



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Commissioner
Jaime Masters

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Jaime Masters, Commissioner

**Request for Applications (RFA)
For
DFPS Texas Service Members, Veterans and Families
Program (SMVF)
RFA No. HHS0007115**

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Responses Due: March 9, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. Central Time**

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952/67-Parenting Intervention Services
952/17-Child Abuse: Identification, Treatment and Prevention**

Table of Contents

Article I. Executive Summary, Definitions, and Authority 5

1.1 Executive Summary5

1.2 Definitions5

1.3 Authority11

Article II. Scope of Grant Award..... 11

2.1 Program Background11

2.2 Grant Award and Term12

2.2.1 Service Delivery Area..... 12

2.2.2 Available Funding..... 12

2.2.3 Period of Performance 12

2.3 Eligible Applicants13

2.4 Program Objectives.....13

2.5 Scope.....13

2.5.1 Community Strengths and Needs Assessment..... 13

2.5.2 Eligible Service Population..... 14

2.5.3 Service Population Requirements 16

2.5.4 Recruitment and Outreach 16

2.5.5 Service Authorization and Referral 16

2.5.6 Organizational Competence..... 17

2.5.7 Family Systems Requirements..... 18

2.5.8 Community and Systems Support Requirements 20

2.5.9 Minimum Staffing Qualifications 22

2.5.10 Program Director Staffing Requirements 22

2.5.11 Organizational Qualifications and Training Requirements 23

2.5.12 PEIRS Database 25

2.5.13 Billing Requirements 25

2.5.14 Required Reports 26

2.5.15 Case Records Management..... 26

2.5.16 Additional Program Requirements 29

2.5.17 Use of Subawards 29

2.5.18 Performance Measures..... 30

2.5.19 Performance Reporting for Cross-systems Efforts 30

2.5.20 Transition Plan 31

2.5.21 Transition/File Closure Procedure 31

2.6 Prohibitions.....31

2.7 Standards.....32

2.8 No Guarantee of Volume, Usage or Compensation33

Article III. Administrative Information 34

3.1 Schedule of Events.....34

3.2 Changes, Amendment or Modification to Solicitation34

3.3 Irregularities.....34

3.4 Inquiries34

3.4.1 Point of Contact 34

3.4.2 Prohibited Communications..... 35

3.4.3 Questions..... 35

3.4.4 Clarification Request Made by Respondent 35

3.4.5	Responses.....	36
3.4.6	Respondent Webinar.....	36
3.5	Solicitation Response Composition.....	36
3.5.1	Generally.....	36
3.5.2	Submission in Separate Parts.....	36
3.6	Solicitation Response Submission and Delivery.....	37
3.6.1	Deadline.....	37
3.6.2	Labeling.....	37
3.6.3	Delivery.....	37
3.6.4	Alterations, Modifications, and Withdrawals.....	38
	Article IV. Solicitation Response Evaluation and Award Process.....	38
4.1	Generally.....	38
4.2	Eligibility Screening.....	38
4.3	Evaluation.....	38
4.3.1	Specific Selection Criteria.....	39
4.4	Final Selection.....	39
4.5	Negotiation and Award.....	39
4.5.1	Negotiations.....	39
4.5.2	Exceptions.....	39
4.5.3	Assumptions.....	40
4.5.4	Posting Awards.....	40
4.5	Questions or Requests for Clarification By DFPS.....	40
	Article V. Narrative Proposal.....	40
5.1	Narrative Proposal.....	40
5.1.1	Executive Summary.....	40
5.1.2	Program Narrative.....	40
5.1.3	Subawards.....	42
5.1.4	References.....	42
5.1.5	Project Work Plan.....	42
	Article VI. Required Respondent Information.....	42
6.1	Administrative Entity Information.....	42
6.1.1	Respondent Information (Face Page).....	43
6.1.2	Governmental/Non-Profit Information.....	43
6.1.3	Background Checks.....	43
6.1.4	Grantee Payment Set Up and Direct Deposit.....	43
6.1.5	Administrative Information.....	43
6.2	Litigation and Contract History.....	43
6.3	Conflicts.....	44
6.4	Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire. (ICSQ).....	44
6.5	Affirmations and Certifications.....	44
6.6	HUB.....	45
	Article VII. Expenditure Proposal.....	45
7.1	Expenditure Proposal.....	45
	Article VIII. General Terms and Conditions.....	45
8.1	General Conditions.....	45
8.1.1.	Amendment.....	45
8.1.2	Costs Incurred.....	46

8.1.3 Contract Responsibility..... 46
8.1.4 Public Information Act 46
8.1.5 News Releases 47
8.1.6 Additional Information 47
8.1.7 DFPS Terms and Conditions 47
Article IX. Submission Checklist..... 48
Article X. Exhibits..... 49

ARTICLE I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, DEFINITIONS, AND AUTHORITY

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Texas, by and through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on behalf of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and pursuant to its Texas Service Members, Veterans and Families Program (SMVF Program), seeks Proposals to increase availability and accessibility of resources and services for current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families in the State of Texas.

This Request for Applications (“RFA” or “Solicitation”) contains standardized requirements that all Respondents must meet to be considered for a Contract under this RFA. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of the Respondent without further consideration. Each Respondent is solely responsible for the preparation and submission of an Application in accordance with instructions contained in this RFA.

Information regarding DFPS and PEI is available online and can be accessed:

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention_and_early_intervention/.

To be considered for Award, Respondents must execute **Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance**, of this Solicitation and provide all other required information and documentation as set forth in this Solicitation.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Refer to **Exhibit B, DFPS Grant Uniform Terms and Conditions** and **Exhibit C, DFPS Grant Supplemental and Special Conditions**, for additional definitions. Additionally, as used in this Solicitation, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below:

"Addendum" means a written clarification or revision to this Solicitation issued by DFPS.

"Agreement" means a promise or a set of promises, for breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of which the law in some way recognizes as a duty. It is an Agreement between two or more parties creating obligations that are enforceable or otherwise recognizable at law. The term also encompasses the written document that describes the terms of the Agreement. For State contracting purposes, it generally describes the terms of a purchase of goods or services from a Contractor or Grantee.

"Amendment" is a formal revision or addition to a Contract.

"Apparent Awardee" means an organization that has been selected to receive a Grant Award through response to this RFA but has not yet executed a Grant Agreement or Contract. Used interchangeably with the term "Apparent Grantee."

"Application" is an application submitted by a Respondent in response to this RFA. Used interchangeably with the term “Response,” “Proposal,” or “Offer.”

“Award” is the act of communicating acceptance of a Proposal to the Respondent, thereby forming a Contract.

“Awarded Respondent” means an organization that receives a Grant Award as a result of this RFA. Used interchangeably with the term "Grantee, ", “Successful Respondent” or "Grant Recipient."

“Best Value” is the optimum combination of economy and quality that is the result of fair, efficient, and practical procurement decision-making and achieves procurement objectives.

“Business Day” is any day other than a Saturday, Sunday, or day in which Texas State offices are authorized or obligated by law or executive order to be closed.

“Caregiver” is an individual who attends to the needs of a Child.

“Case Record” is any documentation and materials in both the electronic file and external file associated with a specific case.

“Child(ren)/Youth” is a person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes.

“Client” is a member of the priority population to be served by the Respondent's organization. For the purposes of this Grant, a Client is a member of a family or household eligible to receive PEI services and who is receiving services under this Grant.

“CSNA” means Community Strengths and Needs Assessment.

“Confidential Information” is any communication or record (whether oral, written, electronically stored or transmitted, or in any other form) that consist of:

1. Confidential Client information, including Protected Health Information;
2. All non-public budget, expense, payment and other financial information;
3. All privileged Work Product;
4. All information designated by HHSC or any other State Agency as confidential, including all information designated as confidential under the Texas Public Information Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 552;
5. Unless publicly disclosed by HHSC or the State, the pricing, payments, and terms and conditions of the Agreement;
6. Information that is utilized, developed, received, or maintained by HHSC, the Grantee, or DFPS for the purpose of fulfilling a duty or obligation under this Agreement and that has not been publicly disclosed; and
7. Any other information deemed confidential under State or federal confidentiality laws.

“Contact” means to get in touch with or communicate with via face-to-face, electronic communication (telephone, text, Email, or computer/webcam) or letter.

“Contract” is a promise or a set of promises, for breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of which the law in some way recognizes as a duty. It is an Agreement between two or more parties creating obligations that are enforceable or otherwise recognizable at law. The term also encompasses the written document that describes the

terms of the Agreement. For State Contracting purposes, it generally describes the terms of a purchase of goods or services from a Contractor or Grantee.

“Contract Performance Measures Report” is a reporting tool developed and prepared by DFPS to compare an individual Grantee’s performance to the target established for the Output or Outcome.

“Contract Term” is the period of time beginning with the commencement date or Effective Date of a Contract and ending when the Contract expires in accordance with its terms, or when it has been terminated.

“Contractor” is an entity Awarded a Contract pursuant to this RFA to provide goods and services, Used interchangeably with the term Grantee for this RFA.

“CPS” means Child Protective Services, a division of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

“Cultural Humility” is the ability of individuals and systems to maintain an openness to ongoing learning and self-reflection around culture; recognizing that people are multi-dimensional and have their own experiences of their respective culture or cultures; and addressing any related power dynamics to build healthy partnerships among people, organizations and systems. Used interchangeably with the term Cultural Competency.

“Data Source” is the system or process from which information about a Performance Measure will be gathered.

“Deliverable” is a written, recorded or otherwise tangible work product prepared, developed, or procured by the Grantee that is to be provided as part of the Grantee’s obligations under the Contract. A discrete type or increment of work. The work may involve the delivery of goods or services.

“DFPS” means the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services its officers, employees or authorized agents.

“Effective Date” is the date of complete execution of the Contract or the date upon which the parties agree the Contract shall take effect.

“Evidence-Based Program” is a Program that:

1. Is research-based and grounded in relevant, empirically based knowledge and program-determined Outcomes;
2. Has comprehensive standards ensuring the highest quality service delivery with continuous improvement in the quality of service delivery;
3. Has demonstrated significant positive short-term and long-term Outcomes;
4. Has been evaluated by at least one rigorous randomized controlled research trial across heterogeneous populations or communities, the results of at least one of which has been published in a peer-reviewed journal. For youth serving curricula, a rigorous quasi-experiment may be substituted for a randomized control trial, at PEI’s discretion;
5. Substantially complies with a program manual or design that specifies the purpose, Outcomes, duration, and frequency of the program services; and

6. Employs well-trained and competent staff and provides continual relevant professional development opportunities to the staff.

“Evidence-Informed” practices use the best available research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation. An allowable solution that allows for performance and success in all conditions. Components of Evidence-Informed programs have been tested using a randomized control trial or rigorous quasi experimental design.

“Family” (Families) means a Family served through this RFA and can include more than one household. Services must be provided to one or more Caregivers or parents that is currently parenting or preparing to parent for at least one Child under the age of eighteen (18) years.

“Family Advocacy Program” or “FAP” is a congressionally mandated program located on every military installation to prevent and respond to reports of child abuse/neglect and domestic abuse in military families.

“Grant” is a Contract Awarded by DFPS to an entity through this RFA for SMVF Program services.

“Grantee” is an entity Awarded a Contract pursuant to this RFA to provide goods and services. Used interchangeably with the term Contractor for this procurement.

“Health and Human Services Commission” or “HHSC” means the administrative agency established under Chapter 531, Texas Government Code or its designee.

“Health and Human Services Field” means a field which has a focus on the safety and welfare of individuals and families. Example degrees in this field include: sociology, social work, criminology, psychology, and counseling.

“Home Visiting Program” is an Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Programs that require service delivery of at least on component of the program in the home or residence of a Caregiver.

“Index Child/Youth” is the Child or Youth on whom a Family’s eligibility for PEI services is based, whether or not they themselves are receiving services.

“Intake” is the act of receiving, logging, and creating an individual Family file at the Grantee’s site indicating acceptance of the Service Authorization.

“Invoice” is a Grantee’s bill or written request for payment under the Contract for services performed.

“Key Personnel” is those staff having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and supervising aspects of this project.

“Management” is the act or art of managing the conducting or supervising of something, as a business.

“Non-Responsive” means noncompliance with a material aspect of the Solicitation document resulting in an Application’s exclusion from Contract Award consideration.

“Outcome” is a measure that demonstrates the effect a service has on Clients, typically related to improvements in the lives of Clients with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being.

“Output” is an indicator used to count goods and services produced.

“Participant” is any person participating in SMVF services

“PEI” means Prevention and Early Intervention Division of DFPS.

“PEI Program Staff” is an employee who works for the Department of Family and Protective Services, Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Division.

“Performance Measure” is a service Output, Outcome, or Deliverable used to assess the performance of the Grantee.

“Performance Measure” (PYD) is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

“Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System” or “PEIRS” is the data reporting system used by PEI Grantees and PEI Program Staff to capture and report program and Contract-related information.

“Primary Participating Caregiver” is the parent or Caregiver of the Index Child/Youth and is the person who is the primary Participant in PEI services. The primary participating Caregiver may or may not be the Index Child/Youth’s primary Caregiver.

“Primary Prevention” Events and activities that seek to raise the awareness to the general public, service providers, and decision-makers about an issue or topic. Example include but are not limited to public service announcements that encourage positive parenting, distribution of materials and information, or giving presentations that focus on child or youth development, safety, family strengthening or other related area.

“Priority Characteristics” are traits that identify the Index Child/Youth, Caregivers, and/or Families who may receive services.

“Program Staff” are employees working under the auspices of SMVF Grantees, including Subawards and volunteers who will be providing support and services to authorized Families.

“Promising Practice Program” is a Program or model that:

1. Has an active impact evaluation program or demonstrates a schedule for implementing an active impact evaluation program;
2. Has been evaluated by at least one outcome-based study demonstrating effectiveness or random, controlled trial in a homogeneous sample;
3. Substantially complies with a program manual or design that specifies the purpose, outcomes, duration, and frequency of the program services;

4. Employs well-trained and competent staff and provides continual relevant professional development opportunities;
5. Is research-based and grounded in relevant, empirical knowledge and program-determined outcomes.

“Proposal” is the Application submitted by a Respondent in response to this RFA. Used interchangeably with the term “Response”, “Application” or “Offer.”

“Protective Factors” are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk in families and communities, thereby increasing the health and well-being of children and families.

“Provider” is any entity providing services under a Contract to a DFPS Client under an Award. Used interchangeably with the term “Contractor” or “Grantee”.

“Purpose” is the reason for inclusion of a Performance Measure.

“Qualified Personnel” are persons with proper training and, in some cases, credentials.

“Referral” is service recommendations to Families beyond the services the Grantee is required to provide through this RFA.

“Reflective Supervision” is the regular collaborative reflection between a supervisor and caseworker that builds on the worker’s use of his or her thoughts, feelings, and values within a service encounter, is a necessary supportive process within the supervisor-caseworker relationship.

“Region” means DFPS Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

“Respondent” means the entity responding to this Solicitation. Used interchangeably with the term "Applicant."

“Responsive” means the Respondent has complied with all material aspects of the Solicitation document, including submission of all required documents.

“Safe” means secure from maltreatment or the risk of danger or harm.

“Scope of Work” is a description of what the DFPS requires and what a Respondent must provide. The written statement or description and enumeration of particulars of goods to be purchased or services to be performed.

“Scope of Work” Events and Activities with a high-risk focus are offered to populations that have one or more risk factors associated with child maltreatment. Examples include, but are not limited to, poverty, parental substance abuse, young parental age, parental mental health concerns, and parental or child disabilities. Programs could include parent education, parent support groups, home visiting, respite care, and family resource centers within communities and neighborhoods that have high incidence of any or all these risk factors.

“Service Authorization” means the process whereby the Primary Participating Caregiver consents to participation in services by completing an enrollment form and any other documentation required by PEI or the Grantee.

“Service Delivery Area” (SDA) is the geographical area designated by DFPS, within which Contracted services may be provided.

“Service Member” means an active duty member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corp, Coast Guard or an active or inactive duty member of the National Guard.

“Service Providers” is the persons providing services under Contract to DFPS or Subaward to the primary Grantee.

“SMVF” means Service Members, Veterans and their Families.

“Software” is all operating systems and applications used by the Grantee to provide the services described in this RFA.

“Solicitation” means this Request for Applications including any Exhibits and Addenda, if any.

“State” means the State of Texas and its instrumentalities, including HHSC, DFPS and any other State Agency, its officers, employees, or authorized agents.

“State Agency” means an agency of the State of Texas as defined in Texas Government Code §2056.001.

“Subaward” is a written Contract that assigns some of the obligations of a Grantee to a third party selected by the Grantee. The third party assumes some of the obligations of the Grantee. The Grantee remains completely responsible to DFPS for all actions carried out by the Subawardee. Used interchangeably with the term Subcontract or Subgrant for this RFA.

“Subawardee” Any entity that has entered into a Contract with the Grantee to assume some of the obligations of the Grantee. Used interchangeably with the term “Subcontractor” or “Subgrantee.”

“Uniform Terms and Conditions” (UTCs) is the terms and conditions applicable to any Contract resulting from this RFA that governs the Application and any resulting Contract.

“Veteran” for the purpose of Participant eligibility means a former member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corp and active or inactive members of the National Guard.

1.3 AUTHORITY

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is requesting applications under its authority in Texas Human Resources Code Section 40.058 and Texas Human Resources Code Section 53.002.

ARTICLE II. SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD

2.1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

PEI partners with community-based programs and agencies to provide a variety of services that help prevent abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas Children. Not all services are available in all Texas communities. Services are free of charge and

participation is voluntary. The SMVF Program is a community-based program to coordinate resources and efforts in support of SMVF with Children between zero (0) and seventeen (17) years of age. It is an outgrowth of the Military Families and Veterans Pilot Prevention Program (MFVPP), which was initiated in Fiscal Year 2016 as a result of H.B. 19 in the 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2015. Under MFVPP, community providers in Bell, Bexar and El Paso counties received Grants to provide an array of services and develop or participate in local or regional coalitions for the purpose of improving service coordination and promoting child welfare, early childhood education, and other youth and family services. The SMVF Program is intended to prevent child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency by enhancing Protective Factors of Youth and Families served and increasing inter-organizational collaboration in high risk counties.

2.2 GRANT AWARD AND TERM

2.2.1 Service Delivery Area

The SDA for this Grant includes counties with military installations as well as counties identified to have a high Veteran population:

1. Primary service counties: Bell, Bexar, Collin, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, and Tarrant; or any county across Texas with military installations; and
2. Any counties contiguous to primary service counties.

Applicant can apply for one county or for any combination of counties in their Response.

2.2.2 Available Funding

- A. The total amount of funding anticipated **annually** for the SMVF grant is **One Million, Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,600,000.00)**. DFPS anticipates making four (4)-six (6) Awards total. DFPS will Award only one (1) Contract for each SDA for this procurement. DFPS may not fully fund requests in order to ensure that funds are available for the broadest possible array of communities and programs.
- B. Grants awarded as a result of this RFA will be on a cost reimbursement basis. Under the cost reimbursement method of funding, Grant recipients are required to finance operations with their own funds with Grant payments made by DFPS to reimburse the Grant recipients for actual cash disbursements to be supported by adequate documentation. Reimbursement will only be made for those allowable expenses that occur within the term of the Grant.

2.2.3 Period of Performance

- A. The period of performance for this Grant will be five years. It is anticipated that the period of performance for this Grant will begin **September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025**.

- B. DFPS anticipates that the initial term of any Contract resulting from this Solicitation shall be for a period of five (5) years (base term). Following the base term, DFPS, at its sole option, may extend any resulting Contract as necessary for the purpose of completing a new RFA and/or to transition to a new Grantee if necessary, to avoid interruption in services.

2.3 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In order to be awarded a Contract as a result of this RFA, a Respondent must be a nonprofit or governmental entity as described by Texas Business Organization Code Chapter 22 or governmental organizations.

2.4 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- A. DFPS seeks to Award grants to qualified governmental or nonprofit entities to provide family intervention and prevention services.
- B. Responses should include plans to increase Protective Factors in Families, support healthy and Safe homes for Texas Children, and reduce the risk of child abuse, neglect, and other negative outcomes in accordance with specifications contained in this RFA. In this procurement, the overarching goals of the SMVF program are:
 - 1. To improve the well-being of Texas Service Member and Veteran Families by promoting positive parenting and positive youth development;
 - 2. To educate, facilitate and otherwise support Service Members, Veterans, and their Families through resources and programming that bolsters existing strengths and addresses emotional, physical and financial barriers;
 - 3. To foster development and sustainment of community coalitions of local stakeholders with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect and supporting positive youth development; and
 - 4. To prevent child abuse and neglect occurrences and juvenile delinquency in military communities.

2.5 SCOPE

- A. The Awarded Respondent agrees to adhere to the following conditions in the provision of services to Clients under this Contract.
- B. The Respondent should propose programming and collaborative efforts to meet the objectives in 2.4. Respondent should propose resources and activities that incorporate the strengths and needs of the eligible service population as defined below.

2.5.1 Community Strengths and Needs Assessment

- A. Respondent should reference the current CSNA, paying specific attention to this Grant's identified Participant population.
- B. Respondent should take care to identify the available assets, community resources, and services in the proposed SDA. In addition, it should specify

additional supports that the Respondent will make available to the eligible service population.

- C. The results of the CSNA should align with the proposed services and programming in the Response.
- D. The CSNA should focus on the prevention of child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency, including corresponding services for Families with Children ages zero (0) to seventeen (17).
- E. Respondent may incorporate sources into its response including, but not limited to:
 - 1. PEI and UT Population Health Maltreatment Risk Mapping, <https://utsys-pop-health.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=265e988d96464d789c744a56dc79e0d0%20;>
 - 2. Defense Manpower Data Center, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp;
 - 3. National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, [https://www.va.gov/vetdata/;](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/)
 - 4. Census information, [https://census.gov/;](https://census.gov/)
 - 5. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov;>
 - 6. County Health Rankings, <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org;> and
 - 7. Data from Texas State Agency Sources

2.5.2 Eligible Service Population

- A. The eligible Client population consists of Families with an active Service Member or Veteran that is either expecting a Child or has at least one Child age zero (0) to seventeen (17). Additional considerations for service delivery:
 - 1. Programs must recruit and serve Families with one or more of the following Priority Characteristics:
 - a. Behavioral concern
 - b. Current or former military connection
 - c. Current or past alcohol abuse - Caregiver
 - d. Current or past alcohol abuse - Youth
 - e. Current or past child maltreatment or child welfare involvement
 - f. Current or past conflict at school
 - g. Current or past criminal justice involvement - Youth
 - h. Current or past domestic or interpersonal violence
 - i. Current or past use or abuse of other substance - Youth
 - j. Developmental delay or disability - Caregiver

- k. Developmental delay or disability - Index Child/Youth
- l. Family dynamics/structure concern
- m. Family or household conflict
- n. High stress level
- o. Homeless/runaway
- p. Household has a Child with developmental delays or disabilities
- q. Household has a history of alcohol abuse or a need for alcohol abuse treatment
- r. Household has a history of substance abuse or needs substance abuse treatment
- s. Low school attainment - Caregiver
- t. Low-income household
- u. Mental health concern - Caregiver
- v. Mental health concern - Index Child/Youth
- w. Parenting skills concern
- x. School engagement concern
- y. Social support concern
- z. Someone in the household has attained low school achievement or has a Child with low student achievement
- aa. Someone in the household uses tobacco products in the home
- bb. Household contains an enrollee who is pregnant and under twenty-one (21)

Note: Some Priority Characteristics are only applicable to a specific subset of Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed programs. As a result, Priority Characteristics may be negotiated with the Apparent Awardee.

- 2. In some cases, Veterans may have criminal justice system involvement. Therefore, Respondents may include system-involved Veterans as a subset of Clients served through these funds with a focus on partnerships with Veteran treatment courts and re-entry programs.
- B. The SMVF Program's focus is primary and secondary prevention. While Clients with a previous history with Child Protective Services are eligible to be served, outreach efforts should focus on those who have not been involved with CPS within the last six (6) months. DFPS may monitor the number of Clients served under an Awarded Respondent's program that have a history or current involvement with CPS. If it is determined by DFPS that the population served falls excessively outside of the primary and secondary prevention focus, PEI Program Staff will provide technical assistance regarding outreach efforts.

2.5.3 Service Population Requirements

Participants served through this procurement, must meet the following requirements:

1. All Participants must enter into services voluntarily;
2. Awarded Respondent cannot charge Clients fees for participating in a program or for any program participation-related costs; and
3. Awarded Respondent must recruit Families that are not already receiving similar services.

2.5.4 Recruitment and Outreach

- A. Respondents must develop and provide an outreach plan to connect to eligible Service Members, Veterans and their Families to address both recruitment and retention strategies. In addition to standard means such as program staff giving out brochures, utilizing social media, sharing program information at events, outreach to eligible Families within the community should involve innovative and pertinent approaches. Innovative means could include, but are not limited to, use of clients or alumni to distribute program material and hosting community awareness seminars.
- B. Respondents should propose how they will alleviate barriers to engagement and participation. Outreach and retention plans should include consideration of community context, geographic location, and the like. In the Application the Respondent should elaborate on the proposed incentives, how they were chosen, and how they will benefit the Participants and the program. For information on effective incentive types and strategies, please consult the field guide and webinar slides available here: <http://www.buildingbetterprograms.org/2016/12/14/using-incentives-in-human-services-field-guide-literature-review-and-webinar/>.
- C. For Families receiving services funded under this Grant, Awarded Respondent must document the origin of the Referral to the program. If subsequent Referrals are provided to another social service Provider as part of services under this Grant, those Referrals must be documented and tracked in PEIRS.
- D. Efforts must be made by the Awarded Respondent to ensure that Families are not denied or delayed services due to a wait list. The Awarded Respondent must have referral policies and procedures in place that provide alternative service options either through the Awarded Respondent or through other community resources when the Awarded Respondent is at capacity.

2.5.5 Service Authorization and Referral

- A. Enrollment Process: The enrollment must include completion of the PEI enrollment form, which includes a review of eligibility criteria, a pre-service Protective Factors survey, and any additional Client surveys and assessments as required by PEI or the Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Program model (s). Awarded Respondent must have a process for enrolling Participants and

assessing Families' strengths and needs where relevant to services to be provided. Any Intake process undertaken must be documented in each Client's case file. Awarded Respondent's Intake process must ensure the program is suitable to meet Family's needs.

- B. Transition/Case Closure Procedure: Case closure must include collection of a post-service Protective Factors survey and any additional surveys as required by PEI. When services are completed, the Awarded Respondent must document closure of the case on the discharge form and in PEIRS. Any Referrals made for additional services to other local social Service Providers must be tracked by the Awarded Respondent in their referral tracking tool.
- C. Area Information Center 2-1-1: Awarded Respondent must add their services to the 2-1-1 Area Information Center for the Region in which the Contracted program primary service area is located and must update information provided to the 2-1-1 Area Information Center within 30 calendar days of any changes in the scopes of their programs. Awarded Respondent information should also be available on the Texas 2-1-1 website.

2.5.6 Organizational Competence

- A. Respondent must propose and enact improvements to its organization to further the goals of competently supporting SMVF to prevent child neglect and abuse and juvenile delinquency. Some dimensions to address could include:
 - 1. Strategically hire Program Staff. The most effective staffing structure for competently supporting Service Member and Veteran Families incorporates intentional recruitment of:
 - a. Veterans,
 - b. Military connected Family members (such as spouses or Children raised in a military Family); and
 - c. Civilian workers with experience supporting SMVF;
 - 2. Make support available to all Family members through accessible service sites, hours, and delivery schedules;
 - 3. Cultivate Service Members, Veterans and Family members as mentors and leaders;
 - 4. Brand the program and recruitment materials in ways that resonate with Service Member and Veteran Families;
 - 5. Conduct strategic outreach to include engaging program Participants in outreach strategies such as word-of-mouth and culturally relevant promotional campaigns; and
 - 6. Involve program alumni in program activities and across the organization.
- B. Respondents are required to utilize the [National Support Network's Standards of Quality](#), [Youth Program Quality Assessment](#) or propose another quality framework to assess the Respondent's organization and services for

responsiveness to the needs of SMVF and enhance their approach across the lifespan of the Grant. Applications will be scored on the reasonableness of the implementation plan, timeline and likelihood of success.

2.5.7 Family Systems Requirements

- A. Respondents must develop and provide a system of family support consisting of approaches that enhance Child and Family well-being, increase Protective Factors, and leverage the efforts of a local coalition focused on supporting Children, youth and Families. Respondent must incorporate intentional, ongoing efforts to support and make resources available to Service Members, Veterans and their Families.
- B. Respondent must select a minimum of one (1) Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Program model, and submit **Exhibit D, PEI Evidence-Based Program Ranking Tool**. Respondent does not have to use the examples provided when selecting a program. Examples of Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Program clearinghouse models include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Rated promising or higher in the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare, <http://www.cebc4cw.org/>;
 - 2. Rated promising or higher in Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development, <http://www.blueprintsprograms.com>;
 - 3. Rated promising or higher in the Results First Clearinghouse Database, <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/data-visualizations/2015/results-first-clearinghouse-database>;
 - 4. Rated promising or higher in The Title IV- E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, <https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/>;
 - 5. Rated promising or higher in Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE), <https://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/>; or
 - 6. Rated promising or higher in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>.
- C. The Respondent should propose a service array that both takes into account the strengths of and addresses the needs of the community's Service Members, Veterans, and their Families. Based on community need, the Respondent must propose services and resources which have been identified as particularly relevant for the eligible Participant population such as, but not limited to:

1. Parenting education;
 2. Home visiting;
 3. Support groups;
 4. Youth skills;
 5. Mentoring;
 6. Evidence-Based interventions for family and military service-related trauma; and
 7. Service planning and service coordination.
- D. The Awarded Respondent must:
1. Implement the chosen Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Program(s) with fidelity to the program model(s);
 2. Provide Reflective Supervision for family-focused services such as, case management or home visiting, at least two (2) times per month for direct service staff/volunteers and integrate case discussion, ongoing education, and professional development as part of supervision;
 3. Maintain caseloads of no more than twenty-five (25) Families for each full-time direct service staff;
 4. Meet requirements and preferred qualifications of the Evidence-Based Programs proposed even if more stringent than the requirements cited in this request for applications; and
 5. Outline the supervision plan appropriate for the selected program delivery model for Child-focused programming falling under the umbrellas of out-of-school-time or mentoring programs.
- E. Based on the CSNA, which should also cite current related research, the Respondent should propose additional support services for Families, including, but not limited to:
1. Resources and Referrals to connect program Participants to supports and services aside from those available through the Respondent or its Subawardees
Examples: Education job training programs, legal services, substance abuse treatment, family violence services, housing programs, child care
 2. Basic needs support
Examples: Food, housing and bill assistance, clothing, diapers and related baby supplies, hygiene materials, financial support, transportation
 3. Child and respite care
Examples: child care during service times, respite care for 24-72 hours; etc.
- F. Based on the CSNA, which should focus on related research from the last ten (10) years, the Respondent may propose innovative and collaborative efforts to meet the needs of their community.

G. Awarded Respondent will promote healthy parenting and family functioning through Primary Prevention activities throughout the year. Respondent must ensure that activities are available to the community at large, including all Families, regardless of risk. The Purpose is to promote healthy parenting and family functioning. Examples of activities may include media campaigns, educational presentations, and participation in community wide events.

2.5.8 Community and Systems Support Requirements

A. Local Coalitions

1. Each Awarded Respondent must create or be an active member of a local or regional coalition of social service and community agencies, businesses, area residents and service Participants who share a common goal of supporting SMVF, preventing child abuse and neglect, promoting positive youth development or a combination of these.
2. For the purposes of this RFA, an active member is defined as an organization that is recognized by the coalition as a formal member, has a designated person or designated persons responsible for attending meetings, and participates in decision-making and actions taken by the coalition.
3. PEI’s intent is that this coalition work will lead to improved services and resources for Service Members, Veterans and their Families.
4. It is recommended that Respondents join an existing coalition to meet these goals where possible. Coalitions may be population- or issue-focused population or have a subcommittee or task force. Examples of agencies and businesses that may be involved include:

Child care centers	Head Start programs	Local school representatives
Child Protective Services	Housing authorities	Local workforce boards
Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG) member organizations	Job Readiness, Development and Employment Programs	Military and Veteran family-serving organizations, Family Advocacy Programs, Morale Welfare and Recreation
DFPS PEI Grantees	Law enforcement	Offender re-entry programs
Early childhood intervention (ECI) Providers	Legal services	Office of the Attorney General
Faith-based organizations	Licensed Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) and other mental health Providers	Primary care Providers (examples: pediatricians and OB/GYNs)

Family violence prevention and intervention programs	Local municipalities such as cities and counties	Child/Youth serving organizations (schools, afterschool programs and other positive youth development programs)
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5. Active involvement in the coalition for the purposes of this procurement must meet quarterly at a minimum and have official meeting minutes. Respondent will document coalition meetings in the “events” section of the PEIRS database and report on efforts and Outcomes in the quarterly program narrative report.

B. Examples of coalition activities include:

1. Improving coordination of existing resources and advocating for additional ones to incorporate the strengths and address the needs of Service Members, Veterans and their Families;
2. Engaging the Participant population in community-building efforts; and
3. Developing a subcommittee to assess, plan and improve service delivery for Veterans and military Families in the community.

C. A community coalition that is an appropriate fit for a Grantee under this procurement would have the following goals:

1. Integrate proposed Family support systems within the community;
2. Encourage collaboration among area agencies to ensure a range of the needs of Service Members, Veterans and their Families are met;
3. Identify barriers to service delivery and find solutions to those barriers; and
4. Address sustainability of the procurement’s goals beyond the period of the Contract resulting from this RFA.

D. Collaborating with PEI Providers within Service Area

1. Respondent must partner with PEI Providers within the service area in addition to PEI Grantees in the Region to lay out plans for formalized partnerships within 60 calendar days of the Grant’s execution. For an example of a non-binding MOU, see this resource published by the Administration for Children and Families: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/mou_508.pdf.
2. Through partnership and awareness of other Grantees service array, Respondent will avoid duplication of services and create a continuum of services in the community. Awarded Respondent must make an effort to avoid duplication of any existing State or federal programs.

2.5.9 Minimum Staffing Qualifications

- A. The Respondent will develop and provide a staffing plan that includes minimum staffing qualifications for direct service workers, administrative staff, Subaward staff and volunteers.
- B. The staffing plan should include concrete processes to recruit and hire Veterans, military Families and former military-serving civilian workers.
- C. If the Awarded Respondent elects to Subaward any services, the same minimum staffing qualifications would apply to Subaward staff. The Awarded Respondent's employees, Subawardee employees or DFPS pre-approved volunteers who are primarily responsible for delivering the direct service Evidence-Based Program or promising practice components must be adults 18 years or older.
- D. The Respondent must develop, provide, and manage a staffing plan to ensure delivery of competent and robust services and continuity of services in the event of a vacancy. The plan must address:
 - 1. Appropriate labor skill set;
 - 2. Minimum educational requirements;
 - 3. Detailed position descriptions;
 - 4. Comprehensive employee training plan; and
 - 5. Succession plan for key program positions.
- E. Direct Service Staff and/or Volunteers
 - 1. Direct service staff or volunteers who are primarily responsible for delivering the core Evidence-Based Program components must have an associate degree, equivalent experience or higher in a health and human services field. A bachelor's degree and two years of direct service experience in a health and human services field is preferred.
 - 2. If any proposed Evidence-Based, Evidence-Informed or Promising Practice Program has more stringent requirements, the Awarded Respondent must meet those rather than the minimum requirements cited.

2.5.10 Program Director Staffing Requirements

- A. The program director role, or equivalent position, will be the primary program contact and will be responsible for program oversight, services, and supervision;
- B. Any person holding the program director position or performing program director responsibilities should have at least a bachelor's degree in a relevant field, with relevant work experience, and a minimum of five (5) years of relevant program management and supervisory experience or a master's degree

in a relevant field, along with a minimum of three (3) years program management and supervisory experience is preferred;

- C. The program director must have experience with performance evaluation, data analysis, reporting, and social service programming; and
- D. The following responsibilities and activities are required of the program director role and/or must be integrated into other appropriate manager roles where qualifications are met. Clear organizational structure is required, with program director responsibilities clearly accounted for and assigned to the qualified FTE(s). The program director will:
 - 1. Serve as primary program contact and liaison;
 - 2. Provide program oversight, to include managing operations, supporting and monitoring performance related to the project, and planning for improvements where needed;
 - 3. Ensure program operations and activities adhere to all applicable policies, procedures, and guidelines with regard to Contract, organization, and selected program model(s);
 - 4. Ensure program goals are met, especially related to Deliverables, targets, and processes;
 - 5. Assist in budget planning, ensuring budget is aligned with program goals and operations;
 - 6. Hire, train and supervise project employees; and
 - 7. Provide for regular administrative, clinical, and Reflective Supervision of direct service staff, to include twice monthly Reflective Supervision for any clinical staff.

2.5.11 Organizational Qualifications and Training Requirements

- A. Respondent's organization should meet the following qualifications:
 - 1. Respondent agency should have at least five years' experience working with vulnerable families or with families either expecting a Child or with at least one Child zero (0) to 17 years of age, or overseeing services to this population;
 - 2. Respondent should have provided services in the primary service area for a minimum of three (3) years directly preceding the submission of Response;
 - 3. Respondent should demonstrate competency in working with military Families (either through Respondents own expertise and programming or through formal partnerships with local Service Providers) who have experienced the following:
 - a. Mental and emotional distress, including service-connected stress;
 - b. Trauma; or
 - c. Substance Abuse.

4. Respondent should have at least five years' experience in managing budgets, Grants, and contracts for social services;
 5. Respondent that has monitoring reports from any Texas State Agency, or federal funding entity, and/or audits performed on Respondent's organization in the past three years should be able to demonstrate the organization is competent in managing and budgeting its programs and operations;
 6. Respondent must have a Financial Manager responsible for fiscal oversight of the Awarded Respondent's organization; and
 7. The same minimum organizational qualifications must be met by Subawardees performing services under this Award.
- B. Respondent's organization must implement the following training requirements:
1. Respondent must submit a training plan for all SMVF Program workers, including volunteers, Subaward employees, and anyone else working on the Contract that includes both initial and ongoing training. Staff training must include the following competencies:
 - a. New Employee Orientation;
 - b. Cultural Humility;
 - c. Military Cultural Competency;
 - d. Mental Health First Aid Training;
 - e. Suicide Prevention and Postvention;
 - f. Evidence-Based or Promising Practice Program Training (when appropriate);
 - g. Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support (if appropriate); and
 - h. Identified Quality Framework (i.e., Youth Program Quality (YPQ), if appropriate).
 2. Additional training topics may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Breastfeeding;
 - b. Case Documentation;
 - c. Case Management;
 - d. Child Development;
 - e. Co-Parenting;
 - f. Healthy Relationships;
 - g. Effective Collaboration;
 - h. Effective Group or Meeting Facilitation
 - i. Ethics;
 - j. Motivational Interviewing;

- k. Referrals and Service Connections;
 - l. Safe Sleep;
 - m. Substance Use;
 - n. Shaken Baby Syndrome; and
 - o. Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Based Approaches.
3. Awarded Respondent must develop and follow process to track all required training in personnel files. All training must be noted in the regular program quarterly reports.
 4. The same minimum training requirements must be met by any Subawardee performing services under this Award.

2.5.12 PEIRS Database

- A. Respondent must enter all service data for all Participants served through the SMVF Program into the PEIRS database using a secure internet connection. Data entered into the PEIRS database includes the enrollment information, service data, and Outcome data (examples include the pre-and post- service Protective Factors surveys and the program experience survey). Respondent must ensure that computer equipment used for data entry meets minimum requirements established by DFPS for efficient connection to the PEIRS database (currently Internet Explorer 11 or higher and/or Google Chrome 47 or higher).
- B. The Respondent must ensure accurate data entry into the PEIRS database and must enter all data for a specific month into the system no later than thirty (30) calendar days following the close of the month in which an enrollment occurred, services were provided, or a Family was discharged.
- C. In order to be approved for database access, prior DFPS and criminal background check clearance must be obtained and completed every two years. Any person given permission to enter or view SMVF Program data must strictly adhere to DFPS rules, regulations and standards for confidentiality, security and integrity of program data. See **Exhibit C, DFPS Grant Supplemental and Special Conditions.**
- D. The Respondent is responsible for entering all data into the PEIRS database.

2.5.13 Billing Requirements

- A. Payments will be made on a monthly cost-reimbursement basis in response to an Invoice and purchase voucher.
- B. Grantee will submit an Invoice and purchase voucher in the PEIRS database on a monthly basis, no later than the last day of the month following that in which the expenditure occurred. If the last day falls on a weekend or holiday, the documents are due the next Business Day.
- C. Grantee shall submit a final close-out Invoice in the PEIRS database not later than forty-five (45) calendar days following the end of the term of the Contract.

Reimbursement requests received more than forty-five (45) calendar days following the termination of the Contract may not be paid.

- D. PEI will pay Grantee from available funds for services rendered in accordance with the terms of this Contract upon receipt of a proper and verified statement and after deduction of any known previous overpayment made by DFPS.

2.5.14 Required Reports

In addition to data entry requirements related to PEIRS documentation, Awarded Respondent are required to submit PEI quarterly reports in order to provide ongoing information regarding implementation efforts, achievements, and challenges. Quarterly reports will be due each quarter on the 15th day of the month following the reporting period for each year of the Contract:

- Quarter 1 (September, October, November), Due January 15th
- Quarter 2 (December, January, February), Due April 15th
- Quarter 3 (March, April, May), Due July 15th
- Quarter 4 (June, July, August), Due October 15th

2.5.15 Case Records Management

A. Tracking Referrals

1. Awarded Respondent must develop and maintain a tracking system to record Participants referred to the Awarded Respondent for program, to include:
 - a. Date of Referral;
 - b. Origin of the Referral;
 - c. Whether Participant was eligible for services; and
 - d. Date Participant began program.
2. Awarded Respondent must track reasons that services were not provided or that a Participant did not engage in program or was determined to be ineligible.

B. Required Record Keeping

1. Awarded Respondent must maintain the following forms in the Participant record.
 - a. Enrollment form;
 - b. Annual Data Authorization Form;
 - c. Pre-service Protective Factors survey, (Primary Participating Caregivers);
 - d. Post-service Protective Factors survey (Primary Participating Caregivers); and
 - e. Program experience survey (Primary Participating Caregivers and Children/Youth ages 10 years and older).

2. The Respondent must ensure compliance with all record keeping requirements stated in this document. As outlined in Table 1 all records must be housed in a central location and made available and accessible to DFPS without limitations.

Table 1 – Required Records	
Participant Case Record and Service Documentation	
1) Purpose	To support and maintain details of services requested by DFPS and provided by the Respondent.
2) Minimum Requirements	<p>A) Respondent will track all services provided in accordance with the Respondent's approved Project Work Plan and by using the appropriate PEI documentation forms.</p> <p>B) Respondent must ensure that all service documentation is complete, accurate, maintained in an organized fashion, and made available to DFPS staff upon request.</p> <p>C) Respondent must maintain records in a manner which protects the confidentiality of the Families being served.</p> <p>D) The Respondent must maintain individual Participant records.</p> <p>E) Records may be maintained electronically; however, Respondent must be able to promptly produce an easily legible hard copy of any records, if requested by DFPS. Records must be housed or maintained in a central location, although backup copies of records may be maintained in an alternate secure location.</p> <p>F) The Case Record must contain, but is not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valid documentation consenting to SMVF Program participation; 2. Appropriate documentation of all program-funded activities to substantiate service delivery. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For individual and Family services, documentation should include service plans and dated progress notes. ○ For Participants in group services like curriculum-based groups or support groups, documentation should include dated service notes with a general description of topics covered and objective notes such as Participant's appearance, presentation, and involvement in the session, as well as any topics like achievements or issues on which to follow up. ○ For participation in group-based youth programs like out-of-school-time programming and mentoring, documentation should include sign-in sheets and

Table 1 – Required Records	
	<p>descriptions indicating activities and dates in which they took place.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Initial and ongoing assessment tools; 4. Original pre-service Protective Factors survey*; 5. Original post-service Protective Factors survey**; 6. Program experience survey***; 7. Release of information and/or confidentiality agreement; 8. Referral log; 9. Basic needs log; and 10. Incentives log.
<p>*Prior to service delivery, the Awarded Respondent must provide a pre-service Protective Factors survey to Primary Participating Caregivers. The Awarded Respondent may provide this survey to any secondary Caregivers who are participating in program services. The survey must be provided either shortly before or at the beginning of the first service session. Awarded Respondent must enter the survey data into the PEIRS database within the required data entry timeframe.</p> <p>**The Awarded Respondent must complete a post-service Protective Factors survey with the Primary Participating Caregivers when the Family meets the timeframe for completing the program or on an annual basis from the time that services began. It is expected that the Respondent makes a concerted effort to have the Primary Caregiver complete a post-survey if they leave the program prior to completion. Secondary Caregivers participating in the program may also complete the survey. Respondent must enter the survey data into the PEIRS database within the required data entry timeframe.</p> <p>***It is expected that the Awarded Respondent will complete the Program Experience Survey with Primary Participating Caregivers and Index Children/Youths when exiting the program, including both Participants who have completed the program and those who are exiting early.</p>	

Table 1 – Required Records	
Required Personnel Records	
1) Purpose	To support and maintain for monitoring purposes evidence of the Respondent’s minimum requirements for employees, Subawardees, and volunteers with regards to qualifications.
2) Minimum Requirements	Individual files for each employee, Subawardee and volunteer must include at a minimum, but is not limited to the following documentation:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Documentation clearly establishing that the Respondent's Service Providers meet the minimum qualifications as required*; b. Background checks requirements; c. Business files to support compliance with insurance requirements; and d. Completed training.
<p>*An employee, Subawardee or volunteer's qualifications are substantiated through records that include, but are not limited to, the job description, transcripts or degree certifications, and a resume.</p>	
<p>Financial Records</p>	
1) Purpose	To support and maintain for monitoring purposes evidence of payments (Invoices) and adjustments related to services provided by the Respondent and billed to DFPS.
2) Minimum Requirements	<p>Respondent must create and maintain reliable and accurate records to support all actions related to invoicing, payments and adjustments for services provided to DFPS Clients. Records must include at a minimum, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Copy of all Invoices submitted by the Respondent b. Form 4116X, State of Texas Purchase Voucher c. Documentation clearly establishing date signed Invoice was submitted d. Monthly mileage log, basic needs support receipts and log, monthly Client activity log, incentives log e. Any other supporting documentation requested by DFPS

2.5.16 Additional Program Requirements

The Awarded Respondent must adhere to the following:

Awarded Respondent is responsible for staying current with and following all policy updates and clarifications issued by DFPS subsequent to this RFA as provided by DFPS Program Staff via email or as agreed upon by both DFPS and Awarded Respondent for the term of any Contract between DPFS and Respondent.

2.5.17 Use of Subawards

A. Awarded Respondent may provide or Subaward for the provision of direct Client services as described within the RFA. Subawardees providing services under this RFA shall meet the same requirements and level of experience as required of the Respondent.

- B. No Subaward under the RFA shall relieve the Respondent of the responsibility for ensuring the requested services are provided according to required standards.
- C. Awarded Respondent will award Subawards based on own internal policies and processes. Respondent will identify work to be performed by Subawardees and include proposed Subawardee budget or budgets in response. Grantee will notify DFPS in writing if the Subawardee changes.

2.5.18 Performance Measures

Through the negotiation process, Outputs and Outcomes related to service and community change strategies will be identified. Some identified Outcomes and Outputs will be required by every Awarded Respondent. The Awarded Respondent may also be expected to select a limited number of community-specific Outcome and Output measures based on the specific work and service array. The Outputs and Outcomes measures will be tracked through PEIRS and other Data Sources developed and maintained by DFPS. Examples of measures likely to be incorporated into all Contracts include, but are not limited to:

Table 2: GRANTEE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES	
Services	
OUTPUT 1: Expected average number of designated Families served monthly.	Respondent will propose a target*
OUTPUT 2: Expected number of designated Families served annually.	Respondent will propose a target*
OUTPUT 3: Primary Participating Caregivers complete both pre- and post- Protective Factors surveys.	60%
OUTPUT 4: Program Experience Surveys are completed at discharge by Primary Participating Caregivers and Index Children/Youths 10 and older.	50%
OUTCOME 1: Index Children/Youths remain Safe in care during services.	100%
OUTCOME 2: An average increase in the score for at least one subscale is reported by Primary Participating Caregivers completing the pre- and post- Protective Factors surveys.	75%
OUTCOME 3: Primary Participating Caregivers or Index Children/Youth report positive Outcomes in at least one domain of the Program Experience Survey at discharge.	80%

* Proposed target is subject to negotiation based on available funds and DFPS requirements

2.5.19 Performance Reporting for Cross-systems Efforts

The table below outlines the primary methods of tracking and evaluating the Respondent’s SMVF-focused collaboration efforts. Respondents should

demonstrate existing systems in place to conduct such evaluation efforts, and the fruits of such efforts.

Table 3: Cross-systems Activities	
Coalition or Collaboration Meetings, topics, number of attendees.	Reported monthly in PEIRS “Events” tab of primary workflow
Meeting minutes.	Attached to Quarterly Program Report
Documented actions undertaken by coalition and community-level efforts.	Reported Quarterly in Quarterly Program Report
Joint efforts undertaken through new and ongoing relationships, including agreements established to coordinate resources and activities.	Reported Quarterly in Quarterly Program Report
Participation and engagement of Service Members, Veterans and their Families in cross-systems efforts.	Reported Quarterly in Quarterly Program Report

2.5.20 Transition Plan

At the end of the Contract Term, including Contract renewals if any, other Contract termination or cancellation, the Respondent shall in good faith and in reasonable cooperation with PEI, aid in transition to any new arrangement or Provider of services.

2.5.21 Transition/File Closure Procedure

The process for closing Participants' files must include the collection of any required surveys: the post-Protective Factors survey for Primary Participating Caregivers and the program experience survey for Primary Participating Caregivers and Index Children/Youths. When programs are completed, the Respondent must document closure of the case on the Client discharge form and in the PEIRS database or other data reporting tools. Any Referrals made for additional services to other local social Service Providers must be entered into PEIRS within thirty (30) calendar days of discharge.

2.6 PROHIBITIONS

Grant funds must not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

1. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;

2. Lobbying;
3. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
4. Vehicles or equipment for government agencies that are for general agency use and/or do not have a clear nexus to terrorism prevention, interdiction, and disruption (i.e. mobile data terminals, body cameras, in-car video systems, or radar units, etc. for officers assigned to routine patrol);
5. Weapons, ammunition, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized vehicles or explosives (exceptions may be granted when explosives are used for bomb squad training);
6. Admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity or sporting event unless such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
7. Promotional gifts;
8. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with Grant-related travel or where pre-approved for working events;
9. Membership dues for individuals;
10. Any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the Grant project;
11. Any use of Grant funds to replace (supplant) funds that have been budgeted for the same purpose through non-Grant sources;
12. Fundraising;
13. Statewide projects;
14. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, State, or local law; and
15. The acquisition or construction of facilities.

2.7 STANDARDS

Grantees must comply with the requirements applicable to this funding source cited in the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements* for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200); the *Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS)*, and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Grantees are required to conduct Project activities in accordance with federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination. Guidance for adhering to non-discrimination requirements can be found on the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Civil Rights Office website at: <http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/aboutHHS/CivilRights.shtml>.

Upon request, a Grantee must provide the HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all the Grantee's civil rights policies and procedures. Grantees must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to performance under the Contract no more than 10 calendar days after receipt of the complaint. Notice must be directed to:

HHSC Civil Rights Office
701 W. 51st Street, Mail Code W206
Austin, TX 78751
Phone Toll Free (888) 388-6332
Phone: (512) 438-4313
TTY Toll Free (877) 432-7232
Fax: (512) 438-5885

A Grantee must ensure that its policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of persons in the Grantee's programs, benefits or activities on the basis of national origin, and must take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate languages other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.

Grantees must comply with Executive Order 13279, and its implementing regulations at 45 CFR Part 87 or 7 CFR Part 16, which provide that any organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture or U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services must not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.

2.8 NO GUARANTEE OF VOLUME, USAGE OR COMPENSATION

DFPS makes no guarantee of volume, usage, or total compensation to be paid to any Respondent under any Awarded Grant, if any, resulting from this Solicitation. Any Awarded Grant is subject to appropriations and the continuing availability of funds.

DFPS reserves the right to cancel, make partial Award, or decline to Award a Grant under this Solicitation at any time at its sole discretion.

There should be no expectation of additional or continued funding on the part of the Grant Recipient. Any additional funding or future funding may require submission of an Application through a subsequent RFA.

ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

3.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE/TIME
Solicitation Release Date	January 29, 2020
Respondent Webinar	February 6, 2020 at 11:00am CST
Deadline for Submitting Questions	February 12, 2020 at 2:00pm CST
Answers to Questions Posted	February 17, 2020
Deadline for submission of Solicitation Responses [NOTE: Responses must be RECEIVED by HHSC by the deadline.]	March 9, 2020 at 2:00pm CST
Anticipated Notice of Award	June 24, 2020
Anticipated Contract Start Date	September 1, 2020

Note: These dates are a tentative schedule of events. DFPS reserves the right to modify these dates at any time upon notice posted to the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites. Any dates listed after the Solicitation Response deadline will occur at the discretion of the DFPS and may occur earlier or later than scheduled without notification on the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites.

3.2 CHANGES, AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION TO SOLICITATION

DFPS reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this Solicitation, or to withdraw this Solicitation, at any time prior to Award, if it is in the best interest of DFPS and will post such on the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites. It is the responsibility of Respondent to periodically check the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this Solicitation.

3.3 IRREGULARITIES

Any irregularities or lack of clarity in this Solicitation should be brought to the attention of the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** as soon as possible so corrective addenda may be furnished to prospective Respondents.

3.4 INQUIRIES

3.4.1 Point of Contact

All requests, questions or other communication about this Solicitation shall be made in writing to DFPS's Point of Contact addressed to the person listed below. All communications between Respondents and DFPS staff members concerning the Solicitation are strictly prohibited, unless noted elsewhere in this RFA. **Failure to**

comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Respondent's Solicitation Response.

Lauren Contreras, CTCD
Health and Human Services Commission
1100 West 49th Street; Mail Code 2020
Building S
Austin, TX 78756
Lauren.Contreras02@HHSC.state.tx.us

3.4.2 Prohibited Communications

All communications between Respondents and DFPS staff members concerning the Solicitation may not be relied upon and Respondent should send all questions or other communications to the Point-of Contact. This restriction does not preclude discussions between affected parties for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this Solicitation. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Respondent's Solicitation Response.**

3.4.3 Questions

DFPS will allow written questions and requests for clarification of this Solicitation. Questions must be submitted in writing and sent by U.S. First class mail or email to the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** above. Respondents' names will be removed from questions in any responses released. Questions shall be submitted in the following format. Submissions that deviate from this format may not be accepted:

1. Identifying Solicitation number
2. Section Number
3. Paragraph Number
4. Page Number
5. Text of passage being questioned
6. Question

Note: Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 3.1 above. However, DFPS, at its sole discretion, may respond to questions or other written requests received after the deadline. Please provide entity name, address, phone number; fax number, e-mail address, and name of Contact person when submitting questions.

3.4.4 Clarification Request Made by Respondent

Respondents must notify the Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specifications, omission or other error in the Solicitation in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions.

3.4.5 Responses

Responses to questions or other written requests for clarification will be posted on the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites. DFPS reserves the right to amend answers prior to the deadline of Solicitation Responses. Amended answers will be posted on the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites. It is Respondent's responsibility to check the websites or contact the Point of Contact for updated responses. DFPS also reserves the right to provide a single consolidated response of all similar questions in any manner at DFPS' sole discretion.

3.4.6 Respondent Webinar

DFPS will conduct an **optional** pre-submittal Respondent webinar on February 6, 2020 at 11:00am Central Time. Respondents may register for this optional webinar here <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7364933907638856204>.

3.5 SOLICITATION RESPONSE COMPOSITION

3.5.1 Generally

All Applications must be:

1. Clearly legible;
2. Sequentially page-numbered and include the Respondents name at the top of each page;
3. Organized in the sequence outlined in Article IX - Submission Checklist;
4. In Arial or Times New Roman font, size 12 or larger for normal text, no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices;
5. Blank forms provided in the Attachments must be used (electronic reproduction of the forms is acceptable; however, all forms must be identical to the original form(s) provided); do not change the font used on forms provided;
6. Correctly identified with the RFA number and submittal deadline;
7. Responsive to all RFA requirements; and
8. Signed by an authorized official in each place a signature is needed.

3.5.2 Submission in Separate Parts

1. Administrative Information, including all forms;
2. Narrative Proposal, including all forms;
3. Expenditure Proposal; and
4. Applicable Exhibits and Required Forms.

The Solicitation Package must be submitted in **electronic form** (i.e. flash drive, USB) consisting of the four parts listed above, separated by folders.

The entire Solicitation Response – must then be submitted in one package to HHSC at the address listed in **Section 3.6.3**.

3.6 SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

3.6.1 Deadline

Solicitation Responses must be received at the address in **Section 3.6.3** time-stamped by HHSC no later than the date and time specified in **Section 3.1**.

3.6.2 Labeling

Solicitation Responses shall be placed in a sealed box or envelope and clearly labeled as follows:

SOLICITATION NO.: HHS0007115

SOLICITATION NAME: DFPS Texas Service Members, Veterans, and Families Program

SOLICITATION RESPONSE DEADLINE: March 9, 2020 2:00pm CST

ATTN: Lauren Contreras

HHSC will not be held responsible for any Solicitation Response that is mishandled prior to receipt by HHSC. It is Respondent's responsibility to mark appropriately and deliver the Solicitation Response to HHSC by the specified date and time.

3.6.3 Delivery

Respondent must deliver Solicitation Responses by one of the methods below to the address noted. Solicitation Responses submitted by any other method (e.g. facsimile, telephone, email) will NOT be considered.

To be delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or hand delivery to:

HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)

Bid Room

Attn: Lauren Contreras, CTCD

Health and Human Services Commission

1100 West 49th Street; Mail Code 2020

Building S

Austin, TX 78756

Note: All Solicitation Responses become the property of HHSC after submission and will not be returned to Respondent.

3.6.4 Alterations, Modifications, and Withdrawals

Prior to the Solicitation submission deadline, a Respondent may: (1) withdraw its Solicitation Response by submitting a written request to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**; or (2) modify its Solicitation Response by submitting a written Amendment to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**. DFPS may request Solicitation Response Modifications at any time.

ARTICLE IV. SOLICITATION RESPONSE EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

4.1 GENERALLY

Those Respondents selected through the evaluation process will be invited to submit additional information and to participate in a negotiation process which will determine final selection. The specific dollar amount Awarded to each successful Respondent will depend upon the merit and scope of the Response and negotiations and available funds. Funded amounts may differ from those requested. Not all Respondents who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving an Award. SMVF services are funded with general revenue dollars and Awardees will be Recipients. This RFA is valued at up to \$10,000,000.00 for the five-year period and PEI expects to Award multiple Contracts (but only one contract for a service area).

The final funding amount and the provisions of the Contract will be determined at the sole discretion of DFPS.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

Applications will be reviewed for minimum qualifications (see Section 2.3 Eligible Applicants) and completeness. All complete Applications meeting the minimum qualifications will move to the Evaluation stage.

4.3 EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the factors required by the SMVF Grant program and other factors deemed relevant by DFPS.

DFPS will select Respondents to receive Awards based on eligibility criteria, facility type, staffing requirements, service delivery, geographical distribution, scores, Best Value factors, and the best interest of the State.

4.3.1 Specific Selection Criteria

Grant Applications shall be evaluated based upon and using **Exhibit E, Evaluation Score Tool:**

1. Respondent's Background and Experience (20 %)
2. Needs Assessment and Goals (10%)
3. Program Delivery (50 %)
4. Financial Stability (10%)
5. Reasonable Project Cost (10%)

4.4 FINAL SELECTION

After initial screening for eligibility, Response completeness, and scoring of the elements listed above in **Section 4.3.1**, a selection committee will look at all eligible Respondents to determine which Proposals should be Awarded to most effectively accomplish state priorities. The selection committee will recommend Grant Awards to the DFPS Commissioner, who will make the final Award approval.

DFPS will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, geographic distribution across the State, state priorities, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

4.5 NEGOTIATION AND AWARD

4.5.1 Negotiations

The specific dollar amount Awarded to each Awarded Respondent will depend upon the merit and scope of the Response, the recommendation of the selection committee, the number of selected Respondents, and the decision of the DFPS Commissioner. Not all Respondents who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving an Award.

The negotiation phase will involve direct contact between the Awarded Respondent and HHSC PCS and DFPS representatives via phone and/or email. During negotiations, Awarded Respondents may expect:

1. An in-depth discussion of the submitted Proposal and budget; and
2. Requests from DFPS for clarification or additional detail regarding Response.

The final funding amount and the provisions of the Contract will be determined at the sole discretion of DFPS staff.

4.5.2 Exceptions

Any exceptions to the requirements, terms, conditions, or certifications in the RFA or attachments, Addendums, or revisions to the RFA or Uniform Terms and Conditions, sought by the Respondent must be specifically detailed in writing by the Respondent on **Exhibit F, Exceptions and Assumptions Form** in this Proposal and submitted to HHSC for consideration. DFPS will accept or reject each proposed exception. DFPS will not consider exceptions submitted separately from the Respondent's Proposal or at a later date.

4.5.3 Assumptions

Respondent must identify on **Exhibit F, Exceptions and Assumptions Form** any business, economic, legal, programmatic, or practical assumptions that underlie the Respondent's Response to the Solicitation. DFPS reserves the right to accept or reject any assumptions. All assumptions not expressly identified and incorporated into any Contract resulting from this RFA are deemed rejected by DFPS.

4.5.4 Posting Awards

HHSC will post to the [HHSC Grants](#), and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) websites and may publicly announce a list of Applicants whose Applications are selected for final Award. This posting does not constitute DFPS' Agreement with all the terms of any Applicant's Proposal and does not bind DFPS to enter into a Contract with any Applicant whose Award is posted.

4.5 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION BY DFPS

DFPS reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification from any Respondent at any time during the Application process.

ARTICLE V. NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

Utilizing the forms attached to this RFA, Respondents will describe the proposed services, processes, and methodologies for meeting all components described in **Article II**, including the Respondent's approach to meeting service delivery requirements. Respondent should identify all tasks to be performed, including all project activities, to take place during the Grant funding period. Respondent will also include all documents requested as part of completing forms to demonstrate fulfilling **Article II** requirements.

5.1.1 Executive Summary

Respondent will complete **Exhibit G, Executive Summary** attached to this RFA. Respondents will provide a high-level overview with a broad understanding of the Respondent's approach to meeting the RFA's business requirements. The summary must demonstrate an understanding of DFPS's goals and objectives of this solicitation. The Respondent should address program goals and propose at least three objectives for the proposed program. Limit the Executive Summary to one page.

5.1.2 Program Narrative

Respondent will complete **Exhibit H, Program Narrative Response Template** attached to this RFA. Respondent will provide a detailed description of the Respondent's background and experience; needs assessment and goals; and program delivery. Response must support all the business activities and

requirements described in this RFA. The detailed description must reflect a clear understanding of the work undertaken. Respondent will also include all documents requested as part of completing **Exhibit H** to demonstrate fulfilling Article II requirements. The Program Narrative should not exceed thirty (30) pages (excluding Attachments).

1. Respondent's Background and Experience

Respondents must address their qualifications and demonstrate their ability to effectively meet the goals of the procurement by addressing the following areas:

- a. Experience with administering programs of a similar scale and scope;
- b. Experience with managing Subawardees if proposing to use them;
- c. Experience working with Service Members, Veterans and their Families;
- d. Current performance on PEI and DFPS Contracts, including Outputs and Outcomes; program reports and billing; and monitoring findings;
- e. Existing collaborative relationships and any achievements gained with the identified partners;
- f. Current involvement in and contributions to formal collaborations and coalitions and any successes or gains realized; and
- g. Letters of Support

2. Needs Assessment and Goals

The Respondent will address the topics below:

- a. The need in the proposed service area for supporting Service Members, Veterans and their Families;
- b. The ways in which the resources available through the procurement will enable the Respondent to:
 - i. More effectively support the Participant population; and
 - ii. Improve community and systems-level efforts in which the Respondent will engage to leverage existing coordination of resources to build additional support for program Participants.

3. Program Delivery

The Respondent will provide additional background on the proposed activities and the ways in which it is prepared to overcome potential challenges in collaborating, to include:

- a. The ways in which the proposed service array and community and systems-level efforts complement each other;

- b. The anticipated challenges in building relationships with other entities in the community and the methods the Respondent has previously employed to overcome similar barriers; and
- c. The process for selecting Subawards and their contributions toward the program's success, if relevant.

5.1.3 Subawards

Respondent must identify any Subawards whom Respondent intends to award to provide SMVF services.

Provide this information in **Exhibit H, Program Narrative Response Template Section C.3.**

5.1.4 References

Respondent shall provide a minimum of three (3) reference letters regarding similar contracts or projects performed, preferably for State and/or local government, within the last five (5) years. Attach to **Exhibit H, Program Narrative Response Template as Attachment H-1.**

Reference letter shall include:

1. Client name;
2. Contract/Project Description
3. Total Dollar amount of contract/project
4. Key staff assigned to the referenced contract/project that will be designated for work under this Solicitation; and
5. Client contract/project manager name, telephone number, fax number and email address.

5.1.5 Project Work Plan

- A. Respondent will complete **Exhibit I, Project Work Plan** attached to this RFA. Respondent will describe its plan for service delivery to the eligible service population in the proposed SDA in order to meet all the requirements outlined in Article II. Respondent will also include all documents requested as part of completing **Exhibit I** to demonstrate fulfilling Article II requirements.
- B. Provide a timeline of activities for program start up, taking care to include all required program activities.

ARTICLE VI. REQUIRED RESPONDENT INFORMATION

6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY INFORMATION

Respondent must provide satisfactory evidence of its ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified goods or services on time. As a part of the Solicitation Response requested in Article III, Respondent must provide the following information: Respondent must provide satisfactory evidence of

its ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified goods or services on time. As a part of the Solicitation Response requested in Article III, Respondent must provide the following information:

6.1.1 Respondent Information (Face Page)

Use **Exhibit J, Respondent Information (Face Page)** to complete basic information about the Respondent and project, including the signature of the authorized representative. The face page is the cover page of the Proposal and must be completed in its entirety.

6.1.2 Governmental/Non-Profit Information

1. Complete **Exhibit K-1, Governmental Entity Information** if Respondent is governmental entity; or
2. Complete **Exhibit K-2, Non-Profit Entity Information** if Respondent is a non-profit entity.

6.1.3 Background Checks

Use **Exhibit L, Background Check Forms** to provide information required for DFPS to run background checks.

6.1.4 Grantee Payment Set Up and Direct Deposit

Use **Exhibit M, Grantee TIN and Direct Deposit Form** to provide information required for DFPS to establish the Texas Identification Number (TIN) and direct deposit for a Successful Respondent.

6.1.5 Administrative Information

Use **Exhibit N, Administrative Information** to provide information regarding identification and contract history of the Respondent, executive management, project management, governing board members, and/or principal officers. Respond to each request for information or provide the required supplemental document behind this form. If Responses require multiple pages, identify the supporting pages/documentation with the applicable request.

6.2 LITIGATION AND CONTRACT HISTORY

Respondent must include in its Solicitation Response a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual failures, including any that occurred between Respondent and DFPS. In addition, Respondent must disclose any civil or criminal litigation or investigation over the last five (5) years that involves Respondent or in which Respondent has been found guilty or liable including any allegations of such that are currently pending.

Respondent must also disclose any settlement Agreements entered into in the last five (5) years related to alleged contractual failures. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify Respondent. Solicitation Response may be rejected based upon Respondent's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual obligations.

Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify Respondent. Solicitation Response may be rejected based upon Respondent's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual obligations. Provide this information in **Exhibit N, Administrative Information.**

6.3 CONFLICTS

Respondent must certify that it does not have any personal or business interests that present a conflict of interest with respect to the RFA and any resulting Contract. Additionally, if applicable, the Respondent must disclose all potential conflicts of interest. The Respondent must describe the measures it will take to ensure that there will be no actual conflict of interest and that its fairness, independence and objectivity will be maintained. DFPS will determine to what extent, if any, a potential conflict of interest can be mitigated and managed during the term of the Contract. Failure to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest may result in disqualification of a Solicitation Response or termination of a Contract.

Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations and individuals who may be assigned to this Contract, if any. Provide this information in **Exhibit N, Administrative Information.**

Additionally, pursuant to Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code, a Successful Respondent Awarded a Contract greater than \$1 million dollars, or awarded a Contract that would require the Successful Respondent to register as a lobbyist under Texas Government Code Chapter 305, must submit a disclosure of interested parties to DFPS at the time the business entity submits the signed Contract. Rules and filing instructions may be found on the Texas Ethics Commission's public website and additional instructions will be given by HHSC to Successful Respondents.

6.4 INTERNAL CONTROLS STRUCTURE QUESTIONNAIRE. (ICSQ)

Exhibit O, Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire including all required attachments must be included in the Response.

6.5 AFFIRMATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Respondent must complete and return all of the following listed forms and exhibits. Exhibits are listed in **Article X**.

1. **Exhibit A, Respondent Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance;**
2. **Exhibit F, Exceptions and Assumptions Form (if applicable);**
3. **Exhibit O, Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire; and**
4. **Exhibit P, Certification Regarding Lobbying**

6.6 HUB

If a Successful Respondent chooses to contract for goods and services using the funding Awarded in this Grant, DFPS encourages the Respondent to use HUBs to provide those goods and services where possible.

ARTICLE VII. EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

7.1 EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL

- A. Attached **Exhibit Q, Expenditure Proposal** of this RFA includes the template for submitting the Expenditure Proposal. Respondents must complete this form and place it in a separate, sealed package, clearly marked with the Respondent's name, the RFA number, and the RFA submission date.
- B. Expenditure Proposal should include the costs of services listed in **Article II, Scope of Work** and shall include. all labor, materials, tools, supplies, equipment, and personnel, including, but not limited to, travel expenses, associated costs and incidental costs necessary to provide the products and services according to the minimum specifications, requirements, provisions, terms, and conditions set forth in this RFA.
- C. The Expenditure Proposal shall indicate the necessary expenses on the proposed budget tab along with a narrative description of the methodology used to calculate the costs.
- D. Respondents must demonstrate that project costs outlined in the Expenditure Proposal are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable State and federal Grant requirements.
- E. Costs will be reviewed for compliance with UGMS and federal Grant guidance found in 2 CFR Part 200, as modified by UGMS, with effective given to whichever provision imposes the more stringent requirement in the event of a conflict.

ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

8.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

8.1.1. Amendment

HHSC reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this Solicitation, or to withdraw this Solicitation, at any time prior to award, if it is in the best interest of HHSC. Any such revisions will be posted as addenda on the [Texas eGrants](#) and [HHS Grant Website](#) thus becoming part of the original solicitation. Respondents must return each addendum acknowledgment form as instructed, failure to do so may result in disqualification of response. It is the responsibility of Applicant to periodically check the **Texas eGrants** and **HHS**

Grants Website to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this Solicitation.

8.1.2 Costs Incurred

Respondents understand that issuance of this Solicitation in no way constitutes a commitment by any DFPS to Award a Contract or to pay any costs incurred by a Respondent in the preparation of a Response to this Solicitation. DFPS is not liable for any costs incurred by a Respondent prior to issuance of or entering into a formal Agreement, Contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing Solicitation Responses, preparing for or participating in oral presentations and site visits, or any other similar expenses incurred by a Respondent are entirely the responsibility of the Respondent, and will not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Texas.

8.1.3 Contract Responsibility

DFPS will look solely to Respondent for the performance of all contractual obligations that may result from an Award based on this Solicitation. Respondent shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by Subawardees.

8.1.4 Public Information Act

Solicitation Responses are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Subject to the PIA, certain information may be protected from public release. Respondents who wish to protect portions of the Solicitation Response from public disclosure should familiarize themselves with this law. Information pertaining to the Solicitation will be withheld or released only in accordance with the PIA.

Amendments to the PIA passed during the 86th Legislative Session, specifically make “contracting information” public information that must be disclosed in response to a public information request unless otherwise excepted by the Act. Tex. Gov’t Code §§ 552.003(7), 552.0222.

In addition, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 2261.253(a), DFPS is required to post executed contracts and the associated solicitation documents on the agency website. Contract documents posted to the web may include the Solicitation Response of any Respondent receiving a Contract.

DFPS does not have authority to agree that any information submitted will not be subject to disclosure. Disclosure is governed by the PIA. Respondents are advised to consult with their legal counsel concerning disclosure issues resulting from this process and to take precautions to safeguard trade secrets and proprietary or otherwise confidential information. If it is necessary for Respondent to include proprietary or confidential information (which may include, but is not limited to, trade secrets or privileged information), Respondent must clearly mark in bold red letters the term “CONFIDENTIAL” using at least 14 point font, on that specific part or page of the submittal which Respondent believes to be confidential. All submittals and parts of submittals that are not marked confidential will be automatically considered to be public information. Should trade secrets or proprietary or otherwise confidential information be included in the submitted

electronic copy, the content should be marked in the same manner as the original as stated above. In addition, Respondent should mark the medium with the word “CONFIDENTIAL.” If DFPS receives a public information request seeking information marked by Respondent as confidential, Respondent will receive notice of the request as required by the Texas Public Information Act.

If DFPS receives a public information request for submittals and parts of submittals that are not marked confidential, the information will be disclosed to the public as required by the Texas Public Information Act. Note that pricing is not generally considered confidential under the Texas Public Information Act. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire Solicitation Response is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of proprietary or confidential information is not acceptable and may make the entire Solicitation Response subject to release under the PIA.

8.1.5 News Releases

Prior to final Award a Respondent may not issue a press release or provide any information for public consumption regarding its participation in the procurement. Requests should be directed to the HHSC Point of Contact identified in Article III.

8.1.6 Additional Information

By submitting a Proposal, the Respondent Grants HHSC and DFPS the right to obtain information from any lawful source regarding the Respondent’s and its directors’, officers’, and employees’: (1) past business history, practices, and conduct; (2) ability to supply the goods and services; and (3) ability to comply with contract requirements. By submitting a Proposal, a Respondent generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing HHSC or DFPS information about the Respondent. DFPS may take such information into consideration in evaluating Proposals.

8.1.7 DFPS Terms and Conditions

Respondent agrees to comply with **Exhibit B, DFPS Grant Uniform Terms and Conditions** and **Exhibit C, DFPS Grant Supplemental and Special Conditions**. Any terms and conditions attached to a Solicitation Response will not be considered unless specifically referred to in the Solicitation Response.

ARTICLE IX. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for Respondent's convenience only and identifies documents that must be submitted with this Solicitation in order to be considered Responsive. Any Solicitation Response received without these requisite documents may be deemed Non-Responsive and may not be considered for Contract Award.

Original Solicitation Response Package

The Solicitation Package must include the "Original" Solicitation Response in **electronic form** consisting of the four parts, described in detail below, separated by folders. The electronic submission must be on a USB Drive.

- 1. Administrative Information (Exhibit J-O) (Section 6.1-6.4)**
 - a. Exhibit J, Respondent Information (Face Page) (Section 6.1.1) _____
 - b. Exhibit K-1, Governmental Entity Information (Section 6.1.2) _____
 - c. Exhibit K-2, Non-Profit Entity Information (Section 6.1.2) _____
 - d. Exhibit L, Background Check Forms (Section 6.1.3) _____
 - e. Exhibit M, Grantee TIN and Direct Deposit Form (Section 6.1.4) _____
 - f. Exhibit N, Administrative Information (Sections 6.1.5, 6.2 and 6.3) _____
 - g. Exhibit O, Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire (Section 6.4) _____

- 2. Narrative Proposal Forms (Forms G through I) (Section 5.1)**
 - a. Exhibit G, Executive Summary _____
 - b. Exhibit H, Program Narrative Response Template _____
 - c. Exhibit I, Project Work Plan _____

- 3. Expenditure Proposal (template included) (Article VII)**
 - a. Exhibit Q: Expenditure Proposal Template _____

- 4. Applicable Exhibits (to be included in Solicitation Package) (Section 6.5)**
 - a. Exhibit A - Respondent Affirmations and Acceptance _____
 - b. Exhibit F – Exceptions and Assumptions Form _____
 - c. Exhibit P, Certification Concerning Lobbying _____

Copies of Solicitation Response Package

Respondent will provide two (2) **electronic** copies (all clearly labeled as "copy") in addition to the "Original" Solicitation Response. Electronic copies must consist of the four parts described above, separated by folders. The electronic submission must be on a USB Drive.

ARTICLE X. EXHIBITS

Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance
Exhibit B, DFPS Grant Uniform Terms and Conditions
Exhibit C, DFPS Grant Supplemental and Special Conditions
Exhibit D, PEI Evidence-Based Program Ranking Tool
Exhibit E, Evaluation Score Tool:
Exhibit F, Exceptions and Assumptions Form
Exhibit G, Executive Summary
Exhibit H, Program Narrative Response Template
Exhibit I, Project Work Plan
Exhibit J, Respondent Information (Face Page)
Exhibit K-1, Governmental Entity Information
Exhibit K-2, Non-Profit Entity Information
Exhibit L, Background Check Forms
Exhibit M, Grantee TIN and Direct Deposit Forms
Exhibit N, Administrative Information
Exhibit O, Internal Controls Structure Questionnaire (ICSQ) for Cost-Reimbursement Contracts
Exhibit P, Certification Regarding Lobbying
Exhibit Q, Expenditure Proposal