

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

**REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST  
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
PREVENTION OF DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**

**February 2, 2022**

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## I. Purpose and Intent

The Department of Human Services (“DHS”), Division of Developmental Disabilities (“DDD”), Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (“OPDD”), is issuing this Request for Letters of Interest (“RLI”) to solicit from Vendors innovative ideas to assist DHS in reducing the incidence of intellectual and developmental disabilities (“IDDs”) in New Jersey.

IDDs are disorders that are usually present at birth and affect the trajectory of the individual's physical, intellectual, and/or emotional development.<sup>1</sup> About one in six children in the U.S. have one or more developmental disabilities or other developmental delays.<sup>2</sup> Some conditions considered to be developmental disabilities include: intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, spina bifida, traumatic brain injuries and certain neurological disorders.

Preventing developmental disabilities begins long before a woman gets pregnant and continues long after her child is born. Numerous developmental disabilities can be prevented through maternal, paternal, and child health practices.

There is a body of research that supports the effectiveness and cost savings attributable to prevention interventions. Effective prevention efforts use multifaceted, systems approaches that range in scope from educating individuals to influencing policy and legislation. These efforts involve interdisciplinary collaborations on an increasing continuum of levels. The various intervention levels include increasing the awareness and knowledge of individuals and community groups, educating providers, establishing advisory boards and coalitions to coordinate efforts and make recommendations and influencing policy and legislation. Another important aspect is developing surveillance and tracking systems that provide baseline data and capture information over time that allow for comparisons and identification of trends.

- Funding will be provided for 3 projects for a total of up to \$185,000 per project. One project will be selected for each of the three regions of the State of New Jersey; north, central, south (regions concretely defined in proposal requirements).

The following summarizes the RLI schedule:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| • Notice of Funding Availability               | February 2, 2022    |
| • Q&A Period                                   | February 3-10, 2022 |
| • Submission of Letters of Interest (Round 1)  | March 1, 2022       |
| • Round 1 Proposal Decision Announcement       | March 24, 2022      |
| • Request for Submission of Proposal (Round 2) | March 24, 2022      |
| • Appeal of Round 1 Rejection Decisions        | By March 31, 2022   |
| • Final Round 1 Rejection Appeal Decisions     | April 5, 2022       |

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/idds/conditioninfo/default#:~:text=Intellectual%20and%20developmental%20disabilities%20\(IDDs\)%20are%20disorders%20that%20are%20usually,multiple%20body%20parts%20or%20systems.](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/idds/conditioninfo/default#:~:text=Intellectual%20and%20developmental%20disabilities%20(IDDs)%20are%20disorders%20that%20are%20usually,multiple%20body%20parts%20or%20systems.)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/index.html>

- Submission of final proposal (Round2) April 21, 2022
- Preliminary award announcement June 3, 2022
- Appeal deadline June 10, 2022
- Final award decision June 17, 2022
- Anticipated contract start date July 1, 2022

## II. Background

The OPDD was established in 1987. Its mission is to reduce the frequency of occurrence of chronic intellectual/developmental and physical disabilities that originate during pregnancy or early childhood. This goal is achieved by many means, including, but not limited to:

- Educating the public, targeting potentially young and new parents about the preventable causes of disabilities, such as ingesting lead paint and non-lead paint sources such as jewelry, toys, stoneware etc. as well as consumption of harmful substances during pregnancy, or unintentional injury during childhood;
- Alerting health care providers and others to new discoveries that suggest ways to reduce the risks of permanent damage to children before, during, and after birth;
- Informing professionals and the public about the impact of maternal and paternal age at time of conception;
- Publicizing newly discovered causes of disability that arise from societal or environmental changes;
- Fostering coordination among different agencies, each of which may be part of the solution to a problem;
- Stimulating research to push forward the frontiers of biomedical knowledge including basic science research to fill important gaps in the sciences of the prevention of disabilities; and
- Advocating for changes in social conditions that endanger children.

The most recent projects focusing on prevention of developmental disabilities funded through the OPDD can be found at:

- <http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/opmrdd/home/programs/>

The most recent long term planning documents from the Governor's Council on the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities and its standing committees can be found at:

- <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/opmrdd/news/ChangesChallengesBooklet.pdf>
- <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/opmrdd/news/BeintheKnowFINAL12.12.pdf>

The latest published data on prevalence rates in New Jersey can be found in CHILDHOOD LEAD EXPOSURE IN NEW JERSEY ANNUAL REPORT, STATE FISCAL YEAR 2016 (July I, 2018-June 30, 2019)

- <https://www.state.nj.us/health/childhoodlead/documents/reports/childhoodlead2019.pdf>

On September 18, 2017, the New Jersey Department of Health (“DOH”) amended its rules for the provision of case management and environmental interventions for children with elevated blood lead levels. The rules require public health action at a single, venous blood lead level of 5 ug/dL or greater. Universal screening of children at ages one and two years old is still required by health care personnel and facilities that provide health services to young children.

In August 2017, the Pew Charitable Trusts issued the document "10 Policies to Prevent and Respond to Childhood Lead Exposure," summarizing health impact findings of lead exposure on children and the communities in which they live.

- <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2017/08/10-policies-to-prevent-and-respond-to-childhood-lead-exposure>

The Strategic Plan to End Childhood Lead Poisoning developed by the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative lists actions that can be taken by federal, state and local agencies.

- <https://www.greenandhealthyhomes.org/strategic-plan-end-childhood-lead-poisoning/>

Useful data and information from the DOH can be found here:

- <https://www.nj.gov/health/chs/hnj2020/about/topics/> objectives related to childhood lead poisoning. Within the provided link, click on the topic Maternal and Child Health, and locate objectives MCH-11 and MCH-12.
- <http://www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/nbs/index.shtml>
- <https://www-doh.state.nj.us/doh-shad/>

Black mothers in New Jersey are seven times more likely than white mothers to die from pregnancy-related complications. In addition, Black babies in our state are three times more likely than white babies to die before their first birthdays. First Lady Tammy Murphy and national public health expert Dr. Vijaya Hogan unveiled the Nurture NJ Maternal and Infant Health Plan. This strategy is intended to reduce New Jersey’s high rates of maternal and infant mortality and eliminate the racial disparities responsible for these deaths.

- <https://nurturenj.nj.gov/>

In 2021, the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network (AADM) reported that about 2.8% of 8-year-old children in New Jersey were identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder in 2018 by the New Jersey Autism Study.

- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/addm-community-report/new-jersey.html>

### III. Project Goals

The goal of this RLI is to solicit new and innovative ideas to assist DHS in reducing the incidence of IDD in New Jersey. Vendors are encouraged to submit proposals that address the prevention of developmental disabilities that are novel or unique to the current developmental disability prevention work underway in our State. By utilizing outcome evaluation methods, DHS has the intended goal to fund developmental disability prevention projects that will eventually be bolstered by empirically supported research.

Based upon these outcomes, the OPDD may consider future support for project models that are able to show their efficacy and are believed to have the potential for further replication throughout New Jersey.

#### **IV. Qualifications**

To be eligible for consideration for this RLI, the vendor must satisfy the following requirements:

- a. Vendors must be a fiscally viable for-profit or non-profit organization or a governmental entity.
- b. Vendors must currently meet, or be able to meet, all Department of Human Services contracting rules and regulations as set forth in the New Jersey Department of Human Services Contract Reimbursement Manual (CRM), and Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM), most notably the Department's Standard Language Document (P2.01).
- c. Vendors, other than governmental entities, must demonstrate that they are incorporated or registered through the New Jersey Department of State and provide documentation of their current non-profit status under Federal 501(c) (3) regulations, as applicable.
- d. If a vendor is a for-profit entity, it must obtain a business registration certificate from the New Jersey Department of the Treasury prior to the time the contract is awarded. For-profits may obtain this certificate at: <https://www.nj.gov/treasury/revenue/busregcert.shtml>

#### **V. Funding Availability**

Funding is available for one proposal in each region of the State of New Jersey (North, Central, and South) with the following restrictions:

1. Funding for three years (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025);
2. A maximum award of \$185,000 will be available for each year;
3. The project should focus on innovative approaches to the prevention of developmental disabilities. Letters of interest must describe activities or interventions that are targeted, measurable and duplicable.

#### **VI. Required Content for Round 1**

- A. The following topics are examples of areas of focus for new OPDD funded projects:
  - Maternal & Paternal Health/Mental Health
  - Children's Health/Mental Health
  - Unintentional Injury
  - Genetic &/or Metabolic, Cardiac, Hearing Screening
- B. One or more of the following issues could be significant components in any proposed projects:
  - Lead exposure/effects

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Perinatal Addictions
- Smoking
- Substance Use (legal & illegal)
- Nutrition (i.e. Folic Acid, Pica)
- Immunization
- Safe Recreational Activities (ex. head injury)
- Genetic disorders and risk reduction
- Genetic Screening and pre-conception testing

C. Additional contributing project components can include but are not limited to:

- Poverty
- Language barriers
- Societal and Environmental Stress
- Access to service systems (i.e. health care, preschool, substance use treatment)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)
- Occupational and environmental exposure before and/or during pregnancy and after birth during early childhood
- Perception of immigration status and access to prenatal/postnatal care
- Genetic conditions found in increased frequency in certain at-risk populations.

D. Target Locations:

- Northern Counties: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Warren
- Central Counties: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, Union
- Southern Counties: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, Salem

Letters of interest must address the following (Utilize section VI. A – D to inform your proposal):

1. Funding Proposal Cover Sheet –Utilize Template Attachment A
2. Project Description (Max five (5)Pages)
  - a) What is your area of focus for this project? What are you addressing?
  - b) What is the target population for the project? Please include current statistics regarding target population. Include geographical information that shows any expansion of impact area during the three years of project funding.
  - c) How does this project meet the purpose and background information described in the earlier sections of this RLI?
  - d) What is the hypothesis? What are the goals and objectives of this project (should be measurable)? Please describe your program activities and explain how they will achieve the stated goals and objectives.
  - e) Provide a timeline for years one through three that includes an acceleration of activities intended to meet the aforementioned goals and objectives. During this three-year period, how will the program grow?
  - f) The tracking of outcomes and the evaluation of the outcomes will be an important aspect of funded projects. Please note methods to be used to

measure the achievement of identified goals and objectives.

- Please be aware that if your project is funded you will be required to secure a program evaluation by an outside entity (NJ preferred) focusing on the efficacy or potential efficacy of your project, at the end of each contract year.
  - Quarterly reporting will also be required.
- g) What is the staffing (full time and part time) required to administer this project?
- h) Provide a budget for the administration of this project. How much will it cost? What are the most significant aspects of the program's budget?

## **VII. Question & Answer Period for Round 1**

Technical assistance regarding this RLI will be provided via the DHS web site. Potential applicants are encouraged to submit questions to the OPDD at [ddd.preventiondd@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:ddd.preventiondd@dhs.state.nj.us) no later than 3:00 P.M. on February 10, 2022. Responses to submitted questions will be posted on the DHS website location <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/providers/grantslrfrfi/> no later than February 14, 2022.

## **VIII. Submission Instructions for Round 1**

DDD assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred by the Provider Agency in the preparation and submittal of a Letter of Interest. Letters of Interest must be no longer than five (5) pages and must use either Times New Roman or Arial font style and the font size can be no smaller than 12 point. The letter must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. local time on March 1, 2022. Letters should be submitted as an email attachment with the vendor's name, project name and date in the subject line of the email. Submissions should be sent to: [jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov).

## **IX. Review of Letters of Interest (Round 1)**

There will be a review process for all timely submitted Letters of Interest, which materially comply with the content requirements in this RLI. DDD will convene a review committee comprised of members of the Governor's Council on the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities to conduct a review of each Letter of Interest accepted for review and provide DDD a recommendation.

Staff from DDD will then inform vendor's whose letters were selected to submit the additional information required during the second (final) selection review. The announcement regarding which agencies will be requested to submit final proposals for review in round 2 will occur on March 24, 2022.

## **X. Appeal of Round 1 Decisions**

An appeal of any decision may be made only by a respondent to this RLI. All



appeals must be made in writing and received by DDD at the address below no later than March 31, 2022. The written request must clearly set forth the basis for the appeal and be sent to: [jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov). A decision regarding any appeals will be made by April 5, 2022.

Please note that all costs incurred in connection with any appeals of the Division of Developmental Disabilities decisions are considered unallowable costs for purposes of the Division of Developmental Disabilities contract funding.

#### **XI. Submission of Round 2 Proposal**

Proposals should be submitted as an email attachment with the vendor's name, project name and date in the subject line of the email. Submissions should be sent to: [jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:jonathan.sabin@dhs.nj.gov).

Your proposal submission will need to be in Times New Roman or Arial font and should not be smaller than 12point.

Additionally, one hard copy of the proposal with an original signature and six additional hard copies will need to be submitted to the attention of Jonathan Sabin at the address below:

Jonathan Sabin, Director  
Office for the Prevention of Developmental  
Disabilities Division of Developmental  
Disabilities  
Department of Human Services  
P.O. Box 726  
Trenton, NJ08625-0726

Round 2 proposals will need to be received at the above addresses by 4:00 P.M. on April 21, 2022, to be considered eligible. Facsimile submissions will not be accepted. There will not be a Question and Answer Period for Round 2.

#### **XII. Review of Round 2 (Final Proposal)**

A committee, comprised of staff from DDD, will review and score the full project proposals and make recommendations for funding.

DDD reserves the right to reject all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in DDD's best interest to do so. DDD's best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, loss of funding, inability of the Applicant(s) to provide adequate services, and indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with State and federal laws and regulations, existing Department Contracts, and procedures set forth in DHS CPIM Policy Circular Pl.04. The Division will notify

all applicants of awards, contingent upon the satisfactory final negotiation of a contract with the Office of Contract Administration by May 27, 2022.

### **XIII. Appeal of Award Decisions**

Appeals of any award determinations may be made only by the respondents to this RLI. All appeals must be made in writing and must be received by the Division at the address below no later than 4:00 P.M. on June 3, 2022. The written request must clearly set forth the basis for the appeal.

Appeal correspondence should be addressed to:

Jonathan Sabin, Director  
Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities  
Division of Developmental Disabilities,  
Department of Human Services  
P.O. Box 726  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0726

Please note that all costs incurred in connection with any appeals of the Division's decisions are considered unallowable costs for purposes of the Division's contract funding.

The Division will review any appeals and render final decisions no later than June 10, 2022. Awards will not be considered final until all timely appeals have been reviewed and final decisions rendered.

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN  
SERVICES**  
Division of Developmental Disabilities  
Letter of Interest Cover Sheet

Name of RLI \_\_\_\_\_

Incorporated Name of Bidder: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: Public \_\_\_\_\_ Profit \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Profit \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital-Based \_\_\_\_\_

Federal ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Charities Reg. Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

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:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Authorization: Chief Executive Officer (printed name): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_