

Title: **Solicitation of Interest (SOI) # 1125
Comprehensive Services for the Legally Blind**

Agency: Children & Family Services, NYS Office of
Bureau of Contract Management

Contract Number: TBD

Contract term: 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2028

Date of issue: 6/7/2023

Due date/time: **7/7/2023 by 4:00 PM Eastern Time**

Location: Statewide

Counties: Statewide

Background

The New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) announces a Solicitation of Interest (SOI) for qualified entities that provide a variety of rehabilitation services specifically tailored to the needs of individuals who are legally blind. Please see the **Eligibility Criteria** section for additional information. This advertisement is public notice that OCFS is seeking to contract with organizations to provide these services to clients of NYS Commission for the Blind.

The State of New York participates in the provision of services pursuant to the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and has through its designated State agency, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Commission for the Blind (NYSCB), received approval from the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration for a comprehensive State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services as set forth in 34 CFR Part 361, Subpart B, [Section 361.10](#), of the Act.

NYSCB is the State entity designated to provide vocational rehabilitation services to New Yorkers who are legally blind. NYSCB currently contracts with 16 not-for-profit providers for a variety of rehabilitation services specifically tailored to the needs of individuals who are legally blind. The rehabilitation services provided under the contracts are fully described in the [NYSCB Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines](#).

Please see the **Scope of Work** section for additional information regarding the services to be provided.

The purpose of this SOI is to invite any eligible and interested entities that believe they can satisfy this program's needs to inform OCFS by a Letter of Interest (LOI). To be considered responsive, your organization's LOI should be received no later than the deadline specified on the first page of this announcement. Please see the **How to Respond** section for additional information and submission requirements.

Through this announcement, OCFS is exploring the availability of vendors who have the expertise to provide the services required by OCFS. NYSCB seeks to contract with all organizations eligible to provide these services based on the criteria outlined in this announcement.

Scope of Work

Funded organizations will provide services as outlined in the [NYSCB Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines](#). You are not required to provide all services listed. If your organization is unable to provide any of the services, please list them in the corresponding section of your LOI. Please note that NYSCB Comprehensive Service Contract Guidelines may potentially be revised during the project term on an as-needed basis at the discretion of OCFS. Organizations providing these services must comply with the most recent version of the contract guidelines as published to the OCFS website.

Referrals of NYSCB participants to funded organizations will be made in accordance with federal regulation “Title 34 → Subtitle B → Chapter III → [Part 361.52 Informed Choice](#)” that requires the participant to select the vendors based upon information/options provided by NYSCB. There is no guarantee of the number of referrals and/or revenue from any award pursuant to this SOI. The amount of service utilization is contingent upon public need and consumer choice, which may vary.

Eligibility Criteria

Interested parties who meet the following criteria are eligible to respond:

- Must be willing to provide services to all referred individuals
- Must be registered in New York State as a Not-For-Profit organization
- Must be willing to perform the tasks outlined in the [NYSCB Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines](#) as specified in the **Scope of Work** section of this announcement
- Must have either 5 years’ experience, providing directly or through subcontracts, the following services to legally blind individuals:
 - Low Vision Services
 - Travel/O&M Training
 - Assessment/Evaluation
 - Daily Living Skills/Independent Living Skills Training
- **OR** must be affiliated with The New York State Preferred Source Program (NYSPSP) for People Who Are Blind
- Must have a facility physically located in NYS capable of providing blindness services and provide a brief description of the facility (size, capacity, equipment, etc.)
- Must not hold a Section 14(c) Subminimum Wage Certificate Program
- Be eligible to do business with New York State

Funding Details

This SOI is being released to gauge interest from not-for-profit organizations, doing business in NYS, that are willing and able to provide comprehensive services to legally blind NY residents. A response to this SOI may result in a contract or agreement with NYSCB in the future. OCFS/NYSCB does not guarantee any specific level of income or any specific level of referrals as a result of responding to this SOI.

The number of awards for this project is contingent upon the availability of funds in the state and/or federal budgets, the number of eligible applicants that respond to this SOI, and the number of program participants in need of comprehensive services for the blind.

The aggregate value of all contracts for this project is anticipated to be \$16,000,000 annually, with a total five-year budget of \$80,000,000 (plus CPI adjustments based upon the Michigan Consumer Price Index).

Individual contract values will be determined based upon the following factors including, but not limited to:

- Geographic region
- Population of anticipated region
- Historical numbers or consumers per region

Contracts resulting from this SOI are paid based upon fixed rates for the services provided. There are two types of payment under the contracts, outcome services and fee for service for ancillary services.

Outcome Services

Payment for outcome services are based upon the following current payment schedule which may be adjusted based on CPI:

Payment Amount	
CSC - Vision Rehab Baseline -SV	\$408
CSC - Vision Rehab Lvl 1 (Basic) -SV	\$883
CSC - Vision Rehab Lvl 2 (Intermediate) -SV	\$1087
CSC - Vision Rehab Lvl 3 (Independent) -SV	\$1087
CSC - O & M Baseline -SV	\$408
CSC - O & M Lvl 1 (Basic) -SV	\$883
CSC - O & M Lvl 2 (Route) -SV	\$1087
CSC - O & M Lvl 3 (Independent) -SV	\$1087
CSC - Social Casework Baseline -SV	\$340
CSC - Social Casework Lvl 1 -SV	\$2445
CSC - Social Casework Lvl 2 Therapeutic -SV	\$2445
CSC – Braille Instruction Baseline - SV	\$750
CSC – Braille Instruction Lvl 1 -SV	\$1500
CSC – Braille Instruction Lvl 2 - SV	\$2500
CSC – Braille Instruction Lvl 3 -SV	\$1250

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CSC - Pre-Voc Young Adults Baseline -SV	\$408
CSC - Pre-Voc Young Adults Outcome -SV	\$2037
CSC - Academic Baseline - SV	\$678
CSC - Academic Instruction -SV	\$5436
CSC - Vocational Skills Baseline -SV	\$544
CSC - Vocational Skills Training -SV	\$5707
CSC - Work Readiness Baseline -SV	\$476
CSC - Work Readiness Training -SV	\$5436
CSC - Work Experience Training -SV	\$1630
CSC – Enhanced Pre-Vocational Skills – SV (Cost Per Outcome - See Section 9.04 Payment Structure for more information)	\$1922
CSC – Enhanced Work Readiness – SV (Cost Per Outcome - See Section 9.04 Payment Structure for more information)	\$1922

Payments for outcome services occur quarterly upon submission of a Claim For Payment and are based on the following schedule:

Progress Report	Period Covered	Due Date
Claim for Payment	Quarterly Payment #1: For the Period of January 1st to March 31st the sum of this payment will be for all successful outcomes during the period	April 30th
Claim for Payment	Quarterly Payment #2: For the Period of April 1st to June 30th the sum of this payment will be for all successful outcomes during the period	July 31st
Claim for Payment	Quarterly Payment #3: For the Period of July 1st to September 30th the sum of this payment will be for all successful outcomes during the period	October 31st
Claim for Payment	Quarterly Payment #4: For the Period of October 1st to December 31st the sum of this payment will be for all successful outcomes during the period	January 31st
Claim for Payment	Final Reconciliation Payment: NYSCB will reconcile the contractor's final annual outcomes against the four quarterly reports and will pay for missing outcomes, if any.	March 31st

Ancillary Services (Fee for Service)

Ancillary services (fee for service) under the contracts resulting from this SOI will be paid based upon the current fees shown in the [NYSCB Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines](#) (may be adjusted based on CPI).

Payments for ancillary services occur upon submission of a completed authorization through NYSCB Case Management System and are based on the following schedule:

Progress Report	Period Covered	Due Date
Fee for Service Authorizations	Fee for Service Authorizations are due 30 days after the provision of service for the term of the contract	30 days after completion of service

Note: OCFS/NYSCB does not guarantee any specific level of income or any specific level of referrals in any of the contracts resulting from this SOI.

The various reports required under the contracts resulting from this solicitation can be found in the [NYSCB Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines](#).

Term of Contract

Contract(s) awarded in response to this solicitation will be for **five (5) years**. The anticipated start date is **1/1/2024**, and the anticipated end date is **12/31/2028**. Funding is anticipated to be available for the first year of the contract. The award of a contract does not guarantee that funding will be available for subsequent years. Contractors may not begin providing services before the contract start date; OCFS has no obligation to pay for services rendered before the New York State Office of the State Comptroller and the Office of the Attorney General approve the contract.

How to Respond

To be considered responsive, interested parties should complete and submit all required documents in conformance with the format and content requirements as explained. A response that does not provide all the information requested may be subject to rejection. The response should contain sufficient information to assure OCFS of its accuracy. The information provided should, wherever possible, verify that your organization meets the requirements in the **Eligibility Criteria** section of this solicitation.

Responses must be emailed to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov and should be received by the due date and time specified on the first page of this announcement.

Interested parties should complete and provide the following documents:

- **Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest**
- **Attachment 2 – Submission Checklist**

Additionally, each interested party may provide the following optional documents:

- [OCFS-2647, EO 177 Certification](#)
- [OCFS-4821, CMS User Authorization](#)

The subject line of the email submission of your response should include the following information: **SOI # 1125 NYSCB Comprehensive Services for the Legally Blind**. Additionally, please clearly identify the vendor's name in the body of the email and in the filenames of attached documents to ensure your submission is processed efficiently. **Early submissions are encouraged as late responses may be subject to rejection.**

Please limit your Letter of Interest to a maximum of ten (10) page(s), Arial 12-point font, single line spacing and one-inch margins. Please see the **Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest** provided for your reference.

OCFS will provide a confirmation email that the submission has been received. OCFS will not be liable for any costs incurred by interested parties in the preparation of documents submitted in response to this solicitation. Vendors may modify, in writing, or withdraw the content of any submission at any time prior to the due date and time.

Questions

Questions should be submitted via e-mail to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov prior to the due date and time specified on the first page of this announcement. The subject line should include the following information: **SOI # 1125 NYSCB Comprehensive Services for the Legally Blind**. Please submit your question(s) with adequate time for response. OCFS recommends allowing at least five (5) business days. **Late questions may not be addressed.**

Evaluation Process

An internal review by OCFS will confirm eligibility. This solicitation is not a guarantee or promise of funding. Available funding to support this initiative will be limited to the amount(s) appropriated in the enacted budget for this purpose and will be awarded among those interested organizations who are deemed to meet the eligibility requirements and are determined to be suited for the program/initiative by OCFS.

OCFS may require additional information from an organization before deciding whether the interested organization is eligible and can supply the requested services. If OCFS requests additional information, it must be provided within five (5) business days from request or as otherwise directed in the request.

Upon determination of eligibility, OCFS will notify eligible organizations of their status and the proposed award amount (if any). OCFS may also request a work plan and budget with justifications in addition to other completed documents necessary to develop contracts.

Awards are contingent upon vendors maintaining and certifying a [Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire](#). Vendors must be found responsible and cannot be listed on the OGS prohibited vendors list.

OCFS Reserved Rights

OCFS reserves the right to withdraw, amend or postpone this solicitation, without notice, and without liability, to any applicant, or other party, and may exercise these rights at any time. In addition, OCFS reserves the right to:

- place a monetary cap on the funding amount made in each contract award;
- change any of the schedule dates stated in the solicitation;
- make an award under this solicitation in whole or in part;
- disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or LOI fails to conform to the requirements of this solicitation;
- reject any LOI if, in the sole discretion of OCFS, it determines the applicant is not a responsible vendor;
- request all applicants who submitted LOIs to present supplemental information clarifying their proposals either in writing or by formal presentation;
- direct all organizations who submitted LOIs to prepare modifications addressing solicitation amendments;
- make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the outcomes identified in this solicitation;
- fund only one portion, or selected activities, of the selected applicant's LOI and/or adopt all or part of the selected applicant's LOI based on federal and state requirements;
- eliminate any solicitation requirements unmet by all applicants, upon notice to all parties that submitted LOIs;
- waive procedural technicalities, or modify minor irregularities, in LOI received, after notification to the applicant involved;
- correct any arithmetic errors in any proposal, or make typographical corrections to LOIs, with the concurrence of the applicant;
- negotiate with the eligible applicant(s) prior to contract award;
- require that all LOIs be held valid for a minimum of 180 days from the closing date for receipt of applications, unless otherwise expressly provided for in writing;
- fund any or all of the LOIs received in response to this solicitation. However, issuance of this solicitation does not commit OCFS to fund any proposals. OCFS can reject any proposals submitted;
- use the LOI submitted in response to this solicitation as part of an approved contract. At the time of contract development, awardees may be asked to provide additional budget and program information for the final contract;
- utilize any and all ideas submitted in the LOI received where an award is ultimately made;
- make inquiries of third parties, including but not limited to applicant's references, regarding the applicant's experience or other matters deemed relevant by OCFS. By submitting an LOI in response to this solicitation, the applicant gives its consent to any inquiry made by OCFS;
- where applicable, require contractors to participate in a formal evaluation of the program to be developed by OCFS. Contractors may be required to collect data for these purposes. The evaluation design will maintain participants' confidentiality and recognize practical constraints of collecting this kind of information;

- when applicable, consider statewide distribution and regional distribution within New York City, including borough distribution methodology, in evaluating proposals; and
- reject any extraneous terms, alternate activities/work to be performed, added conditions, or exceptions stated by applicants within their LOI. This includes, but is not limited to, proposed changes to the standard terms and conditions of the resulting contract(s).

Contract Documents

Interested parties must review the contract terms and conditions of the contract template provided below.

The contract documents consist of the following:

1. Face Page
2. Signatory Page
3. NYS Standard Terms and Conditions (State of New York Master Contract for Grants)
4. Master Contract Attachment A-1 (Agency-Specific Terms and Conditions)
5. Master Contract Attachment A-2 (Federally Funded Grants)
6. Master Contract Attachment B: Budget and Instructions
7. Master Contract Attachment C: Work Plan
8. Master Contract Attachment D: Payment and Reporting Schedule
9. Master Contract Attachment E: Federal Fund Vendor Determination
10. Attachment MWBE: Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises

A copy of the NYS Standard Terms and Conditions (State of New York Master Contract for Grants) with attachments can be found on the OCFS website at:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/docs/Grant-Contract-Template-Federal.pdf>

In addition, the following documents may be required prior to contracting:

- [Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire](#) (if applicable)
- [Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance](#) (if applicable)
- [Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage](#) (if applicable)
- [Attachment A-2, Federal Assurance and Certifications](#) (if applicable)
- [OCFS-4631, MWBE Utilization Plan Form](#) (if applicable)
- [OCFS-4629, Project Staffing Plan Form](#)
- [OCFS-3460, Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy Statement](#)

Diversity

OCFS is committed to identifying, addressing, and reducing disproportionality and to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in our systems of care and custody. Authentic partnerships and joint decision-making with families and communities promote social justice and race equity to address disproportionality and disparities in the provision of services to children and families. OCFS strongly encourages qualified minority-owned,

women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses to submit a letter of interest in response to this announcement.

Contact Information

Primary contact:

Director of Contracts
NYS Office of Children & Family Services
52 Washington Street
Room 202S – Procurement Unit
Rensselaer, NY 12144
RFP@ocfs.ny.gov

Submit to contact:

Director of Contracts
Office of Children & Family Services
52 Washington Street
Room 202S – Procurement Unit
Rensselaer, NY 12144
RFP@ocfs.ny.gov

Attachments

Please see the following attachments to this announcement, which are available on the New York State Contract Reporter website at <https://www.nyscr.ny.gov> or the OCFS website at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/funding/>.

Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest*

Attachment 2 – Submission Checklist*

Attachment 3 – 2024-2028 Comprehensive Services Contract Guidelines

* Attachments marked with an asterisk **must** be completed and included with your response submission.