

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**NON-SECURE DETENTION GROUP HOME FOR PERSONS IN
NEED OF SUPERVISION (PINS) AND OTHER JUVENILE
JUSTICE POPULATIONS AT RISK OF INSTITUTIONAL
PLACEMENT DUE TO BEHAVIORAL AND/ OR EMOTIONAL
DISORDERS
FOR
THE ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OF
MENTAL HEALTH AND PROBATION**

RFP # 1201VF

RFP Release Date: January 10, 2012

Deadline for Proposal Submission: January 25, 2012, 4:00pm

Return RFP Response to: David Rust
Deputy Commissioner- Youth Services
810 East Ferry Street
Buffalo, NY 14211

Contact: David Rust
Deputy Commissioner- Youth Services
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Email: david.rust@erie.gov

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

NON-SECURE DETENTION GROUP HOME FOR PERSONS IN NEED OF SUPERVISION (PINS) AND OTHER JUVENILE JUSTICE POPULATIONS AT RISK OF INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT DUE BEHAVIORAL AND/ OR EMOTIONAL DISORDERS FOR THE ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Overview

For the last several years, the Erie County Departments of Social Services, Probation and Mental Health have worked in partnership with local, state and federal stakeholders to redefine the system of care for children who are at risk of out of home placement in order to strengthen the capacity of families to support and maintain their children in the most normalizing and least restrictive setting possible. During the first years of system of care reform, this effort primarily focused on developing community services with fidelity to the national wraparound model that provide an alternative to residential care for children who are at imminent risk of placement. More recently, Erie County has broadened the scope of reform to include other critical system of care populations and services including reframing the culture and practice of Secure Detention and expanding the continuum of community services for juvenile delinquents. In addition, in response to New York State PINS Reform Legislation enacted in 2005, Erie County has established an interdepartmental, cross disciplinary PINS Diversion Family Services Team (FST) to provide screening, assessment, triage, linkage and monitoring to a continuum of evidence based community services. In 2008 Erie County established a Juvenile Delinquency Services Team (JDST) to provide a similar continuum for the Juvenile Delinquent population. Consistent with the overall reform in Erie County, these additional reform efforts have been implemented with fidelity to the system of care values that all services be family focused, strength based, individualized and culturally competent through service models that have demonstrated efficacy to prevent institutional care.

The importance and success to date of these reforms will impact significantly on the services identified through this RFP. First, non-secure detention services and practices will be implemented consistent with national trends and best practice including: prompt, thorough and objective assessment, high standards of custodial care, brief stays whenever possible, maintenance of connections to family and community/school environment and effective transitioning out of the detention home with appropriate service and planning with fidelity to the above system of care values. In other words, non-secure detention services will be provided in a normative (e.g., recognizing the transitional quality of non-secure detention, establishing short term pro-social goals, and maintaining family and community contacts to the greatest extent possible) rather than institutional environment while preserving the security, safety and supervision of

residents. Consistent with these utilization trends and the above values that services will be provided in a manner that is normative and individualized, the 2012 Erie County Non-Secure Detention contract(s) will include eight (8) non-secure group home beds for males, eight (8) non-secure group home beds for females, and a flexible capacity of eight (8) reserve detention beds. All youth are to be housed at a single campus. Since a review of 2010 utilization trends identified that during short periods of time the above contracted capacity will not be sufficient to address need, the contract will include resources to address such overflow with reserve bed capacity. Finally, in recognition that the Erie County Family Services Team PINS Diversion Unit (FST) is responsible for the management of PINS cases in Erie County from initial intake queries to post dispositional planning, FST will also play a lead role in providing accurate case information and appropriate case recommendations to the Family Court while youth are in non-secure detention under the Court's authority. In fulfilling these responsibilities, FST will closely coordinate its efforts with the non-secure detention provider in order to ensure timely and objective information between each party regarding enrolled youth and their families and in support of quality and efficacy of service planning and delivery and the facilitation of expeditious reintegration into the community.

Consistent with Erie County practice regarding the developing system of Care for children and youth, the following administrative requirements will be applied:

- ③ Admission to the contracted capacity will be made centrally on a non- decline basis by the Erie County Family Court or Secure Detention after hours;
- ③ Services will be geographically and culturally accessible and be provided in a normative rather than institutional atmosphere/ environment that is also conducive to family and agency visits;
- ③ An abbreviated version of *CareManager*® will be utilized to support the assessment, service planning, and service/ outcome monitoring and evaluation functions associated with this initiative;
- ③ The Provider Agency will participate in system reform activities including designated learning communities; and,
- ③ Services will be provided in compliance with all applicable OCFS, ADA and SED requirements.

It is recognized that the response to this RFP may be accomplished through a collaborative partnership of Agencies. In this case, there must be a designated lead Agency that will contract with the Erie County Department of Social Services for the full complement of proposed services. In addition, the lead Agency must directly provide the Non-secure Detention Group Home Services. In addition the Responding Agency (or designated lead Agency in a collaborative response) must meet each of the following requirements:

- ③ Currently licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Families or Office of Mental Health to provide Residential Services for high risk youth;
- ③ Currently provides residential services within the geographic boundaries of Erie County; and,
- ③ Documented experience in serving target population youth as defined in this RFP.

The Erie County Department of Social Services reserves the right to reject in whole or in part any and all bids and proposals.

An Original and six (6) copies of all proposals are to be submitted to:

Erie County Department of Youth Services
David Rust
810 East Ferry Street
Buffalo, NY 14211

Proposals mailed or otherwise submitted must be received at the Erie County Department of Youth Services no later 4:00 PM on January 25, 2012. Proposals submitted later than the above deadline will not be considered.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS:

I. Target Population:

Children and youth ages ten (10) through seventeen (17) with a finding or pending finding of being a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) or a Juvenile Delinquent, and ordered by a Family Court Judge or apprehended on a PINS/ Juvenile Delinquent Warrant (Please Note: Individuals may be over seventeen (17) when the court has continued its jurisdiction). The clinical/ behavioral feature profile of youth in the target population is reflected in the following statistics:

- 85% of youth admitted have had repeated and/or high risk runaway episodes;
- 15% were determined to be unwilling/unable to comply with their Family Services Team (PINS Diversion) or Formal Probation service/monitoring plan;
- 40% will arrive at detention with prescribed psychotropic medication or recently have received mental health treatment;
- 60% are active users of alcohol and/or other drugs. Up to 30% of those will be at a level of habituation or dependence;
- 90% of the girls have a history of trauma;
- 75% are special education students and/or have significant remedial needs; and,
- 40% have a history of involvement with DSS Services.

In addition, the demographic statistical profile of youth admitted to Non-Secure Detention is as follows:

- Place of Residence:
 - 75% are City of Buffalo residents;
 - 16% are suburban residents; and,
 - 9% are from rural communities;

- Gender:
 - 55% Male; and,
 - 45% Female;
- Race/ Ethnicity:
 - 63% African American;
 - 28% Caucasian; and,
 - 9% Hispanic and other;
- Age Group:
 - 65% under age 16; and,
 - 35% 16 and 17 year olds.

Finally, the non-secure detention target population often represents youth with a combination of the following individual, family and community risk factors:

- Individual Youth Risk Factors:
 - History of unstable family life seriously effecting crucial early development;
 - History of trauma;
 - Cognitive deficits; and,
 - Poor emotional/behavioral control;
- Family Risk Factors:
 - Limited problem solving/crisis management skills;
 - Limited support system;
 - Family history of addiction and/ or mental illness;
 - History of ineffective service system engagement and experiencing alienation toward the service system; and,
 - Adult contact with the Criminal Justice System;
- Community Risk Factors:
 - History of poor academic involvement/achievement;
 - Poor attachment to positive community resources;
 - Lack of community resources;
 - Poverty; and,
 - Vulnerability to gang involvement.

II. Program Delivery:

As stated above, the 2012 Erie County Non-Secure Detention contract(s) will include a total of eight (8) non-secure group home beds for males, eight (8) non-secure group home beds for females, and a flexible capacity of eight (8) reserve beds. This capacity level was established consistent with a review of 2010 bed day utilization of current non-secure group home beds. The same review established the need for some limited additional bed capacity that will occur sporadically to address utilization fluctuations. This additional capacity to provide reserve bed coverage that addresses such short term overflow need is projected to total approximately one hundred fifteen (115) bed days annually. The following specifications delineate significant program/ service requirements of each of the above non- secure residential components:

Gender Specific Non-secure Detention Group Home:

- To the extent possible, it will provide a normative environment and atmosphere

while preserving security, safety and supervision of residents;

- Services will be provided in compliance with all applicable OCFS, ADA and SED requirements including the physical plant and staff qualifications and coverage;

- It must have the capacity to admit youth 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. Intake assessments including additional screenings (i.e., MAYSI- 2) provided to the Agency from the County must be completed upon admission;

- The philosophy, culture and practices will be implemented with fidelity to the system of care values that all services be family focused, strength based, individualized and culturally competent;

- It must have the capacity to manage the physical, social, medical, educational and mental health/behavioral health needs of youth ranging in age from ten (10) through seventeen (17);

- The length of stay may fluctuate significantly from a few days to a few months. The program must provide varied and responsive services that are individualized for each resident with the projected outcome of preventing future return to custody;

- The group home program must provide a safe, therapeutic, supervised environment with a strong emphasis on de-escalation of aggressive and hostile behavior. It will ensure that youth displaying aggressive and violent behavior are maintained in Non-secure Detention without further penetration into the justice system via arrest (i.e., juvenile delinquent or adult charge) while in the non-secure residence;

- Transportation services to support all appropriate off-site activities (including pre- placement appointments), ensure access to critical medical, behavioral health, and other community services and attendance to all court hearings;

- Children in the program will experience a full range of educational, recreational, cultural and pro social skill building activities and opportunities. Activities will promote a behavioral management approach that utilizes incentives valued by the individual youth such as the granting of privileges to reward positive behavior and the withholding of privileges to manage negative behaviors;

- Educational services must be provided in a manner that supports the goal of creating a normative environment and ensures continuity with the home school district academic program. This includes coordinating school work assignments with each youth's home school. Educational activities will occur in designated classroom space. When appropriate and approved by the court, individual youth may attend classes in their home school. A sample daily calendar must be provided;
- During summer months, weekends and/ or other school vacation periods, the non-secure group home will ensure the delivery of targeted educational activities that are focused on the development of pro-social, coping and life skills with the goal to minimize downtime and opportunities for learning deviancy while supporting healthy choices.

•Given the emerging mental and behavioral health challenges that admitted youth present, each Non-secure Group home will have on staff a social worker with a master's degree (MSW) experienced with the target population and serving as the program supervisor whose responsibilities will include:

- Application of clinical knowledge and skills to the custodial care of the residents such as the use of screening/assessment tools when indicated, training and providing individual case guidance to direct care staff, ensuring that clinical findings are appropriately utilized in resident care and planning, and engaging families in service planning and coordination activities;
- Provide individual and group counseling that addresses specific issues and topics relevant to the participating youth; and is appropriate and effective given the limited lengths of stay; and
- Case management/ coordination with the various human services agencies and systems involved in the resident's life to ensure that the service plan while in residence and at discharge has the greatest chance to achieve successful reintegration into the community. This may include the early engagement of planned referred services at residence. To further support these coordination efforts, the MSW-Program Supervisor will coordinate daily with the PINS Diversion Family Service Team clinical and front line staff.

Reserve Bed Coverage: is short term overflow capacity approved by NYS OCFS Detention to address additional capacity needs associated with short term fluctuations in referrals/ admissions to non-secure detention by total number of youth, gender specific subtotals and/ or the overall mix of risk levels/ service needs of referred youth. It is projected that total bed days for reserve coverage will not exceed one hundred fifteen (**115**) days. Specific program service requirements for reserve bed coverage are consistent with those defined above by the specific non-secure residential component needed. In addition, the reserve coverage should support each of the following:

- The flexibility to address fluctuations in overall daily capacity, gender specific variations or the specific service level mix required (e.g., at a specific point in time, the total daily need does not exceed the overall contracted capacity of twenty (**20**) but the mix of six (**6**) males and fourteen (**14**) females cannot be met with the configuration of eight (**8**) non-secure group home beds for males, and eight (**8**) non-secure group home beds for females; and,
- Utilization of a reserve coverage service model that can be implemented in a cost effective manner (e.g., the reserve capacity can be activated or deactivated against short term need without assuming ongoing operational costs).

II. Budgetary Issues:

Non-Secure Detention Target Budget Allocations:

Reimbursement Methodology for two 8-Bed Detention Group Homes:

-Initial 3 Month Advance; 1/12 of Allocation for Remaining Months

Reimbursement Methodology for up to 115 Days of Reserve Bed Coverage:

-Reimbursement on Per Diem Basis against Actual Reserve Bed Days Utilization

The first line item in the targeted budget represents funding to cover the base allocation for the two 8 bed Detention Group Homes. This amount is projected to cover all costs for the two Detention Group Homes (including Agency Administration). This line item amount will be reimbursed by an initial 3 month advance and then follow-up monthly advances of one twelfth (**1/12th**) of the contracted amount for each remaining month.

The second line item represents targeted funding to support up to one hundred fifteen (**115**) days of Reserve Bed Coverage. Funding in this line item will only be reimbursed on a per diem basis consistent with actual bed day utilization for the overflow coverage. The reimbursement rate for each bed day will equal 1/115th of the target budget for this line item.

IV. Capacity: As stated above, the Non-secure Detention Contract will include a total of eight (8) non-secure group home beds for males and eight (8) non-secure group home beds for females. In addition, the contract agency will establish reserve bed coverage with a projected utilization of approximately one hundred fifteen (115) bed days annually.

V. Initiative Timetable

- January 10, 2012: Release of RFP
- January 25, 2012, 4:00 PM: Responses are due
- February 3, 2012: RFP Award is announced contingent on site approval by Erie County
- March 1, 2012: Full implementation of Non-secure Detention Program

VI. Evaluation Process:

All proposals will be examined. Proposals that do not conform to the RFP instructions contained in this document or do not address all questions and/or requirements as specified may be eliminated from consideration. However, the County reserves the right to accept such a proposal if it is determined to be in the best interest of the families to be served and the county. In this regard, the award of the contract shall be made to the agency whose proposal best meets the goals and objectives set forth by the County in the Request for Proposals. Evaluation criteria will focus primarily on the applicant's service experience with the target population and residential service elements; the demonstrated efficacy of specific services and practices to be employed (e.g., targeted educational activities that are focused on the development of pro- social, coping and life skills); the applicant's ability to meet program implementation start date requirements as documented through the transition plan and previous applicant successes regarding expedited start-up of services; the comprehensiveness of planned actions and documentation of current application to ensure cultural competency; consistency with target budget allocations; the fiscal and programmatic viability of the plan to provide reserve bed coverage; and the proposed quality improvement plan and associated performance milestones to limit the number of AWOL's, critical incidents (e.g., fighting between residents and physical altercations), the number of child abuse allegations against staff, the non- filing of criminal action reports, and the number of physical plant citations.

VII. Final Selection Procedure

Proposals will be scored by a panel that will include representatives from Erie County Social Services, Youth Services, Mental Health, Probation, and others. An objective weighted scoring instrument based on the criteria indicated above will be used to evaluate and select a recommended service provider. The final recommendation will be made by the Commissioner of Social Services to the Erie

County Legislature based on the proposal that receives the highest overall rating. At the time of the recommendation a report summarizing the process, scoring results, critical decision points and the award recommendation will be drafted to share with appropriate parties. Any subsequent contract for services will be subject to approval by the County Administration, the Legislature and the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority.

VIII. Proposal Format

Each proposal shall contain the following:

1. Letter of Support from the Lead Agency Board of Directors

2. Introduction:

- a. Lead Agency Name.
- b. Agency Address.
- c. Contact Person – the name, title, phone number and fax number of the person authorized to contractually obligate the vendor agency with this proposal and future negotiations.
- d. The name, title and phone number of the person to be contacted for clarifications.
- e. An indication of acceptance of the general requirements and contract terms as described within this RFP.
- f. Summary of Agency History and Experience with the identified Population of Youth.
- g. Documentation of consistency with proposal requirements for lead Agency designation in responding to the RFP:
 - o Currently licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Families to provide Residential Services for high risk youth;
 - o Currently provides residential services within the geographic boundaries of Erie County; and,
 - o Documented experience serving youth in the target population as defined in this RFP.

3. Program Overview: The proposal shall include a detailed functional description of the services to be provided, how they will be delivered, and how they meet each of the significant program/ service requirements of the two non-secure residential components. Within this description, please include specific information regarding how each of the following identified key requirements of each non-secure detention subcomponent will be met. Please include a detailed calendar for both school-year and summer activities.

Gender Specific Non-secure Detention Group Home:

- Normative environment and atmosphere while preserving security, safety and supervision of residents;
- Compliance with all applicable OCFS, ADA and SED requirements including the physical plant and staff qualifications and coverage;

- Admit youth 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. Intake screenings completed upon admission;
- Philosophy, culture and practices will be implemented with fidelity to the system of care values that all services be family focused, strength based, individualized and culturally competent;
- Capacity to manage the physical, social, medical, educational and mental health/ behavioral health needs of youth ranging in age from 10 through 17;
- Provide varied and responsive services that are individualized for each resident with the projected outcome of preventing future return to custody;
- Strong emphasis on de-escalation of aggressive and hostile behavior to ensure that youth displaying aggressive and violent behavior are maintained in Non-secure Detention;
- Transportation services to critical community services and activities;
- Full range of educational, recreational, cultural and pro-social skill building activities and opportunities, including community based activities/opportunities; and,
- The Non-secure Detention Program will be led by a Master's in Social Work (MSW) with target population experience on staff to provide critical clinical and clinical administrative leadership. This program supervisor will have overall program responsibility, and work in daily coordination with FST and the Detention Social Worker responsible for Non-secure Detention.

Reserve Bed Coverage:

- The flexibility to address fluctuations in overall daily capacity, gender specific variations or the specific service level mix required and,
- Utilization of a reserve coverage service model that can be implemented in a cost effective manner.

4. Additional Program Information: In addition to the above, the program narrative must include but not be limited to:

- An explanation of the extent to which services will be delivered consistent with the System of Care values that services be family driven, strength based, and individualized;
- A description of the staffing pattern to meet the service response and regulatory requirements of the initiative:
 - ③ Please include how staff will be deployed to ensure coverage consistent with regulatory requirements (e.g., twenty four/ seven coverage with at least two staff at all times in group homes, or one-on- one coverage when deemed appropriate by clinical assessment); and,
 - ③ Describe how you will ensure cultural and linguistic competence of staff including hiring staff that reflect the diversity of the youth being served. Please provide data that demonstrates your Agency's current efficacy in this area.
- Please describe the level of staff turnover in your agency within programs that place similar demands on individual staff. Identify problems that have been experienced in maintaining sufficient staffing to meet service need. Describe specific management interventions employed to address such problems in staff turnover and specific achievements toward reducing staff turnover. Resumes and background checks for staff working the program will be required by Erie County and must be shared with the Detention Social Worker responsible for the oversight of Non-Secure Detention:

Please Note: While this section may be answered to some extent in general terms, please specifically address challenges in recruiting and retaining individuals in licensed social worker positions and your Agency's success in this regard.
- Identify your Agency's direct experience working with each of the following:
 - ③ Law Enforcement Agencies;
 - ③ Family Court
 - ③ County Juvenile Justice and/ or PINS Services;
 - ③ Emergency Services Providers; and,
 - ③ Other Relevant Human Service Organizations.
- Identify all inter-organizational partnerships or affiliations the designated lead applicant intends to establish toward the provision of the identified service(s) model;
- Please provide a detailed implementation plan that achieves full operational readiness at or before March 1, 2012 and addresses each of the following:
 - ③ Outline timelines and critical milestones associated with the implementation of the program;
 - ③ Provide an overview regarding the property to be utilized for the residential component, the degree to which it needs to be reconfigured to provide the two eight bed units, and examples of timely property for similar applications;
 - ③ What equipment and/ or furniture does your Agency already have available to be applied to this initiative;
 - ③ Describe agency readiness and ability to staff the program in a timely manner; and,

- ③ Describe specific ways in which your Agency is uniquely positioned to achieve operational readiness at and/ or before the March 1st, 2012 required implementation date.

5. Budget Narrative: Provide an annualized phased in budget for the 2012 contract with line item detail against each of the identified Subtotals of the above Non-secure Detention Target Budget. (**Please Note:** Each of the above individual target budget allocations is projected to be sufficient to cover the full cost of the line item subtotal it is funding. If your Agency's proposed budget exceeds the target budget or any of its individual subtotals, you must justify the additional cost on an exception basis with both individual line item detail and a narrative identifying specific reasons why the additional funding is required. This requirement includes any one time costs associated with start up that are not offset by the phasing in of the initiative in 2012). Please ensure that the staffing pattern presented in the budget is consistent with the RFP's guidelines including the identified service capacity levels and the coverage requirements defined within NYS OCFS Detention Regulation.

6. Results Based Accountability and Performance Expectations: The agency selected will be required to develop performance measures based on Results Based Accountability and to report to the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services based on a monthly dashboard. Provide the outline for a quality improvement plan focusing on achieving effectiveness toward limiting each of the following by non-secure detention unit/ service level:

- The number of AWOL's;
- Critical Incidents (e.g., fighting between residents and physical altercations);
- The number of child abuse allegations against staff; and,
- The number of physical plant citations.

Describe specific achievements in each of these areas against your current residential capacity and the target population; and specific approaches taken to ensure effective improvement in practice.

Define performance milestones to be achieved by your Agency through this quality improvement initiative in each of the following areas:

- Home School Attendance while enrolled in the initiative;
- Limiting the number of AWOL's;
- Supporting outside contacts while in Non-secure Detention Group Home;
- Limiting the number of Critical Incidents; and,
- Non-Filing of Criminal Action Reports (i.e., Adult or Juvenile Delinquent).

The agency also agrees to be monitored unannounced by county staff including, but not limited to, Detention Social Workers.

IX. Exceptions: Unless explicitly stated in the proposal, the County shall review all

content as if written in direct response to the requested information and specifications of this RFP. All items that are in the proposal that are not in full compliance or that vary from any of the specifications shall be clearly defined as exceptions. Specific reference to the relevant section(s) in the specifications and the precise nature of the variance or non-compliance shall be clearly delineated in the proposals;

- a. The County reserves the right to accept any and/or all/none of the exception(s) and/or, substitutions(s) deemed to be in the interest of the target population, families and, the County; and,
- b. Non-compliance or variance with any items in the specifications shall not necessarily result in the rejection of a proposal;

X. Terms and Conditions: The Department of Social Services shall not be held liable for any costs incurred by the vendor agency for work performed in the preparation and production of the RFP or for any work performed prior to the issuance of a contract. In addition, the following may apply or be required:

- a. All proposals are open to negotiation until a contract is executed;
- b. Prior to the execution of any contract for services pursuant to this RFP, the selected provider must provide copies of insurance certificates documenting coverage in effect that satisfy the Erie County insurance requirement. These insurance requirements are included as an attachment to the RFP.
- c. No award or acquisition can be made until authorized officials of the County approve such action. The County will not be obligated to the vendor for products or services until authorized County officials have signed the contract. At a future date, there may be opportunities to expand the capacity and/ or scope of this project through additional funding streams that could be Mental Health, Social Services and/ or Juvenile Justice. The approved vendor must then be prepared to meet additional requirements of such funding streams;
 - o To the extent permitted by law, vendors may request in writing non-disclosure of confidential data. Such data needs must be clearly identified within the submitted proposal package;
- d. Other Administrative Requirements:
 - o Memorandum of Understanding and/ or Subcontracts with other Agency Partners;
 - o Program and budgetary sections to the Erie County Department of Social Services Contract supporting the service components of this initiative;
 - o Overview of Agency Procedures that define in operational terms the Services being delivered consistent with NYS OCFS Regulations and evolving local service standards for residential and custodial care.

XI. Inclusions – This proposal must also include job descriptions for all key positions within the team and/ or other positions within the overall organization that have direct supervisory responsibility for the service initiative.