



MECKLENBURG COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

Request for Information RFQ # 487-DL-DSS000105 Issued June 21, 2024

Mecklenburg County, located in the State of North Carolina, is seeking information related to the selection and implementation of **As Needed Emergency Supervision Staffing** for its Youth and Family Services Division of the **Child, Family and Adult Services Department**. At this stage, we are seeking to understand this service market and identify requirements we will want to include in a subsequent Request for Proposal should we decide to pursue this project further. We invite you to respond to the questions posed in Section 2 of our Request for Information based on your understanding of this market and your experience supplying related supports or services. Responding to this Request for Information does not constitute a proposal and is not required in order to respond to a subsequent Request for Proposal should one be issued at a future point.

Response to this Request for Information is due to the Mecklenburg County Procurement Division no later than **Friday, July 26, 2024 at 5:00 PM EST**. Please refer to Section 1-5 of this RFI for guidelines regarding the formatting and submission of your response. Please review these sections carefully.

To facilitate vendor response to the questions presented in Section 2 of this RFI, a copy in Microsoft Word format will be provided upon request via e-mail to Meck-Procurement Bids Meckbids@mecklenburgcountync.gov. Questions should be directed to Demetrius Littlejohn, Mecklenburg County Procurement Division

Mecklenburg County is an equal opportunity purchaser.

Sincerely,

Demetrius Littlejohn
Procurement Analyst
Procurement Division
Mecklenburg County

cc: RFI Project Team
Procurement Division RFI file

Section 1

General Information

V1.0 Feb 1 2015

1.0 About this Request for Information

Mecklenburg County NC (the County) is investigating options for As Needed **As Needed Emergency Supervision Staffing** to be utilized by the Youth and Family Services (YFS) Division of the Child, Family and Adult Services Department. We invite vendors serving this market to provide information which will help us define the scope, requirements, and funding estimates should we decide to move ahead to request proposals from potential vendors. As a municipal government entity, we are required to encumber funds for major expenditures so cost estimates are important for budgeting, but that should not be interpreted to mean that lowest cost is the major evaluation criteria. We strive to procure supports and services which provide value to our residents and best meet their long-term needs. We also strive to develop mutually beneficial relationships with quality-oriented vendors.

Your response to this Request for Information is important to us. We have organized it to collect the maximum amount of information without being too complicated or time consuming to complete. It is organized into two sections:

- Section 1 provides information about the County and details of the service needs we hope to address through this request. If you feel that there is some other metric or detail which will allow you to provide a better response, please let us know so we can address your request.
 - Section 1 also includes instructions for submitting your response, our planned timetable for reviewing responses, and a description of our anticipated next steps. Note that this RFI allows respondents to provide only a partial submission if desired.
- In Section 2, we provide Response Sheets for you to use to submit information including:
 - Vendor profile information
 - General information about the marketplace involved
 - Responses to questions and requirements the County has already identified
 - General information about solutions your organization provides
 - A rate/cost estimate to provide identified services
 - Information about any previous RFIs or RFPs to which your agency has responded

Please keep in mind that we **ARE NOT** seeking proposals at this stage. Our intent is to become an ‘informed shopper’. Please feel free to point out considerations and options we may not be aware of which we should include in our evaluation criteria should we progress to the proposal stage (Section I General Information Sub-Sections 2-5).

2.0 Organization Background

About Mecklenburg County Youth and Family Services

Mecklenburg County (County) is located in the foothills of the Piedmont, in southern North Carolina. Out of 100 counties in North Carolina, Mecklenburg County is the largest, having a population of approximately 944,373 people.

As of June 12th, 2024, there are currently 456 youth in Mecklenburg County Youth and Family Services' custody, of which 28.7% have been in custody for 12-23 months. Of note, placement stability is a key concern for youth in care. Multiple placement moves can put children at risk for a number of poor outcomes, including lower academic achievement, insecure attachment, and distress due to instability and uncertainty about their home environment. Identifying and obtaining appropriate placement options to meet children's needs (including therapeutic needs) is critical as placement stability has an impact on all three goals of child welfare which are safety, permanence and well-being for youth in foster care.

3.0 Project Background and Objectives

The placement goal for youth in foster care is no more than one placement move during their time in care. Twenty percent of youth in the custody of Mecklenburg County have met this goal. Eighty percent (80%) have experienced two or more moves, and of those, thirty seven percent (37%) have had more than four (4) placements. Youth with a high number of moves tend to have unmet therapeutic needs and are challenging to place, resulting in repeated use of emergency placement options. In many cases, YFS finds that emergency placement beds are available, however providers express concern about the youth's level of behavioral need, a recent history of aggression, juvenile justice system involvement, or poor fit for the current environment.

When no foster home or facility placement can be located, these youth fall under the emergency supervision and care of YFS staff at County facilities. Direct youth supervision is not a traditional YFS staff responsibility, and having to provide this service pulls staff away from their regular duties, creating greater strain on the social services system.

Through this RFI, we are seeking information from the staffing agency community to help us understand how best to address this unmet need. This RFI is being sought strictly for the purpose of gaining knowledge of services available with an estimate of your corresponding costs and should not be construed as an intent, commitment or promise to acquire services or solutions offered. No contract will result from any response to this RFI.

Any information submitted in response to the RFI will become the property of DSS. DSS will not pay for any information herein requested nor is it liable for any cost incurred by the service provider. No contract will result from any response to this RFI.

RFI submissions should address the service requested below:

As Needed Emergency Supervision Staffing:

Children in YFS custody sometimes fall into a placement gap where they are in custody, but neither an emergency nor long-term placement has been identified. In this circumstance children may be sheltered at the County offices. There is a need for 24-hour/7 day a week PRN staffing to supervise children in the office who are awaiting placement. In addition, supervision may include transportation to and from school and appointments, supervising respite activities outside of the building, and providing psycho-educational support as needed. We believe that para-professional support from persons with training in verbal de-escalation, crisis prevention and intervention,

behavior modification, and behavior intervention are best suited to perform this role. The County seeks information about staffing agency options that may be supportive in addressing needs of this nature.

4.0 How the County is Currently Meeting This Need

Currently, children awaiting placement are supervised by YFS Child Welfare Specialists as an added responsibility for which they receive enhanced pay. Supervision needs are greatest in the evenings, overnight from 5pm-8am, and 24/7 during the summer months and school vacations.

5.0 Instructions for Responding to This Request for Information

The objective of this RFI is to gather suggestions and recommendations from experts and providers the staffing space about the emergency supervision staffing. Please submit your recommendations in a written response addressing as few or as many of the questions below:

1. Emergency Supervision Staffing
 - a. Your experience with this issue or similar issues.
 - b. Potential staffing solutions.
 - c. Recommendations for the types of expertise, training, and resources required to safely and effectively address youth supervision needs.
 - d. Estimated cost to meet the identified youth supervision needs. Please provide a per youth estimate, inclusive of an hourly rate.
 - e. Any recommended program or contract components that would make providing a staffing solution more likely to be successful.
 - f. If applicable, please provide (attach) samples of relevant RFIs and RFPs prepared by other clients or your organization.

5.1 Submission of Questions and Response

Requests for additional information or clarification of this RFI may be made orally or in writing to the individual listed below, with e-mail being the preferred method of communication. Questions should reference the RFI page and topic number.

Mecklenburg County Procurement Division
Attn: Demetrius Littlejohn
RFI # 487-DL-DSS000105
3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 107
Charlotte, NC 28208
Phone: 980-980-2537
E-Mail: demetrius.littlejohn2@MecklenburgCountyNC.Gov

Section 1

General Information

Please submit your questions by **Friday, July 5, 2024, at 5:00 PM EST**. Any written responses issued by the County to questions and requests for information will be posted to the Internet in the form of written addenda, which will be available on the Internet at www.ips.state.nc.us by searching for RFI # 487-DL-DSS000105 and shall become part of this RFI.

5.2 Expense of Submittal Preparation

The County accepts no liability for the costs and expenses incurred by the vendor in responding to this RFI, or in preparing responses for clarification. Each vendor that prepares a response shall do so at its own expense and with the express understanding that they cannot make any claims whatsoever for reimbursement from the County for the costs and expenses associated with the response.

5.3 Trade Secrets/Confidentiality

Your response is considered a public record except for material which qualifies as “Trade Secret” information under N.C. Gen. Stat. 66-152 et. Seq. Your response will be reviewed by County Procurement Division staff, department evaluators and members of the general public who submit public records requests. To properly designate material as a trade secret under these circumstances, each vendor must take the following precautions: (a) any trade secrets submitted by a vendor should be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope marked “Trade Secret—Confidential and Proprietary Information—Do Not Disclose Except for the Purpose of Evaluating this Response,” and (b) the same trade secret/confidentiality designation should be stamped on each page of the trade secret materials contained in the envelope.

In submitting a response, each vendor agrees that the County may reveal any trade secret materials contained in such response to all County staff and officials involved in the selection process, and to any outside consultant or other third parties who serve on an Evaluation Committee or who are hired by the County to assist in development of specifications. Furthermore, vendor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the County and each of its officers, employees, and agents from all costs, damages, and expenses incurred in connection with refusing to disclose any material, which the vendor has designated as a trade secret. **Please do not mark your entire response as a trade secret.**

5.4 Equal Opportunity

The County has an equal opportunity purchasing policy. The County seeks to ensure that all segments of the business community have access to supplying the products and services needed by County departments and programs. The County affirmatively works to encourage utilization of small and minority business enterprises in our procurement activities. The County provides equal opportunity for all businesses and does not discriminate against vendor regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, or disability.

Section 1

General Information

5.5 Registration of Vendors

The County utilizes a Procurement Software System for most day-to-day interactions with vendors. To compete for and be awarded contracts with the County, vendors must be registered in the MECKProcure system. Registration is not required to submit a response to this Request for Information and registration status will not affect the evaluation of responses. For information on registering as a vendor, please refer to the County Procurement Division website located at: <http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/finance/procurement/Pages/Home.aspx>

Or contact County Procurement at 980-314-2400

5.7 Schedule of Events

The following chart shows the schedule of events associated with this Request for Information:

DATE	EVENT
June 21, 2024	<i>Issuance of RFI.</i> The date County issues this RFI.
July 5, 2024	<i>Submission of Questions/Clarifications</i> Vendors are permitted to submit questions for purposes of clarifying this RFI. Refer to Section 1-5.1 for the submission process. Answers to questions will be posted as an Addenda at meckprocure.com Questions are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on the last day of the question period. No additional questions or clarification will be received by the County beyond this date or prior to response submission.
July 12, 2024	Post answers to questions to MECKProcure.
July 26, 2024	<i>Response Submission.</i> Responses are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on this date, at the address indicated in Section 1- 5.1.
August 9, 2024	<i>RFI Findings Summary Prepared by County Evaluation Team</i> The County RFI Evaluation Team will submit a report of its findings to the Sponsoring Department.

Section 1
General Information

DATE	EVENT
TBD	<i>Potential release of resulting Request for Proposals if warranted.</i>

Section 2

Vendor Response

1.0 Vendor Profile

All respondents, please complete the following profile information about your organization.

1.1 Vendor Name
1.2 Head Office/Primary Business Locations
1.3 Years In Business / Years Serving This Market
1.4 Ownership / Executive Contact Information
1.5 Operations Management Contact Information
1.6 Other Important Facts About Vendor the County Should Know

2.0 As Needed Emergency Supervision Staffing

We are interested in any information or recommendations that you have. You may answer no questions, some questions or all questions in this section.

4.1 Your experience with this issue or similar issues.
4.2 Potential staffing solutions.
4.3 Recommendations for the types of expertise, training, and resources required to safely and effectively address youth supervision needs.

Section 2

Vendor Response

4.4 Estimated cost to meet the identified youth supervision needs. Please provide a per youth estimate, inclusive of an hourly rate.
4.5 Any recommended program or contract components that would make responding to an RFP more attractive and more likely from the vendor standpoint.
4.6 If applicable, please provide (attach) samples of relevant RFIs and RFPs prepared by other clients or your organization.