



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Division of Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) and Office of Family Preservation and Reunification (FPR)

### **Exchange Parent Aide (EPA) Services**

Written questions related to the content of this RFP were due on 3/13/2024.

A non-mandatory conference was held on 3/20/2024.

Written **technical questions** about forms, documents, and format may be emailed at any time up to the due date to [dcf.askrfp@dcf.nj.gov](mailto:dcf.askrfp@dcf.nj.gov).

All responses must be submitted ONLINE.

To submit online, respondent must **first** complete and submit an Authorized Representative (AOR) registration form: [AOR Registration Form](#)

AOR Registration forms must be received by **4/17/2024**.

All responses must be received by **4/24/2024** (by 12:00 NOON)

### **RFP Clarifications**

- **On pages 9-10 of RFP under Section II Deliverables, B. Target Population, 5. Parenting Status**  
Parenting status **should not include** "Resource Parent."
- **Narrative Page Limit**  
The entire narrative section (A, B, & C combined) must total a maximum of 20 pages (excluding cover page and appendices). This is a correction to what is stated in the RFP.
- **Is there a limit to the number of submissions a respondent can apply for?**  
No
- **Is a separate application for each region required?**  
Yes
- **Is there a limit to the number of awards a respondent can receive?**  
No

## Questions and Answers

1. **Could you please clarify the target population of the program? There is conflicting information from the RFP (page 9) and the Exchange Parent website.**

- **RFP Page 9: Target population states: “For parents/caregivers of children ages 0-17, who are involved in Child Welfare System.”**
- **Exchange Parent website states that “Families may enter the program at any time prenatally or with a child from birth through age 12”.**

The target population for the Exchange Parent Aide Program is 0-17. The model developer has confirmed that the Clearinghouse site is pending an update to reflect 0-17 as the accurate target population.

2. **Do all Parent Aides need to be certified? If so, what is the time frame for this to take place? Does the program need to be certified?**

The EPA program must be implemented with fidelity. Awarded respondents shall adhere to the Standards of Operation and Practice as defined by the National Exchange Club. Providers will receive consultation to become and remain accredited. *Parent Aides are not required to be certified.*

3. **If the program is certified, is it mandatory to join the EPA network? There appear to be costs associated with this.**

Programs are required to become accredited within 18 months of program start up. DCF will pay for the costs of Accreditation in year one.

4. **Can you explain the relationship with the National Parent Exchange (model purveyor).**

New program providers are asked to sign the National Parent Exchange program agreement, which is the foundation of the relationship between the provider and this model purveyor. Providers will obtain support in their efforts to provide services in accordance with model fidelity by maintaining regular contact with their EPA district.

5. **According to the material provided, the Parent Aide can be a HS graduate. Can they be a college graduate (some of the other programs following this model use college graduates who have majored in social work or a related field). Would this be acceptable?**

Parent Aides may:

- Possess a **GED or High School Diploma** and demonstrate **3-5 years’ experience** in providing direct care to minors **and/or related lived experience** in the child welfare system. **Note:** Parent Aides with lived experience must demonstrate the ability to effectively advocate within the system while maintaining the appropriate level of diplomacy and model these skills to families being served.

--OR--

- Possess a **bachelor’s degree in social work or related field** with **at least one years’ experience** working with families experiencing trauma, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, homelessness, and child abuse and/or neglect.

**6. Does the Exchange Parent Aide have to be a parent to be hired for this program? I ask this as this role is often paired with mentoring.**

No, see response to question #5 above for the Parent Aide requirements.

**7. Where will the referrals come from? DCP&P? And other sources? RFP page 16**

Families with current involvement with the DCP&P may be referred to the program through various referral sources, including:

Referral Sources	
Self-Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Families may contact the provider directly</li></ul>
Social Service Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>DCP&amp;P caseworkers</li><li>Other social service personnel</li></ul>
Community Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mental health care provider</li><li>Child's pediatrician</li><li>Child's school/childcare</li><li>Other community agency</li></ul>

**8. When referrals come self-referral or through listed community agencies, what will be the process to confirm that they are open DCF cases?**

Awarded respondents will communicate with DCP&P regularly on the receipt of, acceptance or rejection of program referrals.

**9. Is the provider expected to contact the DCP&P office if they get a self-referral from another source and just give the clients information to confirm they have a case and sign a release of information?**

The family will provide consent via the referral to discuss with DCP&P. The referral process will allow for the collection of information that includes eligibility criteria.

**10. Will the agency need to meet with the family to obtain HIPPA permission to contact DCP&P?**

See response to question #9 above.

**11. P.9, Section II.B.: Can children be referred from other DCF- or DMHAS- funded youth-serving programs such as PAT or SFP?**

Yes. Awarded respondents will communicate with DCP&P regularly on the receipt of, acceptance or rejection of program referrals.

**12. P.19, Section II.D.6.: "Professional staff shall be available 24 hours per day to the family to respond to crises." – Is phone availability sufficient?**

Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, 12 months per year. Availability of weekend and evening hours are required to ensure accessibility to the service.

After-Hours On-Call Procedures: Awarded respondents shall operate an answering service that will provide individuals and families with special instructions of where to go in case of an emergency and/or to call 911.

**13. Can this program be a remote program?**

**Service Delivery Setting:** The primary location of services is the family home. Group sessions may be facilitated within the community.

**Service Site:** Agency location can be in any location, in state or out of state. *Direct service staff may be remote.*

**14. P.19, Section II.D.8.: “Transportation may be provided by the care manager, on a limited and as needed basis.” – Are Parent Aides also allowed to provide transportation when needed?**

Yes. Transportation may be provided by the Care Manager or other program staff.

**15. RFP Page 1: Are we submitting 2 budgets? A budget for year one for a total of \$617,000 inclusive of \$75,000 one-time start up. Do we also submit an annual budget for the \$725,000 beginning July 1, 2025?**

Only **one** proposed budget for year one, inclusive of a separate column for one-time start-up costs, is required with the response. Do **not** submit another annual budget for the year beginning July 1, 2025.

**16. Please speak about the operational budget for year 1 vs year 2. Will the staffing & LOS increase in year 2? RFP page 3**

Available funding is up to \$617,000 per award for up to six (6) awards. Each award supports prorated operational expenses funding up to \$542,000 available in year 1, and up to \$75,000 for one-time approved start-up costs. Up to \$725,000 in annualized operational expenses funding is available for the contract renewing on July 1, 2025.

There will be no changes to staffing and LOS for year 2.

**17. P.1, Section I.B.: Would awardees be allowed to increase salaries in subsequent years if we remain within the budget ceiling?**

Salaries provided in the RFP are **minimum** salary requirements.

**18. Why will there be only 5 laptops?**

Agencies should submit start-up budgets for all anticipated costs required to begin program operations up to \$75,000. Start-up costs include but are not limited to the costs of one vehicle purchase; five (5) tablets/laptops equipped with broadband; and curriculum.

Staffing includes 5 direct service staff. The laptops needed for direct service staff will include broadband access so that they may be used in the field with families.

**19. What would the Director or Program Supervisor be expected to use in terms of technology for program monitoring etc.?**

See response provided to question #18 above.

**20. Should staff have access to both a tablet and a laptop or desktop computer?**

See response provided to question #18 above.

**21. RFP Page 26: How many Letters of Support can we provide?**

There is no set limit to letters of support.

**22. Are there page limitations for Section 3, Part A “Organizational Documents” and Section 3, Part B “Additional Documents”?**

No, there are no page limitations for these sections.

**23. RFP page 25, #14: Will the applicant need to do the risk assessment, and will there be a threshold of risk that makes participants eligible for referral?**

DCP&P Structured Decision-Making risk assessments are not included as an eligibility criterion for Exchange Parent Aide.

**24. Will the slide deck or recording from the virtual conference be shared with participants?**

Yes. The Power Point slides will be shared on our website.

**25. Do we need to submit separate proposals for each chosen region?**

Yes. Respondents may apply for and be awarded more than one region. A separate proposal is required for each region.

**26. Do we need to have the NJ business license prior to the contract award?**

Yes. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:32-44, all contractors and subcontractors must provide a Business Registration Certificate from the Division of Revenue in the Department of the Treasury when doing business with the State of New Jersey, and other public agencies in this state. A contractor shall provide the contracting agency with the business registration of the contractor and that of any named subcontractor prior to the time a contract, purchase order, or other contracting document is awarded or authorized.

**27. Is the expectation that the program will be operational at 60 days, and fully staffed within 90 days of the contract award?**

Yes.

**28. Can you clarify the total number of families to be served?**

Each of the six regions will serve 52 families at any point in time (PIT) and 96 unduplicated families per year. Within each region, the minimum number of families served by county is based on model fidelity and needs data. The specific number of families to be served by county is outlined in the tables on pages 11-12 of the RFP.