

## SOI 1158 Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services

**Title:** **Solicitation of Interest (SOI) # 1158**  
**Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services**

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

**Contract Number:** TBD

**Contract term:** Five Years: 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2029

**Date of issue:** 8/16/2024

**Due date/time:** **9/20/2024 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 Job Placement Services and/or Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation services to individuals who are legally blind. Please see the **Eligibility Criteria** section for additional information.

The New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) is the state entity designated to provide services to New Yorkers who are legally blind. NYSCB is looking to broaden the availability of Job Placement Services and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation services to individuals who are legally blind in New York State. The expectation is that having a more diverse provider network for these services will result in greater options for NYSCB's participants, particularly in the more isolated regions of the state.

NYSCB estimates that statewide, 200 NYSCB participants will require Job Placement Services and 100 NYSCB participants will require Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation services annually.

The Placement Services Guidelines and the Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Guidelines are both available online at: [http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider\\_info.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp).

This advertisement is public notice that OCFS is seeking to contract with organizations to provide Job Placement Services and/or Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services. Please see the **Scope of Work** section for additional information.

The purpose of this solicitation 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.

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OCFS intends to contract with all qualified bidders based on the criteria outlined in this announcement.

### **Scope of Work**

Funded applicants will provide Job Placement Services and/or Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services to New Yorkers who are legally blind.

### **Job Placement Services**

Job Placement Services (JPS) are the services directly related to assisting a participant to prepare for and achieve or maintain non-subsidized, integrated employment. JPS are defined within the [Placement Services Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp) <[http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider\\_info.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp)>.

JPS Staff Qualifications - JPS must be provided to NYSCB referred participants only by NYSCB approved, funded organization staff members who possess the qualifications as defined within the [Placement Services Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp).

### **Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services**

Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation (DVE) services enable the NYSCB counselor and participant to obtain information, through comprehensive testing and/or community-based situational assessment, to assist in the determination of eligibility or development of a vocational goal. This will enable the participant to make informed choices in selecting a vocational goal and in identifying the means to achieve that goal. DVE services also clarify issues which may be impeding vocational rehabilitation services. DVEs are defined within the [Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp) <[http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider\\_info.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp)>.

DVE Staff Qualifications - DVE services must be provided to referred NYSCB participants only by funded organization staff members who possess the qualifications as defined within the [Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp). Situational Assessments may be conducted by anyone qualified to provide diagnostic vocational evaluations, or by a job coach, under the supervision of an evaluator or placement specialist, who possess the qualifications as defined within the [Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp).

### **Eligibility Criteria**

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

- Are eligible to do business with New York State.
- Agree to provide the services outlined in the **Scope of Work** section and certify they have reviewed the NYSCB [Job Placement Services Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp) and/or [Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Guidelines](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp) <[http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider\\_info.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/provider_info.asp)> and agree to provide the services outlined within. This must be documented by the provision of a completed **Attachment 1 – Certified Statements and Submission Checklist**.

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- Have a minimum of one year of experience providing the services the organization is proposing (Job Placement Services and/or Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services). NOTE: The one-year experience does not need to be specific to providing Job Placement Services and/or Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services to individuals who are blind. Providing such services to the general population for a minimum of one year would qualify. **This must be documented in your Attachment 2 – Letter of Interest.**
- Employ staff, or commit to hiring staff, meeting the minimum staff qualification requirements for the JPS and/or DVE service(s) the organization is applying to provide. Staff qualifications must be approved by NYSCB before any services can be provided by the funded organization(s). **The qualifications of current staff and/or the plan to hire additional qualified staff must be described in detail in your Attachment 2 – Letter of Interest.**

Omissions in information provided by the applicant may not be resolved in the applicant's favor.

### **Funding Details**

Funding for this project is contingent upon the availability of funds in the state and/or federal budgets and the number of interested and eligible parties that respond to this solicitation. In making awards, OCFS must verify geographic coverage of the regions proposed.

NYSCB intends to make multiple fee-based awards ranging in value from \$10,000 to \$2,000,000 per 5-year term. 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 allows 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.

NYSCB further intends to award a fee-based Contract or Letter of Agreement (LOA) to all organizations meeting the eligibility requirements and whose proposals pass the minimum pass/fail requirements in the **Attachment 1 – Certified Statements and Submission Checklist**. Payment for services will be according to the fixed fee schedule (see **Payment Schedule**, below) and upon NYSCB's approval of the Informed Authorization, as applicable.

The individual award funding levels will be determined by a panel of experts consisting of Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Counselors who hold advanced degrees and have extensive experience in the fields of JPS and DVE. The panel will estimate levels of utilization for each award and use that information to estimate the award value for each funded organization. In the event the panel underestimates usage for any award(s), NYSCB will reach out to the funded organization(s) and perform the necessary amendment(s) to align values with actual utilization.

Organizations who meet the eligibility requirements to receive an award under this SOI but are determined by the NYSCB panel of experts to be providing \$10,000 or less in JPS and/or DVE Services in a given calendar year, will be offered a LOA to provide services

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as a “Non-Contract Provider” (*this LOA will hereafter be referred to as a “Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement”*). Funded organizations providing services under a Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement will be paid the various fixed fee(s) applicable for the service(s) provided to NYSCB’s referred participants, through an Informed Authorization (*in accordance with [New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032 Revised](#)*). Further, organizations can request to be designated as a Non-Contract Provider by requesting to be so designated within their Letter of Interest (LOI) and submitting a completed **Attachment 4 - Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement**. The Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement provides an administratively streamlined method for otherwise qualified organizations who are unsure of the fiscal viability of expanding into the provision of JPS and/or DVE Services to individuals who are legally blind. If a Non-Contract Provider provides more than \$10,000 in JPS and/or DVE Services in a given calendar year, the provider may be required to have a contract with NYSCB/OCFS in order to receive payment for such services. Any organization that opts to initially be designated a Non-Contract Provider in response to this SOI will have the ability to become a “contract provider” at any time during the five-year award term, contingent upon contract approval by the NYS Attorney General (AG) and the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OSC).

Please be aware that NYSCB promotes Participant Informed Choice. The usage of any contract or Non-Contract Provider will ultimately be determined by NYSCB participants and not by the panel of experts. Therefore, all contract or Non-Contract Provider award values should only be considered estimates of potential usage.

**Non-Contract Provider organizations that do not respond to this SOI will not be eligible to become contract providers under this procurement.**

If an organization proposes both JPS and DVE Services, meets the eligibility requirements, and passes the minimum pass/fail requirements stipulated in the **Attachment 1 – Certified Statements and Submission Checklist**, NYSCB will combine both service types under one contract or Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement.

### **Payment Schedule**

Services provided under contracts and/or Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreements resulting from this SOI will be used on an as-needed basis, as authorized by the NYSCB District Office, to support the attainment of desired outcomes. Payment for these services is on an achieved outcome basis according to the following Payment Schedule, for outcomes that have been reviewed and approved by NYSCB.

<b>Payment Schedule</b>	
<b>Job Placement Services</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Job Placement Assessment: Either A or B is allowed	
A) Completion of Assessment Report, (Not Ready w/reasons)	\$1,020
B) Completion of Assessment Report and Job Placement Plan (Ready)	\$1,020
Job Seeking (upon Placement Plan approval)	\$1,080
Job Development (upon Placement Plan approval)	\$1,920

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Job Placement, 6 Day	\$1,800
Job Placement, 90 Day	\$3,000
Employment Customization, 90 Day	\$1,800
New Employer	\$300
Substantial Gainful Activity	\$600
<b>Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Comprehensive Diagnostic Evaluation	\$2,400
Situational Assessment I (Trial Work)	\$240/per day
Situational Assessment II (Up to 10 Days)	\$180/per day

### **Payments and Reports**

The funded organization will submit to the NYSCB District Office a completed Informed Authorization along with the required reports. Payment will be made upon approval by the NYSCB District Office and the OCFS Bureau of Contract Management and upon approval and processing of the payment voucher by the OSC, at the amounts identified above.

The award of a contract or Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement will NOT guarantee the funded organization(s) any referrals or related payments from NYSCB. Referrals will be made by NYSCB only as the need arises in the local NYSCB District Offices. OCFS/NYSCB does not guarantee any specific level of income, or level of referrals, in any of the contracts or Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreements resulting from this SOI.

### **Term of Contract**

Contract(s) and Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement(s) awarded in response to this solicitation will be for **a period up to five years**. The anticipated start date is **1/1/2025**, and the anticipated end date is **12/31/2029**. Funding is anticipated to be available for the first year of the contract. The award of a contract does not guarantee 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 your organization meets the requirements in the **Eligibility Criteria** section of this solicitation.

**Responses must be emailed to [funding@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:funding@ocfs.ny.gov) and should be received by the due date and time specified on the first page of this announcement.**

Interested parties are **required** to complete and provide the following documents:

- **Attachment 1 – Certified Statements and Submission Checklist**
- **Attachment 2 – Letter of Interest**
- **Attachment 3 – Listing of NYS Counties and NYC Boroughs**

Additionally, the following documents should also be completed and provided in the bid, otherwise they may be required post-award during the contract development process:

- **Attachment 4 – Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement** (optional and only for organizations requesting to be designated as a non-contract provider. See SOI section entitled “**Funding Details**” for more information.)
- [OCFS-2647, EO 177 Certification](#)
- [OCFS-4821, CMS User Authorization](#)
- Current service pamphlet or brochure (optional)
- Current Organization Chart that depicts the entire organizational structure and indicates where the organization head or the Chief Administrative Officer and the Contract Developers, Contract Signatories, and Claim Signatories appear in relation to the Board of Directors and the organization as a whole. (optional)

The subject line of the email submission of your response should include the following information: SOI # 1158 Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services. Additionally, please clearly identify the vendor’s name in the body of the email and in the file names 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 40 page(s), Arial 12-point font, single line spacing and one-inch margins. Please see **Attachment 2 – Letter of Interest**, provided for your reference.

Email delivery or read receipts are recommended. OCFS will provide a confirmation email that the submission has been received within one-two business days. Bidders are responsible for contacting OCFS prior to the deadline if confirmation has not 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 or withdraw, in writing, the content of any submission at any time prior to the due date and time specified on page one of this announcement.

## **Questions**

Under the requirement of the Procurement Lobbying Act all communications regarding advertised projects are to be channeled only through the primary contact identified herein.

Questions should be submitted via email to [funding@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:funding@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 # 1158 Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services. Please submit your question(s) with adequate time for response.

OCFS recommends allowing at least five business days. **Late questions may not be addressed.**

### **Evaluation Process**

This solicitation is not a guarantee or promise of funding. An internal review by OCFS will confirm eligibility. 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 by OCFS to be suited for the program.

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 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 will 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 through the New York State VendRep System](#). Vendors must be found responsible and cannot be listed on the OGS prohibited vendors list. Vendors must provide their New York State vendor identification number when enrolling. To request a vendor identification number or for direct VendRep System user assistance, contact the OSC Help Desk at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov](mailto:itservicedesk@osc.ny.gov).

### **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 response fails to conform to the requirements of this solicitation;
- reject any response if, in the sole discretion of OCFS, it determines the applicant is not a responsible vendor;
- request all applicants who submitted responses to present supplemental information clarifying their proposals either in writing or by formal presentation;
- direct all organizations who submitted responses to prepare modifications addressing solicitation amendments;
- make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the outcomes identified in this solicitation;

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- fund only one portion, or selected activities, of the selected applicant's response and/or adopt all or part of the selected applicant's response based on federal and state requirements;
- eliminate any solicitation requirements unmet by all applicants, upon notice to all parties that submitted responses;
- waive procedural technicalities, or modify minor irregularities, in responses received, after notification to the applicant involved;
- correct any arithmetic errors in any proposal, or make typographical corrections to responses, with the concurrence of the applicant;
- negotiate with the eligible applicant(s) prior to contract award;
- require that all responses 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 responses 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 responses 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 responses 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 a 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 response. This includes, but is not limited to, proposed changes to the standard terms and conditions of the resulting contract(s).

### **Contract Documents**

By submitting a response to this solicitation, the respondent agrees with all terms and conditions of the State of New York Master Contract for Grants Standard Terms and Conditions and/or Standard Clauses for all OCFS Contracts. Please review the sample contract templates provided here: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/samples.php>.

The contract documents consist of the following:

1. State of New York Master Contract for Grants Face Page
2. Signatory Page
3. State of New York Master Contract for Grants Standard Terms and Conditions
4. Attachment A-1: Agency-specific Terms and Conditions



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5. Attachment A-2: Program-specific Terms and Conditions (if applicable)
6. Attachment A-3: Federal Assurances and Certifications (if applicable)
7. Attachment B: Budget and Instructions
8. Attachment C: Work Plan
9. Attachment D: Payment and Reporting Schedule
10. Attachment E: Federal Fund Vendor Determination (if applicable)
11. Attachment MWBE: Minority- and Women-owned Business Enterprises

The following documents may be required during the contract development process:

- [Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance](#) (if applicable)
- [Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage](#) (if applicable)
- [ST-220-CA Contractor Certification to Covered Agency](#) (if applicable)
- [Attachment A-3, Federal Assurance and Certifications](#) (if applicable)
- [OCFS-4631, MWBE Utilization Plan Form](#) (if applicable)
- [OCFS-4629, Project Staffing Plan Form](#)
- [SDVOB 100, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Utilization Plan](#) (if applicable)
- [OCFS-4441, MWBE Quarterly Report Form](#) (Required during contract term. See [Attachment MWBE](#) for more information.)

### **Statement on 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  
[funding@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:funding@ocfs.ny.gov)

#### **Submit to contact:**

Director of Contracts  
Office of Children & Family Services  
52 Washington Street  
Room 202S – Procurement Unit  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

[funding@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:funding@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 – Certified Statements and Submission Checklist \***
- **Attachment 2 – Letter of Interest \***
- **Attachment 3 – Listing of NYS Counties and NYC Boroughs \***
- **Attachment 4 – Job Placement and Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Services Non-Contract Provider Authorization Agreement**

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