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QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES # 1
PROJECT NO. DPSCS Q0015010
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Substance Abuse Treatment Services
November 25, 2014

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This List of Questions and Responses, questions #1 through #31, is issued to clarify certain information contained in the above named IFB.

In most instances the submitted questions and the Department's responses merely serve to clarify the existing requirements of the IFB. Sometimes, however, in submitting questions potential Bidders may make statements or express interpretations of contract requirements that may be inconsistent with the Department's intent. To the extent that the Department recognizes such an incorrect interpretation, the provided answer will note that the interpretation is erroneous and either state that the question is moot once the correct interpretation is explained or provide the answer based upon the correct interpretation.

No provided answer to a question may in and of itself change any requirement of the IFB. If, based upon a submitted question, it is determined that any portion of the IFB should be changed, the actual change may only be implemented via a formal amendment to the IFB. In this situation, the answer provided will reference the amendment which contains the IFB change.

The statements and interpretations of contract requirements which are stated in the following questions of potential Bidders are not binding on the State, unless the State expressly amends the IFB. Nothing in the State's responses to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the State of any statement or interpretation on the part of the vendor asking the question as to what the contract does or does not require.

1. *A similar IFB for these programs was released in December 2013:*
 - a. *Was this program awarded to a contractor?*
 - b. *If so, who is the current contractor?*
 - c. *Is there a particular reason this IFB is being re-issued under a different number in November 2014?*
 - d. *What is the total amount of the current contract?*
 - e. *What is the hourly rate for staff by position in the current contract?*
 - f. *What is the average vacancy rate by institution?*

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RESPONSE:

- a. An RFP (Request for Proposals) was issued by DPSCS in December 2013; however, a contract was not awarded for that procurement.
- b. The current Contractor is Gaudenzia, Inc.
- c. The RFP is being reissued as an IFB as the Departments has determined that it is in the best interest of the State to do so.
- d. The total amount awarded to Gaudenzia, Inc. from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2015 under the current contract is \$16,912,562. This does not include MCI-W.
- e. The hourly rates for staff positions in the current contract are considered to be confidential.
- f. The average vacancy rate for October 2013 to October 2014 by institution is: MCTC 44%; PATX 75%; CMCF 71%; and MTC 76%.

2. *The IFB for similar services that was issued last year had a due date of 12/19/2014 [sic 2013] with a start date of April 1 (over 4 months). Responses to the current IFB are due 12/17, with a start date of 1/15/2015 (less than 30 days without deducting for closures for Christmas and New Year's holidays).*

Is the current RFP's timeline feasible for a new vendor given time needed for hiring, purchasing equipment/curricula, etc?

RESPONSE: The anticipated Contract Commencement date is January 15, 2015; however, the Go-Live date for services is anticipated to be April 1, 2015. This time is sufficient for the Contractor to hire staff and purchase equipment/curricula, etc. See Amendment #1, Item #1

3. *Section 3.1.4 p. 29 "p. 29 3.1.4 "the traditional TC concept of peer led and peer-enforced treatment and behaviors an NOT appropriate for this environment"*

Is it the Department's expectation that the treatment counselors and security are the sole individual's responsible for holding the clients/inmates accountable and responsible for participant's behavior?

RESPONSE: The Department is referring to the terms "Peer Enforced" and "Peer Led" as meaning the authority of one peer over another. The Department's expectation is that treatment counselors and security are the primary individuals responsible for holding the Participants accountable and responsible for their behavior. In addition, the Department utilizes the concept of Peer Accountability. The Department expects that the TCs will be led by the Contractor's staff however, the TCs will still utilize peer community and awareness.

4. *Section 3.6.2 p. 52 3.6.2(c) "No authorization will be granted until the Department is assured that all posts will be staffed or covered in a manner that will not interrupt services"*

a. If a new vendor is selected and current staff transfer to work with the new vendor, there is a high probability that the employees' annual training dates would be due at the same time a year later. What is the Department's expectation for providing treatment coverage when the majority of the staff would be in training?

b. Would penalties be assessed for not providing services/staff attending required trainings?

RESPONSE: a: The expectation of the Department is that the Contractor would plan ahead to stagger training days attended by Contractor staff so that the TC would still be able to hold seminars and meetings without compromising staff coverage.

b: Section 1.45.5(j) and Attachment OO state that a liquidated damage of \$25 per business day for each employee that does not attend and complete the in-service training within 30 days of each anniversary date. In addition, as per Section 3.6.2 the authorization to pay for the staff training would not be complete if there was no staff plan for coverage and therefore the Contractor would be unable to bill for that day. The Department would nonetheless assess liquidated damages as per Section 1.45.5 (e) for failing to maintain the required minimum 96% staffing level in the event of inadequate staff coverage due to attendance at training.

5. *Section 3.6.3.1 p. 51 “Existing staff of the current contractor that will continue employment with the Contractor do not need to repeat the security orientation and training if there is documentation of the person’s previous attendance with this training and any break in service does not exceed 40 days”*

Will the Department or the current vendor provided/release the new vendor with the transferring employees’ current training records?

RESPONSE: Staff of the current contractor that continue services under the incoming contractor have their security orientation and training records in the Police and Correctional Training Center White Board which therefore are accessible to the Department. This information would also be available to any incoming contractor.

6. *Section 3.1.9 #9 p. 30. “thus, in addition to the group ATP treatment program, modified therapeutic communities are necessary for those inmates with more intensive substance abuse issues. At the MCTC TC program, for instance the TC program Participants and ATP Participants have joint graduation ceremonies. It is possible that a Participant could complete both programs at different times over the course of his or her incarceration.*

a. are these separate treatment programs?

b. Do the ATP Participants meet at different locations in the same facility?

c. Please clarify the differences in these programs.

RESPONSE: a: Yes, ATP and TC are separate treatment programs.

b: ATP does not meet at Patuxent, CMCF or MTC. At MCTC, ATP meets in the same building for treatment as TC; however, they meet in separate rooms. At MCI-W, TC and ATP (SAI) meet for treatment in completely different locations within the institution.

c: ATP is a Level I Outpatient level of care which meets twice a week for group and once every two weeks for individual sessions. TC is a level III.5 Residential level of care as described in this IFB Section 3.1.4.

7. Section 3.3.1 p. 32: *The description of each facility includes a “static” number of beds.*

a. *Do these programs operate at capacity consistently?*

b. *If not, what is the average census for each unit?*

RESPONSE: a: The static capacity listed in Section 3.3.1 is what the Department aims to achieve at each monthly cycle admission date. The remainder of the monthly census will vary due to attrition of unsuccessful discharges and monthly completions.

b: As the static capacity has changed for the upcoming contractual term, it is difficult to compare previous average census individually for each program. However, for FY 2010, the utilization was 103% (participants exceeded the static number of beds for this fiscal year); for FY 2011, the utilization was 95%; for FY 2012, the utilization was 99%; for FY 2013, the utilization was 98%; and for FY 2014, the utilization was 91%. For FY 2015, the utilization thus far has been 96%.

8. Section 3.3.7, p.34: *“The Department will make available suitable space within each facility for the positions identified on Section 3.5.12 & 3.7.1).”*

This statement refers to staff space; what is the availability of space for groups and other Participant’s activities?

RESPONSE: Group space was part of the viewing of the site visits. For those vendors who were not able to attend the site visits, group space varies by institution and includes large and small group spaces (varying from 15 to 90 Participants) with some spaces including removable chairs and student desks. Permanent furniture fixtures are only available in Recreational Halls where some meeting may take place. The Department supplies ample space for all TC programs as necessary.

9. Section 3.4.8, p. 36 *“For each six (6) month program, provide seven (7)-day admission cycles on a monthly basis beginning the first Wednesday of each month for each program”*

Please clarify “seven day admission cycles.” Does this mean that admissions into the program will be for seven (7) days beginning the first Wednesday of each month and closes after that initial 7 days until the next month?

RESPONSE: Yes. Admissions will be permitted for each monthly cycle for seven (7) days after the first Wednesday of the month and close after the seven (7) day period until the following month.

10. Section 3.4.9, p. 36 and 3.4.12.1, p. 37: *“Allow referrals and accommodate admissions into the Contractor’s orientation program during the first seven (7) days of each new cycle.” “As described in Section 3.4.8 and 3.4.9 the Contractor shall complete admission activities during the first fourteen (14) days of the program cycle...”*

The Orientation Phase is “the first month”, and the admission phase is 14 days. Is the admission phase a part of the Orientation phase?

RESPONSE: Yes. The admission phase is part of the orientation phase.

11. Section 3.4.14, p. 40: Note for CMCF program only:” . . .assign Participants in this phase to institutional jobs. The Contractor shall schedule treatment activities during evening hours to accommodate the Participants job assignments”

a. Do the institutional jobs last the entire day each day?

b. If so, how many treatment hours are expected for these Participants?

RESPONSE: a: Typically, the institutional jobs at CMCF are road crews which generally work 6am to 2:30pm, typically Monday through Friday.

b: Two treatment hours from 6pm to 8pm would be expected for the Participants in this Phase III – Reentry. See IFB Section 3.4.14 .

12. Section 3.4.21, p. 42 “Contractor’s staff shall not be on-site on...Service Reduction Days.”

a. What are Service Reduction Days?

b. How do these affect reimbursement?

RESPONSE: a. Service Reduction days are days that State offices are closed for State employees that are in addition to Holidays. These can be found on the Department of Budget and Management’s website (www.dbm.maryland.gov).

b. As per Section 3.4.21, the Contractor’s staff shall not be on-site during these day and therefore will not be reimbursed for these days as no service will be provided.

13. Section 3.4.22.2, p. 43: Description of Aftercare services for Participants awaiting release. Typically, how many Participants are in this group?

RESPONSE: As per Section 3.4.22.2, Participants in the Aftercare services shall not exceed 15 Participants per group.

14. Section 3.6.2 (b), p. 52: “A plan for service delivery that addresses, to the satisfaction of the Contract Manager...how services will continue to be provided during the absence of the personnel attending training.”

Is the expectation that Participants will continue to receive services although staff are required to be at training? Please clarify.

RESPONSE: Please see Response to Question #4 above.

15. Section 3.7, p. 52: “the Contractor shall provide auxiliary staff counselors...[to] provide 40 hours per week of Self-help Monitor services at each facility.”

- a. *Will the Department provide additional information regarding the expectation of this service?*
- b. *Are these Participants part of a treatment program?*
- c. *Would this be considered a full-time counseling position?*
- d. *Are these to be at night or during the day?*
- e. *Is it feasible for one or two counselors to provide these services at all 3 programs?*

RESPONSE: a: Section 3.7.2 is inclusive of the expectations of this service.

- b: Participants in self-help groups may be graduates of ATP, TC, participating in ATP or be in general population who have never participated in any Department treatment program.
- c: The Department expects 120 hours of total service over three locations per week. The Contractor may choose how to staff this service; whether three full-time Self-help monitors or six part-time Self-help monitors or some other configuration of staff to meet the required total hours.
- d: It is the expectation of the Department that self-help groups would be offered during both day and evening hours to accommodate Participants/inmates attending jobs, shops and/or educational programming.
- e. Please see Response to Question #15(c) above. It is the Department's opinion that a minimum of three Self-help monitors would be needed.

16. *Section 3.13.3, p. 61: Does the vendor have to provide its own phone system?*

RESPONSE: No. The Department will provide the landline phone service for the Contractor. See Section 3.13.1. The Contractor is responsible for long distance phone call charges. The Contractor may not install a separate phone system, and the Contractor's staff may not bring cell phones into the facilities.

17. *Section 3.9.1: Should the required file cabinets to be provided be vertical or lateral?*

RESPONSE: Although the Department isn't requiring one type or the other, due to space issues, a vertical file cabinet would be more appropriate.

18. *Section 3.20.2, p. 70, b; and Attachment F:*

- a. *Will the Department consider separating out all non-personnel and indirect expenses for invoices at 1/12th per month of the approved annual budget, such that only the personnel related expenses (wages and fringe) are invoiced based upon hours worked? Or,*
- b. *Does the Department expect that all costs to provide the service (both personnel and non-personnel) be factored into the hourly rate for each of the positions indicated on Attachment F?*

c. If the latter, does this mean that the vendor is at risk of not receiving any non-personnel expense reimbursement for the amount allocated to a vacant position?

RESPONSE: a: No, the Department will not consider separating out all non-personnel and indirect expenses. Bidders are to allow for these expenses when quoting their bids in Attachment F.

b: Yes. Please see response “18a” above.

c: Yes. The Contractor will not receive any expense reimbursement other than labor hourly rates quoted in its Financial Bid Form Attachment F and could be at risk of not receiving any non-personnel expense reimbursements for the amount allocated to a vacant position.

19. Does the solicitation preclude a contractor from adding additional curricula?

RESPONSE: No. The solicitation does not preclude a contractor from adding additional curricula; however, additional curricula shall be at no cost to the Department, be approved by the Contract Manager, and the Contractor shall still utilize the curricula required in the solicitation.

20. Does the Department supply computers and internet service?

RESPONSE: Yes. All IT related equipment and internet services are provided by the Department.

21. Will staff/employees have access to their firm’s webmail?

RESPONSE: Yes. Staff of the Contractor shall complete an Information Technology Status Spreadsheet provided by the Department (See Attachment QQ for further information) to allow Contractor staff access to its firm’s webmail account.

22. Will the Department provide training in the SMART System?

RESPONSE: No. Part of the licensing requirement of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s (DHMH) Office of Health Care Quality is that providers be trained on the SMART System. This training is provided by DHMH.

23. Does the Department staff administer urinalysis?

RESPONSE: Yes. Custody is responsible for administering urinalysis.

24. Is it possible to just bid on Aftercare services?

RESPONSE: No. A Bidder must provide all services listed within the IFB either through their own participation or in conjunction with subcontractors.

25. Can staff bring their personal cellphones on-site?

RESPONSE: No. Personal cellphones are not allowed on-site.

26. *Does the Department still have the fingerprint system for timekeeping?*

RESPONSE: Yes. Please refer to Section 3.5.19. The Department uses Kronos for its Biometric Time Keeping System that requires fingerprints.

27. *How long does it take to be approved as a mental health vendor?*

RESPONSE: As approval is the responsibility of another Agency, the Department cannot estimate a timeframe; however, see Section 3.4.1 of the IFB for a Bidder's obligation of proof of application.

28. *Is the reporting required in the Kronos Time Keeping in Section 3.5.19 in conflict with invoicing reports listed in Section 3.20.2?*

RESPONSE: Yes. Please see Amendment #1, Item #3 for the correct timeframe of invoice submissions.

29. *If a current employee does not have the required educational degree(s) under COMAR 10.47.01.06, would that preclude the incoming Contractor from hiring that employee to continue their position under the new Contract?*

RESPONSE: The IFB requires all listed positions in Sections 3.5.10, 3.5.11 and 3.7.3 be fully certified including all educational requirements per COMAR 10.47.01.06 and IFB Section 3.5.7. Any current employee who does not meet these requirements will not be allowed to continue employment under the new contract to be awarded.

30. *In section 3.7.1 self-help groups are referenced. What are the hours of the 18 self-help groups required in Hagerstown?*

RESPONSE: IFB Section 3.7.1 only lists the current types of Self-help Monitoring groups at each facility. These are not required amounts but only listed for informational purposes. Self-help monitoring groups may start as early as 8:30AM and end as late as 10:00PM.

31. *Are the Self-help monitors the only monitors at each self-help meeting?*

RESPONSE: DPSCS Custody personnel will perform periodic visits during Self-help meetings and are posted in the general area of the meetings. Self-help Monitors of the Contractor may provide guest speakers at meetings. See IFB Section 3.7.2

Remember bids are due on December 17, 2014, no later than 2:00 p.m. If there are questions concerning this solicitation, please contact me via e-mail at patti.tracey@maryland.gov or call me at (410) 260-7918 as soon as possible.

Date Issued: 11/25/2014

By:

<signed>
Patti Tracey
Procurement Officer