STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

988 Lifeline Crisis Center Expansion

March 28, 2024

Valerie Mielke, Assistant Commissioner

Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

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I. Purpose and Intent

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to fund 988 Lifeline crisis centers for the NJ 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline system. Total annualized funding is $10 million subject to State appropriations.

The purpose of this solicitation is to provide interested agencies with information to prepare and submit a proposal for funds to operate a 988 Lifeline crisis center ("Lifeline center") and, if the agency is not already, become part of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline network. Any applicant must be certified by Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant) as a 988 Lifeline crisis center, or be able to demonstrate the ability to become a certified 988 Lifeline crisis center and apply for certification within 30 days of award. Details of Vibrant's Lifeline Minimum Standards are available here[1].

This funding opportunity offers a total of $10 million annually. Funding will be for multiple 988 Lifeline centers of which up to three (3) will operate 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Funding from this award can be used to recruit, hire, train and pay direct service (responding to calls and/or chats/texts, and making follow-up calls), supervisory and administrative staff, and for technology. Funding can also be used to develop, manage and maintain infrastructure, including technology requirements, to ensure successful response to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Budgeting should include funds for initial technology or technology expansion and to establish strong cybersecurity for the center's system.

The goal of this funding is to enable NJ Lifeline centers to respond to at least 90% of calls and/or chats/texts routed to their center through the 988 Lifeline network. The successful bidder will demonstrate how they will plan to reach this goal. Applicants must indicate their proposed hours of operation as well as counties for which they would provide primary and/or backup coverage for 988 calls and/or chats/texts.

The successful bidder will ensure that their services are responsive to diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural and linguistic competence for those who reach their Lifeline Center through 988.

No funding match is required; however, bidders will need to identify any other sources of funding, both in-kind and monetary, that will be used. Bidders may not fund any costs incurred for the planning or preparing a proposal in response to this RFP from current DHS/DMHAS contracts.

[1] Link: Microsoft Word - 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Minimum Standards for crisis contact centers applying to join the 988 network [January 2022].docx (988lifeline.org)

The following summarizes the <u>anticipated</u> RFP schedule:

March 28, 2024	Notice of Funding Availability
April 5, 2024	Questions on RFP due – no later than 4pm ET
April 26, 2024	Deadline to submit written intent to apply – no later than 4pm ET
April 26, 2024	Deadline to request DHS secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) site login credentials – no later than 4pm ET
May 3, 2024	Deadline for receipt of proposals – no later than 4pm ET
TBD	Appeal deadline – no later than 4pm ET

Bidders are responsible for monitoring the DHS website[2] for updates to the RFP schedule.

II. Background and Population to be Served

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a project funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and administered by Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant), was established in 2005 as the nation's public safety net for individuals experiencing emotional distress or a suicidal crisis. Using an 800 number, the Lifeline was established to provide free and confidential emotional support to individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, every day of the year, across the United States. The Lifeline was comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. Individuals could call anytime from anywhere in the nation and speak to a trained crisis counselor who would listen to and assist callers with getting the help they needed. In 2013, Lifeline worked with CONTACT USA to pilot the nation's first federally supported online crisis chat program.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated in July 2020 that all states in the United States and its territories have access to suicide prevention and crisis services through an easy-to-remember, three-digit dialing code. The number "9-8-8" was chosen by the FCC and established by the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020. On July 16, 2022, this became the new national dialing code for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/NSPL/1-800-273-TALK). The 988 Lifeline now responds to calls, chats and texts regarding suicide as well as mental health and substance use crises.

In 2021, the FCC approved 988 for text messaging. Crisis chat services are also now available nationwide, 24 hours a day every day of the year.

Calls, chats and texts come into the Lifeline network from across the United States and are routed to an independently operated crisis center based on the individual's telephone number. Each center must choose county(ies) for which they will provide primary coverage and, if desired, county(ies) for backup coverage as well. Calls, chats and texts

[2] https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/providers/grants/rfprfi/

are routed to the designated primary coverage center based on the individual's county, area-code or zip code. If not promptly answered, a call, chat or text is rerouted to the regional backup coverage center and then, if necessary, to a national backup center. The ideal model is to have calls, chats and texts answered by an independently operated crisis center in the state from where the contact originates. Since 2021, New Jersey Lifeline call volume increased by 72%. It is estimated that with the establishment of this three-digit dialing code, the volume of calls may increase by several hundred percent over the next few years.

On July 16, 2022, New Jersey successfully transitioned from the previous ten-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number to the 3 digit, 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. In the first year of 988, call volume increased 22% compared to the same time period in the prior year with an average of 4,764 calls per month. In the first four months of year two, New Jersey has already seen an increase in call volume with an average of 5,484 calls per month. Comparing call volume from November 2022 to November 2023, New Jersey has seen a 32% increase in call volume that can be attributed to state- and national public messaging campaigns.

Comparing chat and text data from June 2022 and November 2023, NJ saw an enormous increase in text demand from 134 contacts a month to 1,978. NJ's 988 chat program continues to receive an average of 1200 contacts per month. In the first four months of year two, an average of 4.4% of chats and 5.0% of texts originating in NJ are being answered in state. Until NJ has expanded capacity to respond, contacts not answered in-state are routed to a national backup center.

Currently in the state of New Jersey, there are five (5) agencies that answer 988 calls. Together they provide statewide coverage 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Only one center in the state currently responds to state-based 988 chats and texts. Due to the increase in call volume since the transition to 988, New Jersey is not yet answering 90% of calls originating from NJ area codes. Now that a statewide 988 Public Awareness Campaign is fully operational, additional capacity (staff, infrastructure, technology,) will be needed to respond to the increased volume of calls, chats and texts that are anticipated.

Extensive details about planning and best practices for Lifeline Contact Centers can be found in the Lifeline Contact Centers 988 Convening Playbook[3]. National and state-based data regarding Vibrant's network of over 200 crisis centers are available on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) website at Our Network - 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988lifeline.org)[4]. Information about national guidelines in crisis care can be found in SAMHSA's National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care – A Best Practice Toolkit[5]. This document outlines three core services that will

[3] https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/988_Convening_Playbook_Lifeline_Contact_Centers.pdf
[4] https://988lifeline.org/our-network/
[5] https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/national-guidelines-for-behavioral-health-crisis-care-02242020.pdf

establish a comprehensive continuum of crisis care for any community. These include Regional Crisis Call Centers, Crisis Mobile Team Response and Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Facilities. New Jersey has or will soon establish all three services on a statewide basis.

III. Who Can Apply?

To be eligible for consideration for this RFP, the bidder must satisfy the following requirements:

- The applicant must be a Vibrant certified 988 Lifeline crisis center, or attest that they can meet Vibrant's minimum clinical, operational and performance standards for 988, and initiate Vibrant certification as a 988 crisis center within 30 days of a contract award.
- The bidder may be a non-profit or for-profit entity or governmental entity;
- For a bidder that has a contract with DMHAS in place when this RFP is issued, that bidder must have all outstanding Plans of Correction for deficiencies submitted to DMHAS for approval prior to submission;
- The bidder must be fiscally viable based on an assessment of the bidder's audited financial statements. If a bidder is determined, in DMHAS' sole discretion, to be insolvent or to present insolvency within the twelve (12) months after bid submission, DMHAS will deem the proposal ineligible for contract award;
- The bidder must not appear on the State of New Jersey Consolidated Debarment Report[6] or be suspended or debarred by any other State or Federal entity from receiving funds;
- Pursuant to DHS Contract Policy and Information Manual Policy Circular 8.05, the bidder shall not have a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. Persons in a position of trust include Provider Agency staff members, officers and Governing Board Members. A bidder must have written Conflict of Interest policies and procedures that satisfy the requirements of P8.05, thereby ensuring that paid Board members do not participate in transactions except as expressly provided in the P8.05 circular; and
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:32-44, a for-profit bidder and each proposed subcontractor must have a valid Business Registration Certificate on file with the Division of Revenue. (This statutory requirement does not apply to non-profit organizations, private colleges and universities, or state and municipal agencies).

[6] http://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue/debarment/debarsearch.shtml

IV. Contract Scope of Work

Funds made available through this RFP must be used to develop staffing, infrastructure, and technology to respond to New Jersey-based calls and/or chats/texts that are made to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Successful awardees will recruit, hire and train Lifeline contact center staff to answer calls and/or chats/texts for the 988 system. Centers that are already certified by Vibrant to provide services through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline must begin the process of recruiting staff no later than one month after the contract is awarded. Centers not currently certified must apply for Vibrant certification within 30 days of award. These centers must provide monthly updates to NJ DMHAS on the status of this application.

Award recipients will be required to meet Vibrant's minimum operational and performance standards for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. (See Minimum Standards for Applying to Join the 988 Lifeline Network[7].) If not already a Vibrant certified 988 Lifeline crisis center, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to meet these standards and become a Vibrant certified 988 Lifeline crisis center before receiving DMHAS funding. Once certified, centers will have 3 months to recruit, hire and train Lifeline Contact center staff to answer calls and/or chats/texts for the 988 system.

The successful bidder will establish and maintain an affiliation agreement with the NJ 988 Managing Entity, Carelon Behavioral Health. Carelon currently provides oversight to all 988 Lifeline centers in NJ and ensures centers are meeting expectations set forth by NJ DMHAS, SAMHSA, and Vibrant. Carelon will also provide some required trainings to Lifeline center staff. As a requirement of this funding, contact center leadership must ensure crisis counselors are also adhering to thorough and ongoing trainings as required by Vibrant.

Successful bidders will ensure follow-up services consistent with Vibrant's established standards. All individuals who contact 988 and confirm current suicidal ideation during their interaction with the Lifeline (at the time of the contact or within the past 24 hours) will be asked for consent to follow-up services. Applicants can find detailed information regarding Vibrant's Follow-Up Standards in "Crisis Center Guidance: Follow-up with Callers and Those Discharged from Emergency Department and Inpatient Settings[8]."

Successful bidders will incorporate evidence-based practices in all relevant areas of their applications. In addition, award recipients will be required to gather 988 Lifeline center data as required by Vibrant, SAMHSA, NJ DHS-DMHAS, and possibly other entities. Award recipients will deliver monthly data reports consistent with the data values outlined in this contract. Documents to collect and report data will be provided by Carelon. Data requirements for this funding opportunity include but are not limited to:

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[7] https://988lifeline.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/988-Suicide-Crisis-Lifeline-Minimum-Standards-for-crisis-contact-centers-applying-to-join-the-988-network-January-2022-v2.pdf

[8] https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Ascds%3AUS%3A157908e9-42de-30bf-9c9a-45af0881605b

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) established by SAMHSA;
- Infrastructure, Prevention, and Promotion indicators (IPPs) established by SAMHSA;
- Demographic information provided voluntarily by individuals who contact 988 including information about recent suicidal ideation and substance use;
- Follow-up contacts required and completed;
- Disposition of the individuals served;
- Referrals made;
- information about number of people using mental health services after referral;
- Any additional data requested by Vibrant, SAMHSA, or NJ DMHAS

Vibrant will route calls, chats and texts from a centralized system. Agencies awarded funding for calls, chats, and texts will be required to utilize the Crisis and Open Beds Modules of the data management platform developed by Bamboo Health. This will allow DMHAS to coordinate and manage all NJ data. Standardized assessment tools for all individuals who contact 988 in NJ will be included in the platform. Data collection related to these contacts will be input by all NJ DMHAS-contracted 988 Lifeline centers.

The successful bidder will include evidence of their commitment to equity and reduction of disparities in access, quality, and service delivery outcomes for historically underserved populations. This includes a cultural competency plan that incorporates diversity, inclusion, equity, cultural and linguistic access through adherence to National CLAS standards[9]. The plan must include information about the following domains: workforce diversity (data informed recruitment), workforce inclusion, reducing disparities in access, quality, and outcomes in the target population (i.e., those who contact 988).

Providers will work with Carelon and DMHAS to ensure crisis counseling staff are provided with training regarding cultural knowledge/sensitivity/humility related to the target populations' race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, substance use, socioeconomic status, generational and ability considerations, language, etc.

The successful bidder will also:

- Collaborate with system partners to ensure coordination, equity, and inclusion of care in community services.
- Deliver services in a culturally competent manner that exemplify National CLAS Standards.
- Ensure services meet the language access needs of individuals served by this project (e.g., limited English proficiency).
- Coordinate and lead efforts to reduce disparities in access, quality, and program outcomes.

The successful bidder must have in place established, facility-wide policies that prohibit discrimination against consumers of prevention, treatment and recovery support services

[9] https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/enhancednationalclasstandards.pdf

who are assisted in their prevention, treatment and/or recovery with legitimately prescribed medication(s).

Moreover, no individual admitted into a treatment facility, or a recipient of or participant in any prevention, treatment or recovery support services, shall be denied full access to, participation in and enjoyment of that program, service or activity, available or offered to others, due to the use of legitimately prescribed medications.

Capacity to accommodate individuals who contact 988 centers or are referred with legitimately prescribed medications can be accommodated/referred to providers qualified to provide or arrange for medications.

V. General Contracting Information

Bidders must meet the terms and conditions of the DHS contracting rules and regulations as set forth in the Standard Language Document, the Contract Reimbursement Manual and the Contract Policy and Information Manual. These documents are available on the DHS website[10].

Bidders are required to comply with the Affirmative Action Requirements of Public Law 1975, c. 124 (N.J.A.C. 17:27) and the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (P.L. 101-336).

Budgets should accurately reflect the scope of responsibilities in order to accomplish the goals of this project.

All bidders will be notified in writing of DHS' intent to award a contract.

The contract awarded as a result of this RFP is anticipated to have an initial term of August 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The contract may be renewed annually under the existing terms for up to five (5) years at DMHAS' sole discretion and with the agreement of the successful bidder. Funds may be used only to support services that are specific to this award; hence, this funding may not be used to supplant or duplicate existing funding streams. Actual funding levels will depend on the availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

In accordance with Policy P1.12 available on the DHS website[11], programs awarded a contract pursuant to this RFP will be separately clustered until DMHAS determines, in its sole discretion, that the program is stable in terms of service provision, expenditures, and applicable revenue generation.

Should the provision of services be delayed through no fault of the successful bidder, funding continuation will be considered on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the

[10] https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/contracting/policy/
[11] https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/assets/documents/CPIManual.pdf

circumstances creating the delay. In no case shall DMHAS continue funding when service commencement commitments are not met, and in no case shall funding be provided for a period of non-service provision in excess of three (3) months. In the event that the timeframe will be longer than three (3) months, DMHAS must be notified so the circumstances resulting in the anticipated delay may be reviewed and addressed. Should services not be rendered, funds provided pursuant to this agreement shall be returned to DMHAS.

VI. Written Intent to Apply and Contact for Further Information

Bidders must email MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on April 26, 2024 indicating their agency's intent to submit a proposal for 988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion. It is required that the bidder email their notice of intent to submit a proposal no later than the April 26, 2024 deadline. If a bidder's notice to intent to submit a proposal is received after the deadline their agency is not eligible to submit a proposal for consideration. Submitting a notice of intent to apply does not obligate an agency to apply.

Any questions regarding this RFP should be directed via email to MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on April 5, 2024. All questions and responses will be compiled and emailed to all those who submit a question or provide a notice of intent to apply. Bidders are guided to rely upon the information in this RFP and the responses to questions submitted by email to develop their proposals. Specific guidance, however, will not be provided to individual bidders at any time.

VII. Required Proposal Content

All bidders must submit a written narrative proposal that addresses the following topics, and adheres to all instructions and includes required supporting documentation, noted below:

Funding Proposal Cover Sheet (RFP Attachment A)

Bidder's Organization, History and Experience (15 points)
Provide a brief and concise summary of the bidder's background and experience in implementing this or related types of services and explain how the bidder is qualified to fulfill the obligations of the RFP. The written narrative should:

1. Describe the agency's history, mission, purpose, current licenses and modalities, and record of accomplishments.
2. Describe the bidder's background and experience in operating telephone-based hotline and/or crisis intervention services, responding to calls, chats, and/or texts related to behavioral health crises and suicidal ideation. Identify the number of years of experience your agency has worked with individuals experiencing emotional distress and/or suicidal crisis. If available, provide 12 months of data for: (i) number of contacts received in a month; (ii) number of contacts answered/month; (iii) average answer rate; and (iv) average speed to answer. In addition, provide the minimum and

maximum number of staff and/or volunteers answering calls, chats and/or texts during the week.

3. Describe the bidder's experience working with mobile crisis services such as Mobile Screening services, Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS, also known as Children's Mobile Response) and/or the Trinitas Crisis Assessment Response and Enhanced Services (CARES) program.
4. Describe the agency's work with historically underserved populations.
5. Summarize your agency's administrative and organizational capacity to establish and implement sound administrative practices and successfully carry out the proposed program.
6. Indicate if your agency already has and utilizes written policies regarding: (i) confidentiality; (ii) protocol for high-risk and crisis calls, chats and/or texts; (iii) unconditional acceptance of the individual contacting your agency; (iv) structure and methodology for receiving, tracking and handling calls, chats and/or texts, call back and follow-up procedures; (v) third party individuals contacting your agency; (vi) care and supervision of staff and volunteers; and (vii) data collection and reporting.
7. Describe your current status and history relative to debarment by any State, Federal or local government agency. If there is debarment activity, it must be explained with supporting documentation, such as an appendix, to the bidder's proposal.
8. Provide a description of all active litigation in which the bidder is involved, including pending litigation of which the bidder has received notice. Failure to disclose active or pending litigation may result in the agency being ineligible for contract award at DMHAS' sole discretion.
9. Include a description of your agency's ability and commitment to provide culturally competent services (CLAS Standards) and diversity (Law Against Discrimination, N.J.S.A. 10.5-1 et seq.). Attach a cultural competency plan as an addendum and discuss in the narrative how the plan will be updated and reviewed regularly.
10. Confirm that your agency's submissions are up-to-date in the New Jersey Substance Abuse Management System, Unified Service Transaction Form+, Quarterly Contract Monitoring Report and Bed Enrollment Data System, if applicable.
11. Describe the bidder's current status and compliance with DMHAS contract commitments in regard to programmatic performance and level of service, if applicable.
12. Provide the bidders ownership chart that shows the financial and voting interests, among other attributes. The company ownership chart must identify the types of legal entities and FEIN.
13. A Department Contract is not a Marketable Asset that may be purchased from a Provider Agency by another organization through an Acquisition, Affiliation, Consolidation, Merger, etc. Provide details of recent or pending Acquisition, Affiliation, Consolidation, or Merger or the bidder.
14. Include your agency's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) which addresses, at a minimum, risks that may occur that would challenge the full functioning of the 988 Lifeline center (e.g., power and telecommunication outages). A risk landscape analysis should be done to identify most likely issues, and the COOP should address each risk.

Project Description (25 points)

NOTE: If your agency is not currently a Vibrant certified 988 Lifeline crisis center but receives an award through this RFP, the agency must submit an application to become a 988 Lifeline center to Vibrant Emotional Health within 30 days of receiving this award. For more information about becoming a 988 Lifeline center and the application, go to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Center Application[12].

In this section, the bidder is to provide an overview of how the services detailed in the contract scope of work will be implemented and the timeframes involved, specifically addressing the following:

1. The bidder's proposed approach to the business opportunity described in the State's RFP, including the following.
    a. how the bidder's approach satisfies the requirements as stated in the RFP;
    b. the bidder's understanding of the project goals and measurable objectives;
    c. the bidder's justification of program services which includes assessment and needs of the target population;
2. If your agency is a 988 Lifeline crisis center, please indicate the year that your program began to answer Lifeline calls and/or chats/texts, the number of Lifeline calls, chats and/or texts received and answered annually since 2018, and identify your current primary and backup coverage areas for Lifeline calls, chats and/or texts.
3. If your agency is not a 988 Lifeline Center, describe your agency's ability to meet the requirements to become a 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Center. At a minimum, centers seeking to join the Lifeline network must be certified, accredited, or licensed by an external body (see 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Minimum Standards for crisis contact centers applying to join the 988 network[13] for details.) Your agency must have written policies or guidelines addressing suicide risk assessment, referrals and training, and be willing to participate in periodic 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline network evaluation activities to promote quality assurance for network operations.
4. Detail and quantify how the proposed new staff and/or technology will allow your agency to respond to at least 90% of crisis calls and/or chats/texts received from the 988 Lifeline.
5. Describe your agency's ability to respond to callers who are experiencing a crisis due to substance use or misuse.
6. Detail how your agency will transfer and/or refer 988 contacts to the most appropriate community services (e.g., acute care or outpatient services, peer/recovery support services, etc.) based on initial assessment.
7. Describe how your agency will establish follow-up procedures consistent with Vibrant's established standards[14].
8. Describe the elements your agency will include in its training of crisis counselors.

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[12] https://nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.submittable.com/submit

[13] https://988lifeline.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/988-Suicide-Crisis-Lifeline-Minimum-Standards-for-crisis-contact-centers-applying-to-join-the-988-network-January-2022-v2.pdf

[14] https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Ascds%3AUS%3A157908e9-42de-30bf-9c9a-45af0881605b

9. Detail and describe how your agency will comply with data collection and reporting requirements outlined in this funding opportunity.
10. Include how the center will respond to the diversity of languages, beliefs, norms and values of individuals who contact 988. Describe how the center will address issues of cultural awareness and humility, and be able to assist people of all ages (youth, adults and seniors). Describe how the center will serve populations such as individuals with disabilities, those with specific religious and spiritual orientations, various ethnic and racial identities, varying sexual orientations, and the needs of indigenous populations.
11. List primary and backup counties to be covered by proposed services and any experience or familiarity your agency has in those counties.
12. Identify proposed hours of operation. If your program does not currently operate during these hours, indicate by what date your program will operate during the proposed hours.
13. Provide an implementation schedule for the contract, including a detailed monthly timeline of activities, commencing with the date of award and including a proposed date for full implementation.
14. Describe all anticipated collaboration with other entities in the course of fulfilling the requirements of the contract resulting from this RFP.
15. Describe all anticipated barriers and potential challenges the bidder foresees itself and/or the State encountering in the successful realization of the initiative described herein; and
16. Describe all other resources needed by the bidder to satisfy the requirements of the contract resulting from this RFP.
17. Describe the bidder's evidence-based practice(s) that will be used in the design and implementation of the program.
18. Describe the organization's committees or workgroups that focus on efforts to reduce disparities in access, quality, and program outcomes for your proposed 988 services.
19. Describe the bidder's capacity to accommodate all consumers who take legitimately prescribed medications and who are referred to or present for admission.
20. Provide a summary of the policies that prohibit discrimination against consumers who are assisted in their prevention, treatment and/or recovery from substance use disorders and/or mental illness with legitimately prescribed medication(s).
21. A description of the bidder's last Continuous Quality Improvement effort, identified issue(s), actions taken, and outcome(s).

Outcome(s) and Evaluation (10 points)

Provide the following information related to the projected outcomes associated with the proposal as well any evaluation method that will be utilized to measure successes and/or setbacks associated with this project:

1. Describe the bidder's proposal for ongoing monitoring and reporting of program progress and accomplishments.
2. Describe the bidder's plans for measurement of the achievement of identified goals and objectives.
3. Describe the bidder's process for evaluation and performance improvement for successful outcomes.

4. Describe how crisis center counselors will request permission to send a survey developed by NJ DMHAS and/or Carelon to people regarding their experience with the Lifeline.
5. Provide description of all tools/performance measures to be used in these evaluations. Include tools and activities the bidder will implement to ensure fidelity to the evidence-based practice.
6. Describe the bidder's approach to measurement of consumer satisfaction.
7. Details about any outside entities planned for use to conduct the evaluation, including but not limited to the entity's name, contact information, brief description of credentials and experience conducting program evaluation.
8. The assessment, review, implementation, and evaluation of quality assurance and quality improvement recommendations, particularly noting any reduction of disparities and barriers in access, quality, and referral outcomes.

Staffing (20 points)
Bidders must determine staffing structure to satisfy the contract requirements. Bidders should describe the proposed staffing structure and identify how many staff members will be hired to meet the needs of the program.

The successful bidder will describe their efforts to ensure workforce diversity and inclusion in the recruiting, hiring, and retention of staff who are from the target population (Trained and Certified Peer Counselors) or have had experience working with this population.

1. Describe the composition and skill set of the proposed program team, including staff qualifications.
2. Provide details of the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing required to satisfy the contract scope of work. Describe proposed staff qualifications, including professional licensing and related experience. Identify bilingual staff. Details should include current or to be hired staff, with details of recruitment effort including strategies for filling difficult to staff shifts (evenings and weekends) or programs (chat/text), if applicable. As an example, a salary shift-differential for difficult-to-fill shifts or positions could be offered.
3. Describe program efforts to recruit, hire, train and retain staff who are Certified Peer Counselors.
4. Describe the management level person responsible for coordinating and leading efforts to reduce disparities in access, quality, and outcomes for the populations served. Information provided should include the individual’s title, organizational positioning, education, and relevant experience.
5. Provide copies of job descriptions or resumes as an appendix – limited to two (2) pages each – for all proposed staff.
6. Identify the number of work hours per week that constitute each FTE in the bidder's proposal. If applicable, define the Part Time Equivalent work hours.
7. Description of the proposed organizational structure for this program within the larger organization, including the submission of an organizational chart as an appendix to the bidder's proposal.

8. Describe the bidder's hiring policies including background and credential checks, handling of prior criminal convictions, and attention to diversity and inclusion.
8. Describe plans to deliver training on topics related to diversity, inclusion, cultural competence, and the reduction of discrepancies in program access, quality, and outcomes. Explain how information on implicit bias, diversity, recruitment, creating inclusive working environments, and providing language access services will be shared with staff.
9. Outline the approach for supervision of staff including supervision of peers, if applicable.
10. A list of the bidder's board members and their current terms, including each member's professional licensure and organizational affiliation(s). The proposal shall indicate if the Board of Directors vote on contract-related matters.
11. A list of consultants the bidder intends to utilize for the contract resulting from this RFP, including each consultant's professional licensure and organizational affiliation(s). Each consultant must be further described as to whether they are also a board member and, if so, whether they are a voting member. The bidder must identify all reimbursement the consultant received as a board member over the last twelve (12) months.

Facilities, Logistics, Equipment (10 points)

The bidder should detail its facilities where normal business operations will be performed and identify equipment and other logistical issues, including:

1. A description of the manner in which tangible assets, i.e., computers, phones, other special service equipment, etc., will be acquired and allocated.
2. A description of the location(s) in which the program will be held
3. A description of services provided remotely.
4. A description of the bidder's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility to its facilities and/or offices for staff with disabilities.
5. Demonstrate that the agency COOP includes plans for alternative facilities and/or equipment strategies in case of building shut down or equipment failure.

Budget (20 points)

DMHAS will consider the cost efficiency of your proposed budget as it relates to the contract scope of work. Therefore, bidders must clearly indicate how this funding will be used to meet the program goals and/or requirements. In addition to the required Budget forms, bidders are asked to provide detailed and specific budget notes.

The budget should be reasonable and reflect the scope of responsibilities required to accomplish the goals of this project. All costs associated with the completion of the project must be delineated and the budget notes must clearly articulate the details of all proposed budget items including a description of miscellaneous expenses and other costs.

1. A detailed budget using the Excel Budget template is required. Bidders must submit pricing using the Excel Budget template accompanying this RFP. Bidders should refer to Instructions for Excel Budget Template (Attachment E) for a clear understanding of how to work within the template file. The Budget template must be uploaded as an

Excel file onto the file transfer protocol site as instructed in Section VIII. Submission of Proposal Requirements. Failure to submit the budget as an Excel file may result in a deduction of points. The standard budget categories for expenses include: A. Personnel, B. Consultants and Professionals, C. Materials & Supplies, D. Facility Costs, E. Specific Assistance to Clients, and F. Other. Supporting schedules for Revenue and General and Administrative Costs Allocation are also required. The budget must include two (2) separate, clearly labeled sections:
   a. Section 1 – Full annualized operating costs to satisfy the contract scope of work detailed in the RFP and revenues excluding one-time costs; and
   b. Section 2 - Proposed one-time costs, if any, which shall be included in the Total Gross Costs.
2. Budget Notes detailing and explaining the proposed budget methodology, estimates and assumptions made for expenses, and the calculations/computations to support the proposed budget are required. The State's proposal reviewers need to fully understand the bidder's budget projections from the information presented in its proposal. Failure to provide adequate information could result in lower ranking of the proposal. Budget notes, to the extent possible, should be displayed on the Excel template itself.
3. The name and address of each organization – other than third-party payers – providing support and/or money to help fund the program for which the proposal is being submitted.
4. For all proposed personnel, the template should identify the staff position titles, staff names for current staff, tentative work schedule and total hours per workweek. (NOTE: Establishing a pay/salary shift differential for difficult-to-fill shifts is acceptable.)
5. Identify the number of hours per clinical consultant.
6. Staff fringe benefit expenses, which may be presented as a percentage factor of total salary costs, should be consistent with the bidder's current fringe benefit package.
7. If applicable, General & Administrative (G&A) expenses, otherwise known as indirect or overhead costs, should be included if attributable and allocable to the proposed program. Since administrative costs for existing DMHAS programs reallocated to a new program do not require new DMHAS resources, a bidder that currently contracts with DMHAS should limit its G&A expense projection to “new” G&A only by showing the full amount of G&A as an expense and the off-set savings from other programs’ G&A in the revenue section.
8. Written assurance that if the bidder receives an award pursuant to this RFP, it shall pursue all available sources of revenue and support upon award and in future contracts, including agreement to obtain approval as a Medicaid-eligible provider.

Attachments/Appendices
The enumerated items of Required Attachments #1 through #9 and Appendices #1 through #9 must be included with the bidder's proposal.

Please note that if Required Attachments #1 through #5 are not submitted and complete, the proposal will not be considered. Required Attachments #5 through #8 below are also required with the proposal.

The collective of Required Attachments and Appendices is limited to a total of 40 pages. Audits, interim financial statements (Required Attachments #6, #7 and #8) and agency COOP do not count towards the appendices' 40-page limit. Attachments/Appendices information exceeding 40 pages will not be reviewed.

Required Attachments

1. Department of Human Services Statement of Assurances (RFP Attachment C);
2. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions (RFP Attachment D);
3. Disclosure of Investment in Iran[15];
4. Certificate of Non-Involvement in Prohibited Activities in Russia and Belarus ;
5. Statement of Bidder/Vendor Ownership Disclosure[16];
6. Pursuant to Policy Circular P 1.11, a description of all pending and in-process audits identifying the requestor, the firm's name and telephone number, and the type and scope of the audit;
7. Audited financial statements and Single Audits (A133), prepared for the two (2) most recent fiscal years;
8. All interim financial statements prepared since the end of the bidder's most recent fiscal year. If interim financial statements have not already been prepared, provide interim financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and cash flows) for the current fiscal year through the most recent quarter ended prior to submission of the bid; and
9. Department of Human Services Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form (Attachment G).

Appendices

1. Copy of documentation of the bidder's charitable registration status[17];
2. Bidder mission statement;
3. Organizational chart;
4. Job descriptions of key personnel;
5. Resumes of proposed personnel if on staff, limited to two (2) pages each;
6. List of the board of directors, officers and terms;
7. Original and/or copies of letters of commitment/support
8. Cultural Competency Plan; and
9. Bidder's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) including specific plans related to a 988 Lifeline Center

VIII. Submission of Proposal Requirements

A. Format and Submission Requirements

DMHAS assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation and submittal of a proposal in response to this RFP. The narrative

[15] www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml
[16] www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml
[17] www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/charities

portion of the proposal should be no more than 20 pages, be single-spaced with one (1") inch margins, normal character spacing that is not condensed, and not be in smaller than twelve (12) point Arial, Courier New or Times New Roman font. For example, if the bidder's narrative starts on page 3 and ends on page 23 it is 21 pages long, not 20 pages. DMHAS will not consider any information submitted beyond the page limit for RFP evaluation purposes. The budget notes and appendices do not count towards the narrative page limit.

Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on May 3, 2024. The bidder must submit its proposal (including proposal narrative, budget, budget notes, and appendices) electronically using the DHS secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) site. Proposals should be submitted in the following three files.

1. PDF file of entire proposal consisting of proposal narrative, budget, budget notes, attachments and appendices. Do not include interim and audited financial statements and Single Audits (A133) which should be submitted in a separate PDF file (see #3 below). Label file with the following title: Name of Agency/988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion (Proposal)
2. Excel file of budget using the DMHAS Excel budget template. Label file with the following title: Name of Agency/988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion (Budget)
3. PDF file of interim and audited financial statements and Single Audits (A133), prepared for the two (2) most recent fiscal years template. Label file with the following title: Name of Agency/988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion (Audits)

Additionally, bidders must request login credentials by emailing MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov on or before 4:00 p.m. ET on April 26, 2024, in order to receive unique login credentials to upload your proposal to the SFTP site. Email requests for login credentials must include the individual's first name, last name, email address and name of agency/provider.

Proposals must be uploaded to the DHS SFTP site, https://securexfer.dhs.state.nj.us/login using your unique login credentials.

B. Confidentiality/Commitment to Defend and Indemnify

Pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., or the common law right to know, proposals can be released to the public in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:12-1.2(b) and (c).

Bidder should submit a completed and signed Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form (Attachment G) with the proposal. In the event that Bidder does not submit the Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form with the proposal, DHS reserves the right to request that the Bidder submit the form after proposal submission.

After the opening of the proposals, all information submitted by a Bidder in response to a Bid Solicitation is considered public information notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary submitted by a Bidder. Proprietary, financial, security and confidential information may be exempt from public disclosure by OPRA and/or the common law when the Bidder has a good faith, legal/factual basis for such assertion.

As part of its proposal, a Bidder may request that portions of the proposal be exempt from public disclosure under OPRA and/or the common law. Bidder must provide a detailed statement clearly identifying those sections of the proposal that it claims are exempt from production, and the legal and factual basis that supports said exemption(s) as a matter of law. DHS will not honor any attempts by a Bidder to designate its price sheet, price list/catalog, and/or the entire proposal as proprietary and/or confidential, and/or to claim copyright protection for its entire proposal. If DHS does not agree with a Bidder's designation of proprietary and/or confidential information, DHS will use commercially reasonable efforts to advise the Bidder. Copyright law does not prohibit access to a record which is otherwise available under OPRA.

DHS reserves the right to make the determination as to what to disclose in response to an OPRA request. Any information that DHS determines to be exempt from disclosure under OPRA will be redacted.

In the event of any challenge to the Bidder's assertion of confidentiality that is contrary to the DHS' determination of confidentiality, the Bidder shall be solely responsible for defending its designation, but in doing so, all costs and expenses associated therewith shall be the responsibility of the Bidder. DHS assumes no such responsibility or liability.

In order not to delay consideration of the proposal or DHS' response to a request for documents, DHS requires that Bidder respond to any request regarding confidentiality markings within the timeframe designated in DHS' correspondence regarding confidentiality. If no response is received by the designated date and time, DHS will be permitted to release a copy of the proposal with DHS making the determination regarding what may be proprietary or confidential.

IX. Review of Proposals

There will be a review process for all timely submitted proposals. DMHAS will convene a review committee of public employees to conduct a review of each responsive proposal. Proposals will be scored according to the points allocated in each section as outlined above.

The bidder must obtain a minimum score of 70 points out of 100 points for the proposal narrative and budget sections in order to be considered eligible for funding. In the event no bidder obtains the required minimum scores, DMHAS shall have discretion to award the contract to the highest scoring bidder(s).

DMHAS will award up to 20 points for fiscal viability, using a standardized scoring rubric based on the audit, which will be added to the average score given to the proposal from the review committee. Thus, the maximum points any proposal can receive is 120 points. This includes the review committee's averaged score for the proposal's narrative and budget sections, and the fiscal viability score.

In addition, if a bidder is determined, in DMHAS' sole discretion, to be insolvent or to present insolvency within the twelve (12) months after bid submission, DMHAS will deem the proposal ineligible for contract award.

Contract award recommendations will be based on such factors as the proposal scope, quality and appropriateness, bidder history and experience, as well as budget reasonableness. The review committee will look for evidence of cultural competence in each section of the narrative. The review committee may choose to visit all bidder finalists to review existing program(s) and/or invite all bidder finalists for interview. The bidder is advised that the contract award may be conditional upon final contract and budget negotiation.

DMHAS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so. DMHAS' best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, loss of funding, inability of the bidder(s) to provide adequate services, an indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with State and federal laws and regulations, existing DHS contracts, and procedures set forth in Policy Circular P1.04 as set forth in the Contracting Resources/Contract Policy and Information Manual[18].

DMHAS recognizes the invaluable perspective and knowledge that consumers and family members possess. Input from these groups is an integral component of a system that holds wellness and recovery principles at its core. To that end, DMHAS will assemble an advisory committee of consumers and family members to provide opinions and perspective about proposals or aspects of the proposals to the review committee. Members of the review committee may take the advisory committee's perspective into consideration in scoring the proposals but the advisory committee will not be scoring proposals. Any individual with access to the proposals prior to the final contract award will be screened for potential conflicts of interest and will be required to sign a certification attesting that they do not have any potential conflicts.

DMHAS will notify all bidders of contract awards, contingent upon the satisfactory final negotiation of a contract.

X. Appeal of Award Decisions

All appeals must be submitted in writing by 4:00 pm ET on Date to Be Determined by emailing it to MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov (subject line must include "Appeal and RFP title") and/or mailing or faxing it to:

[18] https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/contracting/policy/

Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Office of the Assistant Commissioner
5 Commerce Way, Suite 100
PO Box 362
Trenton, NJ 08625
FAX: 609-341-2302

The written appeal must clearly set forth the basis for the appeal.

Any appeals sent to an email/address/fax number not mentioned above, will not be considered.

Please note that all costs incurred in connection with appeals of DMHAS decisions are considered unallowable cost for the purpose of DMHAS contract funding.

DMHAS will review all appeals and render a final decision. Contract award(s) will not be considered final until all timely filed appeals have been reviewed and final decisions rendered.

XI. Post Award Required Documentation

Upon final contract award announcement, the successful bidder(s) must be prepared to submit (if not already on file), one (1) original signed document for those requiring a signature or copy of the following documentation (unless noted otherwise) in order to process the contract in a timely manner, as well as any other contract documents required by DHS/DMHAS.

1. Most recent IRS Form 990/IRS Form 1120, and Pension Form 5500 (if applicable) (submit two [2] copies);
2. Copy of the Annual Report-Charitable Organization[19];
3. A list of all current contracts and grants as well as those for which the bidder has applied from any Federal, state, local government or private agency during the contract term proposed herein, including awarding agency name, amount, period of performance, and purpose of the contract/grant, as well as a contact name for each award and the phone number;
4. Proof of insurance naming the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, PO Box 362, Trenton, NJ 08625 as an additional insured;
5. Board Resolution identifying the authorized staff and signatories for contract actions on behalf of the bidder;
6. Current Agency By-laws;
7. Current Personnel Manual or Employee Handbook;
8. Copy of Lease or Mortgage;
9. Certificate of Incorporation;

[19] https://www.njportal.com/DOR/annualreports/

10. Co-occurring policies and procedures;
11. Policies regarding the use of medications, if applicable;
12. Policies regarding Recovery Support, specifically peer support services;
13. Conflict of Interest Policy;
14. Affirmative Action Policy;
15. Affirmative Action Certificate of Employee Information Report, newly completed AA 302 form, or a copy of Federal Letter of Approval verifying operation under a federally approved or sanctioned Affirmative Action program. (AA Certificate must be submitted within 60 days of submitting completed AA302 form to Office of Contract Compliance);
16. A copy of all applicable licenses;
17. Local Certificates of Occupancy;
18. Current State of New Jersey Business Registration;
19. Procurement Policy;
20. Current equipment inventory of items purchased with DHS funds (Note: the inventory shall include: a description of the item [make, model], a State identifying number or code, original date of purchase, purchase price, date of receipt, location at the Provider Agency, person(s) assigned to the equipment, etc.);
21. All subcontracts or consultant agreements, related to the DHS contract, signed and dated by both parties;
22. Business Associate Agreement (BAA) for Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of 1996 compliance, if applicable, signed and dated;
23. Updated single audit report (A133) or certified statements, if differs from one submitted with proposal;
24. Business Registration (online inquiry to obtain copy at Registration Form[20]; for an entity doing business with the State for the first time, it may register at the NJ Treasury website[21];
25. Source Disclosure (EO129)[22]; and
26. Chapter 51 Pay-to-Play Certification[23].

XII. Attachments

Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet
Attachment B – Addendum to RFP for Social Service and Training Contracts
Attachment C – Statement of Assurances
Attachment D – Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions
Attachment E – Instructions for Excel Budget Template
Attachment F – Mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity Language
Attachment G – Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form

[20] https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_BRC/jsp/BRCLoginJsp.jsp
[21] http://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue
[22] www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml
[23] www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml

Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet

____
Date Received

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Proposal Cover Sheet

Name of RFP: 988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion

Incorporated Name of Bidder: ____

Type: Public _______ Profit _______ Non-Profit____ Hospital-Based _____

Federal ID Number: _____________ Charities Reg. Number (if applicable) ________________

DUNS Number: ____________________________

Address of Bidder: ____

____

Chief Executive Officer Name and Title: ____

Phone No.: __________________________ Email Address: ______________________

Contact Person Name and Title: ____

Phone No.: __________________________ Email Address: ______________________

Total dollar amount requested: ________________ Fiscal Year End: _____________________

Funding Period: From ______________________ to ___________________________

Total number of unduplicated consumers to be served: ______________________________

County in which services are to be provided:____

Brief description of services by program name and level of service to be provided:

____
____
____

NOTE: In order to contract with the State of New Jersey, all providers applying for contracts, or responding to Request for Proposals (RFPs), *MUST* be pre-registered with the online eProcurement system known as NJSTART. You may register your organization by proceeding to the following web site: https://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/vendor.shtml or via telephone: (609) 341-3500.

Authorization: Chief Executive Officer (printed name):__________________________________

Signature:__________________________________ Date: _________________________

Attachment B – Addendum to RFP for Social Service and Training Contracts

STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

ADDENDUM TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE AND TRAINING CONTRACTS

Executive Order No. 189 establishes the expected standard of responsibility for all parties that enter into a contract with the State of New Jersey. All such parties must meet a standard of responsibility that assures the State and its citizens that such parties will compete and perform honestly in their dealings with the State and avoid conflicts of interest.

As used in this document, "provider agency" or "provider" means any person, firm, corporation, or other entity or representative or employee thereof that offers or proposes to provide goods or services to or performs any contract for the Department of Human Services.

In compliance with Paragraph 3 of Executive Order No. 189, no provider agency shall pay, offer to pay, or agree to pay, either directly or indirectly, any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity, or other thing of value of any kind to any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13b and e, in the Department of the Treasury or any other agency with which such provider agency transacts or offers or proposes to transact business, or to any member of the immediate family, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i, of any such officer or employee, or any partnership, firm, or corporation with which they are employed or associated, or in which such officer or employee has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g.

The solicitation of any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity or other thing of value by any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from any provider agency shall be reported in writing forthwith by the provider agency to the Attorney General and the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards.

No provider agency may, directly or indirectly, undertake any private business, commercial or entrepreneurial relationship with, whether or not pursuant to employment, contract or other agreement, express or implied, or sell any interest in such provider agency to, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee having any duties or responsibilities in connection with the purchase, acquisition or sale of any property or services by or to any State agency or any instrumentality thereof, or with any person, firm or entity with which he is employed or associated or in which he has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g. Any relationships subject to this provision shall be reported in writing forthwith to the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards, which may grant a waiver of this restriction upon application of the State officer or employee or special State officer or employee upon a finding that the present or proposed relationship does not present the potential, actuality or appearance of a conflict of interest.

No provider agency shall influence, or attempt to influence or cause to be influenced, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in his official capacity in any manner which might tend to impair the objectivity or independence of judgment of said officer or employee.

No provider agency shall cause or influence, or attempt to cause or influence, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee to use, or attempt to use, his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for the provider agency or any other person.

The provisions cited above shall not be construed to prohibit a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from receiving gifts from or contracting with provider agencies under the same terms and conditions as are offered or made available to members of the general public subject to any guidelines the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards may promulgate.

Attachment C – Statement of Assurances

Department of Human Services
Statement of Assurances

As the duly authorized Chief Executive Officer/Administrator, I am aware that submission to the Department of Human Services of the accompanying application constitutes the creation of a public document that may be made available upon request at the completion of the RFP process. This may include the application, budget, and list of applicants (bidder's list). In addition, I certify that the applicant:

- Has legal authority to apply for the funds made available under the requirements of the RFP, and has the institutional, managerial and financial capacity (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal/State share of project costs, as appropriate) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.

- Will give the New Jersey Department of Human Services, or its authorized representatives, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Will give proper notice to the independent auditor that DHS will rely upon the fiscal year end audit report to demonstrate compliance with the terms of the contract.

- Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain. This means that the applicant did not have any involvement in the preparation of the RLI, including development of specifications, requirements, statement of works, or the evaluation of the RLI applications/bids.

- Will comply with all federal and State statutes and regulations relating to non-discrimination. These include but are not limited to: 1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352;34 C.F.R. Part 100) which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin; 2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794; 34 C.F.R. Part 104), which prohibits discrimination based on handicaps and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.; 3) Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101 et. seq.; 45 C.F.R. part 90), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; 4) P.L. 2975, Chapter 127, of the State of New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et. seq.) and associated executive orders pertaining to affirmative action and non-discrimination on public contracts; 5) federal Equal Employment Opportunities Act; and 6) Affirmative Action Requirements of PL 1975 c. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27).

- Will comply with all applicable federal and State laws and regulations.

- Will comply with the Davis-Bacon Act, 40 U.S.C. 276a-276a-5 (29 C.F.R. 5.5) and the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act, N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.27 et seq. and all regulations pertaining thereto.

- Is in compliance, for all contracts in excess of $100,000, with the Byrd Anti-Lobbying amendment, incorporated at Title 31 U.S.C. 1352. This certification extends to all lower tier subcontracts as well.

- Has included a statement of explanation regarding any and all involvement in any litigation, criminal or civil.

- Has signed the certification in compliance with federal Executive Orders 12549 and 12689 and State Executive Order 34 and is not presently debarred, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded. The applicant will have signed certifications on file for all subcontracted funds.

- Understands that this provider agency is an independent, private employer with all the rights and obligations of such, and is not a political subdivision of the Department of Human Services.

- Understands that unresolved monies owed the Department and/or the State of New Jersey may preclude the receipt of this award.

______________________________	______________________________
Applicant Organization	Signature: CEO or equivalent
______________________________	______________________________
Date	Typed Name and Title

6/97

Attachment D - Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE SIGNING THIS CERTIFICATION. THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal department or agency.

2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

____

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

____ _______________

Signature Date

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 C.F.R. Part 98, Section 98.510.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion
Lower Tier Covered Transactions

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.

2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of facts upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to whom this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or had become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

4. The terms covered transaction, debarred, suspended, ineligible, lower tier covered transaction, participant, person, primary covered transaction, principal, proposal, and voluntarily excluded, as used in this clause, have the meaning set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.

5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.

6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause titled “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transaction,” without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.

7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs.

8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. part 9, subpart 9.4, suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

Attachment E - Instructions for Excel Budget Template

The Excel template, posted with the RFP, contains a template spreadsheet. ***Please open the respective template file tab and read the below guidance at the same time.*** This will allow for a clear understanding of how to work within the template file.

1. In the turquoise section, you will enter the proposed costs for this RFP. This should include all information from budget categories A-F, G/A, as well as ***your number of consumers to serve***. FTE's in Category A are to be broken down between direct care, administration, and support. FTE's will not appear until three cells are completed: hours worked per employee on contract (column C), hours worked per employee per week (column D), and the amount of salary (column H) respectively. Category B is to be broken down between medical/clinical consultants, and non-medical/clinical consultants.

2. There is also a One-Time budget section at the bottom in the turquoise section for your use. Onetimes are shown separately, but included in Total Gross Costs right after Gross Costs.

3. Please use the ***"Explanatory Budget Notes"*** column to help support anything that you feel needs to be explained in written word for evaluators to understand your intent regarding any cost/volume data populated in your template submission. Please provide notes, as well as, calculations that support any and all offsetting revenue streams. If you double up expenses on one budget line, please provide the individual expense details in the budget notes. Many cells are protected, but you can expand rows to give more room in the notes column should you need it.

6. General and Administrative Costs should be recorded in the template per the instructions in the RFP. That is, only additional G&A associated with this proposal should be included, not your normal G&A rate.

7. Make sure to remember to place your Agency Name and Region or County in the subject line when you send your template in ***Excel*** format.

SAVE ALL YOUR WORK, REVIEW AND PREPARE TO SEND IN *EXCEL* FORMAT

Attachment F

MANDATORY EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LANGUAGE
N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq. (P.L. 1975, C. 127)
N.J.A.C. 17:27
GOODS, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND GENERAL SERVICE CONTRACTS

During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees as follows:

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Except with respect to affectional or sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, the contractor will ensure that equal employment opportunity is afforded to such applicants in recruitment and employment, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affection-al or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Such equal employment opportunity shall include, but not be limited to the following: employment, up-grading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprentice-ship. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the Public Agency Compliance Officer setting forth provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex.

The contractor or subcontractor will send to each labor union, with which it has a collective bargaining agreement, a notice, to be provided by the agency contracting officer, advising the labor union of the contractor's commitments under this chapter and shall post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, agrees to comply with any regulations promulgated by the Treasurer pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq., as amended and supplemented from time to time and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
The contractor or subcontractor agrees to make good faith efforts to meet targeted county employment goals established in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-5.2.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to inform in writing its appropriate recruitment agencies including, but not limited to, employment agencies, placement bureaus, colleges, universities, and labor unions, that it does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, col-or, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, and that it will discontinue the use of any recruitment agency which engages in direct or indirect discriminatory practices.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to revise any of its testing procedures, if necessary, to assure that all personnel testing conforms with the principles of job related testing, as established by the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey and as established by applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

In conforming with the targeted employment goals, the contractor or subcontractor agrees to review all procedures relating to transfer, upgrading, downgrading and layoff to ensure that all such actions are taken without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, consistent with the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey, and applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

The contractor shall submit to the public agency, after notification of award but prior to execution of a goods and services contract, one of the following three documents:

Letter of Federal Affirmative Action Plan Approval;

Certificate of Employee Information Report; or

Employee Information Report Form AA-302 (electronically provided by the Division through the Division's website at: http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/contract_compliance.

The contractor and its subcontractors shall furnish such reports or other documents to the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program as may be requested by the office from time to time in order to carry out the purposes of these regulations, and public agencies shall furnish such information as may be requested by the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program for conducting a compliance investigation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 17:27-1.1 et seq.

Attachment G – Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form

Department of Human Services
Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form

I, _______________________, on behalf of _______________________ ("Company") agree that the Company will defend, and cooperate in the defense of, any action against the State of New Jersey ("State") or the New Jersey Department of Human Services ("DHS") arising from, or related to, the non-disclosure, due to the Company's request, of documents submitted to the State of New Jersey and DHS, and relating to the Request for Proposals for 988 Lifeline Crisis Centers Expansion ("RFP"), which may become the subject of a request for government records under the New Jersey Open Public Records Act, N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. ("OPRA"). The Company agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the State and DHS against any judgments, costs, or attorney's fees assessed against the State of New Jersey or DHS in connection with any action arising from, or related to, the non-disclosure, due to the Company's request, of documents submitted to the State and DHS, and relating to the RFP, which may become the subject of a request for government records under OPRA.

The Company makes the foregoing agreement with the understanding that the State and DHS may immediately disclose any documents withheld without further notice if the Company ceases to cooperate in the defense of any action against the State arising from or related to the above-described non-disclosure due to the Company's request.

I further certify that I am legally authorized to make this commitment and thus commit the Company to said defense.

____
(Signature)

____
(Print Name)

____
Title

____
Entity Represented

____
Date