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Finance and Management Services
Grants and Contracts Support Team
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**RFP # 2016-0600-3245 Home and Community-Based Services; 1915(I) and 1915(K)
Implementation**

Amendment #1

Amendment Issue Date: July 29, 2015

Please alter the following language to match the amendment.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO OFFERORS: Only the following items referenced in this amendment are to be changed. All other sections of the RFP remain the same. This amendment serves to answer questions submitted by interested parties. A copy of the amendment is available on the State's Online Public Notice website.

- **Replace all reference of RFP # 16000002 with RFP 2016-0600-3245**
- **The following revision has been made to RFP Section 1.15 Subcontractors. "The sentence should now read "If a proposal with Subcontractor is submitted, the Offeror must submit a statement with their proposal indicating that the Offeror will perform 25% of the amount of work for the entire project."**
- **Vendor Questions have been answered as follows:**
 1. Question: Would the State consider lowering this percentage to 25%?
Answer: Yes, the State determined that it would be appropriate to lower the percentage to 25%.
 2. Question: Given the short time frame for this project, having an understanding of the structure of Alaska's HCBS programs would appear to be imperative. Would the State consider adding this as a requirement?
Answer: No
 3. Question: Given the small number of 1915 (k) and (i) that have been approved in other states, this requirement is likely to result in the State having an extremely small pool of vendors. Would the State consider removing this requirement?

Answer: The requirement specifies 1915(i) *and/or* 1915(k) experience. Thus, design experience from just one option would meet minimum qualifications. The State is clarifying that the letter may come from either the contractor or the subcontractor.

4. Question: Min qualifications, demonstrate experience with evaluation of Medicaid payment rate structures and mechanisms.
Can the State clarify whether experience evaluating payment rate structures as part of reviews of other states is sufficient?

Answer: Yes

When the State asks for the contractor to demonstrate this experience in writing, is a description of that experience sufficient?

Answer: Yes

5. Question: The scope of work includes a large number of requirements, many of which are very specific. We do not believe it would be possible to achieve all of this work given the funds that are available. Would the State consider substantially reducing the scope?

Answer: No, The State will only remove the provider manual from the scope of work.

6. Question: SDS is seeking a Contractor with a minimum of five years' experience in providing expert consulting services to State Medicaid agencies on behavioral health, senior and disabilities services." Can the State clarify the expectation for subject matter experts?

Answer: The State is seeking subject matter experts with experience in providing consulting services to state Medicaid agencies on long-term care services.

7. Question: Are individuals who have worked on designing programs for these populations sufficient?

Answer: Yes

8. Question: Scope of Work, Implementation Plan Deliverable, Data analysis (bullet number 1 on page 25).
It is highly unlikely that the databases will include assessment information that will allow a contractor to replicate possible eligibility criteria. In addition, it is likely to be extremely costly to obtain raw data from these databases, cleanse the data, and produce summary information. Even if this effort occurred, because many of these databases may not have similar assessment information, the utility of the analysis will be very limited. An alternative approach would be to allow a contractor to request summary information from the State staff experienced with these databases. This information could be used to estimate the number of individuals potentially eligible and develop cost estimates in a manner that would likely be as reliable as conducting

raw data analyses. Does the State intend the contractor to merge enrollee datasets to identify unduplicated counts of individuals?

Answer: The State will provide summary data for the contractor's use on this project. The State does not expect the contractor to merge enrollee datasets.

9. Question: Will the State provide this merged dataset?

Answer: No

10. Question: Will the State accept analysis based on summary data provided by State staff?

Answer: Yes

11. Question: Development of detailed provider manual/conditions of participation (last bullet on page 25). This could be a very costly task that could potentially be performed by State staff. Would the State consider removing this?

Answer: Yes

12. Question: Section (5.02) Task 1 and Task 2 (page 25 and 26), Can the State clarify exactly what is required by September 30, 2015? It wasn't entirely clear whether the underlined text on page 25 and on page 26 was all that was required by September 30, 2015 or whether the associated list of deliverables was also required.

Answer: All activities under Task 1: Project Planning must be completed by September 30, 2015. All deliverables listed under this task must be completed by that same date except deliverable c. (additional planning meetings) which is completed during the remainder of the project.

13. Question: Does the State intend bylaws to be developed for the Council?

Answer: It is envisioned that the Council will make a decision during their first meeting about how the group will operate, incl. funding for travel for meeting attendance, how issues will be discussed and recorded, how disagreements will be resolved, and other fundamental aspects of efficient meeting management. The Council is envisioned to make their own determination about whether these factors should be recorded in a formal charter and bylaws. Therefore, the contractor needs to be ready to develop Council governance documents, if needed.

14. Question: Section (5.02) Task 1B and shown in deliverable B, It may be difficult to provide an assessment of the State's ability to meet the July 1, 2017 timeframe 30 days after contract award. The contractor and the State will be in a much stronger position to judge this after the operational review and initial development of the implementation plan. Would the State consider either moving this back or describing this as preliminary guidance based on information provided by the State?

Answer: The State expects preliminary guidance within 30 days after contract award. The two additional planning meetings referenced in Task 1, Deliverable c. are envisioned to serve as opportunities for the contractor and the State to work together to refine the preliminary project management schedule for a more accurate estimate. The State is amending the requirements to include the new sentence reflecting that intention: "Task 1: Project Planning, Item b. Within 30 days of contract award, the Contractor must review the Contracting Agency's project timeline and make preliminary recommendations for changes, if any, [etc.]"

- 15. Question:** Section (5.02) Task 2A and Deliverable 2a, page 26 (establishing the Council). To what extent will State staff provide recommendations about and connections with individuals who should be considered for the Council?

Answer: The State is prepared to make recommendations and provide connections to individuals who should be considered for the council.

- 16. Question:** Does the September 30, 2015 timeframe apply only to establishing the Council?

Answer: Yes

- 17. Question:** Section (5.02) Task 2B, page 26. (conduct outreach activities). Can the State clarify its expectations regarding public outreach? For example, will the contractor be responsible for preparing meeting materials, facilitation, recruitment, coordinating travel for participants to the various locations?

Answer: The State will assume responsibility for coordinating travel to the various locations but requires the contractor to be responsible for all other tasks, including preparing meeting materials, facilitation, and recruitment.

- 18. Question:** Should the budget include costs for rooms, technology (A/V), accommodations for meeting participants, meeting notification and travel stipends for the participants?

Answer: The budget should include travel costs for the contractor but not for other participants.

- 19. Question:** The RFP references the need to secure input from those who benefit or could benefit from services in both urban and rural areas. Does this mean that notification to all current enrollees is required?

Answer: No, only public notice will be required.

- 20. Question:** Will this be the requirement of the contractor?

Answer: No

- 21. Question:** Provide more explanation for why there is a listing of databases included in the paragraph that references public outreach?

Answer: The State would like the databases to be used in a data analysis to help ensure that the right populations are identified for outreach,

- 22. Question:** Is the information about data sources put in that paragraph because there is an intent for the contractor to identify and then notify all recipients about this research?

Answer: No. The State will notify stakeholders as needed.

- 23. Question:** Section (5.02) Task 2, Deliverable b, page 26. Are the community forums and focus groups targeted only to providers, as suggested by the language describing Task 2c or should they also include enrollees and program participants?

Answer: The State has amended Task 2c to include recipients as follows: “c. Convene focus groups and community forums with providers and recipients of services to be offered [etc.]”

- 24. Question:** Would the State consider scaling down the number of community meetings and/or focus groups, or allow more meetings to occur via webinar?

Answer: The State will consider webinars in no more than 25% of the localities.

- 25. Question:** Section (5.02) Task 2, Deliverable c, page 26, Can the State clarify the state of the hospital discharge data that needs to be analyzed?

Answer: Data are submitted by hospitals to a contracted data clearinghouse under an agreement with the Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA). The data are checked, cleaned, and errors are corrected before being aggregated on a calendar year basis. Additional details are posted on the Internet and can be located by searching for “Alaska’s Hospital Discharge Database.”

- 26. Question:** Will the contractor be required to secure all data, scrub it and make sure it is ready for analysis, or will State staff provide a useable database to the contractor?

Answer: No. The contractor will be required to work with the Steering Committee to identify the most efficient way to acquire the cleaned data from existing databases.

- 27. Question:** provide more information about the Trauma Registry and the expectations for the contractor in analyzing it?

Answer: The State maintains a website that provides details on the Alaska Trauma Registry. We suggest that contractors consult this website for additional information on the Registry. The State envisions that the contractor will request summary data from the Registry to produce this deliverable.

28. Question: Would it be possible to receive summary data from this registry for use in the analysis?

Answer: Yes

29. Question: Section (5.02) Task 3, Deliverable 3c, page 27, It may not be possible to find four states that have implemented both the (i) and the (k), could this requirement be to include (i) and/or (k)?

Answer: The State's research indicates that the following four states have implemented both (i) and (k): California, Maryland, Montana, and Oregon.

30. Question: Are the requirements for Task 3 Deliverable(c) and (d) additive (i.e. a total of 8 states)?

Answer: The State has amended Task 3, Item d. to include the following language with the new text in bold: "Review regulatory frameworks of other states [etc.] ... implemented 1915(i) and/or 1915(k) options that included this target population." The State has also amended Task 3, Deliverable d. to include the following language (that reduces the requirement from four states to one state) with the new text in bold: "A written summary that includes the same main elements as Deliverable c. of this task for at least one state whose 1915(i) and/or 1915(k) implementation satisfies the characteristics listed under Task 3 d."

31. Question: Would the state accept a scan of all states that have done the (i) or (k) and then select four states for further study based on the potential to provide guidance to Alaska?

Answer: No

32. Question: Section (5.02) Task 3, Deliverable 3f, page 27, Statutes and Regulations Does this mean identifying the areas that need to be updated and providing information on what needs to be changed?

Answer: Yes

33. Question: Alternatively, is the State expecting this budget to include work by the contractor to draft the actual language for the new statutes and regulations?

Answer: No

34. Question: Section (5.02) Task 4, A Review of Current Operations, page 27, Item a: What other components of the current Medicaid delivery system should be reviewed beyond the Home and Community Based Services?

Answer: Medicaid State Plan Service

- 35. Question:** Item b: Can the state clarify what state-funded programs should be reviewed?

Answer: The State provides a vast amount of services through the General Fund, including but not limited to, General Relief, assisted living homes, behavioral health grants, Community Developmental Disabilities grants, Alzheimer's Disease or Related Dementia grants, and Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injury grants.

- 36. Question:** Should it only be those programs that implement long-term services and supports?

Answer: Yes

- 37. Question:** Should it only be those programs that implement long-term services and supports?

Answer: No. This Depends upon the scope of the target populations.

- 38. Question:** Section (5.02) Task 4, Deliverables (a) through (e), page 27 and 28 (some of the questions below are repeats from question 17 but apply to the deliverables section). Item a: Can the State please specify which components of the Medicaid program should be examined?

Answer: ARIES, Enterprise, and Harmony.

- 39. Question:** Developing a detailed written summary is likely to be very costly and could duplicate work that is currently being done as part of the Medicaid Redesign and Expansion contract. Would a high-level summary that highlights the issues for (i)/ (k) implementation suffice?

Answer: Yes. The State has amended the language in deliverables a, b, c, and e of Task 4 by removing the word "detailed" and replacing it with the word "high level."

- 40. Question:** Item b: Is this limited to state-funded LTSS programs?

Answer: Yes

- 41. Question:** Item c: Developing a detailed written summary is likely to be very costly. Would a high-level summary that highlights the issues for (i)/ (k) implementation suffice?

Answer: Yes

- 42. Question:** Item e: Developing a detailed written summary is likely to be very costly. Would a high-level summary that highlights the issues for (i)/ (k) implementation suffice?

Answer: Yes

- 43.** Section (5.02) Task 5, Deliverable a; Identify Eligibility/Resource Allocation Criteria and Target Populations, Page 28, Can the State clarify its expectations for establishing the resource allocation approach?

Answer: Once eligibility criteria have been established and target populations identified, the State requires the contractor to develop a plan for using available resources to achieve the goals associated with the target populations.

- 44.** Question: Is this limited to identifying the process by which budgets should be set in enough detail to identify the method and general approach or should it include the cost to prepare the actual algorithms or other components of the approach?

Answer: The State requires the contractor to prepare the actual algorithms or other components of the approach.

- 45.** Question: Section (5.02) Task 6, Deliverable b; Environmental Scan of Functional Assessment Tools, Page 28, Conducting this level of analysis on five tools would likely be costly. Would the State consider limiting the detailed analysis to the top 3 tools, but also add a requirement that the contractor analyze whether and how current tools should be changed?

Answer: The State will accept an analysis of no less than four tools.

- 46.** Question: Section (5.02) Task 7d Service Package, On page 25, under the general description of the required deliverables, the RFP states that the contractor should provide “A cost impact analysis of the feasibility of implementing these amendments that must include: eligibility criteria, target populations, no caps, state-wideness requirements, and service packages to be provided”

Then on page 28, under Task 7d, the RFP requires the contractor to “identify new services and supports to be covered under 1915(i) and 1915(k) as appropriate for each target population.” Could the state clarify the intent as it relates to cost analysis?

Is the intent that based on the previous tasks, once a service package is identified, the contractor will assess the cost impact?

Answer: Yes

- 47.** Question: Section (5.02) Task 9, Deliverable a; Develop Provider Manual, Page 29 Developing a provider manual is a costly task that is required once analysis and research is conducted to develop the implementation plan for the new program. Would the State consider removing this task?

Answer: Yes, after further review, the State will remove this task.

- 48.** Question: Section (5.02) Task 10, Deliverable b; Cost Impact Analysis, Page 29
Cost estimation. Most of the specific components included in the cost analysis would likely require substantial specialized research. Would the State be willing to accept an analysis based upon summary data requests developed by the contractor, but based on data generated by State staff? These data summaries could be used to develop a summary model of estimated enrollment and costs.

Answer: Yes

- 49.** Question: 10.b.2. It would hard to develop these costs without doing an operational review and developing business plans for the ADRCs. Would the State consider removing this or allowing the analysis to be based on existing reports and analysis of the ADRCs?

Answer: The State will accept an analysis based upon existing reports and analysis of the ADRCs.

- 50.** Question: 10.b.4. Is this referring to MIS or does it refer to systems employed by providers or does it refer to other systems? Please clarify the focus of this.

Answer: The systems in question are ARIES, MMIS, and Harmony.

- 51.** Question: 10.b.9. Developing IT cost estimates would require specialized staff in IT; Would the State consider removing this from the RFP or allowing a case study approach to providing conceptual cost estimates for what has been done elsewhere?

Answer: The State will allow a case study approach.

- 52.** Question: Task 10, estimates of cost savings impact; confirm the magnitude of the analysis related to rate changes?

Answer: The State requires the contractor to identify the changes that will be required, to analyze the scope and implications of implementing those changes, and to draft a timeline for implementation, including development of a priority strategy.

- 53.** Question: Will the state provide a proposed set of rates to include and compare to the status quo?

Answer: Yes

- 54.** Question: Does this contract require that the contractor review and make recommendations for changing rates?

Answer: Yes

- 55.** Question: Section 5.02, Task 11, Develop Implementation Plan, Page 30 Deliverable a.9. This appears to duplicate Deliverable 10. Should this be removed from this location?

Answer: The State envisions that the cost impact analysis developed under Task 10 can be utilized to satisfy this requirement, i.e., the cost impact analysis will form a chapter of the implementation plan.

- 56.** Question: Deliverable a10. Developing an IT roadmap would require specialized staff and be costly; would the State consider removing this from the RFP?

Answer: No, the State considers this work to be a critical part of the contract.

- 57.** Question: Section 5.02, Task 12, Project Management, page 30 Task 12.d. Would the State consider biweekly meetings?

Answer: Yes, but not immediately after project startup. The RFP states (p. 31) that: "The Contracting Agency may decide to reduce the frequency of these meetings as the project progresses."

- 58.** Question: Deliverables 5.02, Task 12e, Would it be sufficient to summarize major decisions and follow-up items, as part of the meeting notes?

Answer: No. That will not be sufficient. The State requires the meeting notes to include, at a minimum, decisions, parking lot items, and action items.

- 59.** Question: Deliverables, 5.02 Project Administration, Can monthly progress reports be provided instead of weekly reports?

Answer: No

- 60.** Question: How does this project relate to the current Legislative Audit Performance Review of DBH and SDS?

Answer: This project is not related to the Legislative Audit Performance Review.

- 61.** Question: Will the results of that project be available for this analysis?

Answer: If requested through a FOIA request.

- 62.** Question: Task 4 duplicates a lot of that scope of work, which is funded separately. Why is this?

Answer: Although the information needed in this project may duplicate some scope of work from other efforts, Task 12 of this RFP requires the contractor to coordinate with existing DHSS contractors, working on Medicaid expansion/reform and others,

to avoid duplication of effort in fulfilling the requirements associated with this project.

- 63.** Question: The questions outlined in this document represent an request to refine and prioritize the tasks and scope of work required. Would the state consider revising the RFP and re-releasing it and/or providing an extension to the due date for submitting proposals?

Answer: No, The State will not revise the RFP and will not extend the due date at this time.

- 64.** Question: Conflicts of interest (1.18), Would a contractor that is currently conducting a review of SDS for the Legislative Audit Bureau be considered as having a conflict of interest?

Answer: It would only be a conflict if the contractor that is doing the audit has inside information that added to the value of writing the proposal.

- 65.** Question: Will the state have a data analyst available to assist the vendor with data analysis to identify the number of individuals eligible?

Answer: Yes

- 66.** Question: Will the state contribute narrative (either in previously written documents or new writing) for sections of the provider manual or is the vendor expected to write the entire manual de novo?

Answer: Yes. The state will contribute narrative in previously written documents for some of the sections of the provider manual.

- 67.** Question: Should the vendor budget time and expense for logistics for focus groups and public forums including recruitment and confirmation of focus group participants, identification of space, ordering refreshments, ordering presentation equipment, etc. or should we expect that the State or a local provider organization will assist with this? Should the vendor budget for room rental, refreshments, incentives for these focus groups/public forums?

Answer: The State will assume responsibility for coordinating travel to the various locations but requires the contractor to be responsible for all other tasks, including preparing meeting materials, facilitation, recruitment, confirmation of focus group participants, identification of space, ordering refreshments, and ordering presentation equipment.

- 68.** Question: Joint ventures are allowed (1.16), how does the requirement about the percentage of work to be performed by the lead contractor apply to joint ventures?

Answer: Joint Ventures are a partnership.

69. Question: If only one member of a joint venture is a qualified Alaska bidder, would the offeror receive the Alaska bidder preference?

Answer: No, all members must qualify for the Alaska Bidder Preference.

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