

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

2016 Child Advocacy Center-Existing and New Combined

Questions? Email us anytime at dcfaskrfp@dcf.state.nj.us

Phone number and contact

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Note: Revised checklists of required documents for county and county prosecutor applicants. These forms are attached to this document and posted for your use.

- 1. The Governor budgeted \$4,800,000 for the Child Advocacy Center Competitive Grant Program. However, the total for the two RFPs is \$4,000,000. How will the additional \$800,000 be utilized? Will there be an opportunity for organizations to apply for these funds in order to provide counties with needed support, training, and technical assistance as they move forward with new accredited CACs and to assist existing CACs with related support to enhance compliance with National Children's Alliance's (NCA) Standards?**

Page 1, Section 1A

“DCF announces the availability of \$1,800,000 in state funding for the purpose of funding renovations, technology improvements, expansion or redesign of existing child advocacy centers in New Jersey.”

According to these parameters, it appears that existing CACs can only apply for funding for renovations, physical expansion, and technology. Some accredited CACs could use the funds for renovations and/or technology, most of the accredited CACs hoped to use these funds to enhance programs and services.

We are excited about this new funding source and cannot discuss future use of the funding because it may involve a public bid and Request for Proposal. Comments and suggestions are always welcome at dcfaskrfp@dcf.state.nj.us and will be taken into consideration.

2. Will you provide a list of allowable and unallowable expenses?

The question and answer period and the Non Mandatory Bidders conference is the opportunity to ask specific questions.

3. Can the funds be utilized for software, for example for investigative purposes?

Yes. It is important to note, that software can have ongoing expenses. The agency should discuss in their proposal how this technology would be sustained in the future.

4. Would soundproofing of interview rooms be an allowable expense?

Yes.

5. Could these funds be used to remodel a kitchen, which is used to provide refreshments, inside the CAC?

Yes.

6. What expenses constitute “technology improvements”?

Some examples may be new wiring to accommodate updated technology, security cameras affixed to the property for security, camera equipment in rooms to record interviews, new computers/ servers in use for the purposes of the Child Advocacy Center.

7. Does the technology have to be in the designated CAC space? For example, if a CAC’s Computer Crimes Unit is in a separate building due to lack of space, can technology be purchased for that unit?

That would seem like a reasonable allowance. Please justify in your proposal the need for this expense and how it is consistent with the best practices relating to Child Advocacy centers.

8. Can accredited CACs purchase cars for the transportation of victims and family members to medical and mental health appointments, court, etc.?

This request is outside the scope of this RFP but will be taken into consideration as a future need. If this is something of interest for future funding consideration, please consider submitting details and justification to dcfaskrfp@dcf.state.nj.us.

9. Could the funds be utilized for a vehicle for a nurse, who is on call?

This request is outside the scope of this RFP but will be taken into consideration as a future need. If this is something of interest for future funding consideration, please consider submitting details and justification to dcfaskrfp@dcf.state.nj.us.

10. Several accredited CACs are renting space and thus cannot renovate. Can funds be used to rent office space for mental health clinicians in another space?

Yes. Applicants must describe in their proposal how funding will be continued or is anticipated to be sustained after these funds expire. It is our understanding that this is one-time funding. Using this funding for a fit out of space, rent until June 30, 2017 and a security deposit as one-time expenses would be considered for this RFP.

10A. Could we use these funds to pay for a longer lease up front, for example a five-year lease?

Yes. The agency would need to provide a copy of the lease in their proposal submission or a letter of intent from the landlord, along with the cost of the rent.

10B. In some cases, the landlord does the renovations for the building. Can we use the money to reimburse the landlord for renovations?

Yes. This process still will require 3 bids and a formal contractual agreement with the landlord. If the applicant cannot obtain this for the proposal, the applicant may submit a letter of intent to support the proposal or describe the process by which this would occur.

10C. If an agency (in a county without an existing CAC) is currently in the process of bidding for a space, and the purchase of that space may not take place in the next six months, can we still apply?

Yes. The agency should submit letters of intent and describe the status of the bidding process in their proposal.

11. Page 2, Section 1D

“Funding...shall demonstrate that the improvements shall be completed or funding obligated by June 1, 2017.” What do you mean by “obligated,” and for how long can those funds be encumbered?

The funds for these projects will need to be obligated by June 1, 2017 as stated in the RFP. The funds will be distributed by the end of FY17 if the project is in process and moving toward completion with written contracts and commitments in place. That would not mean the work would need to be completed by that point in time but legally binding agreements are required to be in place. It would be reasonable given the amount of funding for each project that this might take an extended period of time to complete.

12. What is the deadline for funds to be spent?

The funds are to be obligated with legally binding contracts by June 30, 2017.

13. The other related concern is that the time frame is not sufficient for some counties that have a lengthy process for even obtaining permission to apply for grants. Will extensions be considered for such counties that have an appropriate plan for funds but cannot meet the January 2017 deadline?

There will not be an extension for submitting proposals for this RFP. Please do submit your plan for consideration and understand that the funding may not be available beyond this deadline if the commitments cannot be made by June 30, 2017.

14. Page 5, Section 1G2

“DCF will convene a Proposal Evaluation Committee...”

As indicated above, who will participate on the Proposal Evaluation Committee? We all want to make sure that the funds are fully utilized in an effective and efficient manner. Several things need to be in place in order for a county to successfully achieve accreditation; having a child-focused space alone would not suffice for accreditation. It is important that at least one person on this committee has intimate knowledge of the Standards for Accreditation in order to ensure that that applications are in line with the standards AND that the applicants are in a good position to move

forward with the development of an accredited CAC as indicated in their application.

The Standards for Accreditation being applied for in this RFP are those attached as Exhibit C and each applicant must describe how their proposal aligns or is moving toward these standards through an investment in this project. DCF typically relies on an interdisciplinary team to review responses to RFP's. Any evaluation team members not already familiar with the Standards for Accreditation, will have an opportunity to become familiar with them.

15. Can we use State Contract vendors instead of and or part of our bidding process? County Governments have access to hundreds of pre-approved vendors with set pricing.

Yes, this is acceptable.

16. Are counties and county prosecutors required to submit the standard forms for non-profits?

No, these organizations can use the attached tailored checklists to submit their application. This checklist is available as attachment, on our website and at the Non- Mandatory Bidders conference.

17. Could you clarify what is meant by, "If accepted, provide two additional quotes?"

We are asking that the agency provide two additional quotes for improvements, so that we can be sure that the agency will be getting the best value for the funds.

18. Our unit, which handles technological crimes, has expanded due to a need for additional staff and space. We feel limited by the requirement to be in a "free-standing" space.

Yes, the space for other staff will be considered. Proposals must connect this request to the Standards attached to the RFP. The CAC and its related services can be located within a prosecutor's office, but we are requiring that the CAC itself adhere to the standards and have a separate entrance and contain child friendly space.

19. Can an agency who supports and promotes child advocacy, but is not located within a CAC, still apply?

Yes. If the county does not have a CAC and the applicant has the ability to create one, the applicant is encouraged to partner with the county prosecutors' office. Proposals must link the request for a new CAC to the Standards attached to the RFP.

20. Does the CAC need to be accredited to be considered an “existing CAC?” For example, in Camden, New Jersey, there is an Associate CAC. Could they apply as a “new” CAC?

At this time, there are nine existing accredited CACs in New Jersey, all of which are listed in the New Jersey Chapter of the National Alliance for Children's website. The office in Camden is not on that list, and therefore, would be able to apply as a new CAC.

21. Is there a matching requirement for this RFP?

No.

22. Is this an ‘all or nothing’ grant award? For example, if we submit a proposal with three major components, is it possible that two of the three components be awarded, which the third component is not awarded?

In the event that there is additional grant monies left, post award, it is possible that an agency's proposal be partially funded.

23. Can an agency partner with a prosecutor's office via a Memorandum of Understanding?

Yes, and this is strongly encouraged; however, a lack of an MOU would not be a disqualifying factor.

24. If an already funded county wishes to make suggestions and/or apply for leftover/future funding (should there be any), can they do so?

Yes. Please send to dcfaskrfp@dcf.state.nj.us.

25. Would a certificate stating that our agency is already Safe-Child Standards certified be sufficient, or do we need to submit an explanation as well?

An explanation describing adherence to Safe-Child Standards is required. The Standards are available at:

26. Are we required to submit job descriptions for this RFP?

No. Appendices item #1 is not required for either the New or Existing CAC Requests for proposals.

27. For an existing CAC, if the county has budgeted our agency a certain dollar amount for renovating a roof, for example, and we are awarded these funds, could we use them to supplement what the county budgeted for the roof?

Yes.

28. Could an agency, who has previously budgeted certain money for renovations, instead use this funding for those renovations, thus diverting the previously allotted money into programming needs?

Yes.