



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services

March 11, 2025

Renee C. Burawski, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

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I. Purpose and Intent

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is issuing a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) to the two (2) current Vibrant-certified 988 Lifeline center agencies that have State of New Jersey DMHAS contracts expiring as of March 31, 2025¹.

Up to two (2) awards will be available for a combined total ceiling amount of approximately \$4,600,000 based on state and federal appropriations. The contract may be renewed annually under existing terms for up to four (4) one-year extensions at DMHAS' sole discretion and with the agreement of the successful bidder. Actual funding levels will depend on the availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

This initiative is funded by state appropriations and funds under a federal Notice of Award to the New Jersey Department of Human Services, from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ("SAMHSA"), for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Projects of Regional and National Significance effective July 22, 2024. The New Jersey DMHAS 988 State and Territory Improvement project will increase the capacity of New Jersey's Lifeline Centers and improve access to 988 services throughout the state. The SAMHSA funding bearing the unique Federal Award Identification Number H79FG001208, Assistance Listing Number 93.243 is not for research and development.

The focus of this RLI is to provide funds for increasing capacity of staff and response structure to improve access to 988 services throughout the State of New Jersey with the goal of increasing the in-state response to 988 Lifeline calls, texts and chats. Interested centers can apply through a Letter of Interest (LOI) detailed below.

The funding for this RLI is specifically dedicated to maintaining and adding to the number of staff qualified to answer contacts and make follow-up contacts related to suicide prevention and mental health and substance use crisis. Funding may also be used to implement additional technology and cyber security measures to fully support 988 infrastructures. Requests for one-time costs to improve an agency's response structure will be considered if they are specific to the provision of 988 services (headsets, monitors, keyboards, etc.).

Successful awardees will recruit, hire and train contact center staff to answer calls and/or texts and chats for the 988 Lifeline system no later than 45 days following Final Award.

¹ Date may change to September 30, 2025 subject to SAMHSA approval of another 6-month contract extension

The purpose of the funding opportunity is to:

1. Recruit, hire and train 988 Lifeline center staff for the purpose of answering 90% of New Jersey-based 988 contacts routed to each individual center.
2. Increase the response structure of 988 services in the State of New Jersey to improve the response to 988 Lifeline calls, texts and chats initiated in New Jersey with the goal of reaching and maintaining a 90% in-state answer rate.

The 988 Lifeline center will be expected to accomplish the following:

1. If applicable, the currently Vibrant-Certified Lifeline Centers will obtain any additional certifications and/or training needed to provide NJ 988 text and chat services.
2. Within 45 days of Final Award, recruit, hire and train additional staff to enhance the response to New Jersey-based 988 contacts.
3. Implement additional technology and cyber security measures to support 988 call and/or text and chat infrastructure.
4. Establish and maintain a plan to provide referrals to mental health and substance use services, 988 Mobile Crisis Outreach Response Teams (MCORTs), housing, social services and other resources as needed and appropriate.
5. Gather and report data as required by Vibrant, SAMHSA, NJ DHS-DMHAS, Carelon and possibly other entities.
6. Respond to at least 90% of calls and/or texts and chats presented to their center by the 988 Lifeline.
7. Ensure services are available and accessible to persons with limited English proficiency.
8. Establish and maintain an affiliation agreement with the NJ 988 Managing Entity, Carelon Behavioral Health. Carelon provides oversight to all 988 Lifeline centers in NJ.
9. Onboard onto the Crisis and Open Beds Modules of the data management platform developed by Bamboo Health when available and directed by DMHAS.
10. Maintain compliance with the Vibrant Network Agreement for the provision of 988 services.

DMHAS will:

1. Provide up to two (2) awards to current 988 Lifeline center agencies that have New Jersey State DMHAS contracts expiring as of March 31, 2025² to accomplish the goals as outlined in this RLI.
2. DMHAS anticipates making up to two (2) awards up to \$2,300,000 each for a total combined contract ceiling of \$4,600,000. DMHAS reserves the right in its reasonable discretion to adjust award amounts based on the LOIs submitted.

² Date may change to September 30, 2025 subject to SAMHSA approval of another 6-month contract extension

3. If applicable, monitor successful applicants' efforts to become a certified 988 contact center.
4. Monitor efforts to recruit, hire and train 988 crisis counselors.
5. Monitor outcomes and center answer rates consistent with the goals of this RLI.

II. RLI Timeline

The RLI timeline is anticipated as follows:

March 11, 2025	Notice of Funding Availability
March 18, 2025	Questions on RLI are due no later than 4:00 p.m. ET
April 1, 2025	Deadline to request DHS secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) site login credentials – no later than 4:00 p.m. ET
April 8, 2025	Deadline for receipt of Letters of Interest (LOIs)
TBD	Appeal deadline – no later than 4:00 p.m. ET

Bidders are responsible for monitoring the DHS website³ for updates to the RFP schedule.

III. Background

On July 16, 2022, the 10-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline transitioned to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (Lifeline). People experiencing suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress can access 988 services via call, text or chat from anywhere in the U.S. and its territories 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Since this transition, New Jersey has seen a steady increase in call, text and chat volume. Comparing data from the first year of transition (July 2022 – June 2023) to data for year two (July 2023 – June 2024), New Jersey has seen an approximately 35% increase in the average number of calls received per month. Between 2022 and 2023, the 988 Lifeline experienced a 65% increase in text demand from New Jersey-based phone numbers. In the first year of 988, in-state demand for chats rose by approximately 50%. Comparing 2022 and 2023 data, in-state chat demand has remained fairly consistent with a slight decrease of 8%.

In the first two years of 988, New Jersey is averaging a 79% in-state call answer rate and is providing an in-state response to 58% of the chats and texts routed to New Jersey-based centers. Until NJ has expanded capacity to respond, contacts not answered in-state are routed to a national backup center.

To manage the steady increase in volume of contacts, New Jersey must improve the infrastructure and workforce to meet the demand. The goal is to reach a 90% in-state answer rate for calls, chats and texts that come into the 988 Lifeline.

³ <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/providers/grants/rfp/rfi/>

IV. Funding Availability

Up to two (2) awards will be available for a combined total ceiling amount of approximately \$4,600,000 based on state and federal appropriations. Awards will be inclusive of one-time costs to current 988 Lifeline center agencies that have State contracts expiring as of March 31, 2025⁴. DMHAS reserves the right in its reasonable discretion to adjust award amounts based on the LOIs submitted. Applicants are advised that contract awards are conditional upon final contract and budget negotiation. The contract awarded as a result of this RLI is anticipated to have an initial term of June 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The contract may be renewed annually under existing terms for up to four (4) years at DMHAS' sole discretion and with the agreement of the successful bidder. Actual funding levels will depend on the availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

V. Who Can Apply?

To be considered for this opportunity, eligible providers must meet the following criteria:

- The applicant must be a current Vibrant 988 Certified Lifeline center with a State of New Jersey DMHAS contract that will be expiring as of March 2025⁵;
- The applicant must be in good standing with the State of New Jersey (if applicant is a contracted agency);
- The applicant must be able to clearly demonstrate the need for the proposed staff and/or technology through call center data from the last 6-12 months;
- For an applicant that has a contract with DMHAS in place when this RLI is issued, that bidder must have all outstanding Plans of Correction (PoC) for deficiencies submitted to DMHAS for approval prior to LOI submission;
- The applicant 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 applicant 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

⁴ Date may change to September 30, 2025 subject to SAMHSA approval of another 6-month contract extension

⁵ Date may change to September 30, 2025 subject to SAMHSA approval of another 6-month contract extension

⁶ <http://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue/debarment/debarsearch.shtml>

Board members do not participate in transactions except as expressly provided in the P8.05 circular.

VI. 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](#)⁷.

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 RLI is anticipated to have an initial term of June 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The contract may be renewable for up to four (4) additional one-year terms, at DMHAS' sole discretion, 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.

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 circumstances creating the delay. In no case shall the 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.

VII. Questions

Any questions regarding this RLI should be directed via email to MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on March 18, 2025. 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

⁷ <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/contracting/policy/>

proposals. Specific guidance, however, will not be provided to individual bidders at any time.

VIII. Letter of Interest (LOI) Requirements

All LOIs must include a written narrative that addresses the following topics listed below as A, B and C. The written narrative addressing topics listed in A, B and C is limited to eight (8) pages. In addition, all LOIs must include a detailed budget and the listed Attachments and Appendices. The LOI must adhere to all instructions and includes required supporting documentation, noted below:

A. Mission and Background of Agency: 10 Points

Please provide the mission and brief historical background of the organization. Include the organization's experience with responding to calls, texts and/or chats related to mental health crisis and suicidal ideation.

B. Project Description: 60 points (total) Staffing – 30 Points

- a. Provide details on the paid staff, in full-time equivalencies, for each staff category that will be employed through this initiative. This should include clear details on whether current staff/volunteers (e.g., per diem staff, part-time volunteers) will be used and/or whether new staff will be hired and onboarded.
- b. Detail how the additional staff will be hired and trained within 45 days.
- c. Describe strategies for rapid recruitment including efforts to employ Spanish speakers, members of underserved populations and credentialed peers with lived experience.
- d. Provide details on the staff's linguistic capabilities. Specify the center's access to linguistic capability in meeting callers' needs.
- e. Briefly detail activities related to addressing diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural/linguistic competence with staff.
- f. Discuss the space and technological capacity of the current center to accommodate the additional staff necessary for this initiative.

Service Delivery – 30 Points

- a. Detail how the proposed new staff/technology will improve the center's answer rate. Confirm expectation that this expansion will establish a 90% answer rate for calls and, if applicable, texts and chats routed to your center.
- b. Briefly explain how center staff will transition service users to appropriate community services (e.g., 988 MCORT, acute or outpatient services, peer/recovery support services, etc.) based on initial assessment. Confirm commitment to providing referrals whenever it could be useful to the person contacting 988.

- c. Describe current follow-up procedures and plans for follow-up as required by Vibrant. *(Applicants can find detailed information regarding Vibrant's Follow-Up Standards here: [2023 Follow-Up Guidance Doc.docx \(988lifeline.org\)](https://988lifeline.org/2023-Follow-Up-Guidance-Doc.docx))*
- d. Describe how the center will address issues of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, ethnic and racial identity, sexual orientation and gender identity, and the needs of indigenous populations. Confirm commitment to providing translation services for individuals needing services in a language other than English.

C. Implementation Timeline: 10 points

Please complete the provided implementation timeline chart (Table 3, Attachment B) starting from June 2025 (notification of award on **TBD**) to a 90% center answer rate for services proposed. Provide additional details in this section of the LOI narrative as appropriate.

D. Detailed Budget: 20 points *(this does not count towards the 8-page limit).*
Provide a clearly detailed budget using Excel Budget Template –

DMHAS will consider the cost efficiency of your proposed budget as it relates to the RLI. 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 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 G) 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 IX. Submission of 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, and total hours per workweek.
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.

E. Attachments/Appendices

The enumerated items of Required Attachments #1 through #11 and Appendices #1 through #7 must be included with the LOI.

Please note that if Required Attachments #4 through #9 are not submitted and complete, the LOI will not be considered. Furthermore, the failure to provide documents necessary in response to RLI (as identified in Attachments #1 through #3) will result in LOI not being considered.

The collective of Required Attachments #1 through 9 and Appendices #1 through #6 is limited to a total of 50 pages. Appendix information exceeding 50 pages will not be reviewed.

Required Attachments

1. Completed Attachment A– LOI Cover Sheet and Tables, as provided in this RLI (Attachment A)

2. Completed Attachment B – Data/Staffing Tables and Implementation Timeline, as provided in this RLI (Attachment B)
3. Completed Attachment C – Attestations, as provided in this RLI (Attachment C)
4. Department of Human Services Statement of Assurances (Attachment E);
5. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions (Attachment F);
6. [Disclosure of Investment in Iran](#)⁸;
7. [Certificate of Non-Involvement in Prohibited Activities in Russia and Belarus](#);
8. Statement of [Bidder/Vendor Ownership Disclosure](#)⁹;
9. Disclosure of Investigations and Other Actions Involving Bidder¹⁰;
10. 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;
11. Department of Human Services Commitment to Defend and Indemnify Form (Attachment I).

Appendices

1. Copy of documentation of the [bidder's charitable registration status](#)¹¹
2. Bidder mission statement;
3. Organizational chart;
4. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP);
5. List of the board of directors, officers and terms;
6. Provide an 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, limited to four (4) pages and;
7. Cultural Competency Plan

IX. Submission 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 LOI in response to this RLI. The narrative portion of the LOI should be no more than eight (8) 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 2 and ends on page 10 it is 9 pages long, not 8 pages. DMHAS will not consider any information submitted beyond the page limit for RLI evaluation purposes. The budget notes and appendix items do not count towards the narrative page limit.

⁸ www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml

⁹ www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml

¹⁰ www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml

¹¹ www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/charities

LOI must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on April 8, 2025. The bidder must submit its LOI (including LOI narrative, budget, budget notes, and attachments and appendices) electronically using the DHS secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) site. LOIs should be submitted in the following two files:

1. PDF file of entire LOI consisting of narrative, budget, budget notes, attachments and appendices. Label file with the following title: Name of Agency/Provider Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services LOI.
2. Excel file of budget using the DMHAS Excel budget template. Label file with the following title: Name of Agency/Provider Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services Budget.

B. Login Credentials

Applicants must request login credentials for this RLI by emailing MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on April 1, 2025, in order to receive unique login credentials for the Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services RLI to upload your LOI to the SFTP site. Email requests for login credentials must include the title of this RLI, individual's first name, last name, email address and name of agency/provider.

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

C. LOI Cover Sheet (Attachment A)

DMHAS will notify the selected applicant(s) by way of contacting the person named as the point of contact on the LOI Cover Sheet (Attachment A).

D. 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 I) 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 LOIs

There will be a review process for responsive LOIs. DMHAS will convene a review committee of public employees to conduct a review of each responsive LOI.

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

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 LOI ineligible for contract award.

Contract award recommendations will be based on such factors as the LOI 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 LOIs 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](#)¹².

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 made in writing by 4:00 p.m. ET on Date to Be Determined, by emailing it to MH.upload@dhs.nj.gov (subject line must include "Appeal and Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services") and/or mailing or faxing it to:

Department of Human Services
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Office of the Assistant Commissioner
PO Box 362
Trenton, NJ 08625-0362
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.

¹² <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/olra/contracting/policy/>

XII. Attachments

Attachment A – LOI Cover Sheet

Attachment B – Data/Staffing Tables and Implementation Timeline

Attachment C – Attestations

Attachment D – Addendum to RLI for Social Service and Training Contracts

Attachment E – Statement of Assurances

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Attachment A

LOI COVER SHEET

Title of RLI: Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Incorporated Name of Bidder: _____

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

Federal ID Number: _____ **Reg. Number:** _____

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): _____

Address of Bidder: _____

Chief Executive Officer Name & Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Contact Person's Name & Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Total dollar amount requested: _____

Proposed primary coverage counties (calls): _____

Proposed backup coverage counties (calls): _____

Proposed hours of operation:

Calls: _____ **Texts:** _____ **Chats:** _____

Proposed number of 988 contacts to be answered monthly:

Calls: _____ **Texts:** _____ **Chats:** _____

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

Authorization: Chief Executive Officer (printed name): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Attachment B - Data/Staffing Tables

Table 1

Complete as applicable with 6-12 months of recent data

Time Period Reporting on: _____	
Average number of calls answered per month	
Average number of chats/texts answered per month	
Average call answer rate	
Average speed to answer calls	
Minimum number of staff/volunteers answering calls at any one time during the week	
Maximum number of staff/volunteers answering calls at any one time during the week	
Minimum number of staff/volunteers answering chats/texts at any one time during the week	
Maximum number of staff/volunteers answering chats/texts at any one time during the week	

Table 2

List the qualifications (i.e., professional licensing and related experience) of new staff allocated to and/or planned for this initiative.

Staff Title	Brief Position Description	Full Time Equivalent	Qualifications

--	--	--	--

Table 3

Implementation Timeline

Please provide a timeline starting from notification of award on DATE to a 90% center answer rate for services proposed. Please include the following activities as applicable:

- Apply for Vibrant Chat and Text Certification
- Post positions
- Staff Interviewing/Hiring
- Staff Onboarding/Training (*per the RLI - no later than 45 days after final award for centers already a part of the Lifeline network*)
- Access & Training on Vibrant's Unified Platform for chat and text
- Go-Live with 988 chats and texts
- Expand center hours (identify hours)
- Expand center coverage area (identify counties)
- 90% center chat/text answer rate

Activity	Timeline
Notification of Award	
90% center call answer rate	

Attachment C - Attestations

Should funding be awarded, _____ attests to the
(Agency name)
following:

- Our agency will comply with all reporting requirements.
- Funding received from this initiative will not be used for other agency projects.

Signature

Date

Attachment D – Addendum to RLI 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 E – 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 RLI 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 RLI, 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 F - 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 G - Instructions for Excel Budget Template

The Excel template, posted with the RLI, 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 RLI. 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 H - 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, affectional 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, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. 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, color, 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

Employee Information Report Form AA302 (electronically provided by the Division and distributed to the public agency through the Division's website at:
(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 I – 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 Letters of Intent for Improving Access to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Services (“RLI”), 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 RLI, 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