiple Proposals

Multiple proposals from a provider will be permissible; however each proposal must conform fully to the requirements for proposal submission. Each such proposal must be separately submitted and labeled as Proposal #1, Proposal #2, etc. on each page included in the response.

2.7 Vendor Presentation/Interview

Top scoring proposers, based on an evaluation of the written proposal, may be required to participate in presentations/interviews to support and clarify their proposals. **These will be scheduled for August 20, 2020, following an internal meeting on August 14th. Please keep this date open for a possible presentation/interview.**

3.0 PROPOSAL SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

3.1 Opening of Bid

Proposals will be opened after 3:00 p.m. on August 6th, 2020.

3.2 Preliminary Evaluation

The proposals will first be reviewed to determine if requirements in Section 2.0 are met and if additional mandatory requirements are met. Failure to meet mandatory requirements will result in the proposal being rejected. In the event that all providers do not meet one or more of the mandatory requirements, La Crosse County reserves the right to continue the evaluation of the proposals and to select the proposal which most closely meets the requirements specified in this RFP.

3.3 Right to Reject Proposals and Negotiate Contract Terms

La Crosse County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to negotiate the terms of the contract, including the award amount, with the selected proposer prior to entering into a contract. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully with the highest scoring proposer, La Crosse County may negotiate a contract with the next highest scoring proposer.

In addition, La Crosse County reserves the right to discontinue the RFP process at any time and makes no commitments, implied or otherwise, that this process will result in a business transaction with one or more providers.

3.4 Proposal Scoring

Accepted proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee and scored against the stated criteria. The committee will review all proposals and will request vendor presentation/interviews and use the results of those meetings in scoring the proposals.

3.5 Evaluation Criteria

Description	Points
Service Methodology	60
<p>Please describe how your agency will provide Community Alignment and Intensive Permanency Services as outlined in Section 1.1. Specifically describe the modalities used, activities to be performed and timeframes expected.</p> <p>With regards to Community Alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe experience your organization has in delivering trainings or in other ways publishing or disseminating research or information that explains the negative traumatic impacts family separation has on children and youth and the underlying basis for recent reforms in child welfare that is focused on keeping children with their immediate or extended families or like-kin. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In addition to formal trainings, describe experience your agency has in giving educational presentations on child welfare topics, specifically listing any presentations your organization has given for Wisconsin audiences. - Also, describe experience providing support to child welfare agencies in engaging and aligning community partners and stakeholders around child welfare system changes, including assistance in dealing with common barriers or pushback. <p>With regards to Intensive Permanency Services, please describe how your modality incorporates the following in relation to children or youth who have been in out-of-home care placement for an extended period of time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restoring the trust and ability to connect that is often lost due to the number of broken relationships with caregivers and the length and number of out-of-home placements they have experienced. - Measuring improvement in the ability and success of the child or youth in making connections - Seeking to establish a permanent connection with relatives or like-kin <p>Describe any regular opportunities your organization provides outside of county-specific or onsite work for our employees to attend trainings or review descriptive materials to gain familiarity with your modality (i.e. do you have any descriptive materials that have been created apart from response to this RFP that describe your modality? Are there any trainings you offer apart from the direct work you may engage with in our county?)</p> <p>Please describe in more detail any past positive outcomes of your agency’s Intensive Permanency Services in achieving permanency for children in out-of-home care. Provide any outcome information you have from other states or counties directly resulting from your intensive permanency services modality.</p> <p>List any recognition or awards your modality has received.</p>	
<p><u>Organizational Capabilities</u></p>	<p>40</p>
<p>Describe proposer’s agency experience, ability, and capabilities in providing these specific services, including resumes of current staff that would be providing the services.</p> <p>Please describe any experience you have working with the State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, the Wisconsin County Human Service Association, along with any specific Wisconsin counties.</p>	

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<p>Please provide at least 2 references (references from Wisconsin agencies preferred), with letters, if possible, from agencies where you provided either Child Welfare Community Alignment or Intensive Permanency Services specifically.</p> <p>The intensive and relationally challenging work of child welfare requires a special attention to maintaining an emotionally healthy workforce. Please describe how your organization has incorporated workplace wellness as part of its consultation services as well as any particular strengths your organization has in this area.</p> <p>Also please discuss any strengths in or way your organization has incorporated racial justice and equity issues into your models, training and consultation.</p>	
Funding/Price Proposal	10
Please provide a breakdown in how you propose to bill for these services, staying within the \$400,000 budget for the entire project.	
Vendor Interviews	110
TOTAL	220

3.6 Required Forms

The following forms must be completed and submitted with the proposal in accordance with the instructions given in Section 2.0. Blank forms are attached.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Attachment A | Signature Affidavit |
| Attachment B | Vendor Data Sheet |
| Attachment C | Purchase of Service Contract (only if you have requested revisions) or submit <u>your</u> suggested contract template. |

3.7 Final Offers

The final decision is estimated to be made by the Internal Purchasing Approvers by September 1, 2020.

3.8 Notification of Intent to Award will be Shortly Following Final Approval

As a courtesy, La Crosse County may send a notification of award memo to responding providers at the time of award.

4.0 SPECIAL CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

La Crosse County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause.

La Crosse County reserves the right to re-issue any solicitations.

Upon the selection of a finalist provider, La Crosse County by its proper officials, employees, or agents shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with this provider. If La Crosse

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County, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with this provider; La Crosse County reserves the right to reject such provider and negotiate a final agreement with the provider who has the next most viable proposal or bid. La Crosse County may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a RFP.

Clarification of proposals: La Crosse County reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a provider's proposal or obtain additional information.

La Crosse County is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that demonstrates the best ability to meet the needs of La Crosse County.

La Crosse County reserves the right to waive any formalities, defects, or irregularities in any proposal, response, and/or submittal where the acceptance, rejection, or waiving of such is in the best interests of La Crosse County.

La Crosse County reserves the right to disqualify any proposal, before or after opening, upon evidence of collusion, intent to defraud, or any other illegal practice on the part of the provider.

Indemnification

The Provider agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless, the Purchaser, and its agents, officers and employees, from and against all loss or expense including costs and attorney fees by reason of liability for damages including suits at law or in equity, caused by any wrongful, intentional, or negligent act or omission of the Provider, or its (their) agents and / or subcontractors which may arise out of or connected with activities covered by this contract.