Request for Qualifications (RFQ)  
For Employment and Day Program Services

RFQ Information
RFQ No. 21-001-DD-EDPS
Employment and Day Program Services
Issue Date: July 15, 2021
Closing Date: Open and Continuous

Contact
Daeveene May, Social Service Program Specialist
Pierce County Human Services
3602 Pacific Ave, Suite 200
Tacoma, Washington 98418-6813
Phone: (253) 798-4381 ● Fax: (253) 798-2818
E-mail: daeveene.may@piercecountywa.gov
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INTRODUCTION

**Purpose:** Pierce County Human Services, Developmental Disabilities Program, invites qualified providers to submit applications to deliver Supported Employment and Community Inclusion services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Funding Available:** Please refer to “Appendix B: Rate Structure” for rate reimbursement information. Please refer to the Individual Employment Billable Activities document and Community Inclusion Billable Activities document on the County Best Practice website for information about services which may be billed.

**Application Due Date:** This RFQ is open and continuous. Qualified applicants may submit an application for services at any time. Please refer to “Appendix E: RFQ Timeline” or contact Daeveene May for more information about the next application review period (contact information below).

**Reasonable Accommodations:** The County will provide reasonable accommodations to allow for equal participation in the provider qualification process. To request reasonable accommodations, please contact Daeveene May at (253) 798-4381 (Voice) or 711 (Telecommunications Relay Service), or via e-mail at daeveene.may@piercecountywa.gov. This document will be provided in alternate formats, upon request.

Pierce County Human Services (hereafter referred to as the “County”) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit qualified providers to deliver Employment and Day Services. Specifically, applicants may apply to deliver Individual Employment, Group Supported Employment, and/or Community Inclusion services.

The County is intending to identify providers who are qualified to provide the Employment and Day services described herein. The result of this RFQ is intended to be the award and negotiation of a contract. One or more qualified providers may be selected for award and negotiation of a contract. A provider will not be awarded a contract for any area of service for which they were not determined to be qualified.

Current contractors who were qualified from a previous RFQ and are currently providing Employment and/or Day Services for Pierce County may respond to this RFQ if they wish to qualify for the provision of services they are not currently providing.

This RFQ is a solicitation for qualifications only. It shall not be construed as an offer, a guarantee, or a promise that the solicited qualifications will result in a contract for services with the County.

DESCRIPTION OF SOLICITED SERVICES

**SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

- **Individual Employment (IE)** services are part of an individual’s pathway to employment and are tailored to individual needs, interests, and abilities, and promote career development. These are individualized services necessary to help persons with developmental disabilities obtain and continue integrated employment at or above the state’s minimum wage in the general workforce. These services may include intake, discovery, assessment, job preparation, job marketing, job supports, record keeping and support to maintain a job.

- **Group Supported Employment (GSE)** services are part of an individual’s pathway to integrated jobs in typical community employment. These services are intended to be short term and offer
ongoing supervised employment for groups of no more than eight (8) workers with disabilities in the same setting. The service outcome is sustained paid employment leading to further career development in integrated employment at or above minimum wage. Examples include enclaves, mobile crews, and other business models employing small groups of workers with disabilities in integrated employment in community settings.

- **Community Protection Program (CPP)** provides employment support to clients on the Community Protection waiver. Community Protection clients have been identified to be a risk to themselves or others, need additional support and supervision in the community, and may have specific workplace requirements. Employment providers who offer CP services are responsible for working collaboratively with a client’s residential staff and treatment team to coordinate needed support, workplace requirements, and line-of-sight supervision in accordance with the client’s treatment plan. Please refer to Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) policy 15.03 (Community Protection Standards for Employment and Day Program Services) for specific program information.

Applicants providing a response to this RFQ may apply to provide employment services to CP clients; providing services to individuals in CP is not required. Organizations applying to provide services to CP clients must comply with additional service conditions, as outlined in Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) policy 15.03 (Community Protection Standards for Employment and Day Program Services).

- The goal of supported employment services is the attainment and maintenance of community-based employment earning competitive wages. All services offered should be individualized, responsive to client goals, and focused on building skills to promote the highest level of independence possible.

- In 2006, Department of Social and Health Services/Division of Developmental Disabilities fully enacted DDA policy 4.11, County Services for Working Age Adults, which states that, “all individuals, regardless of the challenge of their disability, will be afforded an opportunity to pursue competitive employment.” This “Working Age Adult Policy” identifies employment as a first choice for adults of working age and establishes employment supports in Washington State as the primary use of day service funds.

- Supported Employment services may be provided to individuals who meet Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) eligibility requirements and who reside in Pierce County, age 21 and older. Eligible participants are referred to qualified service provider agencies by their assigned Case Resource Manager at the DDA.

**COMMUNITY INCLUSION**

- **Community Inclusion (CI)** services are individualized services provided in typical integrated community settings. Services will promote individualized skill development, independent living and community integration for persons to learn how to actively and independently engage in their local community. Activities will provide opportunities to develop relationships and to learn, practice and apply skills that result in greater independence and community inclusion. These services may be authorized for individuals age 62 and older. These services may be authorized instead of employment support (Individual Employment or Group Supported Employment) for working age individuals who have received nine months of employment support.

- The goal of Community Inclusion is the development of meaningful relationships with community members with shared interests and typical of other community members of the same age, and intentional engagement in a client’s community in a way that increases active involvement and integration.
Community Inclusion services may be provided to individuals who meet DDA eligibility requirements, reside in Pierce County, and are aged 62 and older OR have accessed Supported Employment services for at least nine (9) months. Eligible participants are referred to qualified service provider agencies by their assigned Case Resource Manager at the DDA.

Clients may not access Supported Employment and Community Inclusion services simultaneously. For more information about Supported Employment and Community Inclusion services, please visit the County Best Practice website.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
The County values and prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion; contracted providers are expected to engage in these priorities and are encouraged to embrace their role in elevating and engaging underrepresented voices, especially those of black, indigenous, and people of color. Services should be provided in a way that ensures equitable access for all clients and considers the unique needs and lived experiences which may impact the clients and families we support. We believe that our community is stronger and more resilient when all members of the community are heard and represented.

GENERAL INFORMATION
The work of the County is supported by the Pierce County Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board, whose mission is to influence the quality of supports to individuals with developmental disabilities; to respect personal choice and diversity; ensure fundamental human rights; and optimize individual strengths across all communities. Additionally, services are guided by the County Guide to Achieve DDA’s Guiding Values.

APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA
Applicants must meet all requirements outlined in DDA policy 6.13, including a minimum of two (2) years’ experience delivering relevant services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Applicants must be found to be qualified to deliver services by the Evaluation Committee.

An Evaluation Committee (EC) appointed by the Director of Pierce County Human Services, or designee, will evaluate eligible applications and make recommendations to the Department. The EC is comprised of persons who are knowledgeable of the specific professional service requirements.

Based upon the content of the application(s), the applicant interview(s), and the evaluation of other available information, the EC will collectively score the application response(s). The EC will present its recommendations to the Pierce County Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board and to the Director of Pierce County Human Services or designee.

The EC also reserves the right to consider the applicant’s performance related to any previous contracts that the applicant may have held with Pierce County.

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS – PIERCE COUNTY BASIC AGREEMENT (APPENDIX D)
By submitting a response to this solicitation, the applicant acknowledges and accepts all terms and conditions of this solicitation and all County, State, and Federal regulations and requirements related to the delivery of the solicited services. If the applicant is awarded a contract, the applicant's response will become part of the contract agreement. The applicant is bound by the terms of this solicitation, unless the County agrees that specific parts of the proposal are not part of the agreement. The County reserves
the right to introduce different or additional terms and/or conditions during final contract negotiations. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the County’s current Basic Agreement prior to submitting a proposal.

NOTIFICATION OF REQUIRED ASSURANCES

By submitting a response to this solicitation, the applicant acknowledges and agrees to provide services in accordance with the requirements of the contract, and with the statutes, regulations, requirements, and policies identified in “Attachment C: Acknowledgement of Required Assurances.”

CONTRACT AWARD AND PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

The authority to enter into a contract rests with the Pierce County Executive, except as designated. Decisions regarding contract awards for services solicited by this RFQ will be made as outlined by the requirements of this RFQ. Contracts become effective on the date signed by the County Executive, or designee.

In accordance with the requirements of DDA policy 6.13, newly qualified applicants will receive a twelve (12) month provisional contract. Newly qualified applicants are defined as organizations who are deemed qualified as a result of this qualification process, and who are not currently providing supported Employment or Day services to DDA eligible individuals residing in Pierce County. To remain a qualified provider the agency must fully comply with their county subcontract.

In the event that a newly qualified applicant does not receive at least one (1) referral from the DDA or does not notify the County that it has received a referral from the DDA within twelve (12) months of the date that the applicant’s provisional contract is issued, the applicant’s status as a qualified provider will terminate.

EXPECTED TERM OF RESULTING CONTRACT

Contracts may be renewed, without advertisement or solicitation; renewal is subject to the availability of funding, the continued need for the service, and/or satisfactory performance by the Contractor.

ACCESS TO REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

This document contains active hyperlinks. Prospective applicants who are unable to access the Internet may request copies of the documents referenced in this RFQ by contacting Daeveene May at (253) 798-4381 (Voice) or 711 (Telecommunications Relay Service), or via e-mail at daeveene.may@piercecountywa.gov.

NOTICE OF SOLICITATION

Failure of the County to notify any interested party or parties directly regarding the availability of this solicitation shall not void or otherwise invalidate the proposal and/or evaluation processes.

In addition to providing required notification via the County’s publication of record, The News Tribune, the County will provide notification to all known interested parties, and to other organizations and individuals currently on the Department’s e-mail distribution list. Any individual or organization wishing to be added to the Department’s e-mail distribution list in order to receive future notices of funding opportunities can make such a request by contacting Daeveene May at daeveene.may@piercecountywa.gov. A copy of this RFQ will be posted to the Pierce County Human Services website at http://www.piercecountywa.gov.
CANCELLATION OF RFQ
Pierce County reserves the right to cancel the RFQ at any time if doing so would be in the public interest as determined by the County. In no event shall the County have any liability for the cancellation of the solicitation.

CONTACT
Interested applicants may submit requests for further information, timeline clarification, and application questions in writing to:

Daeveene May, Social Service Program Specialist
Pierce County Human Services
3602 Pacific Ave, Suite 200
Tacoma, Washington 98418-6813
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